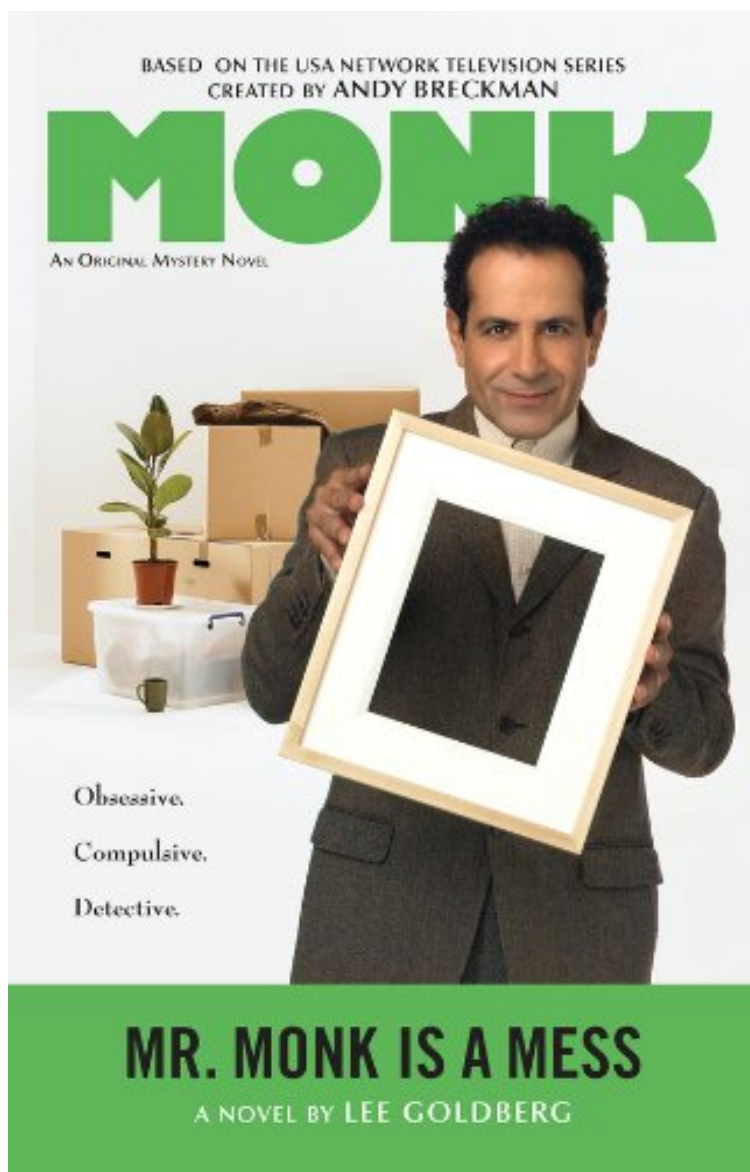


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Mr. Monk is a Mess



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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurObsessive. Compulsive. Detective.An all-new original mystery starring Adrian Monk, the brilliant investigator who always knows when something's out of place....No one likes to come home to a mess--least of all Monk and Natalie. But when they return briefly to San Francisco from an extended stay working as cops in New Jersey, Natalie discovers somebody has been sleeping in her bed. But this Goldilocks is not asleep. She's dead.If that's not bad enough, investigators find marked money from a Federal sting operation stuffed under Natalie's mattress. Now her life is a real mess and she needs Monk's help to clean it up.But Monk has problems of his own. His brother Ambrose is desperate to find Yuki, his missing lover, but his agoraphobia prevents him from leaving the house. Ambrose needs a man on the

outside--and that man is Monk, who is torn, because he's glad to see her go. As the two investigations begin, and the body count rises, it quickly becomes clear to Monk that Yuki has a dangerous past...and that they are pursuing a ruthless, cold-blooded killer that nobody would ever want to mess with...PRAISE FOR LEE GOLDBERG'S MONK NOVELS""No one else could capture these characters and bring them to life on the page the way Lee Goldberg does!"-- King's River Life Magazine"Goldberg makes Adrian Monk much more interesting than the TV version:the twitches are less obvious, the outcomes much less predictable. Even (or especially) the secondary characters are more interesting and have sharper dialogue."--Chicago Tribune""The only thing more fun than watching Monk is reading the adventures Lee Goldberg creates for him. The books set a high standard from the get-go." Crimespree Magazine"Full of snippets of slapstick humor and Monk's special talents for observation," Library Journal"This latest hilariously funny and devilishly clever novel about TV's obsessive-compulsive sleuth Adrian Monk is an impossible crime lover's delight! Very funny and inventively plotted," Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine"Throughout the Mr. Monk series author Lee Goldberg has always kept a firm grasp on exactly who his characters are, and he is able to expertly play them against one another to the best dramatic and comic advantage," The Gumshoe "You'd be hard-pressed to find another recent work that provides so many hip and humorous moments."

