

Matthew Costello

Neil Richards

# CHERRINGHAM

A COSY CRIME SERIES

Murder

Most Wild



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# **Cherringham — A Cosy Crime Series**

“Cherringham — A Cosy Crime Series” is a series made up of self-contained stories. A new episode is released each month. The series is published in English as well as in German, and is only available in e-book form.

## **About the Book**

When the Zakro Corporation attempts to build a mammoth supermarket outside Cherringham, the whole village is up in arms. But the accidental death of lead environmentalist Sam Lewis seems to hand victory to the developers. Could Sam's opposition to the project be the real reason he died? When Jack and Sarah take on the case, they will learn that what was an accident was — in fact — one very wild murder.

## The Authors

**Matthew Costello** (US-based) is the author of a number of successful novels, including *Vacation* (2011), *Home* (2014) and *Beneath Still Waters* (1989), which was adapted by Lionsgate as a major motion picture. He has written for The Disney Channel, BBC, SyFy and has also designed dozens of bestselling games including the critically acclaimed *The 7th Guest*, *Doom 3*, *Rage* and *Pirates of the Caribbean*.

**Neil Richards** has worked as a producer and writer in TV and film, creating scripts for BBC, Disney, and Channel 4, and earning numerous Bafta nominations along the way. He's also written script and story for over 20 video games including *The Da Vinci Code* and *Starship Titanic*, co-written with Douglas Adams, and consults around the world on digital storytelling.

His writing partnership with NYC-based Matt Costello goes back to the late 90's and the two have written many hours of TV together. *Cherringham* is their first crime fiction as co-writers.

## Main Characters

**Jack Brennan** is a former NYPD homicide detective who lost his wife a year ago. Being retired, all he wants is peace and quiet. Which is what he hopes to find in the quiet town of Cherringham, UK. Living on a canal boat, he enjoys his solitude. But soon enough he discovers that something is missing — the challenge of solving crimes. Surprisingly, Cherringham can help him with that.

**Sarah Edwards** is a web designer who was living in London with her husband and two kids. Two years ago, he ran off with his sexy American boss, and Sarah's world fell apart. With her children she moved back to her home town, laid-back Cherringham. But the small town atmosphere is killing her all over again — nothing ever happens. At least, that's what she thinks until Jack enters her life and changes it for good or worse ...

Matthew Costello  
Neil Richards

**CHERRINGHAM**  
**A COSY CRIME SERIES**



**Murder Most Wild**

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# 1. Small Town Politics

Sarah pushed her way through the crowd towards the Village Hall, Chloe trailing a few feet behind.

Chloe was fifteen and going through a stage where Sarah hardly even saw her, let alone understood what she was thinking half the time.

Which made it even more surprising that both of them were now out together walking to the Village Hall, in the middle of a very cold winter's evening in Cherringham.

But these were dramatic times in the village.

And — incredibly — Sarah and Chloe were united in a cause.

She looked ahead and saw so many people streaming into the hall.

“Wow, looks like whole village is turning out,” said Sarah.

“They should! This is really *important*,” Chloe said.

*Such a fierce warrior*, Sarah thought, her love for her daughter now mixed with a strong dollop of admiration.

The way ahead seemed completely blocked by a wall of bodies; she looked around for a better route to the Village Hall. Perhaps if they went down the pavement to the Civil War Memorial then came back up to the main entrance by her office?

*Who would have thought that a meeting of the Cherringham Parish Council could cause such a fuss?*

She and Chloe had walked up together from home, and come through one of the alleyways onto the village square, just by the old stocks.

Usually on a Friday night in winter, with the shops shut and no tourists in town, this area would be totally empty.

*Just tumbleweed blowing, as Jack would say.  
Whatever tumbleweed was!*

But tonight, with the big meeting only half an hour away, the place was packed. Hundreds of people stood between them and the Village Hall, holding up banners, shouting, chanting.

“Developers out! Developers out! Out, out, out!”

Sarah had never seen such a cross-section of village life. Families, workers, old, and young. All united in one cause. She felt a thrill of excitement at the sight.

“Isn’t this amazing?” she said to Chloe, who now stood at her side.

“Awesome,” said Chloe.

Sarah peered at her daughter in the dark — was she being sarcastic? Kids could be so cynical these days ...

But no — Chloe’s face was lit up, her eyes bright.

“Mum, it’s just so cool that everyone’s come out tonight. That they actually *care* ...”

“Politics in action, love,” said Sarah. “Come on, I think I’ve worked out a way to get through.”

Taking Chloe’s arm, she headed off down the High Street, round the back of the hall, where the crowd was thinner.

It was a slow journey. She felt as if she knew everyone — people shaking hands, high-fiving, slapping on backs, raising fists in the air, shouting, singing.

A near party atmosphere.

Banners of all kinds were flying — lots of homemade signs, but Sarah could also see plenty of bigger generic flags and placards from a whole range of green, environmentalist causes.

There seemed to be a lot of strangers — some banners even had London addresses on them.

But there were plenty of familiar faces in the crowd: there was Grace from work, Pete Bull, her plumber, the

vicar, Praveer, her father's friend, Hope Brown, the Butterworths ...

She even wondered if Jack might be here.

But he'd been pretty adamant.

*Right there with you in the cause, Sarah. But I've done my time on protests — on both sides of the lines.*

Well, he was missing something here. She'd never known the people of Cherringham be so up in arms and united.

And not surprising. The idea of a massive supermarket being built right on the edge of the village — on the site of the old 'lost' village of Ingleston — was just completely crazy.

The planning application from the enormous Zakro Corporation was coming up tonight for debate at the Parish Council meeting and the village had turned out in force to register its horror at the prospect.

Unanimous, it seemed.

But ... when Sarah turned the corner of the Village Hall she realised she'd been completely wrong about that.

Because there — ahead of them — was a counter-demonstration. A smaller crowd, but one that was just as vocal as the protestors.

In front of them, she could see Alan Rivers, the local cop, doing his best to keep the two sides apart with portable barriers and traffic cones.

But he was clearly going to need reinforcements as the night wore on.

Sarah sensed that the mood on this side of the hall was darker. Here too she could see faces she recognised, but there was an intensity, an energy to this crowd that felt threatening.

There were no green banners, no printed logos. Just hand-painted slogans:

*Jobs for locals! Stop rip-off prices! Real people need a fair deal!*