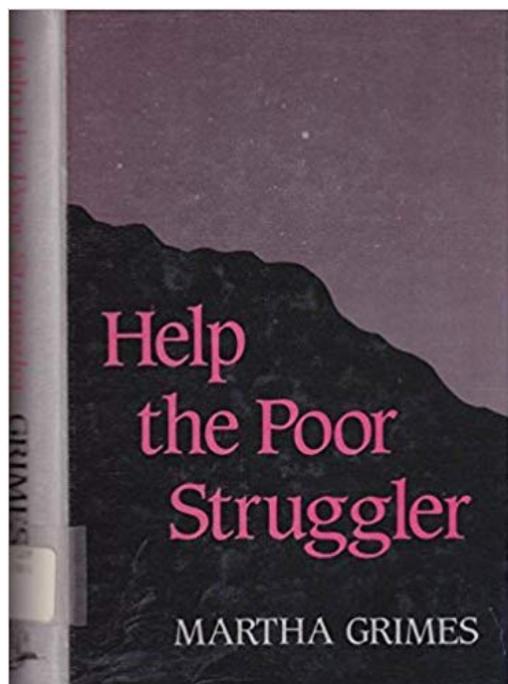


## Help the poor struggler *by* Martha Grimes



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Book by Grimes, Martha



## Reviews of the *Help the poor struggler by* Martha Grimes

**Fordg**

Whenever I need a break from more serious reading, there are a few authors that I know I can depend on to entertain me without taxing my poor brain too much. Martha Grimes is one. I have thoroughly enjoyed acquainting myself with her series of Inspector Richard Jury mysteries over the past year. This is only the seventh in the series that now runs to twenty-three books at last count, so it's likely that I have a few more years of fun reading ahead of me - unless I decide to do a Grimes readathon and finish up in a hurry. Nah, I'd rather spread the pleasure out.

Help the Poor Struggler is another of those strangely named British pubs that Grimes takes for her titles. This one is located in Dartmoor, haunt of that long-ago Hound, and is a particularly hardscrabble example of the genre. But it is favored by the District Superintendent/Commander

Macalvie of the police. Both Macalvie and the pub feature prominently in this story.

It begins with the murder of a young woman in the area some twenty years before. She was stabbed to death in a house where her five-year-old daughter was present and perhaps saw the crime. Afterwards the child lapses into a catatonic state and is unable to answer questions. Ultimately, a young medical student is convicted of the crime and sent to prison, but Constable Brian Macalvie who investigated the case is convinced that he is innocent.

Fast forward to the present. Three young children have been killed in villages around Dartmoor where Brian Macalvie is now the commander. He is sure that these crimes are somehow related to that old murder, which, in his mind, was never solved. Coincidentally, that young medical student who was convicted of it has recently been released from prison and is in the area. His favorite pub is Help the Poor Struggler.

Inspector Jury of Scotland Yard is sent to Dartmoor to help with the investigation. He is not welcomed with open arms by the arrogant Macalvie, but they establish a grudging (on Macalvie's part) working relationship. On the other hand, Macalvie immediately bonds with Sgt. Wiggins, who provides him with a steady supply of Fisherman's Friend lozenges. Macalvie is trying to quit smoking, which doesn't improve his temper.

At length we meet Grimes' latest in her precocious child creations: Lady Jessica, a ten-year-old orphaned heiress who lives with her mysterious uncle and an ever-changing series of governesses, along with a constant estate staff and her dog Henry. Jessica's main goal in life is to ensure that her very attractive uncle does not marry. Jury's intuition tells him that this child may be in danger - that she may be slated to be the next victim.

I was just about halfway through the book and wondering why Melrose Plant had not yet made an appearance. I need not have feared! Jury calls on him to deploy as his undercover agent at Ashcroft, the estate where Jessica and her uncle live, to observe what is happening there, keep an eye on Jessica and report back. In the end, he plays an important part in giving Jury the clue that cracks the mystery.

As usual with Grimes, this was a quick and pleasant read with attractive characters and an interesting plot. Macalvie, in particular, was a quirky and intriguing creation. I wonder if we will see anything further of him, or was he just a one-off? I confess to rather liking him and would be happy to see him in later books.

### **Kelerana**

As usual, Martha Grimes comes through with a very readable mystery featuring Inspector Richard Jury and his friend Melrose Plant. Set in the vicinity of Dartmoor, the book deals with a series of murders of small children. Fearful that another small child, Jessica, a very wealthy orphan with a classic automobile lover as her uncle and guardian. There is the photographer with may not be what she seems, a new and pretty governess, and a strange will which may have set off the murders. Also as usual, Grimes' book title comes from an inn called Help the Poor Struggler. Recommended for all readers who enjoy a well-crafted mystery.

### **Azago**

It's another book, with another cop making psychic leaps and jumps about a crime that is connected, without any kind of fact or proof. Most of the characters are well drawn and interesting. And it has plenty of twists and turns. And strings left untied or not well tied. Once again, the poor girls and

what she does to and with them.

### **Not-the-Same**

. I really like the Jury novels, it's a bit above average. there is a little more character development, not much tho. the new characters are a little tedious. the mystery nothing to write home about. follows the same formula, which is fine but needs good characters and development, not to mention a fine mystery to hang together. pretty much have to read to follow the series.

### **Leceri**

If only she would write another book. I'm re-reading her "Emma" books for the third time and this is after I read all of the Richard Jury mysteries. Sigh!

### **Dianantrius**

Bought this book for my wife who reads a lot of M. Grimes. She likes them. So, good idea!

### **Moze1**

This book isn't a bad book, it's just juggling too many things- too many characters, too many locales, too many plot diversions. Because of this, the mystery gets diluted, and the story doesn't move along at a quick enough pace.

However, it is an interesting psychological study, and Grimes has a nice style reminiscent of Dashiell Hammett the sarcastic hard-boiled kind of detective.

I like the mystery novel, but am also confused by more than several pages throughout the book which appear in symbolic type, making those pages impossible to read. This creates gaps in portions of the novel. I have not had this issue before with Kindle downloads and am surprised at its happening. I don't know if or how this could be fixed.

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