



Dead Days of Summer

Carolyn G. Hart

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The police have Max all but tried and convicted—except for Chief Billy Cameron, whose unshakable belief in his friend's innocence prompts his removal from the case. And as a media circus descends on tiny Broward's Rock, Annie will have to place her own life in jeopardy to clear her husband's name. But time is running out—and she has only one slim chance to unmask a killer who just may have committed the perfect crime.

Dead Days of Summer Details

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From Reader Review Dead Days of Summer for online ebook

Kellene says

The relationships between the characters in the Death on Demand books has always been what made these books for me. This is the group of people that I want around me regardless of the situation, because they will do absolutely anything for a friend. As usual, the story moves along very quickly, and I love Hart's writing style. There were a few things in this one that made me absolutely crazy however. First of all, there are starting to be way too many characters running through these books, which makes it hard to keep up sometimes with who is whom. Secondly, how in the heck was there a whole group of folks on Broward's Rock that didn't recognize Annie, one of whom worked in town near her shop? And thirdly, if these folks didn't know Annie, they didn't know Max either, so why go to such extensive links to frame him for the murder? And when Laurel was so central to the action for so long, how did she just vanish from the story until the end? There just seemed to be a lot of unanswered questions when this book is finished, which led me to a lower rating than I typically give this series.

Sarah says

I give the writing, plot and characterization a 3, but the editing a 2. That unfortunately seems to be a trend with this series. In one instance, Annie calls Vanessa's sister "Ginger" when her name is Ginny, short for Ginivieve, and another time the "e" was left off the end of "crease." I don't know why these obvious mistakes keep popping up. Maybe the editor needs to make a chart while reading to keep track of names, including middle names in some of the previous books, and maybe catch some of these silly errors. perhaps it would help the author to do this while writing, too, since someone mentioned a character having two different middle names in the span of a few pages in their review of Yankee Doodle Dead.

I really have a hard time believing Max, and presumably Annie by extension, are still only 29 years old. Of course, I also didn't believe Annie was only 23 in the first book, Death on Demand. My suspension of disbelief refuses to accept that Annie graduated college, moved to New York to pursue and give up on an acting career, decide she needed to get away from Max, move to Broward's Rock and completely renovate her uncle's bookstore (which at first sounds like it wasn't even a store, but just a place for writers to hang out) all in the space of a year. It's hard to tell from the books, since this is only the second time out of all the novels that I've noticed either of their ages definitely mentions, but it seems like it's been longer than six years since the start of the series, in their lives. If I'm really bored, I should go back through each one and make a chart, since the month is usually mentioned. The last four or five books have all been about six months apart, alternating between winter and summer, so it just seems like more time has passed.

Sheila says

Max gets accused of murder and Annie has to find the real killer.

Val says

Very frustrating (in a good way). A Death on Demand mystery. Max calls to say he is going to be home late

and doesn't turn up. Annie is worried and becomes more so when a girl's body is found and it looks like Max is the murderer. With the help of her friends from the island, Annie proceeds to investigate and find her husband.

All the way through the book you feel frustrated that you can't help solve the disappearance of Max and why the girl is killed. Great writing; would recommend.

Jess says

I really like the Death On Demand series. Carolyn Hart's writing is always good, but I'm not as taken with her other series - the characters are somehow just not as tactile and reachable as Annie and Max and the rest of Broward's Rock.

I know a lot of people don't like book series which have the same cast of characters again and again. In theory, I agree that you can only go through so many permutations of the same cast list before things get stale. However, it's my opinion that the mark of a good writer - and a good series - is that each of the minor characters gets a chance to shine as well, which then allows your two main characters a chance to show other dimensions of themselves. Plus, since I often "see" the characters and storyline in my head as I read (sort of my own private movie version), everything is lent a little more substance and weight as the characters are built up over several books. Carolyn Hart's working on that premise, although she doesn't quite have it mastered yet, in my opinion. A brilliant example is Charles DeLint and his Newford stories, which appear in dozens of his novels, novellas, chapbooks and short story collections, and have interwoven character lines so complex that I am continually drawn back into his work.

That said, this new novel of Hart's features, as always, Annie and Max Darling, along with other faithful friends from previous books. The plot is one of Hart's favorites, a stalwart (familiar) character is framed for murder, but there is just enough doubt that something odd "might have happened" and a character whose integrity is supposed to be without question could have acted completely out of character due to extreme circumstances, such as blackmail, self defense, having been drugged, etc etc, and it's up to Annie, Max and the rest of the cast to prove their innocence, uncover the truth and save the day.

