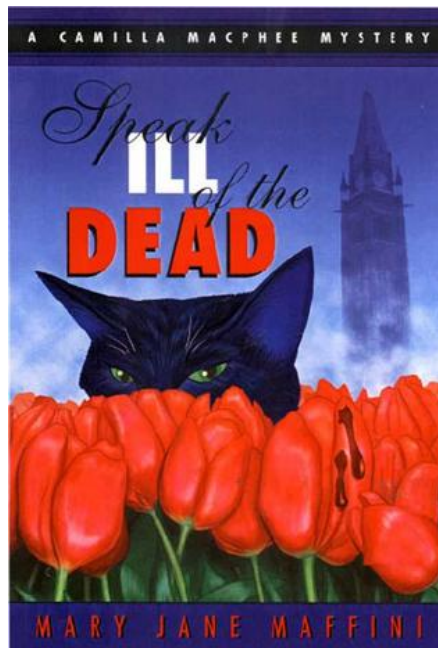




Speak Ill of the Dead

Mary Jane Maffini

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Speak Ill of the Dead Mary Jane Maffini

In the first Camilla MacPhee mystery, Camilla runs a law office specializing in Justice for Victims of violent crimes. Her uneasy association with the world of crime takes a bizarre turn when a vicious fashion columnist is crucified in a downtown hotel room. Camilla's best friend, Robin, was on her way to meet the victim and has become the main suspect. Camilla sets out to vindicate her friend, but the investigation turns dangerous, as she receives cryptic warnings while following a grisly killer's trail marked by more murders.

Speak Ill of the Dead Details

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From Reader Review Speak Ill of the Dead for online ebook

Elizabeth Dodd says

I am catching up on some of this author's earlier books.

This is an engaging story. Each character has their pluses and minuses, some more than others!

I was a bit surprised by the final unveiling of the murderer. It makes sense, but some of the clues were rather obscured.

The next door neighbor is a marvelous character. And I wanted to smack the best friend's sister and family. An enjoyable read.

Nathan Burgoine says

The start of the fabulous Camilla MacPhee mystery series. I met Mary Jane Maffini, and I've been hooked on this series ever since. Set in Ottawa, during the tulip festival, there's even some stuff in here for those of us who can't stand those fluffy cat mysteries.

Jeannie and Louis Rigod says

This series is with a lawyer sleuth, Camilla MacPhee. I get the sense she will figure out this murder in 'spite' of the aid of her assistant (whom I would have fired in a heartbeat,) her sisters and her client. The pace of the action, is as usual in the Maffini books- fast and furious. I should have seen the ending but didn't until the ...ending. This is one terrific, witty, smartly written mystery novel.

Rosemarie Boll says

Mary Jane Maffini is a Canadian crime writer and former librarian. In 1999, she created the character of Camilla MacPhee. Camilla is the driving force behind Justice for Victims, an Ottawa-based non-profit organization that represents devastated crime victims and their relatives. She doesn't drink, but she works long hours, all alone in her cramped office. She uses her career to escape the lingering emotional pain caused by the death of her boyfriend three years earlier. She lives alone and avoids her three sisters, her parents and all new relationships. She's in danger of letting her life's work become a life-sentence. Camilla does have one close friend, Robin, a real estate lawyer. Robin also seems to be engrossed in her career, her charity work and her six cats. Like Camilla, she is completely out of place in her own dysfunctional family and seems to have no substantial personal relationships. In *Speak Ill of the Dead*, Robin is accused of murder. Camilla springs into action and prepares to defend her. Very soon Camilla trades in her lawyer's robes and dons her gumshoes as she transforms into a private detective. She abandons her clients and concentrates on out-sleuthing the local police. The book quickly becomes a run-of-the-mill murder mystery.

Teena in Toronto says

I read the third in this series in July and liked it ... so thought I'd go back and start the series from the

beginning. I like the author's writing style so have been reading the other series she has written.

