



# Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake

*Sarah Graves*

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*Life just got a little sweeter in the island fishing village of Eastport, Maine. Jacobia “Jake” Tiptree and her best friend Ellie are opening a waterfront bake shop, The Chocolate Moose, where their tasty treats pair perfectly with the salty ocean breeze. But while Jake has moved on from fixing up houses, she still can't resist the urge to snoop into the occasional murder.*

Jake and Ellie have been through a lot together, from home repair to homicide investigation. So when they decide to open a chocolate-themed bakery, they figure it'll be a piece of cake. With Ellie's old family recipes luring in customers, they expect to make plenty of dough this Fourth of July weekend. Having family home for the holiday only sweetens the deal for Jake—until the ill wind of an early-season hurricane blows up her plans. When the storm hits, Jake's grown son Sam is stranded in a Boston bus station, and her husband Wade is stuck on a cargo ship. But as bitter as the storm is, something even more sinister is brewing in the kitchen of The Chocolate Moose—where health inspector Matt Muldoon is found murdered.

Ellie never made a secret of her distaste for Matt, who had been raining on their parade with bogus talk of health code violations. Now, with no alibi for the night of the murder, she's in a sticky situation with the police—and it's up to Jake to catch the real killer and keep Ellie living in the land of the free.

**Includes a Recipe!**

## Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake Details

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Author : Sarah Graves

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## **From Reader Review Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake for online ebook**

### **Jill says**

I received this book as part of a Goodreads giveaway, thanks to Kensington Books and Goodreads for the opportunity. This book started out as an interesting cozy mystery, but just lost me along the way with some crazy fixations (the tracking device on Ellie's boat) and some far-fetched storylines (being chased and shot at without the police being involved and the whole escapade with Marla and the hospital) that just made the story seem disjointed overall. I like a good cozy mystery, but it has to be realistic to keep me engaged.

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### **LORI CASWELL says**

#### **Dollycas's Thoughts**

Sarah Graves ended her Home Repair is Homicide Mysteries back in 2013. To her fans delight, she has brought the characters back in this new Death by Chocolate Mystery series. Jake and Ellie have opened up a bake shop on the waterfront and the town of Eastport still has a murder problem and this murder happens right in their business, The Chocolate Moose. Matt Muldoon has been after them since they opened with one complaint after another, even saying he would report them to his "friends at the Maine State Health Department". Ellie couldn't stand the man, but she can't be the only one. She didn't kill him but she and Jake will have to find out who did or Ellie may find herself working in the prison kitchen.

These characters were very well developed in the previous series but are now facing new situations as they try to get their new business off the ground. Enough background is given so new readers should not feel lost. They do mention the crimes they have solved before but it is not too much to take over this new story. Jake and Ellie are both strong women and work together very well.

In addition to the dead man in the kitchen, there is a hurricane headed toward Eastport and the town is planning for their huge 4th of July celebration. Jake and Ellie have a huge order for Chocolate Cherry Cheesecakes for the silent auction. Also, Jake's dad is in the hospital when the story begins. To say these ladies have their hands full is an understatement.

The story rolls along at a great pace as Jake and Ellie find themselves in some dire situations. Twists and turns aplenty keep us readers on our toes. I did enjoy the interaction between the ladies and chief of police Bob Arnold, he trusted them enough to be able to accept their input because they have a history with this type of situation. Jake's family life added a nice subplot and I was so surprised by Sam's announcement.

Fans of the previous series will love this spin-off, new readers will fall for these characters too after reading this book. I have to say spin-offs are rare and hard to do in cozy mysteries but Sarah Graves has done a fine job. I am looking forward to future stories with Jake and Ellie.

