



A Hiss Before Dying

Rita Mae Brown

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

A Hiss Before Dying

Rita Mae Brown

A Hiss Before Dying Rita Mae Brown

Rita Mae Brown and her feline co-author Sneaky Pie Brown are back chasing mystery with their unique circle of Southern sleuths. And though the changing colors of fall are a beauty to behold, this year the scattered leaves hide a grim surprise.

Autumn is in the air in the Blue Ridge Mountain community of Crozet, Virginia--and all the traditions of the changing seasons are under way. Mary Minor "Harry" Haristeen cleans her cupboards, her husband, Fair, prepares the horses for the shorter days ahead, and the clamorous barking of beagles signals the annual rabbit chase through the central Virginia hills. But the last thing the local beaglers and their hounds expect to flush out is a dead body.

Disturbingly, it's the second corpse to turn up, after that of a missing truck driver too disfigured to identify. The deaths seem unrelated--until Harry picks up a trail of clues dating back to the state's post-Revolutionary past.

The echoes of the Shot Heard Round the World pale in comparison to the dangerous shootout Harry narrowly escapes unscathed. Next time, it may be the *killer* who gets lucky. But not if Harry's furry friends Mrs. Murphy, Pewter, and Tucker can help it. Lending their sharp-nosed talents to the hunt, they'll help their mistress keep more lives from being lost--and right an injustice buried since the early days of America's independence.

"As feline collaborators go, you couldn't ask for better than Sneaky Pie Brown."--*The New York Times Book Review*

A Hiss Before Dying Details

Date : Published May 30th 2017 by Bantam

ISBN : 9780553392494

Author : Rita Mae Brown

Format : Hardcover 359 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Cozy Mystery

 [Download A Hiss Before Dying ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online A Hiss Before Dying ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online A Hiss Before Dying Rita Mae Brown

From Reader Review A Hiss Before Dying for online ebook

Catherine says

Not my favorite. Too much history. I like history, but not the back and forth. Not enough from the main characters. I also missed the antics of all the animals.??

Mary Ann says

Issues with this book:

1. Breast Cancer run in April - usually held in October as that is the pink ribbon month.
2. Have surgery and starts doing weighted lifting before 6 weeks have passed.
3. All the radiation treatments so close together (I have a friend who just did these).

On the whole, the book was fun, but I had so many issues that I had to just ignore them and let the book move on. I felt like the book was going over 6 to 8 weeks, but it was all taking place in 8 days. It just was not a good timeline. I liked that it dealt with cancer and the aftermath, but in order to move the book along, she shortened how long everything took and made it hard to believe that they were dealing with one of their own battling cancer.

The story was okay but was unrealistic for the timeline.

Clare O'Beara says

Looking at history of Virginia and the life of slaves, as interludes between modern day crime solving. The two periods are interlinked by tokens such as a slave pass which a slave could use to leave the plantation on an errand.

We meet Harry and her cats and dog, and many of the usual cast of locals. I always enjoy the animals and chatter and the friendship of local people. We see much of the countryside in autumn. I was less interested in the past section which, though well realised, felt like padding at times. But well done for looking at history bravely.

I downloaded an ARC from Net Galley. This is an unbiased review.

Drebbles says

It is autumn 2016 and in Crozet Virginia people are beginning to prep for the long winter ahead. Mary Minor "Harry" Harristeen certainly has enough chores to do as well as her work on various committees but Harry being Harry, she can't help getting involved when not one but two bodies turn up. Harry thinks the deaths

may be related but how? In 1785 Virginia it is winter and folks are just trying to make it through - both slaves and their owners. Life is not easy, especially for the slaves who work for Maureen Selise at Big Rawly. Maureen is always losing slaves - the latest is Mignon who may have stolen some of Maureen's jewelry. Little does anyone realize that events in the past will influence events in the present day.

I admit I always approach a new Rita Mae Brown book with a bit of trepidation. I love her characters - Harry, Fair, the rest of the humans, as well as Harry's pets Mrs. Murphy, Tucker, and Pewter - but I dislike the preachiness that creeps into each book. I have also had mixed feelings about the Revolutionary War flashbacks that have been in her last few books along with the modern mystery.

