



Feathered Quill Book Reviews

Feathered Quill Book Reviews
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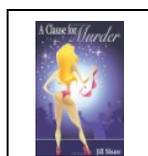
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Spotlight Reviews



[A Clause for Murder](#)

Jill Shure
Best Price \$6.73
or Buy New \$9.98



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A Clause for Murder

By: Jill Shure
Publisher: Syntax Books
Publication Date: October 2010
ISBN: 978-0982410530
Reviewed by: Deb Fowler
Review Date: November 9, 2010

Betsy Ross was the type of gal who only had one regret. Well, make that two. She rued the day her parents, Abe and Ida Ross, decided to name her after a seamstress. And secondly she regretted that Ken Blanchard always seemed to take her for granted, drifting in and out of her life. Mostly out these days. She thought to herself every time they played sleepover, "I didn't want this. I wanted a husband, a family, a ring on my finger, and a lawn mower." She had Sofia, her ten-year-old daughter, and no regrets there, but the dating game was getting to her. The most exciting thing that had happened to her in recent memory was when she had to go fetch Richard Kluger off the ledge of the building by telling him if he committed suicide it would violate the terms of his insurance policy.

Betsy's the lame name, insurance was her game . . . at Aloss insurance agency. It wasn't easy always "telling people about deadly illnesses and death benefits," but a job was a job and she was good at it. The Saturday night "leftover party" she attended with her best friend, Arlene Silvers, and a couple other friends had been a mixed bag. It was one of those events, "where everyone invites over her last great love and a few lesser loves, so [the] losers can be recycled." Everyone knows that recycling equals green, but Betsy only ended up going green with envy because that miserable Courtney Farrow, was after Ken. She was one of those gorgeous trust fund gals from back east who had everything going for her, including "guys [who] fell for her like bricks." As luck would have it, Courtney got totally miffed at Betsy and threw a drink in her face.

That drink just could have been a motive for murder. Next thing you know, Miss Trust Fund, according to Arlene, ended up "fried like a chicken" in her neighbor's garage. It wasn't long before Detectives Raine and Williams were checking out everyone who ever had anything to do with her. In the "man" department that meant half of San Diego. Betsy and Arlene had already checked out Courtney's condo and Betsy pocketed a "tiny telephone book" with nine names in it. Unfortunately for Betsy her very own "silver hoop earring with a single black pearl" had been clutched in darling Courtney's hand when she was unexpectedly fried. Threatening calls and notes began shortly after the murder. "Return the book, or you'll be sorry." Betsy surely was going to be sorry if she didn't figure out who killed Courtney. Misery loves company, but she didn't want to end up like another piece of Kentucky fried. Who really had a motive to kill Courtney? Why was that little book so important?

If you are into cozy mysteries with an adult theme, language, and humor, this lighthearted mystery will keep you chuckling with glee as you try to figure out who did it Courtney Farrow (a.k.a Delilah and Sydney Louise). You'll be ogling the pages as if you were a member of Courtney's fan club, a passel of men (and a few women) who couldn't keep their eyes off her when she was on the

Latest Book Reviews

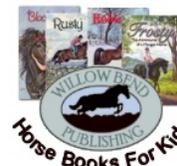
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Dancin' Beauties club stage. Jill Shure was able to keep me laughing, but also wondering whodunit. The main characters were well developed and I was anxious to see who was going to show up next. Betsy, who was part hottie and part Gidget, was a very appealing female "detective" most readers would like to see in a series. Of course that vixen, Courtney, Betsy's friends, and a few of their dashing admirers would be more than welcome to attend the next "leftover party."

Quill says: This mystery was a winner and if there's a sequel I'm in!

For more information on *A Clause for Murder*, please visit the author's website at: JillShure.com

Rendezvous Rock

By: Ricky Bray
Publisher: Robert Reed Publishers
Publication Date: April 2009
ISBN: 978-1934759257
Reviewed by: Deb Fowler
Review Date: November 2, 2010

Eric and Susan were young and in love, in as much love as any simple summer romance could offer two fifteen-year-olds. It was a "mismatched love affair" as his parents were millionaires and hers were nothing more than "mid-American trailer trash." The elixir of love didn't discriminate and it made no matter to Eric that he was an Episcopalian and she a declared witch. He was amused as she elicited a vow of true love from him as she proposed to marry him on Rendezvous Rock at midnight, the bewitching hour. Susan had woven a bracelet with her beautiful red hair to bind to his ankle as a remembrance of the night. Her mother, Florine, wanted reassurance that she had made the proper choice. Yes, she claimed, "He is the halfling that Sun Burst said would come. I will have him for my familiar and bear the Tertiary, or I will fail." (pg. 14).

Midnight soon arrived and the young couple consummated their love, vowing to return in ten years. Eric knew little about the impact of the vows he had taken, but Susan innately knew that what they had done had been portended for thousands of years. She danced for the Pale Queen and was ready for the future, but he knew little of what was expected of him. Susan's father, Russell, a familiar himself, was unsure that Eric would return. The young man was the Final Halfling and Susan, or Moon Tree, were a couple who had much to live up to. Russell knew "his sweetly dispositioned daughter carried the babe, who would carry the Changeling, who would change the world forever." (pg. 36) The girl with the red hair and mysterious emerald eyes would bear a daughter just like her. Sunburst, her granny, arrived to take her north on her year-long journey.

