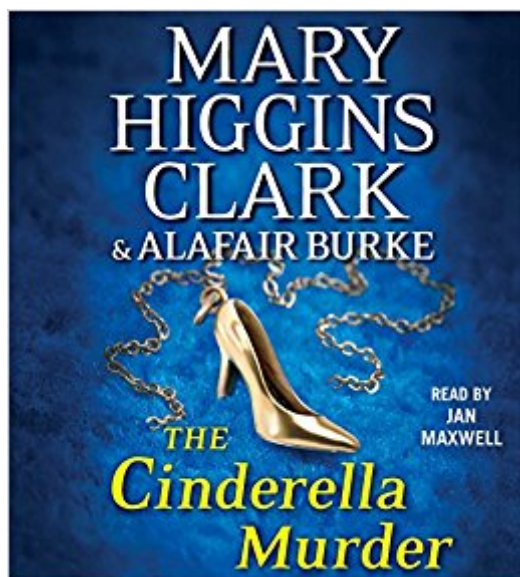


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# The Cinderella Murder (Under Suspicion)



## Synopsis

In a first-time collaboration, the "Queen of Suspense" • Mary Higgins Clark partners with bestselling author Alafair Burke to deliver a brand new suspense series about a television program featuring cold case murders. Television producer Laurie Moran is delighted when the pilot for her reality drama, *Under Suspicion*, is a success. Even more, the program "a cold case series that revisits unsolved crimes by recreating them with those affected" is off to a fantastic start when it helps solve an infamous murder in the very first episode. Now Laurie has the ideal case to feature in the next episode of *Under Suspicion*: the Cinderella Murder. When Susan Dempsey, a beautiful and multi-talented UCLA student, was found dead, her murder raised numerous questions. Why was her car parked miles from her body? Had she ever shown up for the acting audition she was due to attend at the home of an up-and-coming director? Why does Susan's boyfriend want to avoid questions about their relationship? Why was Susan so concerned about her roommate's infatuation with a new-age religious sect? Was she close to her computer science professor because of her technological brilliance, or something more? And why was Susan missing one of her shoes when her body was discovered? With the help of lawyer and *Under Suspicion* host Alex Buckley, Laurie knows the case will attract great ratings, especially when the former suspects include Hollywood's elite and tech billionaires. The suspense and drama are perfect for the silver screen "but is Cinderella's murderer ready for a close-up? Together Mary Higgins Clark and Alafair Burke deliver an exciting publishing event: the start of a thrilling new series guaranteed to keep you guessing until the last suspenseful page.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Fans of MWA Grand Master Clark will find plenty of intrigue and excitement in this contemporary thriller...Clark keeps readers guessing and in suspense." â Publishers Weekly "The snappy pace, layered characters, and many plot surprises will keep readers guessing in this fascinating mystery by two talented writers." â Booklist "This serendipitous series launch, or continuation, will satisfy Clark's legion of fans and may well win her some new ones." â Kirkus Reviews --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

The #1 New York Times bestselling author Mary Higgins Clark has written thirty-seven suspense novels, four collections of short stories, a historical novel, a memoir, and two children's books. With her daughter Carol Higgins Clark, she has coauthored five more suspense novels, and also wrote *The Cinderella Murder*, *All Dressed in White*, *The Sleeping Beauty Killer*, and *Every Breath You Take* with bestselling author Alafair Burke. More than one hundred million copies of her books are in print in the United States alone. Her books are international bestsellers. Alafair Burke is the New York Times bestselling author of eleven novels, including *Long Gone*, *If You Were Here*, and the latest in the Ellie Hatcher series, *All Day and a Night*. A former prosecutor, she now teaches criminal law and lives in Manhattan.

Clark's style has changed over the years; she used to be especially good at creating an atmosphere that engulfed you and heightened the suspense almost unbearably. In this book she overwhelmed the reader with information and failed to create that atmosphere for which she was so famous. I was disappointed.

I pushed myself to finish this book. It moves slowly and I was bored with the idle chatter among characters which was irrelevant to the plot. I have read other Mary Higgins Clark books and enjoyed them but this is a huge disappointment; very predictable early on in the story. If you don't read this, you've missed nothing. I'm left wondering if the collaboration with another author adversely impacted her with this book. So very disappointed.

"The Cinderella Murder" by Mary Higgins Clark and Alafair Burke uncovers a twenty-year old murder of a nineteen-year-old UCLA student Susan Dempsey, who was found murdered (and also

missing one of her shoes--hence the "Cinderella" moniker) after calling her parents and telling them of a movie audition she was planning to attend. I really enjoyed Mary Higgins Clark's last book "I've got you under my skin" where Clark introduced Laurie Moran, a producer of the "Under Suspicion" reality show, who gathers all the suspects together to investigate old unsolved murder cases. In "The Cinderella Murder" we get the second installment of "Under Suspicion"--but this time with Susan's case and suspects like Susan's boyfriend and roommate (both of whom quit college shortly after her murder), her other roommate (who got the part Susan was trying out for because of her absence), the movie producer who invited Susan to the audition and ultimately ended up shooting the film without her, her professor, her computer lab partner who has since become a big deal in the technology industry by founding his own company, a controversial church on campus who seemed to be connected in some way to the college goings on, and the list goes on. Clark's co-writer on this book is Alafair Burke, whose thriller "Long Gone" I really enjoyed a well. Even though this book is a team effort, it reads very much like Clark. I thought both the whodunit and the surprising rationale were well-done, and the overall case of characters was both varied and intriguing. There's the obligatory red herring present as well, which further complicates the plot and makes it harder to figure out what happened. Overall, a well-developed mystery and an engaging read.

I'm honestly shocked at the reviews. I wanted to like this - in fact, I wanted to LOVE it. It just didn't happen. I found the plot to be beyond simplistic, the characters formulaic and wooden. I wanted this to be a Mary Higgins Clark book of old; even moreso, I hoped that Alafair Burke would infuse new life and insure an ongoing stream of such suspense books. I'm disappointed. I just cannot believe the good reviews. Sigh.

Very disappointed! If it didn't say Mary Higgins Clark on the cover, I'd never believe it was one of her books. MHC has a unique style of writing & it's totally missing in the mediocre whodunit mystery. MCH always puts the reader inside the villains mind right away and you spend your time getting glimpses of the his thoughts throughout the story even though you have no idea who he is until the end. Unless she goes back to her usual format, I will not be buying any more of her books. That would be a shame because I've read almost every book she's written.

Co-authored by Alafair Burke, and that was the reason I read this book. I've read and enjoyed all of Ms. Burke's previous books, and was not disappointed with this one. The only problem with 'co-authored' books is that you can't know the percentage contribution of each author. Mary Higgins

Clack is a well known and widely published writer, and this collaboration was quite enjoyable, as was the premise itself. Hopefully there will be more from these two writers.

I love the Under Suspicion series by MHC. It's nicely paced, has charming characters, and has suspenseful story lines. Great way to spend a lazy day. They're easy to understand without reading them in order, since each story is a stand-alone; but if you do read them in order, you'll get a fuller backstory of the recurring characters.

This was a nice suspense novel from the queen of suspense. She has succeeded in writing with a co-author quite well. I like how she introduces different choices for murder suspects before revealing who the real murderer is. The characters are in some of her books more developed and complex than in this one. It might be because this was part of series and the characters have time to develop.

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