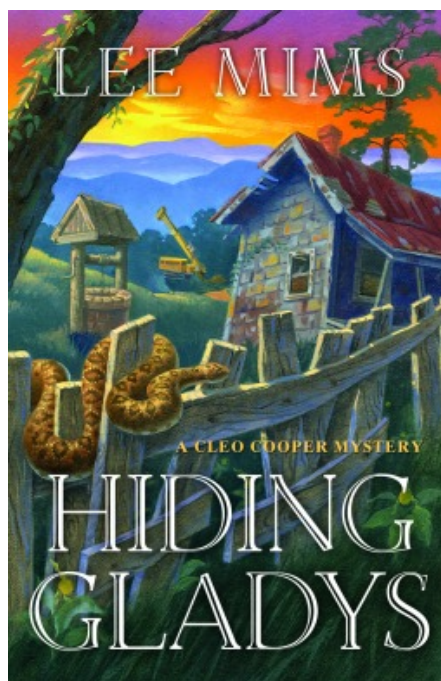




Hiding Gladys

Lee Mims

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A rock fortune inspires family betrayal and murder

Cleo Cooper is either about to strike it rich or lose it all. Discovering a huge and rare granite deposit is a geologist's dream come true. The multi-million dollar quarry deal will also benefit Cleo's friend Gladys Walton, who owns the rural North Carolina property. So what could go wrong? Finding a dead body in Gladys's well, for starters. A hitchhiking rattlesnake and a near-fatal accident during the drill test convinces Cleo that someone is dead set on scaring her--and halting the project. The two likely suspects? Gladys's greedy, grown children, Robert Earle and Shirley, who try every dirty trick in the book to cash in on the granite-rich land. But are they nasty enough to resort to murder?

Between romps with a hot geologist, Cleo devotes every fiber of her being to keeping Gladys safe--and keeping her dream alive.

Hiding Gladys Details

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From Reader Review Hiding Gladys for online ebook

Laura says

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I'm a big fan of mystery, in case I haven't mentioned that already, so when I read the description for Hiding Gladys, I was immediately interested. As far as mysteries go, this one was pretty good. The mystery is interesting and held me captive throughout the book. I truly wanted to know whodunit. I was really invested in the book for that aspect: who was the killer, why were they killing, and where on earth was Gladys?

The writing wasn't blow-me-away, but it was light and fun, and made for a quick and easy read. If I hadn't had things to do, I probably could have finished the whole thing in a day. So, if you're looking for a fun and quick read, this is one to consider.

I do have one complaint though, and that is Cleo Cooper. I found Cleo incredibly grating. She was quick to overreact and yell at other characters for things that really didn't require that sort of a reaction. She seemed spoiled and whiny and didn't think. I understand that she was supposed to come across as impulsive and reckless, but I just felt that Cleo's personality was handled so poorly that she comes across as abrasive and rude.

Overall, I liked the book, the mystery was captivating and I was really invested in finding out who the killer was, and despite my complaints about Cleo, I wanted to keep reading. Again, if you're looking for a quick and easy read, this book is for you.

Hecate says

Provided by JKSCommunications for an honest review

I've always loved a good mystery. I love the thrill I get when trying to figure out the plot of a story, who the real antagonists were, and what else could possibly go wrong. That is one of the reasons I'd originally agreed to read this book.

Despite my initial excitement, as I read the book, I found that it was alright. In all honesty, I was more interested in the plot than the actual protagonist. Upon realizing that Cleo was an older woman, I was confused. Her thoughts and actions - and sometimes her diction - reflected someone significantly younger. I found myself skimming over "Cleo-centric" paragraphs and chapters just so I could focus the majority of my attention on the actual plot of the story.

While exciting in some points, I thought the plot was fairly predictable. I would've preferred if something outrageous happened like Gladys was behind everything, upset that she'd signed over her land and missed out on a fortune - or something like that. Alas, that was not the case and the whole "Who did it" speculation slowly transformed into more of a "well it was obviously them" kind of thing.

