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Sadie Novak cleans up crime scenes for a living and is also blessed-or cursed- with the gift of second sight. This time she's digging out the home of a compulsive hoarder. She discovers unexpected things, including an angry ghost who wants her to go away. And there are even more secrets beneath the surface that someone will kill to keep buried...

Dead and Kicking Details

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Mnms says

This one has a bit more mess and heartbreak than the other books, but still interesting to read. The characters seem to have gotten more depth, but besides that it reminds me a lot of the other books in the series.

Susan says

I enjoyed this book just like the other entries in the series.

Again there was an interesting mystery or two, conversations with ghosts, some weird and wonderful characters, some quite scary - and I'm not talking about just the ghosts - family dynamics and love interests. The author writes well so the story flows along and it was just a great getaway.

One quibble - I didn't care for the push/pull way Sadie was with her boyfriend nor did I care for his constant denial in a particular situation. One good conversation would have cleared that whole mess up rather than letting it go on for a good half of the book.

Look forward to the next in this series, and I hope there will be cause I couldn't find any information :(

Kimberly Ann says

This is the most current in the "Ghost Duster" mass market series, and for some reason they seem to be difficult to get from my Library.

Sadie was a 2nd grade teacher, until the suicide of her brother Brian. After his death, she quit her teaching job and began, " Scene-2-Clean", where she now cleans up crime scenes, decomposition & unattended death sites. But Sadie has a "gift", she can also see & communicate w/ the deceased, whom she helps to complete unfinished business, help find their murderers, and move on.

Sadie's father has just passed and for some reason he is unable to move on.... he has a task to complete before leaving.

Sadie & her boyfriend Zack (a former Seattle PD) are cleaning up his ex-girlfriend's mother's house (she was a hoarder) when they encounter a mummified baby and a particularly nasty ghost, who has poltergeist abilities. The ghost refuses to leave as some of the boxes in the upper bedrooms were his and he is protecting them....

Zack is hurt by the ghost & resorts to being taken care of by his ex (who is a nurse) and she supplies him w/ pain killers to which is he addicted..... The police who are now cleaning up the house since the discovery of the mummified infant, are also being attacked by the ghost....

Sadie does her best to interview the owner of the house, who is in assisted living for care of her Alzheimer's/Dementia and begins to get the necessary information, when her van is vandalized and she is

almost murdered twice.... and then assaulted more.

While working on & off on the hoarder's house, Sadie is also called to clean up the remains of a former male model turned homeless junkie in an under-construction mall boutique and a janitor in an "elite" school for gifted children.

The clues are all there if one pays attention, and for once I did! It was a light and interesting read, it held my interest all through to the conclusion.

Chibineko says

I loved the last two books in this series & I love this one too, but I'd be lying if I said that it didn't irritate me a little bit. Why? Well, I can't go into that without giving away mondo spoilers, but I'll try my hardest to explain.

This book picks up about a year after the end of the previous book. Zack & Sadie have moved in together, but over the last few months they've been drifting apart. Sadie's dad just passed & she's been seeing his ghost at his house. If that's not enough, Zack's talking to an ex-girlfriend (who obviously still has the hots for him). When Sadie agrees to help clean out said ex's mother's house (the woman was a hoarder), Zack gets injured by a malice-filled ghost & Sadie discovers the corpse of a mummified baby...

Where do I start with this book? First off, there's a new love interest introduced in this book. How do they introduce this character? By semi-assassinating the character of Zack Bowman. I say semi-assassinating because while Zack spends much of the book being a jerk, there is enough of a buildup to explain why he acts this way. It's just that honestly it all felt a little forced. It also doesn't help that the new love interest just isn't that interesting & his interactions with Sophie feels a little stiff & un-organic as well. I won't deny that I'm a little irritated that Roberts is introducing a love interest after seemingly wrapping up the "will they or won't they" plot point in the previous book, but I just didn't feel any real sparks between them. (And besides, I would have actually imagined Petrovich to be a better suited love interest for her- there are sparks between the two of them!) It also doesn't help that the plot point that introduced the two of them (a murder scene cleanup in a elementary school) felt really rough & unfinished. I can't help but wonder if Roberts' publishing company leaned on her to add a second love interest for Sadie- after all, such things aren't unheard of in the publishing world. (Patricia Briggs was pressured by her publishers to draw out the love triangle in her books.)

Now what did I like about the book? I loved the amount of detail that Roberts puts in about the crime scene cleanup business & I loved the character of Maeve- she's honestly one of my favorite characters for the series. The suspense in this book was nicely done & as always, Roberts does a very good job at writing. It's just that this book didn't seem to "pop" like the other two books did.

