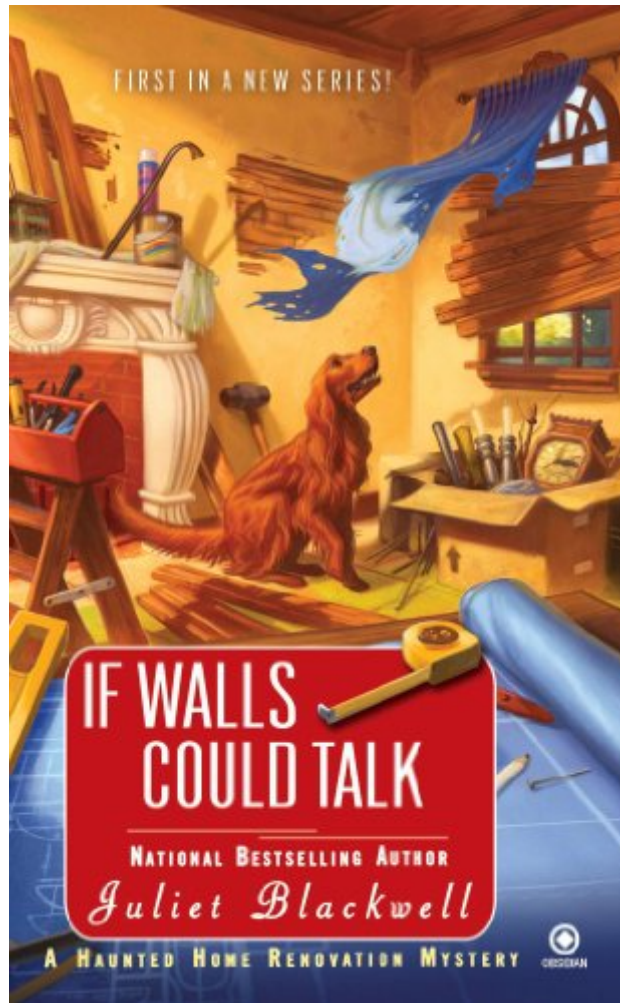


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If Walls Could Talk: A Haunted Home Renovation Mystery



Synopsis

Melanie Turner has made quite a name for herself remodeling historic houses in the San Francisco Bay Area. But now her reputation may be on the line. At her newest project, a run-down Pacific Heights mansion, Mel is visited by the ghost of a colleague who recently met a bad end with power tools. Mel hopes that by nailing the killer, she can rid herself of the ghostly presence of the murdered man-and not end up a construction casualty herself...

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Customer Reviews

Melanie Turner moves home after her mother's death to take over her father's construction business restoring historic homes and in a very short time has become pretty well-known for her work in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her next project is a run down mansion in Pacific Heights. She agrees to take the job after one of the owners dies in the house during a crazy do-it-yourself demolition of the house. While working out the specifications at the house she is visited by the ghostly presence of the man who died. He continues to follow her everywhere and she finally realizes the only way to get rid of this ghost is to solve his murder. The only clue she has is a box she found hidden in the walls of the house. Mel needs to build a case to find the killer before she finds herself nailed by them too.

She also needs to help her ghost rest in peace. I LIKED IT!!!! A really good start to what looks to be a hauntingly wonderful series. Having worked construction myself I know what damage power tools can do and the last thing you need is a bunch of drunks doing your demo, so I can totally relate to this story and know I will truly enjoy the series. Ghosts really aren't my usual forte, but it is stories like this that can totally change my point of view. Mel Turner and her family have grabbed my attention and they are the stars, the ghosts are the supporting quirky characters every good cozy needs. Plus Mel's family is not your typical family next door and Mel's past is pretty diverse, so the author has plenty of room to take us in many directions as the series continues. I really look forward to the next installment of Haunted Renovation.

First Line: This was one pitiful-looking mansion. Mel(anie) Turner may dress like a Madonna groupie, but she knows her stuff when it comes to renovating historic homes in the San Francisco Bay area. Her latest client wants her expertise in bringing a Pacific Heights mansion back to life, but when she visits the morning after a boozy "Do-It-Yourself" remodeling party, she discovers his partner-- who seems to have had a horrendous accident with power tools. The man dies as a result of his injuries, and as Mel begins to see that certain facts and figures just don't add up, she also gets a visit from the dead man's spirit. Murderous intent fills this particular down-at-heel mansion up to its eaves. "To me, old houses might as well be ancient pyramids. They hold secrets and messages from the past; I feel them whispering to me as I walk the hallways. Walls, attics, basements... over the past five years I had found newspapers from the thirties, liquor bottles, old coins, address books, even the occasional stash of money or stocks. I once unearthed a button-up baby's shoe and a dress pattern book from 1916. I even liked the smell: the distinctive, musty aroma of history, reminding me of used bookstores...promising the serendipitous discovery of the perfect novel or family relic or beloved treasure." Once I read that paragraph, I knew that Mel and I were going to get along just fine. She and I have the same feeling for old houses, and as I turned the pages, my affinity for this character grew through her relationships to the other characters and to the way she conducted her business. If I had an old mansion to renovate, I'd hire her on the spot.

The Rule of Three has hit Melanie Turner pretty hard in the last two years. First, there was her divorce after a 10-year rocky marriage. Then, her beloved mother died suddenly of heart failure. And thirdly, Melanie had to take over the reins of Turner Construction after her mother's death devastated her father so deeply that he no longer wished to run his own company. Fortunately, Mel grew up at her father's side in the company and knows her way not only around tools but around

the paperwork side as well. And since Turner Construction specializes in restoring historical properties, this fits in quite well with “ and probably led to “ Mel’s education and career as a cultural anthropologist. Then a second Rule of Three manifests itself. And it doesn’t take two years this time; it only takes two days. On the first day, the death occurs. A friend of Mel’s has gone into the business of remodeling and flipping historical properties. His business partner has talked him into having a “demo party” like those shown on reality DIY programs. When Mel goes to check on Matt the next day, she finds evidence of a drunken bash scattered among the power tools and Matt nursing a nasty gash between his eyes. Realizing the error of his ways, he begs Mel to have her company do the remodel. Within minutes of agreeing to draw up a contract, Matt’s business partner stumbles into the room, having been repeatedly shot with a nail gun and his hand amputated by a saw. And neither Mel nor Matt has heard a thing. The second event was finding out that “Turner Contracting” had already applied for and received a building permit for the remodel. Since Melanie IS Turner Contracting, she realizes someone has forged her signature somehow and well before the death.

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