The writing wasn't bad; however, I believe that they Mims could have dug deeper into the plot and transformed it into something very exciting.

I'm not saying it was a bad book, I can see how and why some people would like it. Unfortunately it was an okay book for me.

Ed says

#1 in the Cleo Cooper series. This debut novel starts clumsily with an encounter with a never explained rattlesnake bringing central characters together. Once the author gets into the flow of things, the writing smooths out - although I found our protagonists description of post coital muscle aches to be cringe inducing. The protagonist is a female 45 year old field geologist working in coastal North Carolina, so the author gets credit for avoiding stereotypes. Coincidences are necessary, I suppose, to get all the material you want into a relatively short novel. The denouement was very satisfactory and I look forward to the next novel in the series, *Trusting Viktor* (2014).

Cleo Cooper series - Discovering a granite deposit of epic proportions is geologist Cleo Cooper's dream come true. Not only will she be famous for discovering the easternmost deposit in the United States, she'll also be rich. And so will Gladys Walton, the owner of the rural North Carolina property that sits atop the bounty of valuable rock. When Gladys goes missing and a murder victim turns up in the well, Cleo works extra hard to keep her test drilling above board and on schedule. But a near-fatal accident convinces Cleo that someone is dead set on killing her, too. With support from a hot fellow geologist, Cleo races against the clock before another body is found and her dreams of fame and fortune are crushed.

Betsy Hover says

I was delighted to receive this book thru GoodReads Giveaways!

The mystery is interesting and held me captive throughout the book. I was really invested in finding out who the killer was in this mytery, however I was not impressed with the character Cleo Cooper.

I would recommend this book on the pure basis of a mystery read.

Leah says

<http://theprettygoodgatsby.wordpress....>

I love my cozies. There's something so fun about curling up on the couch with a cup of tea and discovering the identity of the murderer. I was ecstatic about receiving a copy of *Hiding Gladys* the first in a new series, and couldn't wait to jump in.

Cleo Cooper is a geologist. Super cool. She discovered a bed of granite on Gladys Walton's property and its excavation will make both women fabulously rich. Unfortunately for Cleo, a dead body is discovered and maybe that rattlesnake didn't find its way into her Jeep on its own. Add in two horrible spoiled still-living-at-

home children, an ex-husband (who doesn't want to be entirely out of the picture), and a promising new relationship and you've got the makings of a great story.

The characters in *Hiding Gladys* were great. Robert Earle and Shirley, Gladys's adult children are absolute monsters. They grew up never having to lift a finger and expect things to remain that way. Naturally the giant check their mother is about to receive has them drooling. Nash is a fellow geologist and although Cleo had been on a date or two with him in the past, nothing more developed. That's not to say they wouldn't love to give things another shot, however. Cleo's ex-husband Bud hasn't yet grasped the idea of the ex part and still insists on coming around to her house. Unfortunately, Cleo's own children, Henri and Will, were a bit lacking. I couldn't get a good feel for the two apart from a few basic points the book told me.

As for the story, it was fun! It dragged a bit at times, but once the action started I was hooked. Looking back, I should have realized who the bad guy was, but while reading, I was totally absorbed and thought for sure it was someone else.

While I enjoyed *Hiding Gladys*, I have to say I had a hard time relating to the characters. Cleo's 23-year old daughter owns a boat. How someone younger than me could afford their own boat - and it was a fairly large one, not some dinky canoe - is beyond me. Also, my eyes nearly jumped out of their sockets when Cleo went to the bank for a **\$4 million** loan. Who knew becoming a geologist could be so lucrative.

Apart from a few minor issues, I did enjoy *Hiding Gladys*, though I'm still debating whether or not to continue with the series.

Melody says

This is my first-ever cozy mystery. I suspected I wouldn't like it. I told the nice woman handing out the ARCs of this at the ALA booth that I was quite sure this wasn't my thing. It was early on at the conference, though, and I hadn't quite perfected my stony but cheery "Not my thing, thanks!" dismissal. So I took this, and since I took it, I felt an obligation to read it.

