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When Tori Sinclair's philandering ex turns up dead, the police chief believes it was murder-and that Tori may have been involved. Now, only the girls from the sewing circle will be able to help keep her life from coming apart at the seams...

When Tori accompanies the circle's fiery matriarch to the local health clinic, the last person she expects to run into is her ex-fiance's great-aunt. And the old woman is so shocked at seeing Tori that she promptly has a heart attack and dies. Now that Tori's philandering ex, Jeff- the man she's vowed to stay clear of- has shown up in Sweet Briar, insinuating he's ready for another shot with Tori...

Then Jeff turns up dead, apparently from a heart attack as well. Except the police chief believes it was murder- and that Tori may have been involved. Now she must rely on her ladies from the sewing circle to help her piece together the clues while she keeps her life from coming apart at the seams...

Dangerous Alterations Details

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From Reader Review *Dangerous Alterations* for online ebook

Dyana says

The women of the Sweet Briar Ladies Society Sewing Circle - Tori, Georgina, Leona, Margaret Louise, Dixie, Debbie, Melissa, and Beatrice - are a tight-knit group who gossip, share, celebrate, console, investigate, and sew together. At times these books can be a bit saccharine, but there is always a mystery to be solved. The theme for this book seems to be women who have been betrayed by philandering men.

Margaret Louise and Tori accompany Rose to a local health clinic while she gets an IV treatment for rheumatoid arthritis. While there, Tori recognizes a woman named Vera Calder. She is the great aunt of her ex-fiancé Jeff who lives in Chicago. Tori had moved to Sweet Briar to start her life anew after he cheated on her. Vera is there with her step-son's wife who's name is Lynn. Lynn is there getting a chemo treatment for cancer. Tori and Vera stare at each other in recognition and soon after Vera dies of an apparent heart attack. Did seeing Tori cause it? Tori is asked to call Jeff with the news and like an idiot, she agrees. He says he will be on the next plane and asks Tori to pick him up at the airport. She agrees again. Jeff tells Tori he made a mistake by cheating at their engagement party and wants her back. At the funeral his girlfriend Kelly shows up and shoots daggers at Tori. Also Garrett, Lynn's husband, shows up with his mistress. Lynn is still living with him because she needs his insurance for her medical bills. Vera leaves all of her inheritance to Jeff and none to Garrett, but Lynn gets the house.

Milo Wentworth, Tori's boyfriend, is away at a summer teaching conference. In the last book he asked her to marry him, but she is stalling in giving him an answer because of her insecurities involving what Jeff did to her. She doesn't tell him over the phone about Jeff being in town, and he is upset when he finds out from one of her friends. Jeff jogs by the library one day and about an hour later drops dead on the street of an apparent heart attack. The police chief believes it was murder, and he feels Tori may be involved somehow.

There are several minor subplots:

- Nina, Tori's assistant at the library, is on leave because her baby is due soon. Dixie, the former librarian, is helping out at the library and wanting to make some changes. Tori is nervous about leaving her alone in the library.

- The ladies of the sewing circle spend a weekend away in a luxurious cabin, but Georgina and Tori are called back to town because Tori's office at the library has been destroyed by a fire. Did Dixie accidentally start it by plugging in an old coffee pot or is something more sinister going on?

- Leona, the southern belle and only non sewing member of the group, doesn't want anyone mentioning Chicago, is hiding something from her past, and reacts badly to Tori and Lynn's relationship with their cheating men. She thinks the men are better off dead. Leona is fleshed out in this book and we find out what made her who she is today. Leona and Rose spend a lot of time bickering, but do they really care for each other?

- Paris, Leona's male bunny, is growing fat. He has a surprise in store for everyone and also provides the comic relief in the book.

- Throughout the book the ladies are making comfort pillows for people visiting the IV center. There is a pattern for them in the back of the book.

One pet peeve I have is that all the characters in the book call Tori Victoria. Only the author calls her Tori in relating the story. Another thing is that Tori (see, even I am doing it) is always gasping, gulping, swallowing, gaping, wiping away tears, dropping her mouth open, taking a breath of air, repeating back one word answers when talking to people, and saying "What do you mean?" - all showing her many insecurities. It's annoying. Toughen up girl. At one time or another, Tori doubts Milo when she finds he made a brief visit back home without telling her, doubts some of her friends, and wonders if they might have a motive for killing Jeff. The author also keeps repeating the obvious - things we already know. A good read, but I see room for improvement.