The prophecy had begun and the young couple had started their journeys. Eric soon learned about his heritage and would be trained to become a man, a warrior. The destiny of an entire race depended on their sole progeny. Susan's child, whom she named Gayle, was soon born. She was Terra Fey reborn. Some would call her Thunder Witch because of her amazing powers. Night Bane, the Warlock, would later say that "Her child [Gayle's] will be a male child who shares her unique talents. From his seed will blossom a thousand daughters bearing this new blood. They will be the mothers of a new race, what Thunder Witch's Father has named Homo superious . . ." (pg. 375) Yet there were others who wanted to kill their child, "The Changeling," as she represented the AntiChrist. Would Gayle survive the onslaught of those who wished her dead? Would Eric survive his training? If he did, would he remember his vow to return to Rendezvous Rock?

This seemingly simple tale, which starts off with a summertime romance between two young people, quickly explodes into an amazingly intricate, adventurous fantasy. The end result could have epic consequences to the civilization as we now know it. This is one of those tales that the reader slowly picks up pieces of the puzzle and puts them together. We know within the first few pages that Susan is a witch and embraces its creed as her religion, a religion she takes quite seriously. The secret history of her clan is slowly dispersed throughout the pages of the book.

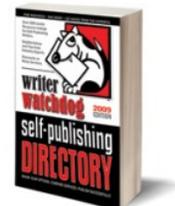
At first I thought there were several minor intertwined tales, but soon discovered it was akin to knitting an intricate Aran in which every stitch, or in this case "word," counts. The author had the uncanny ability to weave this tale in such a manner that continued to pique my interest throughout the entire book. My only criticism is that I would have appreciated a cast of characters in the front as it became confusing at times. For example, Jack also had the moniker Night Stalker and was the First Paladin. That aside, if you



BARBARA ARDINGER



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want to experience the power of a glammer in a book, get ready to be mesmerized!

Quill says: If you want a tightly woven tale of mystery, romance, adventure, and fantasy all rolled into one, you'll certainly enjoy Eric and Susan's story. You will be quickly drawn into the world of The Three Circles and learn about the seldom seen, yet powerful force of those who may live among us!

To learn more about *Rendezvous Rock*, please visit the author's website at: RickeyBray.com

Morning Mist of Blood

By: Eric Wilder
Publisher: Gondwana Press LLC
Publication Date: August 2010
ISBN: 978-0979116537
Reviewed by: Ellen Feld
Review Date: October 27, 2010



Buck McDivit is a handsome but down-and-out ex-cop who can't even get a loan for a new truck. He works several odd jobs and lives on a horse farm where he works part time, but he doesn't make enough to pay for more than the bare essentials. Life is dull for Buck in his hometown of Edmond, Oklahoma, but all that is about to change with a single phone call.

One of Buck's odd jobs is assisting the Logan County death investigator with investigations of suspicious deaths. A cowboy's body is discovered at the ranch of oil tycoon Clayton O'Meara, Buck is asked to help examine the murder scene. It is soon apparent that several cows are missing which leads Buck to wonder if they have been stolen, and if so, if that act somehow relates to the cowboy's death.

Clayton takes Buck into his confidence, telling him that there have been other suspected cattle rustlings on his property. The sheriff thinks a big cat, perhaps a bobcat, is behind the missing cattle but Clayton suspects that Roy Dunlap, another local oilman, may be behind the disappearances. Clayton hires Buck as his own private investigator to see if he can discover who is behind the thefts, if somebody is also stealing crude from his storage tanks, and if either might be related to the murder. And, oh, while you're at it, Buck, look into the neighboring "...commune populated by a crazy bunch of women." (pg. 34) They own about 200 acres right in the middle of Clayton's ranch, and the oilman would really like to buy the land and see the women move out. Buck has his work cut out for him!

Buck enlists the help of his best friend, Trey Calderham, an investigator for the Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association. Trey soon discovers some intriguing and unusual facts about cattle showing up at the local auction. As he digs deeper, Buck sets off to check out Lykaia, a commune inhabited and restricted to women, women who have done amazing things to make their 200-acre property energy efficient and self-sufficient.

There are a lot of things happening in *Morning Mist of Blood* but it is easy to follow along. Buck has to solve a murder, track down the missing cattle, deal with a panther, participate in some rather unusual pagan rituals, survive a bar fight and avoid getting killed by someone who really wants him dead. Oh, yes, and don't forget the old girlfriends! Sound like a lot? It is but it's also a lot of fun to follow along with Buck as he tries to survive it all and solve a crime.

Unlike some suspense novels that throw so many characters at the reader that it's hard to keep track of them all, the author introduces just enough characters to hold the reader's interest. They really come to life under the author's pen - I even got attached to Pard, Buck's dog, and Beauty, a wolf/dog cross owned by one of the women at the compound. They each had distinctive personalities.

Morning Mist of Blood is a good, old-fashioned western frontier mystery updated to incorporate many contemporary issues. And the all-women commune that takes Buck in to participate in some of their rather, um, risqué rituals, might appear from the outside to be every man's dream come true. But there is a murderer on the loose, and with Buck being drawn into ceremonies where his judgment is impaired (is he in a dream state or are people/animals/events real?), his life, and those around him, are in danger.

Quill says: A riveting read that blends mystery, suspense, and just the right amount of supernatural occurrences to keep pages turning.

For more information on *Morning Mist of Blood*, please visit the author's website at: www.EricWilder.com

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