I can confirm that this is SO not my thing. As the publisher mentioned, the protagonist is not a typical gumshoe, but is a geologist by trade. Sadly, she's also got an ex-husband with whom she's not quite finished, and a slightly sinister handsome gentleman caller. There are bodies, there are many drinks, there are old women with gumption, there are oh, so many things I am bored with.

I didn't find the writing style particularly engaging. There was so much telling. So much. People were always sitting in wingback chairs, or drinking Jack Daniel's Black Label whiskey.

I don't feel qualified to select stars for the cozy mystery lovers, but I can say that for me it was a one-star sort of book.

Next ALA, I'm perfecting my "NO THANK YOU" stance well in advance.

Brenda Rumsey says

This is the first Lee Mims book that I have read and I truly enjoyed it. It was so much fun watching Cleo as she tried to brush all the bad events aside as coincidences until there was no denying the facts...someone was

trying to kill Gladys and she could become collateral damage. Cleo is a smart, strong character trying to make her dream come true in a job that is dominated by men. One of her strengths is that she "cares" about people and would really like to trust them, but when Gladys keeps disappearing and accidents keep slowing down her team of workers, even she couldn't deny that time was running out. A fun read. I will definitely be watching for Lee's next book.

Lovey Dovey Books says

Cleo Cooper, divorced mother of two and geologist turned amateur sleuth, rocks in Lee Mims' debut mystery. Action, drama, and science has never come together quite so entertainingly as in *Hiding Gladys*.

Hiding Gladys begins with a bang when Cleo's caught on the road with a rattle snake slinking through her jeep as she's heading towards her latest job. She's found granite on her friend Gladys Walton's land and is expecting a big payout if her testing results are conclusive. While setting the land up for testing, Cleo stumbles across a dead body. Investigation begins and the hunt for Gladys, an important key to this twisted mystery who seems to have disappeared, ensues.

Mims keeps her readers in suspense, but the story keeps moving. While Cleo sorts out whether Gladys' rotten children are trying to remove their mother from the picture, she's either working on the land or working to avoid her ex-husband, Bud. She'd rather rely on fellow geologist and ex-army ranger, Nash, to get her out of a jam. Along the way she keeps her eyes peeled for clues and answers to the questions forming the big picture.

Geology isn't the first subject you'd expect in mystery, but Mims makes it work. The explanations of Cleo's work is far from humdrum, but intriguing substance to fill the story's atmosphere. The one thing that was hard to imagine was this 45 year old woman running around and fulfilling some very physical scenes. It helped that her field has made her used to such activeness, but I couldn't help slipping up and imagining her as a spry 29 year old, at least.

The first Cleo Cooper Mystery is a charming mystery, one that you would do well to get a hold of as soon as possible! A little humor draws you into Cleo's life and that of her family, even giving *Hiding Gladys* a cozy aura.

Book provided in exchange for an honest review

Also posted on Lovey Dovey Books

Ruth Hill says

Sometimes it is really tough to know what rating to give a book. And this one happens to be one of those books. This is the first book I have ever read by Lee Mims, and it was easy to tell that she knew about geology. She added in plenty of details, and her writing style was very readable. In fact, there was never a dull moment. And even though the reader is pretty sure about who is involved, I have to say that the author put in a twist I didn't see coming.

What I appreciated about Cleo (and Gladys) was that they are older women who do not slow down! Okay, so I'm not 40 yet, but I'm getting there. I love the fact that these women show that age is truly just a number. I love the fact that authors are writing more than YA and 20-something romances.

Speaking of romance, I found it ingenious that the author has Cleo still attracted to her ex. And since this is a series, I hope to see these two again! I would love to see more romance between them. They can stay out of the bedroom--I would prefer that. But thankfully the author gives her characters privacy in the bedroom. I could do without the profanity as well, but again, that is just personal preference.

I have chosen to give the book a five star rating. While I would have loved for this to have been a cozy mystery (no profanity, no sex, a fuzzy and warm plot), it is well written and a mystery where the bad guys get their due and lives go on the way they should. And it is a quick read. I would certainly come back for the next installment.

