



Doggie Day Care Murder

Laurien Berenson

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Melanie Travis thought her sleuthing days were behind her. She has a new baby to take care of--not to mention five Standard Poodles. These days, the closest Melanie gets to detective work is scoping out the scene at the local doggie day center for her friend Alice Brickman.

As Melanie learns, it's a dog's life at the Pine Ridge Canine Care Center--and life is good. Everyone seems blissfully happy. Everyone canine, that is, as Melanie soon discovers there are some simmering resentments among the Pine Ridge staff. And when Steve Pine, the center's charming, good-looking co-owner, is found shot to death on the floor of his office, there's no shortage of suspects.

With the police at a loss for leads, it's now up to Melanie to go undercover and sniff out a killer whose secrets lie buried in a dog's paradise that's proving to be anything but. . .

"Warm and fuzzy. . .another cute tail-wagging puzzler."--*Publishers Weekly*

"A top-notch mystery. . .Newcomers to the series will be hooked, and returning readers will continue to enjoy Melanie's relatable nature and charm."--*Romantic Times*

Doggie Day Care Murder Details

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From Reader Review Doggie Day Care Murder for online ebook

Amanda Gilles says

I found this book in looking to broaden my reads in the mystery genre....and in having a shitzu-poodle I thought this would be a great read. I was a bit unsure since it is #15 in the series but like other readers had said it was easy to get into and my understanding was not altered by not reading the previous books in the series. Overall the book was not bad-it has several drops of humor sprinkled throughout however the mystery itself moves slower than I expected with the murder early on but solving the case takes pages. There is also a heavy focus on the process and facts of showing poodles-not that interesting to me.

Beverly Harrison says

I enjoyed the first person narrative and the protagonist, for which I give the two star rating. Otherwise, I had too many technical issues and plot or structural annoyances keeping me from enjoying the book. For example, the story really begins on page 90. Up to page 90 is back story and not terribly interesting. Although it is peppered with witty internal monologue. Another example is, (spoiler) the protagonist is an idiot not to know she was in danger working alone at night at the doggie daycare, but conveniently, this stupidity brought along the climax of the story. Mostly, I found it irritating. Therefore, I will not be reading any more of this Author's books.

Wendy says

A fun little romp, especially for dog lovers. Melanie Travis is in a happy 2nd marriage with a new baby, a 9-year old, and 5 standard poodles. When her friend goes back to work, she asks Melanie to check out a doggie day care to see if it looks like a good place for her dog while she's at work. Days after Melanie's visit to the facility, one of the owners is murdered, found shot in his office. Melanie has a history with solving murders before the police or helping them solve murders, so the surviving owner asks Melanie for help.

Between family activities and dog shows, Melanie has a chance to pick up a lot of information that finally leads her to the right track for the murderer to show him/herself.

Fran says

Yeah. What was I thinking? LOL It was a quick, mindless read, though.

Diana says

I love a good mystery, and this was grossly lacking. Our protagonist is an idiot with way too much time on her hands, a perfect family & no common sense. I knew who the murderer was as soon as the character

appeared in the book. On a brighter note, the author does seem to know her dogs.

Janet says

Eh. Not so good, not so bad. I could have done without the über-cliced ending. The novel could have ended without that particular little soppy-eyed event. Gag.

Kathy Davie says

Fifteenth in the Melanie Travis mystery series revolving around Melanie Travis, a former dog handler and now a second-time mom, in Stamford, Connecticut.

The Story

Married a year now, Melanie and Sam are the proud parents of three-month-old Kevin and nine-year-old Davey is thrilled to have a new brother. Enjoying her role as a stay-at-home mom, Melanie's best friend, Alice, flatters her into checking out the Pine Ridge Canine Care Center. Seems Alice is all too ready to give up the stay-at-home routine and go back to work as a paralegal at her husband, Joe's, law firm. But Alice needs daycare for Brinkley, their 18-month-old golden retriever, and wants Melanie, with her dog expertise, to check the place out.

Heck, I'm impressed—a Taj Mahal of daycare for doggies! Lots of pasture and toys for dogs outside. Inside there are couches and chairs set up in individual rooms each with its own televisions and an in-floor remote so the dogs can turn it on/off or change the channel. No doors allows the dogs the freedom to move around and choose their friends.

Then Aunt Peg comes up with questions Melanie hadn't thought to ask and when Melanie and Alice return to Pine Ridge, it's to find Steve Pine murdered. Between Alice and the desolation on Candy's face, Melanie agrees to investigate.

All this and then Melanie finds out that Aunt Peg and Davey have cooked up their own surprise for Davey carrying on the family tradition.

The Characters

Melanie Travis has a bit of a reputation with friends, family....and the police for investigating. But with her marriage to game developer, Sam Driver, and the kids—9-year-old Davey from her marriage to Bob and 3-month-old Kevin, Mel is done. Really. No more.

It took Sam Driver four years to talk Melanie into marrying him and when they did finally do the deed, they ended up with a family of five black Standard Poodles: Faith, Eve, Raven, Casey, and Tar—seems Sam used to show dogs as well. Oh yeah, and Davey.

Alice is Melanie's best friend. New moms together who bonded over all the mommy activities some nine years ago. Married to Joe Brickman, they have two kids: nine-year-old Joey (yeah Davey and Joey are friends) and seven-year-old Carly along with the introduction to the murder scene, Brinkley.