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### **?Dani? ?Touch My Spine Book Reviews? says**

I give this book 4.5 out of 5 Delicious Stars! The reason I picked up this book is because I love a good cozy and the author sounded rather familiar! I must also admit to myself, that I chose this title due to that yummy looking cover! I mean doesn't this book scream YUUMmmm! After re-reading the premise and starting the story I realized that I have read a few of Sarah Graves' previous titles in her Home Repair is Homicide series which I loved! I will jump in here and say the main reason I gave it 4.5 stars instead of 5 was because I feel this book should be marketed more as a spin-off because it was very helpful knowing some of the character's stories at before reading this novel. I do think this book could be read on a standalone basis but probably best if you have a feel for things first. I highly enjoyed this fun murder mystery that was filled with so much adventure! This was exciting and I enjoyed the pace while catching up with some of the characters! I actually loved the characters and the baking gave me the super munchies! I think this is a great edition to Sarah Graves's collection of stories! I am sure I will enjoy the following book in this series as well and I am definitely ready for a new adventure!

I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review from Kensington Books and all views and opinions expressed are my own.

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## **Kristina says**

Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake by Sarah Graves is the first book in A Death by Chocolate Mystery series. Jacobia "Jake" Tiptree co-owns The Chocolate Moose in Eastport, Maine with her best friend, Ellie White. They have agreed to make a dozen chocolate cherry cheesecakes to be auctioned off by the Coast Guard to pay for the town's fireworks. Jake received an early morning call from Miss Halligan who owns Second Hand Rose that the door to the chocolate shop was ajar. When Jake arrives at The Chocolate Moose, she finds Matt Muldoon dead in the kitchen with his head in a pot of melted chocolate (what a waste of good chocolate). Matt had been trying to get the ladies out of their shop with baseless (and ridiculous) accusations that he would report to the health department as violations. Ellie is at the top of the suspect list thanks to her recent altercation with the victim. Jake needs to prove that Ellie is innocent of the crime while trying to get the cheesecakes baked in time for the auction without their commercial ovens. Then they discover a hurricane is heading towards Maine, and they need to batten down the hatches. Jake is also worried about her son, Sam who failed to arrive home from Boston (afraid he fell off the wagon) and her father who has left the hospital against medical advice (and he refuses to stay in bed). Even with a hurricane heading their way and the threat of Ellie being arrested, they must get the cheesecakes done. Thanks to overwhelming demand, they now need to make twenty-eight instead of twelve (the town is not canceling their Fourth of July celebration). Can Jake prove that Ellie did not kill Matt Muldoon? Will they get the cheesecakes done in time for the auction?

Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake is the first book in A Death by Chocolate Mystery series, but it is technically a continuation of A Home Repair is Homicide Mystery series (there are sixteen books in that series). I was not aware of this until I started the book, and I felt like I had been plopped into the middle of a series. I wish the author had taken the time to introduce her readers to her characters in the beginning of the book, because I felt lost and confused. We are given more details on the characters as the book progresses (thankfully). However, I never fully connected with the characters and I felt out of step (there were still holes not filled in). Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake is packed full of action. There is one situation after another throughout the story. The action starts with the murder in the first chapter, then Jake and Ellie almost get hit by another boat when fog strands them in the water, Jake's father disappearing from hospital, Jake's father takes off with car (and with his medications, he should not be driving), Marla and her dog attacked, lack of chocolate to make cheesecakes, Jake and Ellie breaking into Marla's house, someone shoots at the duo, Sam is missing, Hurricane Amber and so much more. I wish the author had cut down on the zany

incidents. It was too much and I beginning to wonder if Jake had a death wish. I wanted more solid content. I did find some aspects of the book to be unrealistic. Most mystery readers will have no problem figuring out the identity of the culprit long before it is revealed in the book. There is a repetition of information in the story especially regarding the stepmom's attitude towards cleaning (the same details are repeated over and over). I know it is a culinary mystery, but the author did not need to include so many scenes on the baking of the cheesecakes. The ending felt rushed (take away a baking scene and the ending could have been less abrupt). For readers who love Sarah Graves A Home Repair is Homicide Mystery series, you will enjoy the continuing antics of Ellie and Jake.

