

MARY
DAHEIM



THE ALPINE
PURSUIT

An Emma Lord Mystery

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As her myriad of fans can attest, *USA Today* bestselling author Mary Daheim creates wonderful mysteries peopled with marvelous characters as quirky as they are endearing. *The Seattle Times* says Daheim is “one of the brightest stars in our city’s literary constellation”—and the popularity of her irresistible Pacific Northwest crime series has swept across the nation. Now the unfaltering Emma Lord is back in her highly anticipated hardcover debut.

For a small town newspaper like *The Alpine Advocate*, a new play at the local community college is big news. Editor and publisher Emma Lord is duty-bound to attend opening night, but expects the amateur enterprise will serve only as a cure for insomnia. The play is dubbed “a black comedy,” but the only laughs Emma gets are from the bad acting and the wretched script. And while the turgid production makes Wagner’s *Ring* cycle seem like a vignette, the real drama begins just before the final curtain.

Hans Berenger, dean of students, wasn’t well known or well liked around Alpine, but the audience found his death scene genuinely convincing—until they realized he wasn’t acting. No one can say how or when the blanks in the prop gun were replaced with the real bullets that killed Berenger, but the list of suspects reads like a playbill of the cast and crew. They all had opportunity, access, and their own axes to grind with the thespically challenged dean.

Seeking the assistance of Vida Runkel, the *Advocate*’s redoubtable House and Home editor, Emma Lord vows to unravel a mystery that spirals out into unexpected places. As Emma sets the stage for the most likely suspect, she finds herself in a two-character scene whose next cue could make the resolute editor take a final—and permanent—bow.

From the Hardcover edition.

The Alpine Pursuit Details

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From Reader Review The Alpine Pursuit for online ebook

Christine says

So happy with this series and the direction it's taking. I was worried, a couple of books ago, with the big series twist, but I think it's made Emma a better protagonist, and frankly I wish it had happened many books ago!!

Glenn Harris says

The ever-reliable Mary Daheim rings another intriguing variation on the murder investigations of the ever-curious publisher/editor Emma Lord. Remarkably, with only ten books to go in the alphabet, there are still plenty of people in the little town of Alpine left to kill.

Lynn says

An interesting mystery, but the overarching series story is up in the air. It seems the characters are simply going through the motions and in the end of the book, they seem to be wandering a bit lost. Not the best of the series, but it may prove to be necessary after reading the next installment.

Laura Rodd says

Fun, summer read.

Sandy Holmes says

I enjoyed this mystery - a lot of twists. I enjoy her Alpine series with Emma Lord, a modern Miss Marple, who aggravates Sheriff Milo Dodge with her nosiness and interference. The author has quirky characters who she describes with humor. A quick, enjoyable read!

Jeanie says

Good mystery.

Becky says

This book was just ok for me. This sections about Emma's trip to Italy was just a stretch for connecting them

to this mystery. I hated the ending and wished there had been more to it for closure.

Karla Huebner says

Apparently I went from one extreme to the other. If the last book I finished in 2015 seemed dark and grim to the point of being almost tediously so, the first book of 2016 proved to be such a "cozy" that it, too, ran the risk of being thrown across the room. Both were by well-regarded mystery writers, so is the problem with the books or with me? Probably a bit of both. There's also the fact that I hadn't read earlier books in either series, so had not built up any attachment to the protagonists.

This one, set in small-town Washington state, features the owner of a weekly newspaper and a cast of seemingly endless size. I'm willing to believe that I might have enjoyed this one more had I read earlier books in the series, but this is NOT the book to start with. The narrator has apparently recently lost the love of her life, and we get various flashbacks to a trip she and her brother took to Rome while she was grieving, but the flashbacks did nothing to pull me into the novel at hand. She's also mulling over a failed romance with the chief of police, so the two try to get along but aren't very successful. The reader has no clue to when that romance occurred--a year ago? Ten years ago? And how old is our narrator? She indicates she's middle-aged, but says she left her big-city reporting job thirty years ago when her ex-fiance died and left her money because he had forgotten to change the beneficiary in his insurance after he got married and had kids. I suppose the narrator could be as young as 55, but this tidbit made me think she was more like 65. I hope I still feel middle-aged at 65, but I doubt anyone else will see me that way, even if (as is the case for our narrator) people are still attracted.

So... okay... the book trots perkily along despite the narrator's tendency to react in annoyingly juvenile ways to people who get on her nerves. Just about everyone in the book is fodder for comedy, and while I love a good comic novel, this felt forced.

I recognize that I would have been happier rereading a Heinrich Böll novel or continuing the biography of Mircea Eliade that I've been gradually wandering through, but often I'm just tired after reading lots of journal articles and trying to figure out what went wrong with a citation in my book, so I feel that lighter fare has a worthy place in my reading life. I just want to be able to enjoy such books and not be made grumpy by them.

Carolyn says

As usual, I enjoyed the interaction of the various characters in this novel. Love the independence, as well as depth, of the main character (Emma Lord)

Grey853 says

I like the easy style of Mary Daheim's writing in the Emma Lord series. Emma is spry for her age and stays busy running the local paper. That affords her a lot of opportunity to get involved in murders and other misdeeds of the small town.

The one thing that bothered me about the book was the ending. It was the second time in a week where the

main character allows the actual killer to go free. While I understand having sympathy considering the motive, it still leaves me cold when a book ends on that note, like the protagonist playing god.
