



Progressive Dinner Deadly

Elizabeth Spann Craig

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Who wants chips and dip when they can have Dickens and Twain?

To the residents of the sleepy town of Bradley, North Carolina, hardworking Jill Caulfield seemed beyond reproach. She volunteered at the women's shelter, worked at the church preschool, cleaned houses for extra money, and actually enjoyed yard work. And she was nothing less than a saint to cheerfully put up with her unemployed, skirt-chasing, boozier of a husband.

When intrepid octogenarian sleuth Myrtle Clover caught Jill, her new housekeeper, peering into her medicine cabinet, she should have been upset. But discovering that Jill wasn't such a squeaky-clean goody-goody made her vastly more interesting in Myrtle's eyes.

Myrtle would have happily continued figuring out what made Jill Caulfield tick. If Jill hadn't foolishly gone and gotten herself murdered, that is.

Progressive Dinner Deadly Details

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From Reader Review Progressive Dinner Deadly for online ebook

Lynn Demsky says

GREAT read! Entertaining, likeable characters - well written and just plain fun! I felt sorry for Myrtle trying to get the Book Club to read classic books, had to super frustrating as a retired schoolteacher! Love all the old Geezers!

Dawn Michelle says

3 1/2 Stars

I didn't like this one as much as the first one [though there are plenty of laugh out loud moments in this book; I snarked a lot while reading it]; it was a bit convoluted and I am not totally convinced in the why's of the murders. That said, it was still a decent read and I will be continuing on in this series; I really love Miss Myrtle and her sense of humor and her intelligence and her not wanting to get shuffled off to the nursing home just because she is old[er]. Good read!

Mascanol says

Sometimes I just can't resist the 99 cents digital books. This cozy has the oft seen older woman busy body trying to outdo her lazy police chief son. Add in a few cronies and a few dogs and cats and you're set for a quiet evening at home.

JoAnn W. says

I would give this book one-and-a-half stars if I could. I did finish it, although I was tempted to put it down several times.

I will say that I enjoyed the characters and found most of them interesting and believeable. Some reminded me of people I have known.

I also enjoyed the portrait of small-town white Southern life with their values, priorities, and behaviors, in many cases different from those in my part of the country.

But I found it boring for the most part. I didn't enjoy the long, lengthy conversations, and I found the plot totally unbelievable, more like a comic book than a novel. I also wasn't impressed with the writing style. It reminded me of my high-school short-story writing class.

Nola Arganbright says

What a fun Cozy Mystery series! I love Myrtle Clover. In this book the Book Club decides to convert to a Dinner Club when Myrtle suggests changes, hoping for a better genre of books. What can go wrong with a progressive dinner? Anything is possible when octogenarian Myrtle Clover is involved!

I loved this character even though she may not be the sweetest berry in the patch. I could remember a teacher I had that could fit her shoes. She is a quirky crime solver and that gossip that everyone loves to tell their problems to.

I am so excited because I discovered that I have 5 more of the series on my Kindle!

Rebecca says

Even giving this book 2.5 stars would test my generosity. It just isn't that good and the constantly shifting POV drove me bonkers.

Bettyann Hegland says

I enjoyed the second installment in this series more than the first. The writing seemed a little tighter and more focused on the plot and character development. Our protagonist, Myrtle, seems a little more "real" and less of a caricature of what a younger person assumes an octogenarian to be. Since I'm a cat lover, myself, the addition of the feral cat, Pasha, enlivened the story.

Karen B. says

Another fun adventure with Myrtle Clover. The more Myrtle Clover books I read the more I enjoy them. The personalities are consistent and I love the way Myrtle uses her garden gnomes to protest her son's trying to keep her from investigating murders. Myrtle's neighbor, Erma is always a delight in her way of annoying Myrtle. It seems like there is always some miscommunications involving Myrtle and her book club. In this book, Myrtle is trying to get the group to focus on more "meaningful" literature for reading. Myrtle's idea gets twisted around and suddenly it's "Myrtle's idea" to change the club to a supper club and hence the progressive dinner. Myrtle actually thinks it's a horrible idea. Add to that the fact that everyone knows Myrtle is a horrible cook and that is preparing dessert part of the dinner ... adds even more humor. One of the dinner hostesses is murdered; a woman supposedly everyone loved but in reality, a lot of people had a reason to not like her. Using her friend Miles as her sidekick, comparing him to Watson for her Sherlock Myrtle investigates to dig for the truth; much against Police Chief son Red's consternation. This series makes it seem that becoming an Octogenarian sleuth is something to look forward to after retirement.