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### **Peggy R says**

This is the first in Sarah Graves' new Death by Chocolate Mystery series. Jake (Jacobia) and Ellie are friends who decided to open a bakery together in a small town in Maine. I enjoyed both characters, but I went into this book not knowing that it and the characters were a spin off from another series by this author. Having said that, once I found that out it made sense why I felt like I was missing something with these characters. They had a backstory that was already established and at time I felt like I stepped into the middle of something. The story had a fast pace, the murder happening in the very beginning. Jake and Emily have to prove that she did not kill the victim, with whom she did not like as was trying to make trouble for the bakery. There was so much going on that at times it was hard for me to keep up and the story felt a bit muddled. There were definitely some twists and turns that I didn't anticipate and I didn't realize the full identity of all the culprits involved.

I voluntarily read an advanced reader copy of this book provided to me by the publisher through Netalley.

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### **Lisa Morin says**

Eastport, Maine and Jacobia "Jake" Tiptree are back! I was so excited to see that Sarah Graves has a new series out featuring one of my favorite protagonists.

Seeing Jake and Ellie together again was incredible. Having this series featured around their new bakery is brilliant. The name of their shop is delightful, aptly named The Chocolate Moose.

Getting ready for the town's 4th of July celebration has Jake and Ellie running ragged, they are busy baking chocolate cherry cheesecakes to be auctioned off and the proceeds used for their fireworks display. Jake is used to working under pressure, but when the body of the health inspector is found in the shop's kitchen, it seems that Elli has the biggest motive for wanting him dead.

Jake is no stranger to murders so it comes as no surprise when she becomes involved in the investigation.

Fans of the series by Sarah Graves that first introduced us to Jake, will absolutely love this fantastic story. I cannot wait to read more in this top notch series.

I voluntarily read an ARC of this book provided by the publisher and NetGalley.

#DeathByChocolateCherryCheesecake #NetGalley

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## NicoleG says

An entertaining first in series cozy! I did not read this author's previous series with the same characters but I wasn't too lost since the author did a good job of giving the reader background information. A well plotted mystery with several twists and turns that had me guessing until the end. I enjoyed reading this book and it made me want to go back to the author's previous series.....

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## Betty says

The first book in a new series. Sarah Graves has long been a favorite author and she does not disappoint. This book is full of suspense and continues the life of Jacobica Tiptree and her friend, Ellie. The pair has open a bakery featuring chocolate 'goodies' in Eastpoint, Maine. It is the 4 of July and they are baking Chocolate Cherry Cheesecakes to be auction off at the town's celebration. The body of the health inspector Matt Muldoon is found in their bakery. Ellie has made it clear she did not like him. The clues point to her as the killer. Jake's attempts to clear Ellie from suspicion will take on thrilling boat rides, hidden tunnels, the appearance of large amounts of cash, betrayal by friends, and the arrival of a hurricane. Jake's father is recovering from a heart attack, her son, Sam is stranded in Boston and Wade, her husband is guiding ships into the harbor. I highly recommend this book.  
Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake recipe is included.

Disclosure: I received a free copy from Kennington Books through NetGalley for an honest review. I would go thank them for this opportunity to read and review this book. The opinions expressed are my own.

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## Carrie says

When picking up Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake by Sarah Graves I was under the impression that this was an all new cozy mystery series and with that highly appetizing cheesecake on the cover I knew I needed to read it. But once starting to read the book I found that the "First in a new series" is a bit misleading with this one.

Sarah Graves has written the Home Repair is Homicide series which consists of sixteen books and what she has done is taken the characters from that particular series and come up with a spin off by moving them into a new setting. Now I for one am the type to do my best to avoid jumping into something mid series because I always get that feeling of something missing so imagine my disappointment when immediately starting this one that feeling arose thinking this was a true book one.

Starting off the story jumps right into the action and I became on alert when it was mentioned Jacobia "Jake" Tiptree had experience solving murders. So within the opening pages there really wasn't an introduction to this character I'm supposed to connect with at all. Then after tossing the reader into action there was a bit of character development which at that point felt a bit out of place beginning to give the story a disjointed feel.

