

A Louisiana belle adjusts to life in Brooklyn.

KILLER CONTENT

Businessman Joseph Ferguson, unable to book a commercial flight, charters a plane that goes down in the Irish Sea. The pilot is dead, and so are three of his four planned passengers: Ferguson, shady broker Maurice Reid, unemployed hypochondriac Morgan Price, and childlike poet Harry Walters. Which of the men failed to board the flight? Why? Did he arrange the crash? Where is he now? The inquiries of Inspector Lewis and DS Young focus on Tower House, the home of Maurice's friend Charles Wade, where all three of the others had put in an appearance in the days before most of them died. Wade has obviously been marked by Maurice as lamb to be shorn; his daughter Hester is charmed and beguiled by Harry, whom everyone else heartily dislikes, an antipathy shared by Ferguson's wife (or maybe widow), Moira. A series of extended flashbacks to those last few days calmly skewers the pretensions of all the characters while allowing each of the four designated passengers to audition for the role of sole survivor. An acridly amusing 1945 short story, "No Bath for the Browns," provides a brief addendum that's worth every word.

For fans who like their nostalgia served with a side of wicked cleverness.



KILLER CONTENT

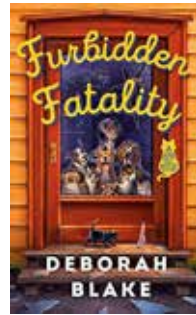
Blacke, Olivia
Berkley (304 pp.)
\$16.00 paper | Feb. 2, 2021
978-0-593-19788-2

A Louisiana belle adjusts to life in Brooklyn.

Odessa Dean might have been content to live life as a waitress at the Crawdad Shack in the minuscule town of Piney Island, which, according to her, is neither an actual island nor particularly filled with conifers. Instead, she's rescued by that linchpin of cozies everywhere: her maiden aunt. Instead of dying, Odessa's Aunt Melanie simply goes off to Europe for three months, leaving her niece to housesit a Williamsburg apartment that would be large even by Piney Island standards but is positively palatial compared to the efficiencies and squats her Brooklyn co-workers cram themselves into. Because yes, Odessa trades her Crawdad Shack apron for the neon green T-shirt that's the uniform of the waitstaff at Untapped Books & Café, where instead of shrimp po'boys she offers hummus and microbrews to local hipsters. The Untapped crew is a varied bunch. Izzy Wilson is bright and energetic, happy to spend her days making customers happy. Chef Parker Reed does his best to accommodate carnivores and vegans alike. But Bethany Kostolus aspires to more than serving the sandwich of the day. She hopes that her YouTube videos will propel her to fame as a nationally recognized maker of artisanal soap. Unfortunately, her dreams end in a fall from the elevated pedestrian walkway in Domino Park. Detective Vincent Castillo assures Odessa that Bethany's death was an accident, but Odessa isn't convinced. In lieu of the standard cute cop-vs.-talented amateur standoff, Blacke's quirky characters and offbeat

plot twists allow her debut to work some pleasing variations on the theme.

Refreshing fare.



FURBIDDEN FATALITY

Blake, Deborah
Berkley (288 pp.)
\$7.99 paper | Feb. 23, 2021
978-0-593-20150-3

A stray kitten starts a recent lottery winner on the journey to restore an animal sanctuary in spite of an evil dog warden.

Dropping off the kitten that's been wandering outside her Lakeview apartment complex is supposed to be a quick errand for Kari Stuart. But when she finds the shelter full to capacity, Kari wonders if she's going to be stuck with her new

“...the perfect treat that brings the holiday spirit to all ages and is a great story that families can share together.”
—Readers' Favorite

“...meaningful lessons of individuality and inclusiveness that resonate with readers of all ages.”
—IndieReader.com

“Miscreants on Santa Claus' naughty list are recruited to help save him in this debut children's novel.... An original and action-packed holiday tale... ”
—Kirkus Reviews

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