



Cappuccinos, Cupcakes, and a Corpse

Harper Lin

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A new culinary cozy mystery series with recipes from bestselling author Harper Lin

Francesca Amaro moves back to her hometown of Cape Bay, Massachusetts, and takes over the family business, Antonia's Italian Café. She spends her days making delicious artisan cappuccinos, until she stumbles upon her neighbor's dead body. When the police discover Mr. Cardosi was poisoned, Francesca becomes a suspect.

The victim's son, Matty, happens to be Francesca's old high school friend. Together, they uncover the secrets of the locals in order to find the killer in their idyllic beach town.

Includes two special cupcake recipes!

Cappuccinos, Cupcakes, and a Corpse Details

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From Reader Review Cappuccinos, Cupcakes, and a Corpse for online ebook

Sheryl says

More like 2-1/2 stars. I thought the story was actually a bit boring. The mystery was weak and the reason Francesca decides to start sleuthing instead of leaving it to the seemingly more than competent detective is pretty dumb. (Although oddly we don't see the detective doing any investigating. We only hear about it when Francesca talks with him once or twice.) Fran jumps to a lot of wrong conclusions proving she really doesn't know what she's doing. I know she's an amateur sleuth but she seems worse than most. Overall, it was fairly boring. At least it was short and didn't take much time to listen to. I also wasn't a huge fan of Margeurite Gavin's narration. I know a lot of listeners love her as a narrator but I don't really care for her. Her voices for the characters are excellent but her non-dialog voice, the one she uses for the regular narration, irritates me. It always sounds a little too dramatic, in my opinion. If I do decide to try book 2, it will be in print instead of audio, but I doubt I will continue with the series. It just wasn't enticing enough.

Simona says

Honestly I was disappointed with this book.

Firstly it took me ages to finish it, even though it was a quite short one, but I had to force my self to pick it up and continue. At some points I was so bored, that I even thought of dnfing it.

Secondly, I quite like cozy mysteries, that are funny, fluffy and with a little bit of romance, but there were nothing interesting about this book. The mystery was poorly done, the main character Fran was 30 and something years old, but sometimes acted like she was a teenager. All the time she gave an impression, that she can do everything better, than the professionals. Also there were lack of character development overall, because I couldn't care less about any of them. Well, maybe I'm lying, actually I liked the dog and that's all. Moreover, there were nothing funny about this book and the romance between characters felt strange.

Thirdly, the ending was too rushed compared to the rest of the book, and didn't make any sense.

Do I recommend this book ? Definitely not.

Kylie D says

A sweet little cozy that sees Fran return to her hometown after the death of her mother, just to stumble across the dead body of one of her neighbours. With the help of her neighbours grandson Matt, an old school friend, Fran attempts to solve the murder. I found this book an enjoyable light read. A refreshing change from all the grim murder stories out there. I often found myself grinning at the predicaments Fran found herself in, especially when stray dogs were involved. All in all a fun read and I will be looking out for the rest of the series.

Tamara says

I enjoyed this cozy mystery.

??Hannah?? says

This was a very enjoyable book. It was a fast read too. Francesca has moved back home where she is running the old family business. While out walking she stumbles across a dead body. He happens to be the father of a old high school friend. She then spends the book helping the deceased mans son Matt find the killer. The killer was a surprise but then the author really never gave many clues. With the ending the way that it was I will definitely be picking up the next book.

Delitealex says

Good start to a new series. Francesca returns to her hometown after her mom dies to take over the family business. She ends up getting in the middle of a murder investigation by finding a neighbor's body while walking home from working at her family's coffee shop. I liked the characters. I enjoyed how seriously Fran was about investigating. It was also fun to see Matt and Fran reconnect. I plan to read the rest of the series.

bookaholic_kim says

Now i get the cover of the book. Why it is titled as Cappucionos, Cupcakes, and a corpse. The story line and the mystery is very light like the colors in the cover. I really think that if you are starting to read mystery then this series is for you.

QNPoohBear says

Kindle freebie at time of download-worth paying for.