Now it's rare for me to rate a cozy so low because it's usually the characters and setting that I fall in love with so being a tad disconnected from the start wasn't a good sign. But as I went on I was still expecting a 3

or 4 star read despite the rough beginning but what I found was quite often the story would get a little overly descriptive for my taste as in what they were baking etc etc but then fly through the actual mystery parts that should have gone a little deeper.

The flow just felt off to me throughout so in the end I wasn't a huge fan of this one. I will say though that those that were fans of the author's previous series and these characters will probably feel right at home and absolutely love the series but for me being a new reader this one just wasn't my cup of tea leaving me to rate this at 2.5 stars.

I received an advance copy from the publisher via NetGalley.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress....>

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### **Tari says**

What a whirlwind of a mystery! I definitely never saw the solution coming, lots of clever plot twists and schemes too as well as murder.

Jacobia better known as Jake, owns a specialty bakery with her friend Ellie. Imagine her surprise at finding a dead guy in her shop with his face planted in melted chocolate, chocolate that had been melted to use on the dozens of chocolate cherry cheesecakes she and Ellie had promised the 4th of July fireworks committee for their annual auction. All fingers point to Ellie, especially when she was there and did have the motive that the dead guy, who turned out to be health inspector Muldoon, was harrasing her about fake health code infractions.

Jake knows she has to clear her friend's name, there's a big hurricane storm coming, she's not heard from her grown son in days and there are all these cheesecakes that need baking. Everything of course works out in the end but boy was it a fun ride getting there.

I loved the humor and banter between Jake and Ellie as well as their friend Bob, the police chief who always managed to look the other way when they were investigating but still gave them his usual "don't go around snooping" line. It was awesome that there were a couple of abandoned dogs that found homes, one with Jake and her family (its owner was in the hospital) and another with a local challenged man who picked up odd jobs here and there.

It was pretty fun reading about the fourth of July in the middle of winter! I'm anxious to see what the next installment brings!

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### **Lori says**

Jacobia "Jake" and Ellie open a new bakery in Eastport, Maine. When they arrive to make cherry cheesecakes for a town celebration, they find someone in their chocolate. The state police suspect Ellie. Jake and Ellie set out to find the real person responsible. Although the first in a series, I felt lost on this one because the characters referred to other mysteries they solved. Only after reading another review did I realize the same characters appeared in a previous cozy series and just "got a new job." Unfortunately for those of us

who did not read the previous series, nothing helped warm us to the characters, and we missed out on a lot of character development. The plot seemed quite convoluted. The persons who did it were far too obvious as well. While I may eventually read future installments, I will not rush to do so.

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## **Lesa says**

Sarah Graves' latest mystery, *Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake*, marks the return of Jacobia (Jake) Tiptree from the *Home Repair is Homicide* mysteries. This book kicks off a new series, and a new adventure for Jake. Don't worry, though. Jake will always find a way to be involved in a murder investigation.

Jake opened *The Chocolate Moose*, a bake shop, just six weeks earlier with her best friend, Ellie White. And, Matt Muldoon has done nothing but harass them since the shop opened, threatening to complain to the state health department. When Matt is found murdered, left for dead in the bakery, Ellie has to admit she's not sorry he's dead. Even the man's wife doesn't seem sorry he's gone. But, Ellie's the one without an alibi, and her fingerprints are on the murder weapon.

While Jake and Ellie continue to bake cheesecakes for the vital Fourth of July auction, Jake has a million worries. How does she prove that Ellie is innocent? How does she cope with the failing health of her father, a man willing to break out of the hospital to end his days at home? Hurricane Amber is heading directly at Eastport. And, what about Jake's son, a recovering alcoholic and addict whose phone conversation is cut off as he's trying to explain where he is?

Welcome back to Jake and Ellie, two strong, courageous women, determined to find a killer. Eastport, Maine, is described so well in this book that the town almost becomes a character. *Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake* is an intense, action-packed mystery filled with surprises.

It's been five years since Graves' last *Home Repair is Homicide* mystery, and, I'll admit, I had tired of them. But, *Death by Chocolate Cherry Cheesecake* launches a new series in the hands of an expert. Fans will welcome the return of Jake and Ellie, while new readers can jump into this book with no qualms.