To my surprise and delight I really enjoyed "A Hiss Before Dying". Yes, the preachiness is there - particularly in the current day story and solution to that mystery - but it didn't overshadow the book like it has in other books in the series. Brown does an excellent job of writing both the Revolutionary war storyline and current storyline. If I did have to pick a favorite of the two, I would pick the Revolutionary war storyline. Readers have followed several characters throughout the past few books in the series and I have mostly enjoyed the storylines. Brown manages to let us realize how awful slavery was without getting preachy about it. I don't know if this is the last book that will feature flashbacks to the Revolutionary War but if it is Brown did an excellent job of wrapping up the story arc and this may be one of the rare times that I have clapped for a murderer! Unfortunately, Brown does not do as neat a job of wrapping up the modern storyline. This is deliberate not sloppy writing but, while I realize not everything in real life is tied up neatly, I want more closure when reading this type of mystery.

"A Hiss Before Dying" is not perfect but for the most part I really enjoyed it.

Anam Cara says

It had been some time since I'd read a book by Rita Mae Brown. When I saw this title, it was like seeing an old friend who I had missed and was happy to spend time with. Since it has been so long, I don't know if the author had changed her methodology in more recent books, but loved that the story wove back and forth between present day and the late 18th century. It was easy to read, but kept me wondering how the two stories would finally come together. Although I tend to think of Rita Mae Brown as a mystery writer, I think we can add historical fiction to her list of genres.

There were references in the book to historical fiction. I had finished shortly before a work by Philippa Gregory! Harry says, "Some people have the knack of making history come to life. Academics are snotty about historical fiction. I think it's a great way to learn." I agree completely! For example, even though I lived in Charlottesville for over 5 years, I had never given much thought to the reason for the name of Barracks Rd. In this book I learned that during the Revolutionary War, British prisoners were held there in the Albemarle Barracks. And I believe that Rita Mae Brown is one of those people who has a "knack of making history come to life."

Her characters from the 18th c. are well developed. I feel like if I met any of them, I would know them instantly. The recurring characters are all old friends. The relationships between characters went perfectly with the personalities.

I am happy that the animals still communicate with each other and the wild animals that appear in the story

line. I do wish that the cats weren't such smarty-pants, but I guess that is just the nature of cats.

Carol says

I'm not really a fan of the split timeline books. There's too many characters and plot lines, and I didn't see much connection between the two stories. I'd rather read about more of the present-day characters from the earlier books who seem to have disappeared in these later books. What's happening with Miranda, Big Mim, Little Mim, and others that I remember? Even Harry's animals had smaller parts this time, mainly spats between Pewter and Tucker.

Joy Smith says

This is the second of her recent mysteries that include historical segments. (I haven't read the first one, and I don't recall the title.) I preferred the current storyline with Harry and her companions. (I confess that I skimmed some of the historical interludes.) Lots of background about slavery, politics, and the environment; but I love most the interplay between Tucker and the cats, the hounds, and the wildlife. Exciting climax, and I appreciated the wrap up on the plantations and back in the current time (Afterword). Be sure to read the notes at the end from Pewter, Sneaky Pie, Tucker (love that Corgi), and Rita Mae.

Maureen FitzPatrick says

Confusing

I am a big Rita Mae Brown fan but this book tried to include too much in it. It was confusing at times in its attempt to merge history with the present day. This was a bit disappointing.

Jeimy says

I have to say this is not what I expected. The animals are a contrived idea and they do not contribute anything to the solving of the mystery. As for the plot, at first I thought that the interwoven plot lines could have stood alone. Upon reflection I see that it is the hasty ending that makes it seem like so.

Nonetheless, I enjoyed the ride and I am not entirely convinced I will not give Brown another shot in the future.

Debbie Maskus says

Sneaky Pie's editing shows that cats can make mistakes, such as the sentence "an elderly men". In whole the book presented many facets of life in Virginia through the eyes of animals and the people. I love the adage the "idle hands do the Devil's work." The lack of a centralized currency shows one of the many problems

facing the "new" United States. No matter what, greed and cunning dominate the quest to control. I felt that the animals talked too often, and I missed hearing from their humans. I enjoyed the alternating chapters set in current times and in 1786. The illustrations by Michael Gellatly enhanced the story.

