



## Between a Book and a Hard Place

*Denise Swanson*

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**Between a Book and a Hard Place** Denise Swanson

**The New York Times** bestselling author of *Dying for a Cupcake* returns with a new mystery filled with lost family, hidden treasure, and long-buried secrets...

Five-and-dime store owner Devereaux “Dev” Sinclair moved to Shadow Bend for her family. But when her long-lost mother shows up in town, she realizes too much kin can be killer...

Shadow Bend’s library closed years ago because of budgetary problems, so when a wealthy benefactor offers to reopen it, everyone, including Dev, is thrilled. But Dev’s excitement wanes when she realizes the mysterious donor is actually her runaway mother Yvette’s latest husband, Jett Benedict.

Dev suspects that Yvette and Jett’s intentions aren’t as noble as they appear, but before she can discover what they’re really up to, Jett turns up dead—and all clues point to Yvette as the prime suspect.

Even though Dev has no loyalty to Yvette, she’s in a bind. Setting the record straight could prove her mother is a killer. But doing nothing might get her mother booked for a crime she didn’t commit...

## Between a Book and a Hard Place Details

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Author : Denise Swanson

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## **From Reader Review Between a Book and a Hard Place for online ebook**

### **Becky says**

Now that Dev's dad is working at her Dime Store, the cast of characters in this series is even more interesting to read! One of the things I especially enjoyed reading about were the Civil War stories, since I do not live anywhere near Missouri and only know about my state. Those tidbits were easily part of the whole story. Throw in some UFOs and ETs with Dev and her friends and time is enjoyably spent reading! I am looking forward to Book 6--what did happen to the gold?

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### **ette says**

I was enjoying this series but this one did not work for me. It starts with the town suddenly worried about an alien invasion. It felt too far fetched. I may try the next one in the series hoping it gets better.

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### **Regan says**

Another romance hiding behind the cozy genre. I like romance, I really do. And I like cozy mysteries. But I like them separate and having an entire cozy series based on a love triangle is really disappointing. Swanson tells a good story when she sticks with her mysteries.

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### **Vivian says**

A great cozy mystery series that I have enjoyed so far. This one was a little different - there seemed to be more focus on the romance aspect than the mystery aspect, which is fine as I usually like a little romance with my cozies. What I didn't like about this book was the love triangle - I don't personally get much out of a love triangle, so this aspect didn't appeal to me. Overall, however, a cozy that I would recommend to fans of the genre.

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### **Julia David says**

I like Dev, her friends and family. Just when things seem to be getting better, she is thrown for a loop when her mother shows up after 13 years. Everything goes down hill from there. Her mother and father are getting cozy, her mother's husband is murdered, her mother is a suspect and her father could be if Dev doesn't do something. So, Dev and her friends try to figure out who murdered Dev's step-father.

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### **Sarah says**

\*Sigh\* 5 books in and the love triangle is still going strong with Dev no closer to deciding which man she wants (And why the heck are they putting up with that crap??) As a result, I have to honestly say, I did not like this book. It might have pulled off a 2 or 3 star rating had the triangle been wrapped up. Instead it's actually kind of a love square now, with Jake's ex-wife living with him and all, which makes the entire thing even more absurd.

Plus, we have aliens, ghosts and a hypercritical mom (who has no room to criticize, since she abandoned her teen daughter years ago when the money dried up and her husband went to jail), yay.

This book was a huge disappointment to me. I **hate** love triangles, they make the woman look like an idiot who can't make up her mind. Oh yeah, that's right, that's **exactly** what Dev is. But it doesn't make the guys look much better, since they put up with it. The mystery was interesting, but I there were just too many distractions. Like, could Poppy maybe grow up a little and stop acting like such a brat about her dad, and then maybe he could stop being such a jerk too. Because really, they're getting old too.

Done with this series. I just don't care enough to wonder who Dev picks, if Poppy and her dad ever make up or if the damned aliens are going to take Nadine away.

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### **Jamie says**

I didn't like this book as well as the others. It was a little slow getting started. Aliens, the murder of Dev's stepfather felt like there were several different things going on but I enjoyed the ending when everything came together. I love that her mother made an appearance in this book. I'm really getting bored with Dev's love life. It feels like this has gone on forever. I am ready for her to choose and move on. Her life feel like its in neutral and not going anywhere. I plan to read the next book in the series and hope that this is straightened out soon.

