



# Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall

*Hannah Dennison*

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When the only copy of *Ravished*, Iris Stanford's new manuscript, never arrives at her London publisher's office, her daughter Kat investigates the tiny local village post office, where it appears the package never left the building. Iris is on tenterhooks--not only is her novel gone with the wind, but she's deathly afraid that Muriel Jarvis, the postmistress and notorious busybody, will expose her secret identity as the bestselling romance writer Krystalle Storm. Meanwhile, Muriel has her own problems with the sudden death of her husband Fred, which has left her heavily in debt. In the spine-tingling climax, both past and present collide as Kat fights for her life and those she holds most dear, dancing once again with the dark forces lurking behind the grandeur of Honeychurch Hall.

This nail-biting addition to Hannah Dennison's Honey Church Hall mystery series, *Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall* is not to be missed.

## Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall Details

Date : Published May 2nd 2017 by Minotaur Books

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Author : Hannah Dennison

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# From Reader Review Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall for online ebook

**Kayt18 says**

“Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall” is the 4th book in the Honeychurch Hall Mystery series by Hannah Dennison. It is the first one in the series that I have read. I think I would have been able to give this book 5 stars had I read the others in the series. It can be read as a standalone or out of series, but I feel from how reading it was to me that it would be better enjoyed if read in order so you can get all the back stories. That said I really did enjoy the storyline and mystery. I just felt a bit disjointed from some of the characters. I will have to go back and read the other books so I can truly relate to them. This is a fun book and has enjoyable characters and I think any reader who enjoys books in this genre will be entertained.

The protagonist is Kat Stanford who is opening an antique shop and is the former host of televised Fakes and Treasures. She lives near her mother Iris Stanford who writes a wildly successful romance series under a pen name. Only a few people know this tidbit. In this novel their small town is preparing for the annual Skirmish, which is based on the siege of Honeychurch Hall during the English Civil War. Maybe Kat will get more traffic with the visitors for this event. Before it can happen though several things occur. One is a body is found on the historical property. It may have a historical bearing on the families of the hall. There are a lot of characters in this book and it overwhelmed me a bit since I did not have the back stories of them. Not so much that I was not able to follow though. I have to say that I really enjoyed the historical body storyline. It had so many aspects.

Now not only are the characters in this novel dealing with the skirmish and the centuries old body, but Iris’ manuscript is missing, the funds for the event are missing, strange sightings in the graveyard are reported and a few other things as well. Iris is suspicious of a few citizens including the gossip mail lady. Lucky for Iris her “brother” is home from prison (another secret) and he is going to do some investigating. Unfortunately for all of them, he finds said gossip dead. Things really ratchet up at that point. Missteps, mishaps and of course mayhem ensue.

“Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall” is a wonderful cozy in the vein of some of the wonderful English based novels of this genre. I wish I had read them in order so this one would have been more comfortable and familiar. I think that would definitely have brought this to a 5 star read for me. Even so I was able to thoroughly enjoy the characters (a lot of them to get to know), the mysteries (a few thrown in for good measure) and the writing style (flowing and enjoyable). The protagonist is smart, but seemed to need something more, a confidant, partner, dear friend, something. I am going to go back and read the others in this series because it is most assuredly worth the read and I want to know more and more about the stories and characters. Iris is a hoot and I would love to get to know her better. If you enjoy English cozies you will like this one for sure.

I was provided a copy to read.

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## **Jackie Nolan says**

This was my first book by this author so I wasn't really sure what to expect going into it. Kat is an enjoyable character as well as her mother, Iris. The mystery behind everything that was going on was enough to keep me reading the book, but at times, I just felt a little confused and sometimes bored. It may have been because I haven't read the previous books in this series. There was just so much talk about the family history and talk of the reenactment that I just didn't get. The murder suspect kept me guessing until the end of the book, which is something that I love in a mystery. I don't want to be able to figure it out easily. I will definitely go back at some point and read the previous books in this series.

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

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## **Carol says**

Welcome back to Honeychurch Hall  
located outside of Little Dipperton Devon.

" Skirmish Day " is in the planning there.

It is a reenactment celebrating a battle  
fought in the English Civil War held annually

While preparing for the event, a skeleton  
that is centuries old is found along with  
a helmet and dagger. She had been  
murdered.