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## **Taryn says**

In this first book of the series we are re-introduced to characters from a previous series that the author has written. I liked the change because I got to visit with old friends but life has changed up a bit for them which brought a freshness to everything. Jake has finally finished with all the renovations on her home and is looking for something new to sink her teeth into. Enter her best friend Ellie, together they decided to open up *The Chocolate Moose*, a bake shop filled with lots of chocolate treats. When Jake finds a local dead in the shop, his head in their chocolate melting pot, she's not sure who it is or how they got there. When she finds out that it is a local who has been giving them nothing but trouble, especially Ellie, she knows that it's time to figure out just what happened and why. Along the way the ladies have to deal with baking dozens of cheesecakes, being almost ran over by another boat, and an oncoming storm. With all that is going on will they be able to keep Ellie out of jail and the bake shop open? Will all the cheesecakes get done in time for the auction? Follow along and see. This was truly a wonderful read, I loved seeing the move these characters made and look forward to what happens with them next.



I received an ARC of this book, all thoughts and opinions are my own.

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## **Moondance says**

**It was a bright summer morning, the first day of July in the remote island village of Eastport, Maine--three hours from Bangor, light-years from anywhere else---with a salty breeze snapping in the banners over the seawall and the sun glittering on the bay.**

Jacobia (Jake) Tiptree and Ellie White have opened a bakery in Eastport, Maine called the Chocolate Moose. They have been tasked to make a dozen chocolate cherry cheesecakes for the Coast Guard to auction off for the town's firework display. Jake is shocked to find local trouble maker, Matt Muldoon dead in the bakery's kitchen. The local police are convinced that Ellie is the killer. Jake and Ellie work to find the true murderer.

It was nice to catch up with Jake and Ellie. I enjoyed meeting them in the Home Repair is Homicide series. I like the new venue of the bakery as a backdrop for the story. Jake is married to Wade and her son, Sam is now in his twenties. In addition to the murder, the island is on target to be hit by a hurricane and Jake's father has checked out of the hospital against medical advice following a heart attack.

I enjoyed the storyline and thought this was a good introduction to the series. There were a lot of twists and turns with a number of shady characters. Any time spent in Ellie's boat freaks me out. It seems there is always some issue that makes the trip a challenge.

This was a book that I stayed up to read because I wanted to see what was going to happen next. It was definitely a wild ride. I look forward to the next book in the series.

3.5 stars

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## **Carla Johnson-Hicks says**

I picked this book up as it was advertised as the first in a new series. What I didn't know was that these characters were well loved in another series, so there was a lot of character development and relationship information that I was lacking, through no mistake of my own. Jake and Ellie have opened up a bake shop on the waterfront of town Eastport, called Chocolate Moose. Apparently, Jacobia (Jake) has experience helping to solve murders, so when the annoying town inspector ends up murdered in their shop, Ellie is the main suspect. Matt Muldoon has been after them since they opened with one complaint after another, even saying he would report them to his "friends at the Maine State Health Department". Ellie didn't kill him but she and Jake will have to find out who did or Ellie may find herself under arrest. In addition to the dead man in the kitchen, there is a hurricane headed toward Eastport and the town is planning for their huge 4th of July celebration. Jake and Ellie have a huge order for Chocolate Cherry Cheesecakes for the silent auction. Also, Jake's dad checks himself out of the hospital after having a heart attack. There is so much going on that I am not sure how it all gets sorted out.

Jake and Ellie are both strong women and work together very well. Jake's husband, Wade, makes a few appearances in the story, but is not a major player. Bob the sheriff is another good character and he does not

want Jake and Ellie investigating on one hand, but feeds Jake information on another. The story rolls along at an okay pace with Jake and Ellie getting themselves in several sticky and dire situations. There were a lot of twists and turns and the conclusion pulling everything together was well done, but I found I did not really get invested in the story. If you are familiar with Sarah Graves' other series and these characters, you will probably love this book. The publisher generously provided me with a copy of this book via Netgalley.

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