One of the reasons I like this author is because Maffini is a Canadian writer. She was born in Sydney, NS, (where I went to high school) and now lives in Ottawa.

This series is set in Ottawa. Camilla goes to the Mayflower Restaurant on Elgin Street ... I've been at that restaurant a few times when I've been in Ottawa.

I like the heroine in the series. She's a lawyer so it makes sense that she digs into these mysteries and ultimately solves them (unlike Charlotte who is a professional organizer in another series). And given Camilla's Cape Breton background, she and her family drink rum and cokes ... and you know I like them!

There were lots of kitties in this book which I found cute ... they weren't annoying like the two dogs in the first book of the Charlotte Adams' series.

I figured out who dunnit about half way through but not why so there was still some surprise at the end for me.

Like the other books I've read by this author, there are many typos. This surprises me since she had a career working in libraries. Why aren't the proofreaders or editors picking them up?

Ellen says

Speak well of the author, June 5, 2012

By Ellen Rappaport (Florida)

This review is from: *Speak Ill of the Dead: A Camilla MacPhee Mystery* (Paperback)

I've read all the books in Mary Jane Maffini's other series...which I enjoyed so much. So I thought why not give M.J.'s other series a try.

I am so pleased to say that M.J. Maffini did not disappoint me with this her first book in the Camilla MacPhee series.

Camilla MacPhee is not like her other sisters at all. They are all such fashion statements and Camilla...well let's just say she could care less about making impressions. Camilla is a lawyer and quite independent. She's had to be since her husband's passing. So she throws herself into her career at Justice for Victims. Camilla gets thrown a spoiled brat with a sense of entitlement named Alvin who absolutely needs a place to work...like her agency and right now. That is according to Camilla's Father who loves to pick up strays and point them in the right direction.

Mitzi Brochu, a fashion guru with the personality of a shark, turns up dead in her hotel room minutes before Camilla's appointment with her. But who discovers the gruesome body? Camilla's best friend Robin. Robin is taken into custody and grilled by the police until Camilla comes to her rescue and attempts to intervene on her behalf. The best way for Camilla to do this is to become, you guessed it, Robin's lawyer.

Camilla is a fiesty character and likable. She's on the side of the good guys and pays for it in more than threats. As the story developes two sidekicks become part of Camilla's posse. Alvin soon learns the ropes of investigation and super sleuthing from Camilla and earns his right to be a welcomed character in this plot. Mrs. Parnell, Camilla's cantankerous elderly neighbor, wins a spot in my heart as she developes a partnership with our heroine in solving this mystery.

All in all I enjoyed every page of this book. It was interesting with characters that took on a life of their own. I intend to continue reading this series and look forward to the next book in the Camilla MacPhee series.

So glad M.J. Maffini decided to write another series. Highly recommended to all lovers of cozies.
Ellen

Philip says

Good Fun Read! A few flaws but I liked it. The main fault I have that prevented 4 stars is all of Camilla's investigations that are "off camera" and hid in the background leaving the readers uninformed and Camilla the only one with the facts needed to solve the murder. I had the murderer narrowed down to one of two about half way through the book but lacked the clues from Camilla's secret phone calls which enabled her to make the big revelation and not so surprising ending. I find it hard to like books by authors who use this trick of the hidden clue. This fault along with books just stopping with no conclusion and culprits walking away with no justice served are some of the things that automatically make me downrate a book.

It's a bit of a stretch to believe the rather weak motive for the murder, and many of the multitude (too many, perhaps?) of other suspects had much stronger motives for getting rid of Mitzi, but I guess it can be accepted. I don't think Camilla is too smart for walking into dangerous situations with no backup but I liked Alvin a lot. He's not quite up there with Louise Penny's "Ruth Zardo" or Hilary MacLeod's "Jasmine" but pretty good!

The Ottawa setting at Tulip Festival time was great.

