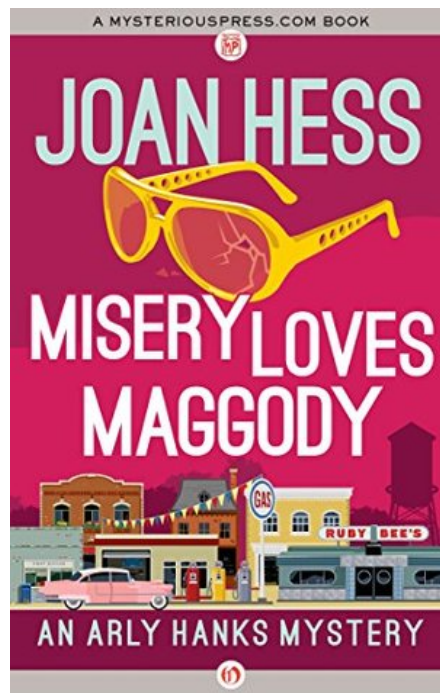




Misery Loves Maggody

Joan Hess

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The madcap citizens of Maggody, Arkansas, descend on Graceland, and a bizarre murder mystery forces police chief Arly Hanks to pay homage to the King.

When Chief of Police Arly Hanks came home to Maggody, Arkansas, after a bad divorce, she thought life here would be simpler than it was in New York City. But it's been one insane episode after another, and the latest eruption of chaos may just drive poor Arly around the bend. After all, Maggody is more than a town; it's a state of mind—and that mind is a bit deranged.

When Arly's mother, Ruby Bee Hanks, and a few fanatics leave town on a pilgrimage to Graceland, Arly hopes for a few days of peace and quiet. But before you can say, "Blue Suede Shoes," one of the Elvis enthusiasts has been found dead, and the Memphis police are flummoxed by the tourists' unique brand of crazy. Arly will have to solve the murder herself because, as she knows all too well, it's not insane—it's Maggody.

The people of Maggody love having a tacky good time, and Elvis-lovers know that there's nowhere tackier, or more fun, than Graceland, Tennessee. The madmen of Maggody should fit right in.

Misery Loves Maggody is the 11th book in the Arly Hanks Mysteries, but you may enjoy reading the series in any order.

Misery Loves Maggody Details

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From Reader Review Misery Loves Maggody for online ebook

Cornerofmadness says

I think that when you see a tons of reviews on the cover saying how funny something is it sets you up, maybe unfairly. This was literally the most unfunny thing I've ever read that was meant to BE funny. At best, Arly Hanks, chief of Maggody, is mean spirited bordering on cruel. Granted I haven't read much of this series so maybe it would have helped if I knew the characters better but as it was, there isn't a jack one of them I want to know better. I found them all dim witted and misogynistic except maybe Arly herself.

Arly's mother Ruby Bee and her friend, Estelle (not that you could tell they were friends in this, that's how mean they were to each other), go on a cut-rate tour following Elvis's footsteps. While they're gone, Arly is busy with a fundamentalist Christian preacher who thinks Satanists are breaking in and using his church (and wants nothing to do with a woman who dares to have a job) and is called on to run interference between two Buchanons as the new mom seems to have postpartum depression. By the way neither of these two things have a damn thing to do with the main crime. Again maybe I would have cared if I knew the players better but as it was, it was a major distraction from the main plot.

Speaking of which, the main plot resolves around Ruby Bee and Estelle on the world's worst Elvis tour and takes nearly 100 pages to show up. One of the people on their tour seems to suicide off a hotel balcony but the local sheriff, Sanderson, believes it was murder and he thinks it was Jim Bob, Maggody's mayor who was at the hotel-casino to meet his mistress who was on the tour. In the mean time, Ruby Bee falls seriously ill and is hospitalized bringing Arly into the picture. As much as she doesn't like Jim Bob, Arly doesn't believe he could be a murderer and even when she's attacked for something in her mother's room, Japonica, the deputy, won't even believe her in spite knowing Arly's a police officer.

Everyone seems very incompetent from the villains to the police. In fact, they're at the level of bad at their job I expect in a cozy where the amateur has to step in and take over because of the incompetence. Between the alternating points of view (Arly's in first, everyone else in third) dealing with aspects of the story not relating to the crime, characters I don't care about and a wisp thin plot, I only gave this a second star in deference to it's a long running series with people who found some merit in it. I did not.

Rita says

Good dialogue. Story had potential, but lacked something. Didn't keep my interest.