I was sent a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review. I was not financially compensated, and all opinions are 100 percent mine.

Ivyd says

Cleo Cooper is set to realize every geologist's dream. She's discovered a huge and rare granite deposit under her friend Gladys Walton's land; however, someone doesn't want Cleo and Gladys to reap the rewards.

HIDING GLADYS is a wonderful debut with a distinctly Southern heroine, of a certain age, aided and abetted by an excellent supporting cast. Cleo's age was a big plus for me. Sometimes you get a bit tired of bright young things and want someone with attitude based on living experience, ensuring she can back up that sass. Cleo Cooper is your quintessential well rounded Southern girl. She can tromp through the woods, handle a gun, hang with the fellas, drive the hell out of a boat, hold her own in a fight when necessary, and clean up to reveal a beautiful, sexy, intelligent woman who isn't averse to using her feminine wiles. In addition to these stellar attributes Cleo also brings to the table a large slice of "bound and damn determined" combined with a heaping helping of hardheaded, just to keep things interesting and others on their toes, dontcha know. It was the hardheaded that made me want to pinch her occasionally, but sadly I understood it too

Cleo is ably assisted and abetted by Bud, her ex husband. I flat out adored Bud. He doesn't mind admitting when he's wrong & he still loves Cleo. He's also shaping up to be a great friend making Cleo one lucky woman.

There are her children, daughter Henri, and son, William.

Stick, Mule and Joe are the crew Cleo works with while endeavoring to prove her suspicions of what's beneath Gladys's land. They're great guys.

Nash Finley, handsome and sexy fellow geologist that Cleo dated briefly. Should his reappearance be likened to the proverbial bad penny?

Robert Earle and Shirley are Gladys's pitiful excuses for children. Sorry doesn't even begin to describe these two. Not a redeeming quality between them, poor Gladys.

Finally there's Gladys herself. What a trooper. They don't come much feistier than Gladys, even when she discovers the painful truth of the Shakespearean quote, "How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is to have a thankless child."

HIDING GLADYS manages to make geology interesting. Well, maybe not the nuts and bolts of geology, but the results of it. Who knew? From natural gas stores to whopping granite mountains, there's definitely enough money to kill people for. Rattlesnakes to dangerous boat rides and plenty in between, Cleo has her hands full trying to survive, keep Gladys safe, and figure out who is behind these attempts on their lives. I know I'll never look at yucca bushes the same again.

HIDING GLADYS is a solid debut featuring an interesting, charming cast and possessing a strong sense of place and culture. I can't wait to see what Cleo and crew gets up to next.

Reviewed by IvyD for Manic Readers

Linden says

Geologist Cleo Cooper seems to have located a large deposit of granite not far from her home, promising to give her financial security. However, the children of Gladys, under whose land the granite rests, are anxious to talk Gladys into letting them take charge of their inheritance before her death--instead of selling it to Cleo.

The story includes much interesting information about a geologist's profession along the way of unraveling the mystery.

For grades 8 and up

Lia Burres says

My husband's review:

ok story goes like this,a geoligist named cleo cooper made a very profitable find on a large lot of land owned by a woman named gladys granite worth millions.she has an ironclad agreement to survey and eventually mine the material,seems simple huh,not quite she has a nasty suprise in her jeep as she is heading out to the farm a rattle snake,in a effort to seek help she runs into not one but two saviors,Nash Finley a smart nice geoelist who has delt with her in the past and seems to be very interested in her and Bud her ex-husband who also seems to want her back,her loyal dog Tulip is always by her side.after the incident when she heads back to the farm everything is not so easy as it seems,gladys is missing and her children are set to have her leave immediatly,undaunted by their threats and so called proof they have a power of attorney signed by their mother saying they now own the property.cleo starts about her business to survey the property aided by her workers known as stick and mule,but the job is more dangerous than it could ever be almost shot by an unknown person,a bridge giving way almost killing her and their crew and falling in a well to discover a body at the bottom.is it gladys or not,nash keeps showing up as well as bud worry about her safety.but as things keep unfolding she wonders who is responsible for the body at the well who can she trust and who is out to kill her,and most of all where is gladys?

