

Title: The Hanged Man's Noose: A Glass Dolphin Mystery

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By James W. Bond

The Hanged Man's Noose

Judy Penz Sheluk

Barking Rain Press

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Small towns in mystery novels tend to be full of darkish secrets courtesy of their often colourfully-named denizens. Lount's Landing – "about ninety minutes northeast of Toronto" – is no exception, although it is drawn rather better than most.

And that is courtesy of Judy Penz Sheluk.

The Hanged Man's Noose is Judy's first novel and your reviewer is, for one, glad that it promises to be but the first in a series; its full title is *The Hanged Man's Noose: A Glass Dolphin Mystery, Book 1*.

You may be asking why *From the Shelf* is reviewing a novel rather than, say, the latest manual on collecting early nineteenth-century promenade concert posters or the current price guide concerning colonial New Netherlands pressed glass. It's because Lount's Landing is home to The Glass Dolphin, an antiques shop we'd all love to visit, but can only do so by delving into this book.

Okay, it's also because Judy is a terrific writer who has spent much of her professional career working the corners and main stages of the antiques world. Not least

in her CV are her past editorship of *Antique and Collectible Showcase* (the purchase of which led to *The Upper Canadian* becoming *The Upper Canadian Antique Showcase* prior to it becoming the journal you now hold in your hands) and her current editing of *Home BUILDER Magazine*, as well as being Senior Editor at *New England Antiques Journal*.

The Noose stars Emily Garland, intrepid niche-market journalist on assignment in Lount's Landing, and Arabella Carpenter, who owns the Landing's aforementioned antiques shop. They make an amusing, entertaining and eminently followable duo as they investigate real-estate skullduggery, murder and the latest offerings at the public house that lends its name to the book's title.

A small town with a history that is pertinently addressed, numerous characters with backstories explored just enough for us to want more and an antiques shop with the most exquisite candlesticks you'll never be able to purchase: what more do you want?

Should *The Noose* and its follow-ups prove popular with enough readers to find itself in the ranks with Jonathan Gash's *Lovejoy* series there will have to be a new genre code generated to help book cataloguers: Mystery / Amateur Sleuth / Antiques. It's a change to look forward to.