Anna says

I randomly picked up this book at a used bookstore, having never read any other books in this series or by Joan Hess. All characters were well fleshed out and I even if I was missing out some backstories from the earlier 10 books, it did not distract from the main story. I found the book funny, a bit caricaturish in its humour; the author came across as having fun with her characters. Not a traditional "whodunit" in a sense that the crime came later in the plot. Fast moving summer read!

Kathy says

This was a reread, of sorts, meaning I listened to it on audio. The narrator was not convincing voicing characters living in Arkansas and Mississippi, but otherwise I enjoyed it. Hess's sense of humor isn't for everyone, but folks who grew up in small towns anywhere in the US will find themselves laughing out loud at some of the antics. All the loose ends were neatly tied up, even those back in Maggody, and the solution to the murders had a nice twist.

Nancy Cook-senn says

Denizens of Maggody go on a bus tour to Graceland and a Tunica casino where Ruby Bee falls ill and others endure murder, drug dealer chases, Mayor Jim Bob getting thrown in jail and escaping, Bro. Verber getting drunk, and Kevin in drag looking for an errant Dahlia who has been gambling their money away.

Lyn says

There's not an attractive character in this book, not even the snarky "heroine". It is trying so hard to be funny by making fun of everyone and every thing that it made me not care about a single blessed soul. As a mystery the characters were so stupid or self-involved that no one bothers to ask the right questions. I would not have finished this book except that I was listening to it on CD on a long trip. When I lost a good radio station, I would come back to it. My annoyance kept me awake.

Adrienne Testa says

This series is a no thinking, sit on the beach book. Some people might be offended by the stereotypical deep southern character portrayals... Ms. Hess has gotten them down to a tee, the characters remind me of Larry the Cable guy and Jeff Foxworthy stories. Estelle the trouble maker, sneaking into the men's room at the casino and grabbing the arm of a senator urinating was amusing. Jim Bob the mayor arrested for murder of his mistress. Jim Bob's holier than thou Christian wife and the small town southern preacher are amusing. The preacher watching the talk shows as he sips the wine and spends the day in his bathroom under the guise of research for a sermon is amusing. Kevin following his wife dressed as a woman in a car he stole is amusing. The story.... a trip to Graceland and areas Elvis spent time in was not the greatest or most interesting story but the characters are amusing. This series isn't for everyone, but it is decent and a quick read.

Lesley Looper says

I listened to the CD version of this book in the car. Although I've read and enjoyed several other Joan Hess books, I never did take to this one. I thought Arly could've been a stronger character, either in the goings on in the hotel, or with her hospitalized mother. I can't say I really liked or sympathized with any of the characters in this one.

Carol says

I listened to this book and the reader made several of the voices grating to my ear, I would have enjoyed the book more if I had read it instead of listening. Police Chief Arly Hanks' mom and a friend go on a Graceland tour and then people start to die and mom ends up in the hospital and her friend cause all kinds of trouble. Will the two of them make it back home in one piece???

Brandon Kurtich says

This was a good book in the series, but definitely not Hess's strongest. There was a lot lacking, mostly due to the fact that this barely takes place in Maggody at all. Hopefully the next one will return ALL the characters, especially Raz and Marjorie.

Melisa says

Not terrible, but none of the characters were likable, and the mystery wasn't very interesting or hard to figure out. Being from the south, I am frequently disappointed in books about the south. This was no exception. I am from MS and I can guarantee you that most people there have ordinary names. In this book, the characters are named ridiculous things like Jim Bob, Ruby Bee, and Cherry Lucinda. There was not a single person in the whole book with an ordinary name. I spent most of the book being annoyed at the characters, since I figured out the mystery so early on.

Terri says

If you've never read a Maggody story, you need to read one. They are funny. I think they could also be satirical because of the people and setting is soooo over the line. People shop at Jim Bob's Supersaver Buy 4 Less, owned by the womanizing Jim Bob Buchanan, whose wife is very sanctimonious. The Sheriff sometimes carries her gun, but she only has 3 bullets, one man goes everywhere with his pig, and the Buchanan clan is numerous and colorfully named, (Diesel, Petrol, Idalupino for starters. They all live in Maggody, and 'town' of about 750 citizens and while 'nothing ever happens in Maggody, there always seems to be something going on.

Karen Cowgill says

Funny as all get out! Still a very good read and well worth it! She is a very good author and her Arly books are great!

Rosemary says

enjoyed this one

Helaine says

If you want a good laugh in a read, don't miss this Arly Hanks Mystery series. But do start with the first book in the series so you get the whole scoop on the various residents of Maggody.