BookgasmExtraitChapter OneMr. Monk in Summit The hours pass very slowly when youre sitting in a squad car, parked behind a billboard on a New Jersey country road, waiting for speeders to whiz by.Its not the most glamorous side of law enforcement, but writing \$390 speeding tickets pays the bills, especially when a handful of corrupt politicians have looted the town treasury to finance their outrageously extravagant lifestyles.So thats why Adrian Monk and Ithe lovely and resourceful Natalie Teegerhad to do our stint early that Monday morning out on the old highway, a remote, curving stretch of two-lane asphalt through the rolling hills, which no driver could resist taking at high speed.We were into our third week working as uniformed police officers in Summit, thousands of miles away from our homes in San Francisco, where Monk was usually employed as a police consultant and I toiled, underpaid and underappreciated, as his long-suffering assistant.Summit was basically an upscale bedroom community for highly educated, well-off professionals who worked in New York City, which was only a thirty-minute train ride away. The towns roots as a pastoral farming community were still evident in the pastoral setting, the tree-lined streets, and the lush landscaping around the homes, many of which dated back to the early 1900s and had been impeccably restored and maintained. That cost lots of money, but from what I could see, there was no shortage of that in Summit, except in the recently looted town treasury.We were in Summit as a favor to Police Chief Randy Disher, whod once been a San Francisco homicide detective, and his live-in girlfriend, Sharona Fleming, whod once been Monks nurse and assistant.With all the local politicians in jail or out on bail awaiting trial, Disher found himself drafted as acting mayor and in desperate need of temporary help enforcing the law. So he called on us.Id worked around a lot of cops over the years while helping Monk solve murders but Id never had a badge myself. But now that Id worn one for a few weeks, Id discovered that I liked it.Thank God for cars and paved roads, Monk said. He sat in the passenger seat, aiming his radar gun out the window, waiting for our next victim.I had to think about the reasoning behind his comment because Monk reasoned like nobody else. Thats partly a result of his obsessive-compulsive disorder, but mostly its due to the bizarre way he looks at the world. Its what makes him a brilliant detective and an enormous pain in the ass.I knew he liked cars because they had four wheels and were symmetrical, but he also firmly believed that the steering wheel should be in the center of the dashboard instead of on one side or the other. He would have settled for cars having two steering wheels, one on each side, even if one was only for show, but so far none of the major automakers had agreed to his gracious compromise (despite the fact that hed sent them countless letters arguing his point).So why was he thanking God for cars now? Perhaps it had less to do with cars than with the pavement, which I knew he liked without reservation.Youre grateful because cars are symmetrical, I said, and the roads they use are flat, level, and divided into lanes that dictate an orderly flow of traffic.Thats only part of it, he said. Im eternally grateful that nobody has to use horses for transportation anymore. Back in the old days, before we had paved roads, horses should have been outlawed in populated areas.That would have made it awfully difficult for people to get around.Horses made it worse.I dont see how.On a typical day in New York City in the 1800s, horses dropped two-point-five million pounds of manure and expelled sixty-five thousand gallons of urine onto dirt roads. You try walking through that. Monk did a full-body shudder, which people unfamiliar with him often mistook for an epileptic seizure instead of extreme revulsion. Before cars came along, the Big Apple was the Big Poop.Ever since Monk had become improbably enamored of Ellen Morse, the ecologically conscious and obsessive-compulsive proprietor of Poop, a store on Summits

