



## Pawing Through the Past: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery

By Rita Mae Brown

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"You'll never get old."

Each member of the class of 1980 has received the letter. Mary Minor "Harry" Haristeen, who is on the organizing committee for Crozet High's twentieth reunion, decides to take it as a compliment. Others think it's a joke.

But Mrs. Murphy senses trouble. And the sly tiger cat is soon proven right ... when the class womanizer turns up dead with a bullet between his eyes. Then another note followed by another murder makes it clear that someone has waited twenty years to take revenge.

While Harry tries to piece together the puzzle, it's up to Mrs. Murphy and her animal pals to sniff out the truth. And there isn't much time. Mrs. Murphy is the first to realize that Harry has been chosen Most Likely to Die, and if she doesn't hurry, Crozet High's twentieth reunion could be Harry's last.

*From the Paperback edition.*

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## **Pawing Through the Past: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery** By Rita Mae Brown Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #157510 in eBooks
- Published on: 2004-03-30
- Released on: 2004-03-30
- Format: Kindle eBook

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

When a mystery author claims her cat as coauthor, it's a fairly safe bet that the team won't be producing disturbing psychological thrillers or hard-edged legal procedurals. And indeed, Rita Mae Brown and her cat, Sneaky Pie, have carved out a comfortable niche for themselves in the cozy category, spinning tales (*Rest in Pieces*; *Murder, She Meowed*; *Cat on the Scent*) around the goings-on in Crozet, a small Virginia town where everyone knows everyone else and recipes and gossip are exchanged over the post office counter. Mary Minor Haristeen ("Harry") is Crozet's postmistress and the proud owner of two cats, Mrs. Murphy and Pewter, and one corgi, Tee Tucker--animals with an uncanny ability to sniff out secrets and hidden motives as well as mice and roast beef.

*Pawing Through the Past* capitalizes on the myriad subtle relationships that form the backbone of small-town culture, and which Brown and Sneaky Pie have carefully woven throughout the Mrs. Murphy series. In a nicely appropriate nod to that culture's rivalries and alliances, Brown has chosen a high school reunion--traditional hotbed of simmering unease--as her *mise-en-scène*. When each member of the Crozet High Class of 1980 receives an anonymous note stating, "You'll never get old," most take it as a joke or a compliment. But when the class womanizer turns up with a bullet between his eyes, and more notes--and more bodies--start appearing, Harry and her menagerie find themselves at the center of a revenge plot 20 years in the making.

Brown's latest is replete with the sly asides that have endeared her to animal lovers--"Cats are by instinct and inclination dedicated anarchists"--and with the naively humorous "conversations" between the animals themselves. When Pewter, watching a team of police officers wrestling a stiff corpse out of a dumpster, wonders, "Why don't they just break his arms and legs?" Murphy replies knowingly, "They'd pass out. Humans are touchy about their dead." Unfortunately, these favorable attributes can't quite mask an incoherent plot, nor Brown's awkwardly pompous social commentary: "By and large, the women looked better than the men, testimony to the cultural pressure for women to fuss over themselves." But Brown's legions of fans will doubtlessly forgive these shortcomings, concentrating instead on the antics of a memorable four-legged and furry trio. --*Kelly Flynn*

#### From Publishers Weekly

Mary Minor "Harry" Haristeen and her intrepid trio of animal sleuths are back for an eighth--and winsome--adventure (following *Cat on the Scent*). Harry, postmistress of seemingly bucolic Crozet, Va., and her classmates are excited about their upcoming 20th high school reunion. They share bittersweet memories of that time when everything seemed possible, as preparations proceed to welcome back far-flung classmates. But it quickly becomes apparent that one person's memories are only bitter: weeks before the celebration, each classmate receives an anonymous letter reading, "You'll never get old." The class Casanova then gets a bullet between the eyes; more threatening letters follow. While the humans involved argue, dither and try to figure out what's behind the murderous rage turning their reunion into a killing ground, Mrs. Murphy, Pewter and Tee Tucker (Harry's sage tiger cat, plump gray cat and Welsh corgi, respectively) conduct their own investigation. Brown's appealing sense of humor, well-constructed setting and competent plotting carry the day. Her talking, thinking animals are funny and, for those who like this sort of thing, even adorable. Illus. by Itoko Maeno. (May)

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From [Booklist](#)

Apparently eight's the charm for Rita Mae Brown and her cat, Sneaky Pie, whose latest adventure just may be the best in this long-running series. Did Brown read reviews or hear complaints from fans about her last effort, *Cat on the Scent*? Whatever the reason, she has toned the corny elements way down this time around. Yes, the animals still talk, as they always do, but here the comments of Mrs. Murphy and Pewter (the cats) and Tee Tucker (the dog) are used judiciously, and Brown wisely avoids having them drive cars or perform other far-fetched antics. Happily, endearing protagonist Mary Minor "Harry" Harristeen, the thirtysomething, no-nonsense farmer who runs the post office in tiny Crozet, Virginia, takes center stage. As she plans the twentieth high-school reunion of Crozet High's class of 1980, Harry finds herself pondering various emotional issues, including her feelings for her ex-husband, Fair. Soon introspection turns to action as several of Harry's male classmates are shot. Brown delivers more information about Crozet "regulars" than she has in previous installments, adding spice to the story and fueling our curiosity about which one of these folksy characters could be a killer. Fans of cat mysteries will be happy to discover that Brown has returned to form. *Jenny McLarin*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Ellen Jones:**

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? E-book is very important thing for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that reserve has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They may be reading whatever they have because their hobby is actually reading a book. Why not the person who don't like reading a book? Sometime, individual feel need book after they found difficult problem or perhaps exercise. Well, probably you should have this *Pawing Through the Past: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery*.

#### **Judith Smith:**

Now a day folks who Living in the era where everything reachable by connect with the internet and the resources within it can be true or not need people to be aware of each data they get. How people have to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Reading a book can help individuals out of this uncertainty Information particularly this *Pawing Through the Past: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery* book since this book offers you rich data and knowledge. Of course the details in this book hundred per-cent guarantees there is no doubt in it everybody knows.

#### **Michelle Favors:**

*Pawing Through the Past: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery* can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. We all recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that could increase your knowledge in words, easy to understand, bit entertaining but nonetheless delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort to put every word into enjoyment arrangement in writing *Pawing Through the Past: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery* however doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest as well as based confirm resource details that maybe you can be one of it. This great information may drawn you into fresh stage of crucial considering.

**Charles Parker:**

Within this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability to do something more are more important than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you should do is just spending your time not very much but quite enough to enjoy a look at some books. On the list of books in the top list in your reading list is definitely Pawing Through the Past: A Mrs. Murphy Mystery. This book which is qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking way up and review this reserve you can get many advantages.

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