Francesca Amaro has returned to her hometown of Cape Bay, Massachusetts from big city living in New York following the death of her mother. Francesca takes great pride in running her late grandparents' café and lives living in their old house, her childhood home, among all the family friends and neighbors. Sometimes though, the local busybodies are too much for Francesca! On her way home one day she discovers a neighbor, Mr. Cardosi slumped over his morning coffee – dead. When the autopsy reveals Mr. Cardosi did not die of natural causes, Francesca's old classmate Mike is on the job trying to solve the mystery. Francesca is frustrated by lack of progress and wants to help her old friend Matteo solve the mystery of his father's death.

I loved this book! There's a strong mystery that's impossible to solve (no clues), a bit of romance and a lot of local color. I especially liked the local color. Having spent my summers on Cape Cod, I know exactly what Cape Bay looks like and smells like and how annoying tourists can be. I was trying to figure out where Cape Bay is supposed to be and I naturally assumed Cape Cod, but it appears to be North Shore because Plymouth

is the nearest town with a big box store. I also loved the coffee shop aspect. At first there was too much coffee and not enough food but once cupcakes entered the picture, I was sold. The book contains some very yummy sounding recipes I must try. However, even small New England towns can boast excellent coffee shops with authentic Italian espresso- so don't be afraid to visit us outside the pages of a book.

I strongly identify with Francesca- Italian-American girl returning to her New England coastal hometown from big city living (check), loves cupcakes (check) and values family food traditions (check), pet lover (check). She's smart about her investigating and uses her knowledge of the locals and their love of gossip to get answers. She doesn't go off recklessly or try to prove anything. Her chemistry with Matt is awesome. They're definitely more than friends and NOT brother and sister! He's sweet and fun. It sounds like Matt is also a successful businessman and loves living in his hometown. He had a complicated relationship with his father but that doesn't mean he's not grieving. I like how comfortable he and Fran are together and how she knows what he needs.

Mr. Cardosi sounded so familiar! I think my great-uncle Frank WAS Mr. Cardosi, minus the murder. Mr. Cardosi was SO Italian! He was proud, temperamental and held a grudge. Yet he had a hidden softer side he didn't often show the world. I liked him in spite of his faults probably because my dad is going to be like that when he's a little older!

There aren't too many other characters here besides Fran's police officer friend Mike. He's tough but fair and sympathetic. He gets tough when he has to be but otherwise is sensitive to the situation. There's also Sammy, Franny's right-hand woman in the café. She's almost too perky and kind to be true. I'm not sure I like her. There are a couple of local figures appearing in the novel but I don't know if they will be recurring characters. Finally, there's Latte, my favorite character. I won't reveal too much about him but I liked him a lot. Some of his behavior wasn't all that normal for a pet but I liked how he was included in the story.

This series has something for everyone. My library has this series on audiobook (MP3) and I plan to download them and listen soon.

Anne says

Really enjoyed this book. Liked the characters a lot and the way it was written. Will look for more books by Harper lin. Nice cupcake recipes too!

Meg says

I'm a fan of Harper Lin; I feel she tells a good story, with a good flow, relatable characters, and, yes, editing that was A-OK! To top it off, this series has a great setting; who wouldn't love a cozy cafe in a seaside setting, especially one that has been in the family for seventy years? There is the added bonus of the MC reconnecting to an old male childhood friend (albeit under sad and trying circumstances), and a slow but steady rebuilding of that friendship. I also liked that the MC started investigating with the thought in mind that whatever she pulled together would be shared with the police; she didn't start out, as so many MCs unfortunately do, by thinking the authorities were just simply incompetent. I enjoyed this one and have already started the second in the series.

Kevin says

I decided to read this because it was a Cozy Mystery Corner and as an added bonus was available today on Amazon for free.

It was a fast and fun read, I read it this afternoon in a few hours, it's only novella length what the book lacks in length and the strength mystery plot, it makes up for in extremely likeable characters. So give it a try, like I said it's FREE today on Amazon so you have nothing to lose, except for a few hours of reading time.

Gaele says

AudioBook Review:

Stars: Overall: 4 Narration 4 Story 4

Full of hope, humor and a rather conflicted sense of self from our heroine Francesca, she's returned to Cape Bay Massachusetts to take over her family's Italian Café, after living in New York for years. Francesca is strangely conflicted in her self-awareness: her self-revealing declarations often conflict with one another. It offers an intriguing entrée into her personality: her moods and her self-confidence seem to ebb and flow consistently, following the path of her mood of the moment. But, back in familiar surroundings with her childhood friend Matty (Matt), she's using the time to grieve for her mother as she returns to the familiar.