I will continue to buy & read Roberts' stuff as well as continue to recommend it to people, but I can't help but worry a little bit about the future of the series. This isn't a deal breaker, but one of the things I loved about Roberts' series was that the romance didn't seem like a big thing- that the mystery & ghost stuff were the main parts of the books. I guess all I can do is wait & watch.

Jess says

Another fantastic addition to this already great series. Sadie is dealing with the death of a family member in this book, and has to decide whether or not it is selfish to help that family member move on to the next life or keep them with her a little longer. Sadie is also having trouble's with her live in boyfriend Zack... she thinks that he's lying to her and hiding something as well. On top of that, Zack's ex-gf is in the picture and has hired them to do a cleaning job on her mother's house. Sadie thought she was just being nice to help out, until a box unexpectedly opens and there's a mummified corpse in it. Sadie's on the job to figure out what the heck is going on.

Another page turner, these books are very quick reads. It grabs you in the beginning and doesn't let go until you're on the last page. There was a great mystery, some great romantic issues lol, and some pissed off ghosts. What else can I ask for in a book?

Val Cowhugger says

I'm probably in the minority here but I wasn't liking this one as much as the 2 previous ones and even if this wasn't the last one, I doubt I'd pick up a 4th!

While the story between Sadie and Zack is ok (though I find his action, moving back with his ex-girlfriend, quite annoying and immature, but am willing to book it to the fact that he's supposed to be back on pain meds..), I have a few points in this book I didn't agree with:

First of all, the clean-up part in the elementary school. To me it felt as if the principle had something to hide with all the descriptions of how her desk was originally facing the door etc. and Sadie finding her phone with a trace of blood. Granted, later on is led to believe it's just a trace from the principle having had contact with the murdered victim, but her actions when she came into the room and found Sadie kneeling on the floor, looking, were somehow suspicious! I completely believed there will be something more revealed later in the story, which never happened though!

Most importantly though I truly disliked the fact that the angry ghost was supposed to be a child kidnapper, raper and killer! In all the cozies I have read so far (and that's quite a lot!) I've never encountered one that touched such a heavy subject! That's why I'm enjoying cozies so much over the harsher thrillers! That part just left a bitter taste in my mouth and clouded the entire rest of the story for me!

Other than that, 'peanuts' but still a bit annoying were also the facts of how the other detective was brought up and showing an interest in Sadie as well as the other detective's (Petrovich's) reaction when he heard about that new development between Sadie and the hot shot cop. In all the books I was always under the impression that they were just good friends (Petrovich and Sadie), so why would he act so upset now over that? Seemed silly to me!

Beth says

I think I've read this before

I have a feeling, since page 4, that I had read this one a few years ago. I liked it all over again although the

main character cleans up crime scene and unattended deaths so it seems gruesome. It gives reason for her to be at crime scenes and as she can talk to the departed help solve the crime

CJ - It's only a Paper Moon says

I don't know what I think about this book. I wanted to smack Zack several times and also slap Sadie. I mean, if you think your man is stepping out on you...then *do* something! Just don't jump to conclusions, get some straightforward answers like you did last book.

Also - if a crazy ghost is trying to kill you I would love for you to ignore that one and not the one that needs your help!

Everyone was a little messed up and out of character in this book without any real reason. It doesn't help that each book takes place a year apart. I mean, come on now Ms. Roberts - why mess up something that wasn't broken to begin with, without any good reason for it?

Sheila says

In this episode, Sadie's father has just died. She is grieving but is able to see her father's spirit and talk with him. She doesn't want him to go but wants to keep talking to him. Zack, her live-in and employee is called away and she suspects there might be a problem with their relationship. She follows him to the house of an ex-girlfriend, Paulie. Paulie's mother has Alzheimers but was a hoarder. Paulie has asked Zack to help her clean up the house so she can put it up for sale. Sadie suspects Paulie is trying to win Zack back but he denies that. Zack arrives the next day to start the clean-up but within a short time, objects start flying and something hits his ankle. Paulie suspects his ankle is broken. Sadie sees a big burly angry looking spirit who is upset his boxes are being taken away. A verbal battle ensues between Sadie and the spirit. Sadie takes Zack to the hospital but not before they discover a small box with a mummified baby. They call the police, and Petrovich, a homicide detective who Sadie has become friends with over the years since she started her crime cleanup business responds. The house is sealed off as a crime scene but when the police officers try to investigate further, objects start flying and they become spooked. Petrovich asks Sadie for help as he admits he has heard of her unusual abilities. Zack is laid up at home until the swelling in his ankle resolves. When Sadie goes back to the house for something she forgot, she finds Paulie sitting in front of Zack with a half empty bottle of vodka. Zack has a hx of drug abuse when he got addicted to narcotics after taking a bullet intended for his police officer partner. It seems Paulie is now providing Zack with the very same drug he was earlier addicted to. Then, Sadie seems to be targeted once again with vandalism and threats to her life. The story revolves around her relationship with Zack, trying to determine who is out to kill her, helping her father move on and helping her mother realize her unusual talents. Again, a good story. Looking forward to the next installment with these characters.