Linda says

I am a fan of Elizabeth Lynn Casey's Southern Sewing Circle cozy mystery series, and I can honestly say that Dangerous Alterations is my favorite book so far! This book has it all: the death of Tori's ex-fiance, an "incident" at her beloved library, insight into Leona's personality, news from Melissa, more "cuteness" from Lulu, and a girl's weekend away. The Sweet Briar ladies are so much fun to read about.

Leslie says

Enjoyed, but needs some more editing

Was a good book and I enjoyed it. Only issues was lots of words are ran together. A few no big deal, but there are so many it became annoying. Would be nice if editing took another look.

Teri Stich says

This series is just so much fun. Books, Sewing, Murder what could be better!!!

Linda says

While I've loved every book in this series, I have to say this was my favorite. The friendships among the sewing circles ladies are growing stronger, but also becoming more complex. The main character, Tori, is my idea of the perfect cozy protagonist--kind, intelligent, insightful, and (of course!) intensely curious. Long live the ladies of the Southern sewing circle!

Amanda says

Disappointing. Usually, when there is a themed mystery series the books main focus is on that theme. So i really thought there would be a sewing focus. This barely talked about sewing. Her work at the library was the main focus. Perhaps it would be a better fit with a library series. Also, the title had nothing to do with anything in the book.

Hilary (A Wytch's Book Review) says

Tori and Margaret-Louise are supporting Rose through her treatment at the hospital, as Tori glances round she realises that her ex-fiance's Great-Aunt Vera is there with another lady, when Vera suddenly drops dead Tori needs to phone Jeff (the ex) and let him know. Just after the funeral Jeff turns up wanting another go at a relationship with Tori (she gives him rather short shrift!) and she thinks that is the end of it, unfortunately the next day he drops dead whilst out jogging. Tori is shocked but doesn't think there is anything else to it (the whole family have a history of heart problems) and so she heads off with the majority of the sewing circle to enjoy a weekend away. Not long after they arrive, however, Georgina (the Mayor) receives a phone call - the library is on fire!

Tori and Georgina head back, only to discover that the fire was deliberate and that so was Jeff's death, now the whole group needs to pull together to find out the truth of both matters, and to stop the wrong person being stuck sewing mail bags!

Melissa says

I really enjoy this series! Tori's friends help her solve the mystery. I really like the friendships involved with the Southern Sewing Circle. The community really helps each other out.

LORI CASWELL says

We are back in Sweet Briar with Tori Sinclair and the ladies of the Southern Sewing Circle. In this installment Tori's past comes back to haunt her.

First at a local health clinic Tori runs into her ex-fiance's great aunt Vera. The old woman seems shocked to see Tori. Tori is shocked when the woman dies on the spot, most likely from a heart attack. Vera's death brings slime-ball Jeff to Sweet Briar for the funeral and he has the nerve to ask Tori to take him back.

Tori is also worrying about Dixie, the former head librarian, filling in for her as she takes off on a weekend retreat with the Sewing Circle. Then she learns that it seems Jeff has fallen over dead during a run around Sweet Briar, from a heart attack as well. Heart problems run in his family but even Tori believes this is too much of a coincidence. The police chief thinks so too and even thinks Tori may be involved in the death.

It's time to gather everyone together and try to piece together what really happened as Tori tries hard to keep for life from ripped apart at the seams.

Dollycas's Thoughts

I love this series and I love these ladies. The story is filled with one surprise after another. Elizabeth Lynn Casey has outdone herself with this one. It is easily the best book in the entire series, but knowing this author the next one will be awesome too. The characters continue to grow, the story is full of layers that will continue into the next installments. The mystery or should I say mysteries are clever. I will say there were at least three places in this story when I said "OH MY GOSH", totally unexpected, off the wall twists.

As the time passes, the friendships of these women have grown so that even though some are already family, together they are building a new family all their own. Tori has been in Sweet Briar a very short time and now with her past up close and personal she has the entire support of the ladies of the Southern Sewing Circle. She needs them more than ever in this story. They protect her and fight for her like she was their own, daughter, niece or sister. They are there to help her pick up the pieces and move forward. These friendships are the core of this series. To move away from one life to start over in a new place is extremely difficult but she has been welcomed and embraced by this town totally.

