



## Ask the Cards a Question

*Marcia Muller*

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There's trouble in Sharon McCone's quiet San Francisco apartment building. Madame Anya, with her cards, her tame crow, and her candles, had predicted evil for Molly Antonio. Linnea Carraway, drinking heavily and careening crazily in the wake of a divorce, had argued with her. Now the sweet, elderly lady lies in her apartment. Linnea, last to see Molly alive, is the prime suspect and if Sharon means to clear her best friend, she has to find the murderer fast. Suddenly death is in the cards, threatening Sharon's oldest friendship, her professional credibility-and her life.

## Ask the Cards a Question Details

Date : Published April 1st 1990 by Mysterious Press (first published 1982)

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Author : Marcia Muller

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## **From Reader Review Ask the Cards a Question for online ebook**

### **Gail says**

It was OK, not really my favorite type of book to read, though. This was the first book I have read by this author, it is unlikely I will read many more. I would call it a Cozy Mystery.

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### **Spuddie says**

Second in the series featuring San Francisco private investigator Sharon McCone. Sharon ends up investigating a killing that happens in her own building when her upstairs neighbor, elderly Mollie Antonio, is brutally strangled. Detective Greg Marcus asks her to identify the body since it seems everyone else in the building he's tried to question is either "drunk or crazy" and Sharon is horrified to note that a piece of drapery cord that possibly came from her own apartment is likely the murder weapon.

As PI's are wont to do, she keeps mum about that tidbit of information and heads off into the neighborhood to question people close to Mollie, and as usual doesn't share her gleaned information with the police, putting herself and others in mortal danger. I guess since she ultimately solves the crime, that stuff doesn't matter though. Don't get me wrong, I like Sharon...it's just that I can't figure out how she's going to keep her PI license through umpteen books in the series if she keeps up that kind of behavior. LOL

The reader was okay, but I have to admit that while she did okay with varying the female voices, most of the male voices sounded very similar.

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### **Connie says**

I loved this short story about Sharon McCone and the murder she investigated. I do like the interaction between Greg and Sharon because it seems to be normal for a private investigator and a detective. I don't believe they could be on the same page very many times.

I like that Greg chases after Sharon with chocolate and gets her to laugh.

I am giving this 5 out of 5 stars, because I didn't really know who the murderer was until the very end.

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### **Judy says**

As a fan of the later Sharon McCone series, back tracking to author Marcia Muller's beginning of these mysteries was an entertaining trip.

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### **Gail Burgess says**

I usually write down a list of possible suspects on the front cover as I begin a mystery and then refer to it as I eliminate, or sometimes add, a suspect. So, even in a book I had read before, many years ago, I still had not even written down/considered the culprit as a suspect!... At least not until it was so close to the end I never returned to the front cover to add the name. To me, that makes for a great mystery -- at least when I can then see how I missed considering the person and why s/he actually should have been considered.... Also love how Kinsey figures out details -- like the time it takes frozen food to melt! :-)

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### **John Grazide says**

It was okay. It seems that Sharon needs to find out how to apply her investigative findings a little quicker. That might save her from a bunch of trouble. Both professionally and personally. This one has her investigating the murder of her neighbor. And along the way other murders happen and she stumbles onto a stolen goods ring. All this happens while her childhood friend moves into Sharon's apartment and into a bottle. At least in this one we don't have to suffer the constant woman bashing that we did in the first. With such a long running series it is bound to pick up. Right?

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### **Kat Walter says**

Book #2 better than the first. I think the series will improve as the characters develop. As a whole, there are too many bodies for such a short novel, it is dated, the dialogue is weak, and the characters are flat.

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### **Amanda says**

This book was fine. I liked it less than the first in the series and even less than a Sue Grafton. The mystery involved stolen bulk goods and murders of older women, which was less thrilling than a typical murder mystery. I listened to the audiobook and thought the narrator really over acted, making a lot of it seem cheesy.

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### **William says**

I could not find much to like here, I'm afraid. A pretty short book with lame dialogue and flat characters. Sharon McCone did not come to life for me, and her friend, Linnea, was equally unconvincing. Even San Francisco does not come through as the vibrant city it was then.

All I found interesting was a window on life in the early 1980's: waterbeds, typewriters (manual and electric), "secretaries," etc. I had not remembered that we had airport security that long ago, though it apparently let non-passengers through as well as those with tickets.

I gather from other reviews that the series improves, so I will keep at it. The main value of this book, then, is

to serve as a background for future episodes which are apparently better.

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### **Sherri Robinson says**

I love the series and it is fun to revisit how the character started and visit the 80's. She has to run to a pay phone and check her answering service. The issue of caring for a childhood friend in a studio apartment hasn't changed in 30 years. Fun read on many levels. Only issue is this book may be hard to locate. I had to purchase on Amazon for a used copy.

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### **Pamela McLaren says**

Intrepid private investigator Sharon McCone is on the hunt again and this time it is a murder that happens practically on her doorstep: one of her neighbors, Molly Antonio, has been killed.

And she was strangled and mysteriously, a length of curtain cord that McCone herself had cut off her curtains is suddenly missing. The actions get stranger as McCone considers her current houseguest, a childhood friend who has come to cry on her shoulder following a divorce. The house guest, Linnea Carraway, is not the most pleasant of guests; she is drinking, playing music loudly at all hours of the day and night, and just before Antonio's death, had an argument with the victim. And now it seems, Antonio was killed with a length of curtain cord.

Soon there are several suspects to consider, from the woman's husband to the building's resident psychic. And there is something strange happening at the local Blind Center ...

This is the second book that I have read of Marcia Muller and while I continue to be interested in her character, I was a little disappointed that the dialogue and action seem a little simple. As an earlier reviewer mentioned, the story initially seems to be an interesting one but it was way too easy to solve. I was hoping that her stories would grow and develop into more complex tales. Will continue to read because a neighbor has given me the whole series but with an eye to whether Muller grows as a writer and McCone as a character. These are written has hard-boiled who done it but are turning out to be cozy mysteries without the insight of a Mrs. Marple or Hercule Poirot.

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### **Vanessa says**

This was a good mystery that kept me guessing until the end. And while I enjoy seeing the development of the private investigator, Sharon McCone, I prefer the later ones. There is a larger cast of regular, interesting characters. Due to my passion for audio books, I have read these out of order, and in this case, I am glad I did. I don't know if the earlier ones would have hooked me as much as her later novels.

Still, I enjoyed the story and look forward to reading more.

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### **Paige Kuether says**

Well written and a fast read.

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### **Marsha says**

I'm slowly reading through Marcia Muller's Sharon McCone mysteries and reliving the seventies, or so it seems. Sharon is a tough, hip San Francisco private eye seemingly alone in a man's world. She isn't afraid to pull her gun and protect herself or someone else as she did in the climax of this book. Even though her friend was a mixed-up, drunken divorcee, she was still Sharon's friend so bam! The blind bad guy was killed right there on the altar of a defunct church. She has a peekaboo relationship with a local detective and it looks like things might heat up. I hope so, because this gal needs a boyfriend...and a new apartment. The old one has too many murders.

I'm ready for my next dose of Sharon McCone, please!

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### **SuperWendy says**

The last time I listened to this on audio was probably 20 years ago, and a lot of it "came back to me" while listening this time around. I appreciated that there was an actual mystery here and not simply a serial killer running amok. Stylistically Muller is still in her late 70s/early 80s mode, and I spent the whole book wanting to tell the Linnea character to "snap out of it!" - but entertaining listen with a "slice of life" feel to the depiction of McCone's neighborhood.

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