



Murder of a Sweet Old Lady

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When she left Scumble River years ago, school psychologist Skye Denison thought she'd never be back. But after a run of bad luck in the big city, she has a new appreciation for the down-home charm of small-town life--and decides to start over in the town where she started out...When Skye's beloved grandmother is found dead in her bed, the family consensus is natural causes. Still, Skye insists on an autopsy--an examination that proves the sweet old lady was, in fact, murdered! But who could have done the deadly deed? Skye is determined to find out, though her snooping doesn't sit well with the relatives. Family tensions can mean only one thing: family secrets. And when a series of hooligan attacks on Skye's property leads to an outright physical assault, Skye has to wonder if by exposing the rotten roots of her family tree, she's one step closer to exposing the killer...

Murder of a Sweet Old Lady Details

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Jennifer says

I enjoyed this one much more than the previous, but the main characters were established in this one so it was more about the story and less about the world building. I did not like that the superintendent was trying to bully her into changing results to make the Mayor happy; and that he refused to hear about WHY she was fired from her last job. The fact that she actually caught him in an incriminating position was extremely helpful. Now, Mona's issues with the essay contest made a whole lot more sense. It wasn't that she was close minded and refused to hear anything other than her own opinion, it was that she herself had an abortion and it caused her all kinds of problems later in life. I did not like Mona, and I like her husband even less. I was surprised that Mona was the one who killed her mother; I was expecting Dante or Hugo. But, the reasoning made sense. I did not feel like we got a good enough explanation about Minnie's "episodes" especially since they reason they went away was because of Mona's abortion. I was getting really irritated with Simon during this book. Yes, he had a point that they had been seeing each other for 9 months and weren't making any progress in their relationship, but his constant pressuring of her was uncalled for. At the same time, Skye should have been more proactive in her dealing with him, instead of saying nothing so frequently. I'm not sure how I feel about Wally; I thought he overreacted a little bit to her going to the survivalist camp. I'm not sure she actually betrayed him. This was a fast, engaging read and I will be continuing with this series.

Colleen Earle says

This was really dark for a cozy mystery.

There was a lot going on plot wise so although I had my suspicions about who the murderer was I didn't quite have it down until the reveal.

I really like Skye. I find her to be really relatable because we are the same person only she has a career and a masters degree.

Love this series. Can't wait to read the next book.

Sheri says

Murder of a Sweet Old Lady (Denise Swanson)

Murder/Mystery. Skye Denison is a school psychologist. Not so perfect, she can't seem to lose those few extra pounds she gained after the break up with her boyfriend. After recently being fired from her job in New Orleans, and her break up, she returns home (reluctantly) to Scumble River, Illinois. She has been back for about a year, trying to adjust to her new job and her hometown.

Her grandmother dies, and Skye is not to sure it was of natural causes. The next day her grandmother's caretaker ends up dead as well. The local coroner deems her death a murder, and Skye is on the scene. Turns out her family has some hidden secrets, are these secrets scandalous enough to cause one of her family members to turn to murder? Skye is about to find out.

I am really starting to get hooked on this series. Skye is so likable. A bit over weight, unable to commit to a relationship, and definitely outspoken. A little bit of humor, descriptive details about life in a rural town , secrets, mystery and suspense. If you like a fun mystery you will enjoy this read.

Sarah says

As a fan of Denise Swanson's Dime Store series, I decided to tackle the 2nd Scumble River Mystery after having read Skye's first brush with death last fall. I will say at the end of "Small-Town Honey," I wasn't too keen on continuing with this particular series. I hadn't really warmed to Skye or any of her family, so I figured "Sweet Old Lady" would help me decide whether or not I would continue with this series.

Boy, I'm so glad I read it because I am finally HOOKED.

