



IT CAN BE MURDER DIGGING UP YOUR FAMILY TREE, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOUR ANCESTOR IS TRYING TO KILL YOU...

The Murder Tree by Alan Veale is based on the true story of Jessie McLachlan

The small, frightened figure of Jessie McLachlan turned right at the top of the street and hurried on eastward, still clutching her precious bundle, starting a chain of events that were to rattle through history long after she was dead...

Chrissie Fersen desperately wants to know how she is connected to the death of a servant woman in Glasgow in 1862. Enlisting the aid of local librarian Billie Vane, she is determined to clear the name of the woman originally convicted of the crime. But her chief suspect appears to be alive and well – and it looks like he still has murder on his mind...

The Murder Tree introduces an unlikely pair of heroes: the American daughter of a wealthy businessman and a Manchester-born librarian working in Glasgow. Each have their share of domestic strife to deal with, while sharing a thirst to find out the truth about a 150 year-old murder. But deaths are still taking place today as far afield as New York, and trying to dig through the roots of this unique family tree becomes more hazardous than either Chrissie or Billie could have foreseen...

“When I read *Heaven Knows Who* by Christianna Brand – a contemporary account of the trial of Jessie McLachlan, and the events preceding it – I was immediately struck by the dramatic ‘twists’ in this factual story, and by the intriguing questions it posed about who had really committed the crime. Because it was a true story, it struck me that there would undoubtedly be descendants alive today who may even be ignorant of the involvement of their infamous ancestors – and that prompted the creative instinct within me to look at the potential to write another version of the story, but from a modern day viewpoint,” says Alan Veale, of his motivation to write his book.

Born in 1952 in Manchester, **ALAN VEALE** developed his creative imagination when given school homework at the age of 13: write a fairy story. His life-long interest in theatre led to an outpouring of scripts before early retirement in 2009 brought an opportunity to tackle the ultimate challenge: write a novel.



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