Aunt Peg is Melanie's aunt by marriage and she and her husband, Max, had raised a nationally known line of Standard Poodles, the Cedar Crest line. With Max's death, Margaret scaled operations back and now judges dog shows contenting herself with just six Standard Poodles. A gift of a Standard Poodle puppy five years ago along with Aunt Peg's relentlessness saw Melanie doing quite well as a dog handler.

Bob, Melanie's ex-husband, is an accountant as well as partners with Melanie's younger brother, Frank, in a very popular coffee house, the Bean Counter. Mel, Sam, and Bob have a very cordial relationship.

Steve and Candy Pine are brother and sister who have opened the Pine Ridge Canine Care Center—the ideal doggie daycare. Theirs is an ideal partnership with Steve handling the accounts and other paperwork as well as the ladies while Candy handles operations. Bailey is their fabulous dog groomer and Jason is a summer employee working towards an MBA in Business. Jason has lots of ideas for improving PRCCC but he's a very low man on the totem pole.

Roger Cavanaugh is a silent partner in PRCCC as well as a client with his dog, Logan.

My Take

This was a cute, homey mystery. Light and fluffy. It's ideal if you love dogs—Standard Poodles in particular with a peek-in behind-the-scenes of dog handlers getting ready for a dog show.

The odd notes are Melanie's not-so-happy relationship with Aunt Peg. Berenson needs to work up a bit more tension between the two. She writes the tension but I'm just not feeling it.

I do like the better light that now shines between Melanie and Detective Minton. It'll be curious to see where this goes.

The Cover

Oh, too cute!! Three corgis, a spaniel, and a terrier happily playing on a doggie obstacle course. The title is not particularly imaginative but it certainly is appropriate as it is all about a *Doggie Day Care Murder*.

Kirsti says

This is my first Melanie Travis mystery, although I have seen them before. I always hesitate over mystery books; I have one series I beyond adore (The Cat Who) but I've never found another series to honestly compare. I was in the mood for something similar, and this book definitely didn't disappoint!

I know it's a bit strange to start a series with number fifteen, but this book drew me in effortlessly and kept my interest throughout. I found out previous things that had happened in this series, and got hints for the future. Both made me want to read previous books and future ones as well. I'll definitely see if my library has more of the series, and keep my eye out for them second hand now as well. Always awesome to find a fun new series!

I do love any story about animals, fiction or otherwise. Dogs and cats are always a favorite too. If you like your crime with a helping of canine, then this series might be for you!

Lisa says

The Melanie Travis mysteries are some of my favorites. I am so glad to find a new one - so far it does not disappoint.

Deanna says

Great series.

I love the Melanie Travis' books. Sorenson has created such interesting characters that add such depth to every story. In this book Melanie agrees to check on the areas only doggie day care center for her best friend Alice. As always Melanie stumbles upon the murder of one of the co-owners. She then promises his sister to try and find out who did it. With new baby Kevin in toe Melanie does just that while helping to build the back stories of our main characters. I really enjoyed the book and can't wait for the next.

Emily Cullen says

Melanie's best friend asks her to check out a doggie day care for her pet. The place looks amazing but the dog owner is killed and there's no shortage of suspects. Steve's sister is suspect #1 and she asks Melanie to help find her brother's real killer. Melanie's very busy these days with an infant, an older son and five poodles but she agrees to look into things. I love the Melanie Travis cozy mystery series. A great heroine, good stories and I like how Melanie and her family grow up and change in every book you read.

Linda says

This was my first Melanie Travis story and it was delightful!! I loved all the animals, I loved Melanie and her family. There is a lot of humor. The plot was great, and thoroughly entertaining! Dog lovers will enjoy this story, for sure! I want to read ALL the books in this series now!

Carol says

A quick, light read. It is better than her earlier books (which I added to my "avoid" list), the information on dogs is good: obviously written by somebody very knowledgeable about the dog show circuit.

Lori Whitwam says

Berenson's dog mystery series is always good. Some are better than others, and this one was about average.

Perhaps I was less-enamored because in this one, for a dog-lover like me, only distracts me from the dogs.

Melanie is asked to check out a doggie day care center for a friend. Skeptical at first, she finds it's a well-run, hospitable place for the dogs of the terminally busy. The brother/sister owners seem to love the place, and the brother is very handsome and charming. The next day he is found shot to death in his office. The sister, Candy, asks for Melanie's help in uncovering her brother's killer.

Is it the neighbor who fought the day care business in a previously residential neighborhood? One of the (many) clients and employees who had had flings with the dead man? Someone who felt cheated or mistreated? The angry client whose unspayed shih tzu was bred while there for grooming?

Meanwhile, Melanie's maiden aunt, a big name in the show dog world (Standard Poodles, same as Melanie), decides to start training Melanie's son in junior showmanship. Sadly, this is the most dog-stuff I got in this book. The dogs are more background characters than usual, so only three stars.

Jayme(the ghost reader) says

This is the fifteenth book in the series. The book jumps ahead three months from the last book. The main character Melanie is married and has a three month old son. Her older son is going into the fourth grade. It is the start of summer. Her best friend Alice asks Melanie to check out a local dog daycare because she is going back to work and doesn't want to leave the family pet all alone. Melanie agrees to check it out. On the surface, it seems like a great place and the dogs are happy. However something doesn't add up when one of the owners is found murdered. On a small side note, Melanie's son Davey tries his hand at being a junior handler in his dog show debut