Elaine Bidstrup says

Myrtle, a very proper, single, retired octogenarian school teacher is president of the local book club. She is very displaced with the trivial "beach reads" the club has been reading and conspires with her friend, Miles,

to begin reading classic literature. Other members of the club find this idea reprehensible, as they had trouble understanding the "book about the Boy Scout and the bird" (To Kill a Mockingbird to the rest of us). Her plan degenerates into a progressive dinner supper club, which eventually leads to not one but two murders! Myrtle has 'helped' her son, a local policeman, solve another murder, but her son wants her to keep out of it. Instead, he tries to get her involved in activities he thinks are suitable for someone her age. I agree with Myrtle that this makes her furious!

LLona Cunningham says

Normally I love the antics in a good cozy mystery --- but after reading 10% of the book I still didn't know what the mystery was. Lots of people having conversations I wouldn't stick around to hear even if I was there in person, and several people I honestly didn't care about.

On the chance that I just wasn't in the mood for this pace, I'll give it the 2 stars because it has a good cover design and might appeal greatly to someone else, just not to me.

Laura says

Okay, I couldn't finish this book. I enjoy a good mystery now and then, but honestly, I could not get interested in a single character of the book. The main character is a retired school teacher named Myrtle. Myrtle came across as holier- than-thou and not at all likable. I actually didn't care what out a single character. If a book doesn't capture my interest within the first quarter, I put it down. Wished I hadn't wasted my time.

Marti says

Myrtle, a retired English teacher, was frustrated with her book club. She felt they were wasting their time reading and discussing drivel while she longed to have discussions on the great works of literature. Unfortunately, her idea got co-opted into a supper club. On the night of the first progressive dinner, one of the members of the club wound up dead on her kitchen floor, lying in a puddle of blood. Myrtle, who had an interesting relationship with her son Red, the local police chief, vowed to solve the crime before Red did. Along the way, Myrtle becomes friends of sorts with a feral cat she names Pasha. Of course, Pasha winds up being key to the story. This certainly was not great literature but it gave me an enjoyable few hours of reading nonetheless. For lovers of cozy mysteries, this one is a nice choice.

Connie says

This book could have used another round of editing or two. The characters were disagreeable to me -- not entrancingly disagreeable, just disagreeable. They warmed up and so did the plot by the 8th chapter. It's a pretty good mystery. I haven't read any of the other series by this prolific writer. This book needed some more critical re-work by the author and her editor. It could be worth it.

And the octogenarian protagonist is 6 feet tall? Really? She "reads" diminutive.

Cute cover.

Tj says

The Myrtle Clover mysteries series are a cookie cutter style of books. Having said that I must in all honesty say they are also entertaining. Myrtle is a retired English teacher living in small town American. She is in her 80's and is not ready to go gentle into that good night.

Myrtle like all good mother's thinks her son still needs her help. Fortunately for Myrtle and her nosy nature, her son Red happens to be the chief of police and she is all too willing to help with the occasional murder. She has also been known to show displeasure with her son by displaying her vast collection of garden gnomes in her front yard.

In Progressive Dinner, Myrtle's plan backfires. Being a retired English teacher, she wants to upgrade the class of books her book club reads. She isn't the bodice ripper type. With the book club not being the Shakespeare crowd, a progressive dinner club seems like a perfect way to upgrade the club.

The club is to move from house to house sampling different parts of the meal. Myrtle being less than a stellar cook is bored to tears until one of group is murdered. Myrtle's inner Sherlock is ready to solve the case!

If you like someone who is ready to take on the world, who is more than a tad nosy, and works the "little old lady" shtick to her advantage, then give this series a try. (Hey you gotta love garden gnomes as a torture device.)

Theresahpir says

Like several other reviewers, the reason for my reading of this particular title was largely based on the fact that I acquired the ebook for free! And, while I wouldn't classify it as one of my favorite reads, I did enjoy this book for what it was.

What it was, in my opinion, was a great example of a cozy mystery. It wasn't super exciting and fast-paced, but the plot moved along adequately enough as Myrtle, the retiree-turned-super-sleuth, tries to solve yet another murder in her small, southern town. Sex, drugs, violence and all the other things you find in more mainstream mysteries is present, but scaled back and not overly graphic. Obviously, there needs to be a certain level of suspension of disbelief employed, especially when evaluating the individual characters (who seem more like generalized stereotypes rather than real people with real flaws), but at the same time, there is a level of truth in the idea that maybe our secrets aren't as secret as we think they are...and that maybe our neighbors aren't as fond of us as we think.

Third in the series, Progressive Dinner Deadly is actually the second Myrtle Clover Mystery I've read and the formula seems to work well. This was a comfortable and familiar read, perfect for a rainy day. It wasn't without a few laugh out loud giggles either. However, this book was a little different than the other one in the series I've read; this one seemed to throw in the element of a DOUBLE mystery, which was interesting,

albeit a little predictable. Overall, I gave this book a fairly neutral rating. It isn't for everyone but there's something addictive about these series. I'll definitely be keeping an eye out for more about Miss Myrtle!
