



Fatal Roots: A County Cork Mystery

Sheila Connolly

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The dead do not want to stay buried in Sheila Connolly's ninth installment of her County Cork series, *Fatal Roots*. Maura Donovan, who moved from Boston to take over her family's pub in Ireland, is getting used to rural Irish living and has even struck up a romance with a local man. She feels she's settling in nicely before her world is once more disrupted: her estranged mother shows up with a half-sister she's never met, and a student wants to inspect the "fairy fort" on her property for a research project. When a body is discovered buried under the fort, Maura wonders about the history of her property and if it might still bring danger.

Fatal Roots is the perfect cozy mystery with its small setting full of colorful characters, multiple points of intrigue, and a strong, sassy heroine. Maura's combination of Boston toughness and touches of Irish heritage make her easy to root for, whether when she's solving her latest mystery or finally learning to trust the main man in her life. She continues to evolve as the novel progresses. Her relationships with her mother and the friends who visit the pub help to show her emotional progression. Though Maura is always in the limelight, these characters steal plenty of scenes.

The Irish setting plays a huge part in the story. County Cork is by turns charming and dangerous—the ideal backdrop for the whodunit. History about the area and Irish folklore give the book depth and color.

Intriguing and whimsical with just the right amount of menace, *Fatal Roots* is a cozy mystery that's full of surprises.

ANGELA MCQUAY (January / February 2020)

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