Mystery readers like loose ends to be tied up, so they inevitably DO save the day, but there are enough twists in Hart's plots so that, while you're reasonably sure the accused is innocent, you have a hard time putting together the clues on who the true killer is until the very end. And that, honestly, is one of the best things about Hart - she does keep you guessing. I usually have figured out the killer before the characters do, but not so early in the book that it spoils my enjoyment.

Kate says

"Annie Darling, owner of the Death on Demand mystery bookstore, is understandably upset. It isn't like her p.i. husband Max to abruptly disappear and homicide is definitely not his style. But when his car is found abandoned on a remote road with a brutally slain, once-beautiful young woman nearby and the murder weapon stashed in the trunk, Annie's worst fears seem justified.

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running out and she has only one slim chance to unmask a killer who just may have committed the perfect crime."

~~back cover

After so many books in this series following the same plot with different window dressing, this one came as a wonderful and welcome surprise. The only downside was another dose of Max and Annie's obsessive love for each other, which is guaranteed to warm most women's hearts but is so seldom encountered in real life.

Michele says

This series is just really, really fun to read. The twists and turns...the mystery bookstore as a central location...what could be better?

Lisa says

Really liked this book. I will read more of the series!!!

Barb says

Another fast moving, cozy mystery (# 17) about island bookstore owner Annie Darling and her P.I. husband. Carolyn Hart creates lots of suspense for the inhabitants of Broward's Rock, a beach community in S.C. This time Annie's husband Max appears to have murdered his lover and spends much of the book imprisoned while Annie and friends, never believing the overwhelming evidence against him, set out to solve the crime. A few loose ends leftover but otherwise an entertaining read.

FangirlNation says

Annie and Max Darling face their worst crisis yet in *Dead Days of Summer*, the 17th book in Carolyn G. Hart's *Death on Demand* series. Annie is disappointed when Max calls her one afternoon to tell her that he will be home late that night. He has a meeting with his new client at his consultation company Confidential Commissions. Then, Max disappears. While 200 volunteers mobilized by Hennie Brawley and Emma Clyde scour the whole island searching for Max, acting police chief Billy Cameron learns that Max was seen that night seemingly in the arms of another woman at a cheap bar. On a lead from the bartender, Billy finds Max's red Porsche abandoned on a deserted road, with the murdered body of the woman he was seen with.

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Amy says

Typical for the series. I am occasionally annoyed by some obvious plot holes or errors in SC descriptions in these books, but I keep reading them for light diversion.

In this case, I kept screaming in my head about the missing diary for them to check the internet for a blog or live journal. But they never did, coming up with their own weak solution, which I think will lead to a good lawyer crying "foul! entrapment!" in court.

the other big question (and no, this is NOT a spoiler) that never was answered for me-- we found out why and how the murder occurred, but never why the murder chose Max to frame. That bugged me.

From the Publisher

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Wendy says

This was an ok inn the series...some of plot lines went nowhere and the story was a little flat.

Anastasia says

Dead Days of Summer by Carolyn Hart is the 17th book in the Death on Demand mystery series. Annie Darling is the owner of Death on Demand mystery bookstore and her husband Max Darling runs Confidential Commissions. Max accepts a commission to locate a clients brother, but instead his client ends up dead and he is arrested for her murder. Annie, with the help of the other residents of Boward's Rock, set out to prove his innocence by finding the real murderer. I enjoyed this addition to the series, and it was good to catch up with the residents of Boward's Rock. It was good to see how everybody banded together, each bringing their own special skills to helping the couple, making the solving of the crime a combined effort. A comfortable, cozy read. I also think it is better enjoyed if readers are familiar with the series and are acquainted with the characters.

Helen says

This is #17 and I think MS Hart should rest a bit. I'm afraid the motivation for the murder is just too weak and I can't accept it. I've read the next one which was, I think, more plausible, so perhaps this is just a glitch. I love the characters, love the store & the cats and I can even accept the mother-in-law, although there are moments when she goes overboard. I love the community, although the island seems to be growing in size all the time, and Annie's friends are just what you want friends to be. I cannot accept that any police chief, no matter how small his community, would let civilians into police planning the way Billy does. The group does

push him into it, but I think most police types would clam up and freeze the friends out, even if it meant that a case was left unsolved. They almost have to with the way police investigations work and with the restrictions there are on what police can and cannot do. I still enjoyed it very much.

Gloria says

Totally enjoyed this fast paced book. Didn't want to set it down. Max was in jail for a crime he didn't commit or even understand. Annie set out to solve the mystery and put herself in danger during the process. Lots of friends were there to help and I had some problem keeping up with who reach person was. Still, I really enjoyed this murder mystery.