I don't think I'll rate Mary Jane Maffini in my short list of favourite female mystery writer's such as Louise Penny, Barbara Fradkin or Hilary MacLeod but I'll, at least, read some more in this series before making a firm decision.

Sandra Holladay says

[(figured the calico was pg right away) (hide spoiler)]

Susan says

2.5 stars

This one ended better than it began but overall it was just OK. The book started with a negative tone and only came up for air once in a while through the rest of the book.

The author seemed to have a pattern of choosing the 'heavier' option in most of her character and plot decisions. E.g. Camilla 'clomps' rather than 'walks'; she dislikes her employee; her friend's family is neurotic, selfish, and unsupportive; her own family is condescending and so much more beautiful than her; her in-laws

leave lots to be desired; her colleague is a terrible driver; and so on, where even the tulips caused Camilla a great deal of annoyance. Tulips?!? This series of choices toward the more negative, 'lowest common denominator' options made the book heavy. Even in the rare moments when, for example, Camilla found herself having a pleasant morning, it was 'taken back' a paragraph or two later by a snarky or sarcastic comment.

I also never really warmed up to the protagonist/narrator. Camilla seemed to deal with life and the people around her with a sarcastic, passive-aggressive manner that was irritating. It also made Camilla seem superficial and false as she was somewhat two-faced to those around her; the reader received Camilla's actual opinions of the person while the other character got her false front. It is difficult to like this sort of personality in a character.

I will not seek out other books in this series. If I happen to come across one while browsing the library shelves, I might sign it out. Then again, I might not.

Debi Emerson says

SPOILER ALERT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I did NOT like this book. In fact, I didn't finish it. I was plowing my way through it because it's against my nature NOT to finish a book. But it was tough going: the author was just trying TOO hard to be cute & quirky; I didn't even much like any of the characters.

Then she killed a cat. Now this may sound petty of me, especially within a mystery which is all about murder, but I can't abide the killing of animals in a book. For any reason. And there was really no good reason for this: the menace it intended to convey could have been done just as easily in countless other ways. I turned to the end to find out "who done it" and moved on to another book.

Won't be reading any more in this series!!

Shonna Froebel says

Camilla MacPhee is a lawyer who runs an organization for victims rights. She has agreed, under pressure from her father, to take on an assistant, Alvin, under a government job training program, but finds herself frustrated with the young man's attitude and work. When her best friend Robin asks to meet her at a nearby hotel, Alvin has misplaced the message, and Camilla finds herself coming into a scene where Robin, obviously in shock, is coming out of a hotel room where someone has been murdered.

With Robin refusing to talk and the police focusing on her, Camilla must figure out herself who might be behind the murder. The murder victim, a catty fashion writer, has no shortage of enemies, but Camilla must figure out motive and opportunity. Camilla is also looking after Robin's six cats while Robin takes refuge at her parents' home.

With lots of Ottawa ambience, an interesting group of suspects, and a twisty plot, this yarn will keep you turning those pages.

Lynn Kennedy says

Not a complicated mystery but I liked it. I really enjoyed that it's set in Ottawa where I live. I will read more by this author.

Melanie says

A good cozy mystery that takes place in Ottawa. Love the cover of this book. :-)

Katherine Clark says

I sort of read this for the Cozy Monograph. Maffini (one of the best selling Canadian mystery writers) came up in one of my searches for info for Ch. 4, and the protagon's profession, that of being an advocate for victims, got me curious, so I checked out the book. Not much was said about the work, which I found disappointing. The crime itself (the puzzle) was OK. I liked the protagonist--she was bristly and assertive, more so than I find in most cozy protags, and that is kind of the point. This isn't a cozy; it is just over the edge, but it isn't. I found by the end of the book, despite my interest in the protag, that I probably won't read the rest of the series. I've got waiting for me at the library her first in another series that looks interesting. I did like her description of Ottawa (though there could have been more of this). Much of what the author discusses was shown to me by Sheila and Tim, so that was fun.

Chelsea says

Cute cozy mystery.
