



The Edge Of The Crazies

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Perched at the foot of Montana's Crazy Mountains, Blue Deer is a small town boasting an uneasy mix of longtime residents and hotshots from both coasts looking to possess their own piece of the Big Sky. Local sheriff Jules Clement manages the town's tensions fairly well...until someone blasts a hole in screenwriter George Blackwater's office window--and in George himself.

As more of the town's prominent citizens start turning up dead, the pressure on Jules keeps rising. It starts to look like this rookie sheriff may not survive the next election...if he lives to see it.

The Edge Of The Crazies Details

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Author : Jamie Harrison

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P.S. Winn says

For me the really interesting part of the story is the location. I live in Montana myself and use the scenery in a lot of my own books, in fact that's why I bought this one. The author did a good job bringing the feel and the problems of small town life and its' unique problems into this novel. Jules is the sheriff in the small town of Blue Deer, MT (you have to read the book to find the secret behind the name.) In this novel, Jules is up to his eyeballs in murders and finding the killer or killers takes readers into the idiosyncrasies of the people who inhabit the town. The novel was mysterious, suspenseful and touched with humor.

Ed says

#1 in the Sheriff Jules Clement series. Auspicious debut to an unfortunately short-lived (4 entries) series. Blue Deer, MT and it's somewhat odd-ball inhabitants is not for all tastes but I found it irresistible.

Sheriff Jules Clement, Blue Deer, MT mystery - George Blackwater is shot while working at his computer, his wife (a prime suspect) is murdered. Are the crimes related?

James Thane says

Beginning in 1995, Jamie Harrison, the daughter of novelist Jim Harrison, wrote four novels set in the fictional town of Blue Deer, Montana, located on the edge of the Crazy Mountains, very near where the real town of Livingston, Montana would be found. The main protagonist was a young archaeologist, Jules Clement, who returned home to Blue Deer and was elected to the office of County Sheriff, a position that had once been held by his father.

Blue Deer is populated with a mix of eccentric characters, some of whom are long-time residents and others of whom are more recent arrivals, including a number of writers, artists and other celebrities who have found their way to Big Sky Country in the last few years. Among other things, Harrison cleverly explores the tensions that have developed between native Montanans and the new arrivals.

The Edge of the Crazies, a wonderfully titled book, opens when someone takes a couple of shots at a screenwriter named George Blackwater. George is wounded but survives, and as Jules begins to investigate the shooting, it appears that there are any number of potential suspects, including George's wife, Mona.

Jules is unlike any other sheriff that the reader has likely encountered. But so, for that matter, are many of the characters in this book, many of whom are jumping in and out of bed with each other with little regard for the potential consequences. Watching the interactions among the characters is a great deal of fun and there seems little urgency in solving any of the crimes that occur as the story proceeds.

Before long, someone is murdered and it appears that the crimes now unsettling Blue Deer might relate back to a mysterious death that occurred years earlier. Jules clearly has his work cut out for him as he must

negotiate his way through a minefield of quirky characters and grudges both ancient and more recent. Harrison clearly has a knack for creating unique characters and for understanding the dynamics of a small town in the midst of change. Virtually any fan of crime fiction should enjoy this book.

Richard says

Don't you always wonder where the urge or even ability to write comes from? In the case of Jamie Harrison I suspect because she is Jim Harrison's daughter and grew up in Montana may explain at least in part where Jamie Harrison got her impetus. That unlike her father who has never written a straight up "mystery" is what sets her apart from her father's work. "Edge Of The Crazies" is set in the mythical town of Blue Deer, MT which like a number of the small western towns that do the front range of the Rockies is populated with a range transplants from elsewhere. It could be the town up Boulder Canyon I once lived in which is why I like the work. Although none of the remaining four books that form a quartet of sorts similar to Lawrence Durrell's great Alexandria Quartet in that some common characters appear in each of the subsequent works ("Going Local" 1996, "An Unfortunate Prairie Occurrence" 1998, and "Blue Deer Thaw" 2000 but the books are not dependent on one another. Unlike the Alexandra Quartet however the first book in the series is the best, the rest entertaining but not as strong. Perhaps that has something to do with the risk one takes when you commit to reading a book by a new author and when you find you like that book, none of the others quite match that same rush that results from the element of discovery?. Perhaps it's unfair to even compare the two?

Unlike other mystery authors i.e., Sue Grafton and Janet Evanovich who publish books like a chain-smoker consumes cigarettes, Harrison's last book in this quasi-series was published >10 years ago. Maybe like Robert Pirsig author of "Zen And The Art Of Motorcycle Maintenance" she's said all she has to say about these characters who live in this small mountain town? Pirsig would respond to anyone who asked him what his book was about with "I've said everything I have to say as plainly as I could and if you don't get there's no hope for you" or something similarly unpleasant. After publishing four novels and still being relatively young I suspect she will publish more. I hope so

Christine says

This was a fun jaunt through a Northern-Exposure style Montana mystery. I'll read more from Jamie. Jules was a fun law man...