Temica says

After reading book 3, I remain quite fond of this series. The main character is slightly damaged but worth fighting for. Enjoyable.

Nancy says

I am not sure if cozy mysteries are supposed to hit an emotional chord with the reader, but I can tell you that the end of this book did bring a tear to my eye. The conversation between Sadie and her father was the type of interaction that any girl would want to have with her father.

Dead and Kicking is the third and what appears to be the final book in the Ghost Dusters series. A series that I have enjoyed from the start because it does not follow the typical cozy format. Of course, there is a dead body; several in fact, since Sadie Novak owns Scene 2 Clean, a trauma scene clean up company, but the main character is not out to be an amateur detective, she is there to do a job and to help answer some questions so the Seattle Police Department can solve crimes.

Sadie is the person that the police department calls in when a murder or unattended death occurs and there is hazardous “matter” to be cleaned and disposed of. What makes Sadie different is that she can see and speak with the dead and helps them tend to unfinished business on this side, so they can shimmer and shine and meet their loved ones in the great beyond.

Sadie is having a rough time right now, after the death of a family member and finding her almost fiancé in a delicate situation with his ex-girlfriend, Sadie is in a personal tailspin. What she needs is a good job to keep both her mind and body busy. What she did not expect was to clean out the home of a hoarder that has a resident nasty spirit and the body of a mummified child falling out of one of the boxes.

No one wants a week like Sadie is living through, but being able to help the dearly departed to find the way home and ridding society of killers just seems to be a typical day in the life of a gifted trauma cleaning specialist

Julia says

This light paranormal cozy series has its ups & downs. This installment had a fairly good mystery (well, two of them) & lots of character development, and even some humor. But the villain(s) are rather one-dimensional. I do wish the romance aspect with Zack was a bit less fraught, but I dealing with his drug addiction was a realistic direction for the author to go to. The inclusion of Pretty Boy Floyd was a turn-off for me. However, I guess you can't have a story without some drama/conflict. Dawn needs a bigger role next time. The biggest reason I keep reading these stories is because I enjoy Sadie's psychic friends so much.

Gail says

This is the third outing for Sadie Novak, who runs a crime scene clean up business. Oh, and she also sees and talks to the dead, aiding them to cross over. Her so-called spooky reputation is growing among the police officers of Seattle, though it doesn't stop her from getting jobs.

Her father has died and during the funeral, he appears to her. Her business partner and boyfriend Zack is behaving oddly. As she discovers, Zack is doing a job for his former girlfriend, cleaning out her mother's

house. The house holds the contents of a hoarder and a very mean, ugly, hostile ghost. This ghost is powerful enough, he can throw physical objects around.

As her relationship worsens, the jobs pile up and the Big Ugly ghost presents many problems. This book is good, with a lot of interesting little stories as well as the main plots.

Sadie herself is not very accepting of the psychic and spiritual community, even though one of her good friends is a psychic consultant. The Wiccan ceremony in the book could be offensive to a practitioner with its misplaced elements and general mockery of the Rede and other details of Wiccan practice. It was hard to remain unoffended by Sadie's rude and skeptical behavior, even as a reader.

Dani - Perspective of a Writer says

So I read this in two days and don't regret it a bit. It is perhaps her best mystery yet though I suspected who was involved with the baby and the angry ghost. (The first two mysteries were not what was good in the previous two books.)

The best element in this series is that Sadie is always going through something and that many ghosts are involved in some shape or form. This time it is her dad passing. I liked all the trouble he had and that she felt conflicted about what to do about him - that is Sadie to a T. I didn't appreciate as much Zach's problem though I know that addicts have relapses, especially when loved ones are distracted by heavy things going on in their own lives and can't provide a check and balance for the ex-addict.

I really enjoyed the multiple cases this time around and that Sadie was pretty much on her own this time. While I wouldn't have minded this becoming a couple mystery where Sadie and Zach solve it together I can appreciate seeing Sadie cope on her own without the big, bad cop looking over her shoulder. I also liked the friendship aspect between her and the active cop. The love triangle though got really hinky and I didn't much appreciate it though I liked the misdirect about blood on the phone and how Zach's ex-partner explained it. Ultimately Sadie had to decide if Zach was worth the effort.

Also I really appreciated her mother's reaction to her ability and how the sister reacted to hearing about dad. I can really appreciate the inclusion of family and find that a major plus in the whole series but especially this book.

BOTTOM LINE: Sadie deals with a lot and it makes a wild ride.

Natalie says

Loved it, now the hunt is on for book 4 and 5.