Now, things are proceeding smoothly and everything is as expected until, when walking home from the shop, she finds a body, her friend Matt's father. Not entirely convinced the elderly man's death is from natural causes, along with helping Matt through his grief, she decides to snoop about a bit. In between the rather quick to solve mystery, Matt and Fran start along a rather tepid, if sweet, romance. Light, quick reading and perfect escapist fun, the story bounces about to the end, with a mystery that doesn't overtax, but is clever in construct.

Narration for this story is provided by Marguerite Gavin, and her presentation of this story is perfectly suited to the lighter nature of the story's tone, even with it being a murder mystery. The fun alliteration of the title, that hints to more within is not leading you off course, and Gavin's pacing and tone for Fran are perfectly suited to the rather optimistic and "tomorrow is a new day" attitude that Fran hopes to put forth. Moments that allow for her occasional insecurities to step to center stage, as well as clearly presented distinctions to present each character with their own presence in the story help to keep the reader engaged and aware of the goings-on. A wonderful presentation that presents the story for what it is, engaging, fun and light mystery, perfect for those moments when an escape is desired.

I received an audiobook copy of the title from Tantor Audio for purpose of honest review. I was not compensated for this review: all conclusions are my own responsibility.

Review first posted at < I am, Indeed

Noriko says

I picked up this book with my friend's recommendation saying this is a typical yet a delightful cozy-mystery that leaves you feeling warm and fuzzy.

I'm glad that I trusted her judgment and actually read it because what she said turned out absolutely right. I really enjoyed and adored this cute cozy-mystery.

In most cases with cozy-mysteries, protagonists - typically heroines - tend to get on my nerves. They are either have hardly any strong reason for their own little investigations, or they are hopelessly and frustratingly stubborn and obstinate. I especially loath heroines who smugly assumes they can do way better than law enforcement and take the matters into their own hands.

In this cozy, the heroine, Francesca, is nothing but amicable, sweet and compassionate. She has just gone back to her hometown after her mother's death to take over the cafe and it's not long before she reels from her own bereavement when she runs into the dead body of her nextdoor neighbor.

As Francesca commiserates Mat, the deceased's son, they find out Mat's father was actually poisoned and they decided to run their own investigation and Francesca takes the lead.

As they spend some time going to lunch and dinner to touch base, they start to develop a relationship that's slightly beyond a friends' catching-up.

As you can guess, this is a typical cozy-mystery, but like I mentioned, Francesca never comes across either too pushy or obstinate. Granted, her motives for the investigation is not strong nor convincing enough, but it flows naturally and I think that's what we should condone/let it slip when cozies are involved.

More than anything, I really appreciate the author striking a perfect balance in writing a heroine, Francesca, without being too nosy or irritating.

The romantic development between Francesca and Mat is also delightful and heart-tingling. The flow feels so natural, there's nothing that I found forced or convenient. Perfectly executed. I enjoyed the slow-burn relationship that gradually departs from the one between friends.

Lastly, the culprit reveal. I think what makes the reveal really suspenseful and thrilling is the involvement of Mat. I cannot give away the plot, but the fear of losing someone you really care always enhances the tension of the sequence and it worked just right with this book. I found myself holding my breath with my hand over my heart, not wanting any of my favorite characters to get hurt!

The ending left me curious and hopeful for the sequels. I am itching to know how Francesca and Mat end up (they are already so perfect and adorable being together though) and the sender of the roses!! The author left out the answer to the question, or did I miss it??

Either way, this is a winner for me and I'll bet you enjoy this sweet cozy-mystery if you enjoy the genre.

Gary Sundell says

Enjoyable story. The mystery was a bit weak. I enjoyed the characters and the friendship between the MC and Matt. On the upside, no cop boyfriend and no romantic triangle

Trisha says

This was an adorable little cozy mystery.

It was such a fast read and I liked that the plot wasn't drawn out or elaborate. I love that meeting Matty was sweet and light and never got all detailed and odd.