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### **Colleen Earle says**

Definitely didn't like this book as much as the books that I've read from Scumble River

Swanson also writes romance novels and it shows more in the book.

The beginning was a bit slow but it picked up after the murder.

Will probably check out the other books in the series to see if I like the characters more when their lives aren't as complicated

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### **Kristina says**

Between a Book and Hard Place by Denise Swanson is the fifth book in A Devereaux's Dime Store Mystery

series. Devereaux Sinclair owns Devereaux's Dime Store and Gift Baskets in Shadow Bend, Missouri. Devereaux is getting used to having her father back in her life. Kern Sinclair was recently paroled (even though he was innocent). Things are going well until Devereaux's mother returns to town with her latest husband, Jett Benedict. Jett has offered money (financing for three years) to the town for the library which has been closed (for quite some time). He only asks for access to the libraries archives immediately. The town, of course, agrees. While Jett is busy in the archives, Yvette (Devereaux's mother) is busy flirting with Kern (Devereaux's father). Then Devereaux gets an urgent call to come to the library. Jett Benedict is dead with Kern and Yvette at the scene of the crime. Devereaux quickly comes up with a plan (she does not want her father to violate his parole). Devereaux gathers up her friends and set out to find who wanted Jett dead and why did Jett want access to the towns archives. Devereaux also has her two love interests vying for her attention as well as dealing with Jake's ex-wife, Meg and Noah's crazy mother, Nadine (who swears that aliens are invading the town).

Between a Book and Hard Place has interesting characters, a good setting, and an intriguing mystery. I am disappointed, though, by the lack of character development (they have not changed much since the first book). I was hoping that the love triangle would be resolved in this book, but it is still alive and strong. This book does contain some humor (it will have you laughing). Unlike other cozy mysteries, this book does contain foul language and some sex related scenes (steaming up the windows of Jake's truck). The mystery was easy to solve (there were not many suspects), but I liked following the clues to the end. I give Between a Book and Hard Place 3.5 out of 5 stars. I hope the next A Devereaux's Dime Store Mystery will have more mystery and less on the love triangle (or maybe it can be resolved).

I received a complimentary copy of Between a Book and Hard Place in exchange for an honest review of the novel.

Check out my review for additional details: <http://bibliophileandavidreader.blogspot.com/2013/07/between-book-hard-place.html>

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## **LORI CASWELL says**

### Dollycas's Thoughts

A tangled web, Dev's mom returns to Shadow Bend and it is a complete surprise to Dev but not a surprise to everyone. Her mother, Yvette, moved on years ago leaving Dev behind. Why come back now? and with another new husband? Dev is on high alert, her mother is up to something. Her husband Jett has offered a huge amount of money to reopen and refurbish the town's library. He says he is a history buff and all he asks is that he be able to do a little research in the library's archives. Before he can delve too deeply someone kills him and Yvette is the prime suspect but Dev and her dad could be on the suspect list as well. Dev doesn't really want to help her mom but she would do anything for her dad so she is going to track down the real killer and be sure he is booked for murder.

I whipped right through this story. Unlike the the last installment Noah and Jake are both back in town vying for Dev's affection. Things get a little steamy with both of them but they both have their share of excess baggage. She is going to have to choose one or set them both free soon, but I certainly don't know what I would do in her situation. It does make for fascinating reading.

The author gives us a fun mystery to solve too. One that takes us visiting all over Shadow Bend and searching back in history too. You know Missouri was kind of split during the Civil War and Shadow Bend

families were also affected. I loved tagging along following the clues and putting the pieces together.

Denise Swanson writes a fantastic story with characters I have grown to care about. She fills the story with mystery, mayhem, suspense, and a liberal dose of romance and romantic tension. Seriously, those guys are going to come to blows one day :)

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### **Kelley says**

Novel received courtesy of Goodreads.com First Reads Give Away

This was my first "cozy" mystery. I had a difficult time getting into the book, not because of this book, but because the last one I read was so good! The characters were pretty well-rounded and the plot was enough to keep me interested. I understand now why they're called "cozy" mysteries and I know I'll need to have a different mindset when I start the next one.

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### **Lisa Ks Book Reviews says**

Another great installment to the Devereaux's Dime Store Mystery series!