Harry Krebs says

HIDING GLADYS by Lee Mims is the author's first entry in the Cleo Cooper mystery series. Cooper, a geologist by trade, has entered into a mineral rights agreement with Gladys Walton, a woman in her seventies. When Cleo begins the operation to test drill the land in question, mysterious events begin to take place—accidents, a human body discovered, and both Gladys and her housekeeper cannot be found.

Did the human remains belong to her elderly friend, Gladys? Are Gladys's leach-like children behind the mysterious occurrences, or is there something deeper and more sinister going on?

I found the story interesting and fast paced with the characters well developed. The characters were appropriately likable or despicable. Cleo, herself, was presented humanly with her own minor faults and character flaws giving way to somewhat questionable personal relationships. I highly recommend this book.

Raelyn Falkin says

The Writing: For a debut novel, this is rather well done. The writing was short, sweet and to the point without losing the necessary descriptive detail. I enjoyed that it was also easy to read and made for a perfect fast read.

The Plot: I was intrigued by this geological mystery when I first heard about Hiding Gladys. What would have been nice was a less obvious plot twist. I had inklings near the middle of the novel and wasn't too surprised about the mind behind all the shenanigans. I think I would have enjoyed this better if it had kept me more on my toes.

The Characters: Most of the focus is on the protagonist, Cleo Cooper. Problem with that, though, is I didn't like her very much. She seemed nice at first but then I started to notice that she didn't really act her age. She's in her mid forties with children in their twenties, and yet she acts like a whiny teenager some times. I didn't really make sense to me. I also didn't like how she claimed to be all gun ho about strong independent women and not needing a man, but when the going got tough she would look to a man. And then near the end she just made some really stupid decisions that had me face palming.

Overall: Despite Cleo grating on my nerves, I did enjoy this book quite a bit. I liked the mystery (even if it wasn't too hard to figure out) and enjoyed the action within. I found it to be a wonderful 'I feel like reading a mystery this afternoon' type of novel. You know those late afternoons or evenings when you want to read a short and sweet mystery with a delicious glass of wine (or beer or chocolate milk if that fits your fancy). I would definitely read book two should the occasion arise.

Susan says

When I finished this book, I let out a deep sigh, blinked, and immediately looked around for the next Cleo Cooper mystery. Alas, there is not one. Yet. Though I have heard there is potentially another in the making. Lee Mims, take all the time you need to do your craft. I can wait for excellence. Simply, I thoroughly enjoyed this cozy mystery and I want more. This book didn't try to outreach itself and kept the story line simple, fun, and engaging. One of the main things I appreciated about it was the protagonist Cleo. She knows what she wants and goes for it, in business, in recreation, and in bed.

If I have to chat about the faults of this book, which were few and minor and didn't detract from my enjoyment, then I will. There are 2 handguns used by Cleo in this book, a Beretta and a Glock. However, she used some slang (baby 9) and I occasionally thought she was talking about the Glock and then later thought she was referring to the Beretta. So, if you are a handgun aficionado this discrepancy would probably stand out for you like it did for me. Also, there is one scene where our heroine shoots in a darkened house at someone she believes is a bad guy, which folks might question for all sorts of safety reasons – you can't really tell if there is a third party or not in the house and shooting gives away your position quite well. And that's all I got for flaws. Yep.

I liked the use of wildlife, nature, and a pet dog throughout the book to give the main characters depth. The

minor conflict between Cleo and her ex-husband (he wants her back, the kids want her to go back to him) was intriguing; Cleo is quite good at setting her boundaries and still having a friendly, even friendly with benefits, relationship with her ex-husband. Cleo also has a snarky sense of humor – in particular there was a certain 9 inch joke during a boat chase that had me groaning and laughing at the same time. All in all, I am looking forward to the sequel coming out and seeing what other trouble Cleo can get into and out of. And I nearly forgot about the frogmore stew! I bet some of you wish I had – hehe!