This mystery. Wow. So different from any other cozy I've read. A lot of the reviews I've seen of this book on Goodreads call Swanson out for being distasteful writing a cozy about a woman investigating her grandmother's murder where her family members are suspects. But I LOVED it. So dramatic and new compared to all the quaint, frilly mysteries that are out there today. This was twisted and dark and so juicy to read, and finally explained why Skye's family was so weird and often unbearable in the first novel. They've got baggage upon baggage, honey. Skye, even though she can be bratty with her bickering, is one of the most real characters out there in this genre. She's stubborn, she's haunted by her past, her love life is a mess, and she makes mistakes constantly. It's such a relief to read about a heroine who isn't the apple of everyone's eye. Skye struggles so much through this book, and it endeared me to her in a way that I couldn't quite get to in my first read of the "Small-Town Honey" Scumble River debut novel.

If you're a person that likes to read cozies because the heroine gushes about her pets, has a cutesy hobby, or has a fun love affair with the town's resident hottie, then this book isn't for you. If you want a mystery that is raw as it is riveting and solved by an amateur detective who could be your best friend, then you've found a series worth waiting for.

anonymae anonymae says

I read this series to learn how certain writing errors effect a readers experience of a story's narrative. I also read this series to learn about creative similes.

Jodi says

I don't know how I feel about this series. The main character is alright...but the description of her community just seems so absurd. Not to mention, the author took what could have been a decent enough "romance" and now seemingly has created a love...square? Idk if I can get on board. One more book and then I'll decide.

Deborah says

Enjoyable yet somewhat predictable mystery.

Darcy Palmer says

Main character: Skye Denison, a school psychologist.

Gabby says

I read this installment of the Scumble River series because I liked the first book enough to want more. Although this book was okay, I probably won't be reading more of the series. Skye Denison is the main character; she's a school psychologist and a snarky daughter. She doesn't have many friends which is probably because she doesn't put herself out much to get to know others. Two men are interested in her, and she says she has feelings for both of them, but she seems to have the emotional maturity of an adolescent which doesn't make for much of a romantic life. This book was bordering on distasteful because it involved the death of Skye's grandmother, and the main suspects were members of her family. Those people had all the charm and tact of a pool of sharks, so it was nearly impossible to become involved in any of their stories. The ending was not particularly satisfactory; not because of loose ends but because it really didn't seem to matter to any of the characters whodunit. I had hoped for much better after reading the first book, but I think it's time for Skye and me to part ways.

Vicky says

The chapter titles are ridiculous. Skye is not much of a heroine. For a psychologist, she certainly has no handle on her family and co-workers. She lets other people tell her what to do which creates a very weak character. Skye is very immature. And to be "afraid" in this day and age to have an intimate relationship with a man she is dating for 9 months is unrealistic. I managed to get through the story as I did with the first one. I will now begin the 3rd installment with the hope that the author matures her writing as well as the character. If I hadn't already purchased the set I would not read another.

Sara Smith says

I've read some other books by this author, but not in this series. I found this book to keep my interest, have quite a bit of mystery and some romantic interest.

Susan says

I read quite a few books in this series about 5 years ago, but hadn't read this one. Really. I couldn't stand Skye. I can understand why she is so aggressive given her extremely difficult family. But I don't understand her aversion to her parents hoping her out occasionally. And she dislikes it when she has to wait when she makes an appointment with someone, but is continually late for appointments she has.

Georgiann Hennelly says

When Skye finds her beloved Grandmother dead in her bed. The family believes it was natural causes. But Skye insists on an autopsy- an the examination proves the sweet old lady was murdered! But by who? Skye is determined to find out, though her family resents her snooping Skye persists. Even after a series of hooligan attacks on her property and an out right physical assault, Skye begins to wonder if by exposing the rotten roots of her family tree , is she one step closer to exposing a killer.

Wendy Wilson says

Funny and full of surprises! I was able to read it in a day. It would make a great beach or Saturday read.

Daniel says

This is just an okay book for me. The plot was a bit thin and the murderer's reason for killing the sweet old lady felt shallow. Even the supposed love triangle between the main character and the two guys after her didn't have much spark as, say, The Vintage Magic Mystery series by Annette Blair. It's cozy and easy enough to read during the cold season, but there's a lack of urgency from making me want to grab the next book in the series.