main street that sold an astonishing array of art, shampoos, creams, stationery, fossils, coffee, and cooking oils derived from excrement, had been a walking encyclopedia of crap. I never thought of it from that perspective, I said. And I'm sorry that I can now. It's a wonder humanity survived that apocalypse. That wasn't an apocalypse, I said. When the streets are piled with four hundred thousand tons of poo soaked in twenty-three million, seven hundred and twenty-five thousand gallons of pee in a year, that's an apocalypse, Monk said. That's why four horsemen, and not four guys in Toyotas, are your first warning that it's coming. I sighed and shook my head. I couldn't believe we were having this stupid discussion when there were far more important things we could be talking about, like the enormous changes we were making in our lives. In forty-eight hours we'd be back in San Francisco, but only for a few weeks, and just to pack up our lives and our belongings. That's because Disher had offered us full-time jobs as cops on his force and we'd accepted. Well, I had. Monk kept flip-flopping. But no matter what he ultimately decided, our relationship had already changed in a big way. From the moment I put on the Summit Police uniform, I stopped being his employee and became his partner, although I couldn't bring myself to call him by his first name. And if he decided to stay in San Francisco, and I came back to Summit, he'd have to decide whether to hire a new assistant or to try to make it on his own for the first time since his wife was killed and he was discharged from the SFPD on psychological grounds. I was about to bring up the topic when a bright red, mud-splattered Range Rover sped past the billboard we were hiding behind and on toward Summit. Monk lowered his radar gun and looked at me. Let's roll. I flicked on the lights, cranked up the siren, and punched the gas, peeling out in a spray of gravel. The driver of the Range Rover wasn't the only one who couldn't resist speeding on that lonely highway. We caught up to the Range Rover in seconds and the driver dutifully pulled over to the shoulder without a fight. I parked a few feet behind the car and observed that the driver was a woman and that the vehicle had New Jersey plates. Monk was scowling, presumably because her bumper was splashed with mud thick with twigs and bits of leaves. He hated dirt. I typed the numbers into the computer on our center console and discovered the Range Rover was registered to Kelsey Turek of Summit. There were no warrants associated with her or the vehicle. I got out and approached the driver's side of the car and the woman at the wheel. Monk remained behind me, on the passenger side of the car, peering into the back of the vehicle, just in case there were a couple of bank robbers, a kidnapped heiress, a dozen illegal aliens, piles of cocaine, or maybe a stolen nuclear warhead in plain sight. The backseat was folded down flat, but the cargo area was empty. All I saw was a bottle of vinegar on the floor. As far as I knew, that wasn't contraband. The woman lowered her window as I approached. The first thing I noticed was the heavenly smell of the Range Rover's plush leather interior. I'd never owned a car upholstered in anything but vinyl or cloth. The driver was a cute, pug-nosed woman in her thirties, wearing a man's long-sleeve flannel shirt and a pair of faded jeans. Her face was red around her eyes and the bridge of her nose, as if she'd been wearing ski goggles. Good morning, I said. May I see your license and registration, please? She already had them out on her lap and handed them to me. She had a nasty blister on her palm, just below her thumb. What's the problem, Officer? she asked. I glanced at her license, which identified her as Kelsey Turek, though her photo reminded me of Katie Holmes in her Dawson's Creek days, before Batman, Tom Cruise, Scientology, and age robbed her of that adorable woman-child quality. Are you aware of the speed limit on this highway? I asked. Fifty-five, she said. And do you know how fast you were driving, Ms. Turek? Fifty-five, she said. Perhaps it would surprise you to know the actual speed you were driving, I said and realized I didn't know, either. I looked across the top of the car to Monk, who stood on the passenger side and was peering through the window at Turek. How fast was she going, Mr. Monk? Fifty-four, he said. I glared at him. So why did we pull her over? Was it so you could commend her for traveling at an even-numbered rate of speed or ticket her for driving too slow and impeding the nonexistent traffic? Her car is splattered with mud, Monk said. And there's a piece of a plastic bag caught on her trailer hitch. That's not a traffic violation, I said. May I go now? Turek asked, looking uncomfortable, like a child watching her parents arguing. I handed her back her driver's license and registration. I saw a white band of skin at the base of the ring finger on her left hand where she'd perhaps taken off a wedding ring. It made me think of the one that I'd once worn. It was years after Mitch was shot down over Kosovo before I finally stopped wearing my ring. It took a surprisingly long time for that band of pale skin to tan and I was painfully sad when it did. Officer? she prodded. Yes, I'm sorry, I said. You can go. No, you can't, Monk said to her. I sighed and turned back to Turek. Forgive me for asking, but would you mind washing your car when you get back to Summit? My partner would really appreciate it. Sure thing, she said. Whatever you want, Officer. We can't let her go and we certainly can't let her wash her car, Monk said. Why not? I demanded. Because she could wash away important evidence. Of what? I said. That her car

was dirty? That she murdered her husband, Monk said. That last word was barely out of his mouth when Turek floored it, the car speeding away, spraying us with loose dirt and gravel. I staggered back, my face stung by the bits of rock, my eyes full of dirt. Ill take that as a confession, Monk said.