



The Crossing Places (Ruth Galloway Mysteries)

By Elly Griffiths

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The first entry in the acclaimed Ruth Galloway series follows the "captivating" archaeologist as she investigates a child's bones found on a nearby beach, thought to be the remains of a little girl who went missing ten years before.**

Forensic archeologist Dr. Ruth Galloway is in her late thirties. She lives happily alone with her two cats in a bleak, remote area near Norfolk, land that was sacred to its Iron Age inhabitants—not quite earth, not quite sea. But her routine days of digging up bones and other ancient objects are harshly upended when a child's bones are found on a desolate beach. Detective Chief Inspector Nelson calls Galloway for help, believing they are the remains of Lucy Downey, a little girl who went missing a decade ago and whose abductor continues to taunt him with bizarre letters containing references to ritual sacrifice, Shakespeare, and the Bible. Then a second girl goes missing and Nelson receives a new letter—exactly like the ones about Lucy.

Is it the same killer? Or a copycat murderer, linked in some way to the site near Ruth's remote home?

*Louise Penny

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The Crossing Places (Ruth Galloway Mysteries) By Elly Griffiths Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Product Description

When she's not digging up bones or other ancient objects, quirky, tart-tongued archaeologist Ruth Galloway lives happily alone in a remote area called Saltmarsh near Norfolk, land that was sacred to its Iron Age inhabitants--not quite earth, not quite sea.

When a child's bones are found on a desolate beach nearby, Detective Chief Inspector Harry Nelson calls Galloway for help. Nelson thinks he has found the remains of Lucy Downey, a little girl who went missing ten years ago. Since her disappearance he has been receiving bizarre letters about her, letters with references to ritual and sacrifice. The bones actually turn out to be two thousand years old, but Ruth is soon drawn into the Lucy Downey case and into the mind of the letter writer, who seems to have both archaeological knowledge and eerie psychic powers. Then another child goes missing and the hunt is on to find her. As the letter writer moves closer and the windswept Norfolk landscape exerts its power, Ruth finds herself in completely new territory--and in serious danger. *The Crossing Places* marks the beginning of a captivating new crime series featuring an irresistible heroine.

Amazon Exclusive Essay: "A Bridge to the Afterlife" by Elly Griffiths, Author of *The Crossing Places*



The Crossing Places is set on desolate marshland in Norfolk. It is thought that prehistoric people saw marshland as sacred. Because it is neither land nor sea but a mixture of both, they saw it as a kind of bridge to the afterlife--neither land nor sea, neither life nor death. This is why they often buried treasure, or even bodies, at the edge of marshland. There have been several discoveries of so-called bog bodies, prehistoric bodies preserved in peaty marshland soil. The most famous of these is probably Tollund Man, discovered in Denmark in 1950. Tollund Man, who dates from the Iron Age, was hanged before being thrown into a peat bog. Was he a sacrifice to the gods, an offering in return for safe passage across the treacherous ground? No one really knows.

Norfolk is on the east coast of England. Less than ten thousand years ago, this land would have been part of the European landmass, now Scandinavia. It's no wonder, then, that Norse belief was strong in the area. My story is fictional but there have been many real-life archaeological discoveries on the Norfolk coast. At

Holme-next-the-Sea, a wooden henge was discovered, believed to date from the Bronze Age. At the center of the henge circle was a tree, planted upside down. Was this Yggdrasil, the world tree of Norse legend? The tree on which Odin was sacrificed for the good of mankind? Again, no one knows. As Ruth, the forensic archaeologist in my book, says, "the questions are more important than the answers."

(Photo © Jerry Bauer)

From Publishers Weekly

Griffiths's serviceable first mystery introduces archeologist Ruth Galloway, who leads a quiet life in a remote region of Norfolk, England, known as the Saltmarsh. When Det. Chief Insp. Harry Nelson asks for her expertise in identifying human remains found in the marsh, he's disappointed when Ruth determines they date to the Iron Age. Harry, who's been haunted for 10 years by the kidnapping of five-year-old Lucy Downey, hoped the bones could bring closure to the girl's family. Drawn into the investigation, Ruth delves deeper into Lucy's disappearance and studies the letters Harry has received over the years, presumably from the kidnapper. When another young girl goes missing, Ruth and Harry fear the cycle has begun again. With her brittle exterior and general distaste for human companionship, Ruth is a difficult heroine with whom to empathize, but the novel's archeological details and the unsettling denouement go far in making up for her prickly character. (*Jan.*)

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From [Booklist](#)

Starred Review Nearing 40 and overweight, forensic anthropologist Ruth Galloway is content with her life, teaching at the University of North Norfolk and living in a cottage on remote Saltmarsh with her two cats. When DCI Harry Nelson enlists her help in identifying the bones of a child unearthed in the marsh, he anticipates closing the case of 5-year-old Lucy Downey, snatched from her bed 10 years earlier. But Ruth confirms that the bones date from the Iron Age, an exciting find that recalls memories of a dig led by her mentor, Erik, at which she met her former lover, Peter. Impressed with Ruth, Nelson shares his file on the missing child and calls on her when another little girl goes missing, putting Ruth herself at risk. Griffiths combines elements of archaeology, mythology, and even ornithology with the foreboding mood of the marsh. The result is an atmospheric mystery with a pulse-pounding climax and starring an oh-so-human protagonist who deals with life realistically. A knockout start for a series that should have broad appeal across the crime genre, from thriller fans to lovers of slightly edgy cozies. --Michele Leber

Users Review

From reader reviews:

David Binkley:

Have you spare time for any day? What do you do when you have far more or little spare time? Yes, you can choose the suitable activity regarding spend your time. Any person spent all their spare time to take a move, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open or maybe read a book eligible The Crossing Places (Ruth Galloway Mysteries)? Maybe it is for being best activity for you. You know beside you can spend your time together with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with the opinion or you have various other opinion?

Norman Fuentes:

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Cassandra Harvey:

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