Every trip to Sweet Briar is a pleasure. The residents of Sweet Briar just stitch themselves right into your heart. I'll give Tori and friends some time for things to settle down. I know the next book is in the works and I can't for my next visit.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Berkley Prime Crime. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. Receiving a complimentary copy in no way reflected my review of this book. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 : "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

Amanda Meggs says

Overall I have found Tori to be quite an irritating main protagonist. She doubts and mistrusts her boyfriend and friends on a regular basis, and has to 'wipe away a tear' way too often. The mysteries in the series are fairly obvious (to me anyway), but not impossible. I have come back to the series a few times but I'm afraid this will be the last one for me as I hoped Tori would improve and she hasn't grown at all, still seems to be the same character even though again and again it's proven that he can trust her friends.

Beth says

Less mystery more character story

This book focused much more on the characters, their back stories and movement forward. The victim inspired no sympathy and the solution was obvious fairly early in the book. Still a good story and installment in the series

Grey853 says

I really wish I liked Tori, the protagonist, more. I do like the writing and the other characters, but Tori's nearly constant self doubt gets on my nerves.

When her ex-fiance comes to town and starts to make an ass of himself, it's no surprise that he gets knocked off pretty quickly. Then everyone comes under suspicion. However, the culprit is pretty obvious from the beginning.

Overall, I do like the women in this series, though some of the bickering and interfering in Tori's life can be a bit much. There is humor and excellent dialogue. I guess my biggest beef is Tori's lack of confidence and poor decision making. It's like she never learned to say no or stand up for herself. She needs to do that and do it fast. It would make this series so much better for her to find inner peace and strength.

Gail says

I am having fun reading this book with my friend Melissa and comparing notes. I just love this series! I love the growing friendships with the women of the Sweet Briar sewing circle. They always come together to help each other out. They have a great idea for the comfort pillows for cancer patients. I was even surprised by the ending. Did not see that one coming but I did get a little suspicious near the end. Looking forward to the next book in the series!

Rage says

this is really cozy. the focus isn't the murder - I was reading digitally, so I know that I was 65% of the way through the book before anything is even established as murder. the focus is Tori's absent fiance (he's taking classes), and how Tori has recovered from a broken heart, and how terrible broken hearts are, and working at the library, and ladies sitting together and sewing. there's a lot of banter, jokes about age and ringtones and people acting nosy about Tori's love life. I think for some readers this would be just perfect. not for me, but for many readers on here!

Carla Johnson-Hicks says

Even though this is the 5th book in this series, I had no trouble following the story. There was a lot of background given (over and over) so I knew a lot about this group of ladies. The women of the Sweet Briar Ladies Society Sewing Circle - Tori, Georgina, Leona, Margaret Louise, Dixie, Debbie, Melissa, and Beatrice - are a tight-knit group who gossip, share, celebrate, console, investigate, and sew together. There are times they are rather short and sarcastic with one another (at least Rose and Louise) but it is sorted out at one point.

In this story, Tori's ex (the one who cheated on her at the rehearsal dinner) comes to town for the funeral of his great-aunt. It is also the mother-in-law of the woman, Lynn, who Tori just met at the hospital getting chemo for breast cancer. Margaret Louise and Tori were there with Rose while she was getting an IV treatment for rheumatoid arthritis. Jeff wants to get back together with Tori but his girlfriend Kelly is not happy about this turn of events. Also Garrett, Lynn's husband, shows up with his mistress. Lynn is still living with him and not pursuing divorce because she needs his insurance for her medical bills. Vera leaves all of her inheritance to Jeff and none to Garrett, but Lynn gets the house. With that all being said, it is no surprise that Jeff ends up dropping dead and there is more than one suspect. For some reason, Tori feels that she needs to investigate, after all, she was engaged to Jeff.

Even though the mystery is the main storyline, there was a lot going on. Tori was not as intrusive a sleuth as

in some other series I have read, in fact, there were times that the mystery definitely took a back seat to some of the drama in the lives of these ladies. Tori is loved by all, but seems to be a bit simpering at times. I am not sure if I liked her or not. I did not dislike her, but she did not seem like a friend that I would sit down with. She has left her boyfriend Milo hanging for several months after he asked her to marry him because inside she thinks she was the cause of Jeff cheating on her, come on girl. I had figured out who and how the murder had occurred much earlier in the book than the big reveal. Not sure if this is a series I will continue with or not.