CAROL WAGERS says

A very good Western murder mystery. Sheriff Jules Clement is a very likeable character

Mike Heyd says

Enjoyable though slightly depressing. All of the characters are a bit unlikeable. Still, well plotted and well

executed. If only the cemetery hadn't been called "Cavalry"... Could the author have just been horsing around?

Lisa says

The first in a mystery series set in a small Montana town -- great setting and interesting characters make up for the not-that-good mystery. The author really nails sordid little towns and the relations among the police, the officials and the press. Good enough that I'm reading the second one.

Patricia says

Blue Deer, Montana. Quirky, colorful. Definitely on the edge of the crazies. Odd or typical? Hard to categorize, but it is the type of town that will make you wince. (Maybe all small towns do). Jules, the likeable police chief in this town, has his hands full with sex, lies, and videotape. And also, murders. A good read; good writing.

Sarah says

Once I again I was drawn to a book simply because of the setting (southern Montana.) But I didn't find anything about this book engaging - the characters were boring, and the mystery wasn't all that mysterious. The ending seemed anticlimactic. There are more in this series, but I won't be reading them.

Pam Bales says

It was a long time ago when I read this, but I read a couple more. It was an entertaining read, but that's all I can say about it. I do love a good mystery, and I remember enjoying it.

Sara Cochran says

Just read it again. I don't really do that with books, so that's a big compliment. We're gearing up for a trip to Yellowstone this summer and this series is my homework. I assign it to all of you whether you have a trip planned or not. These books are delightful. I love murder mysteries and this has quirky, fully-developed characters and an amazing setting. You won't be disappointed.

Cynthia says

Cute and funny, but it felt too familiar: the sophisticated new yorkers who move to a rural area and "go native" but haven't quite got over thinking the local police blotter is quaint and comical. This feels like the

book I wanted to write 10 years ago when I first moved to the country, which is perhaps the reason why I didn't have the patience to finish it.

Nicole Galloway-Miller says

My husband's best friend, Aaron, allowed me to borrow it. I was recovering from a medication change. The novel was a light suspenseful engaging and entertaining. Therefore it was the perfect choice during my recovery. Aaron highly recommended it, since it had kept him entertained during his stint in the army where he was stationed in Iraq. I wasn't so sure about it, at first. Aaron had never loaned me a book, so I wasn't sure what I was going to get. After reading the first few pages, I knew I was hooked. I finished it in two days. It is well-written and the characters are interesting and unique. Overall, it was enjoyable as a light read and a nice break from the serious novels, like "Atlas Shrugged," which I spend the majority of time reading.

Alethea Bothwell says

She knows small towns. Her detective isn't particularly impressive as a detective, but he is a good (interesting) character.

Leather says

If I had started the series of Sheriff Jules Clement with this first part, it is quite likely that I would not have finished that book.

Unfortunately for me I started (stupidly) by the third novel, I liked it, and knowing the quality of the author I forced myself to finish this first part. To regret.

I found this book very long, very disjointed, hazy and vaguely depressing. The characters are too numerous and not pleasant enough to enjoy them. The plot is very nebulous, I felt lugged throughout the book as a leaf in the autumn wind. And the conclusion is not very convincing, the final situation is a frightful cliche of bad police novel.

Yet all the qualities I found in the third part (prairie fire) are already present, but at the larval stage, including much less incisive humor in this first part, despite some funny situations.

Despite all its faults, this melancholy book often sounds just right, thanks in its realistic atmosphere. But that's not enough for me to make an interesting novel.

Karen Holman says

This book had characters that had the reader asking why, the setting Montana, and an ending that finished the mystery. Overall the language was overpowering and did not add to the story.

Dolly says

This is an interesting mystery, although it is filled with overly dramatic plot lines and a few cartoonish characters that are way too interconnected. I like the parts that describe small town life and the funny police blotter items that fuel the local gossip mills. The violence was a little over the top, but probably more realistic than I'd like to admit.

It took me awhile to get into this story, but overall I enjoyed it. I would consider reading another book in the Jules Clement Mystery series, just to find out what happens to the lead characters.

Margaret says

"A grease fire had recently cleaned up the kitchen, and the place was popular again, people apparently reasoning that they were now less likely to be hospitalized for food poisoning."

I almost decided to not finish this book, its grimness contrasting with my usual cozies, but the mordant humor led me on.

Carolyn (in SC) C234D says

This series is a new one for me, and I really enjoyed book #1. Main character Jules Clement is decent and intelligent. He left Blue Deer, Montana, as a young man, traveled the world, and felt drawn back in his early thirties. Timing is everything, and he was elected sheriff. Things get busy in the county, Jules gets involved with two women at the same time, and he may be in over his head. I found this book hard to put down. There were a lot of twists, which kept me guessing, and I liked the humor. I'm sorry that apparently there are only four books in the series, but at least I have three more to read.