Author Denise Swanson once again pens a mystery that will delight her fans. She knows exactly they want, and she delivers.

My favorite part of this series is time spent with Dev in her store. I really enjoy reading about the gift baskets she puts together.

Skilled writing, and a love of her craft are very apparent in Ms. Swanson's books. **BETWEEN A BOOK AND A HARD PLACE** was a wonderfully paced story with just the right amount of mystery and suspense to keep the reader quickly turning the pages from the beginning, straight through to the exciting reveal.

Rather you're new to this series, or a returning fan, **BETWEEN A BOOK AND A HARD PLACE** will make the mystery reader in you extremely happy.

At the back of the book you'll find a sneak peek of Denise Swanson's newest Scumble River Mystery, **MURDER OF A CRANKY CATNAPPER!**

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### **Grey853 says**

Dev's mother is back in town along with her new rich husband, much to Dev's dismay. The woman dropped Dev off 15 years ago to be raised by her grandmother and then went off to find her fortune elsewhere. To say Dev is still angry about being abandoned would be putting mildly. That said, her mother is a complete bitch and why anyone would give her more than a few seconds of his/her time is beyond me. The constant criticism and nasty, obnoxious comments usually aimed at Dev are really hard to read.

The ploy is that her mother's new husband is donating a huge amount of money to refurbish an old building and make it into a library. The reality is that the new husband is flat broke and is looking for the "hidden" treasure rumored to be stored in the old building.

Meanwhile Dev is dating two men at the same time. Nobody seems the least bothered by this. Personally, I hate romantic triangles in a book, especially when the woman takes both people for granted.

I read the first book in the series some time ago and didn't like it much and I don't like this one much better. The writing is improved, but the characters are still annoying and unlikable.

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### **Susan says**

I feel that I read this book under false pretenses: Dev's long-lost mother returns to their small town with her new, rich husband who is going to bankroll reopening the library. I thought it was another library book. Actually, the library--though the scene of the crime--has little to do with things; it's never reopened; nobody works there. Okay, just my personal preference. At any rate, when a body is found, Dev and her two suitors, plus her long-time buddies, work at finding the murderer to clear Dev's father and mother, who are both suspects. I don't mind some romance in mysteries, but this series is too rom-com for me. Also, the pride most of the characters take--in 2016!--in their Confederate ancestry is rather distasteful.

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### **Yvonne says**

In this fifth book of "A Devereaux's Dime Store Mystery" series, Devereaux "Dev" Sinclair has her hands full. She has two sexy men fighting for her attention and now her long-lost mother, Yvette, has returned to Shadow Bend. Dev is determined to ignore her mother, the same way her mother has ignored her all these years but nothing is ever that simple.

When Shadow Bend's library receives a monetary donation so that it can re-open its doors, Dev is stunned to learn that Yvette and her new husband, Jett, are the donors. However, Dev can't help being suspicious of their intentions. When Jett turns up dead, Yvette is the number one suspect. Dev isn't all that concerned about her mother but the evidence not only points towards Yvette, but towards Dev and her father as well. She has no choice but to track down the real killer. She asks for a little help from her friends, which include the two men fighting for her.

I've been a fan of Denise Swanson's Scumble River cozy mystery series for years. So, I was thrilled when she started a new series. I read the first book, which I loved, but as usual I fell behind on my series reading and missed the next couple of books. I have them, just haven't had a chance to read them. When the latest book came out, I skipped ahead and I don't feel like I've missed anything. Although, rest assured, I will be going back and read the ones I missed.

As for this one, I was so engrossed in it that I was shocked to discover I was nearly finished reading the book. Talk about moving at a fast-pace, this one certainly did. I ended up devouring this one in just a couple of days. The characters are likeable from Dev down to her supporting cast of friends. I loved how they stood

by each other.

I'm not sure how I feel about the two men in Dev's life. Both Noah and Jake are good guys with much baggage attached to them. I don't know how Dev can choose, I couldn't and I'm going to feel bad if she leaves one out in the cold. I almost wish there was only one clear choice for Dev's affections. We'll have to see how this plays out.

Overall, intriguing story with interesting characters. I can't ask for more than that.

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Disclosure: The publisher and Edelweiss provided me with a copy of this book to review. This did not influence my thoughts and opinions in any way. All opinions expressed are my own.