Crystal Karre says

Besides the recurring characters throwing in some history always makes these books a page turner

Susan says

I have read all of the Sneaky Pie mysteries and, overall, have enjoyed every one - some more than others. I still do enjoy the characters of the present day mysteries - Harry and all of her friends, family and assorted pets. Yes, I also like learning American history. However, I am not really enjoying her new formula with these last books, that of two stories alternating chapters. Honestly, I want one or the other. It's confusing and, as a reader of her stories from the very first book, those are the stories I want to read. Having said that, I will add that this mystery can be read as a stand alone and both periods are good mysteries. I just would rather she would write either contemporary or historical mysteries.

My thanks to the publisher, Bantam and to NetGalley for an advance review copy in return for my honest review.

Carmelia says

This is the second book in the Mrs. Murphy series which alternates between present time and long long ago. I don't enjoy those time jumps, I don't enjoy the storyline about the slaves and their (mis)treatment.

When I pick up a Mrs. Murphy book, I want to read about Harry, Faith, their animals, their friends and a well written present day mystery.

I don't want to read about some historical stuff which happens to cause some bad things today, but is finished off in a way I can't even remember the conclusion a week after finishing the book.

If this way of writing continues, I won't be picking up any more of the books in the series.

Rickie Budnek says

The story in the present time is good, but I am getting really tired of paying money to read about my favorite characters, only to find them in half the book. The other half is history that takes place more than a hundred years ago. I want the books to go back to my favorite characters. The author may be tired of them, but I am not.

Juli says

I have been a fan of the Mrs. Murphy series by Rita Mae Brown (with the assistance of Sneaky Pie Brown) since the very beginning when Mary Minor "Harry" Harristeen was the postmaster of Crozet, Virginia and took her lovely pets to work with her at the post office. The series now has 26 books! Alas, I have not read all of them.....life got in the way and somewhere back just after Harry remarried her ex-husband Fair (the local vet) I lost track of the series. Now that I'm a bit older (just how old I refuse to admit discuss lol) and no longer have little ones getting in to everything, I have more time to read. I've come back to one of my most favorite mystery series! When I saw this newest book as available for review, I jumped right on it! I wanted to know just what Harry, Fair, Mrs. Murphy, Tee Tucker, Pewter, Boom Boom and all the other lovely folks in Crozet have been up to in my absence.

A Hiss Before Dying is a mystery within a mystery. Two men are murdered in present day Crozet. One of the men had just purchased a bronze slave pass medallion dating from the post-revolution era in Virginia. That medallion ties in with events that occurred in the 1780s. The story switches back and forth between present and past. At first it was a bit difficult keeping the characters straight with all the switching back and forth, but luckily the author included a list of all the characters in the front of the book. When I got confused about who was who in the post-revolutionary story line, I just paged back to the list and got a reminder.

While I'm not normally a big fan of stories that jump back and forth in time, I enjoyed the double-mystery. I didn't know what a slave pass (or chit) was and I found the historical information the author provided to be very interesting. The story is well-written and paced. I enjoyed how the two mysteries intertwined. The antics of Harry's furry pals are still much the same as earlier in the series, adding a bit of humor and animal wisdom to the story. Harry is still her pragmatic, hard-working, spunky self, surrounded by a cast of friends and citizens of Crozet who make these stories so enjoyable. I definitely need to backtrack a bit and read the books in the series that I missed. All 11 of them! :) I have a lot of reading to do!

It really isn't necessary to read the other books before this one. It's enough of a stand-alone story that a reader could jump in at book 26 and still enjoy the story. The series is great though, so I highly recommend reading the earlier books.

Rita Mae Brown is the author of many books including Rubyfruit Jungle and the Sister Jane series. For more information on the author and her books, check out her website: <http://www.ritamaebrownbooks.com/>

I voluntarily read an advance readers copy of this book from Random House Publishing via NetGalley. Opinions expressed in this review are completely my own.