Whose skeleton could it be? Why was she  
buried on Honeychurch Hall grounds in an  
unmarked grave?

What could happen next ??

How about a missing manuscript, a missing  
tin with money for the reenactment, stolen  
cars, a nosy postmistress, a frumpy tea shop  
owner, new suspicious women to the area,  
a doll, escaped convicts, affairs, secrets from  
the past and present, a current murder,  
mischievous young boys, a crypt, a graveyard,  
a flamboyant lothario, a posh restaurant plus  
a centuries old ghost for starters!!!

Feisty, colorful, well described characters  
involved in a well written plot. There are many  
twists and turns which peak the readers  
interest. Add humor, romance along with the  
historical setting for an enjoyable read.

This is the fourth book in the Honeychurch  
Hall Mystery series. The book can be read as a  
stand alone.

Great read!!!

I volunteered to read this book. Thanks to the author

via Facebook's Cozy Mystery Review for the book.  
My opinion is my own.

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### **Michelle Fidler says**

This was an English village cozy mystery where everyone knows everyone else's business! For example, the postmistress, Muriel, is suspected of reading the mail. I think my favorite part of the book was concerning the missing manuscript. This isn't a regular murder mystery. A murder doesn't occur until page 208; before that there's a centuries-old body that was most likely murdered.

Lots of descriptions in the book, maybe too much for me (I find dialogue easier to read). Quirky characters made it interesting. There was a dog, Mr. Chips, in the book who didn't figure in too prominently, but he made it onto the book cover. I liked the English village setting.

I liked the supplemental items at the beginning of the book: the family tree and the coat-of-arms. The print was a good size (loved that). I will probably only read one more in the series.

I received a copy to review and voluntarily did so.

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### **Jessica Robbins says**

Book four in the Honeychurch Hall Mystery series. This may be my favorite book of the series yet. A battle reenactment is set to happen in the area and Iris is freaking out because her publisher claims her newest manuscript never arrived even though she shipped it weeks ago. Since she insists on using an old typewriter of course she does not have a copy (which Kat harasses her about to no end saying she could at least photocopy it) so Kat has to help her hunt it down. Tracking says it never left the local post office so she goes to check. Muriel gets really upset (especially since her husband recently died) and pretty much kicks her out. The next things they know the manuscript shows up with the publisher in terrible condition and with missing pages. While their investigation continues Muriel is found dead making Kat and Iris the prime suspects though there are lots of other things coming up missing as well. Yet again the two make some of the funny decisions ever when it comes to finding out what happened and the blend of all the different characters makes for quite a fascinating story to say the least. I just love the writing style of this series and now my only regret is that I am out of more books until she writes another one. I give this one 4/5 stars.

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### **Deb says**

Murderous Mayhem At Honeychurch Hall by Hannah Dennison is once again a fun, unique, quirky, fast paced cozy that has you laughing out loud at times and wondering what is coming next. From The peculiar quirky characters that are back for another adventure to the unusual circumstances they all find themselves in to the murders this is a book that you won't want to miss.

I enjoy this book because it takes you in and you find yourself getting caught up in the comings and goings of British life as well as the demographics of the Lord's and Lady's intermixed with the villagers of Little Dipperton

Each person in this book has their own peculiar personality and that just adds to the fun of the book. Kat is an antique appraiser who has a knack for getting right in the middle of everything that goes on at Honeychurch Hall. Her eccentric mother Iris and unconventional uncle Albert always add a quirky, unusual element to the plot with the stories they come up with to cover their mischievous exploits. I love these two they just make the book.

This story is two fold, one is the mystery when the body of a woman, who seems to be an ancestor of either the Honeychurch's or the Carew's, is found accidentally and then the murders of Dipperton residents complicate the upcoming Skirmish planned at Honeychurch Hall. On top of all this Kat's mother Iris' missing manuscript pages need to be found and she is sure Muriel the postmistress has them. She sends Albert to retrieve them only to get mixed up in the murder of Muriel and becoming once again suspects in the investigation. On top of everything else someone has been stealing from the people of Little Dipperton, Lavinia thinks her husband Rupert Lord of Honeychurch is having an affair, Harry the son of Lavinia and Rupert along with his friend Max think they see a ghost in the churchyard and Kat thinks the ghost of Eleanor Honeychurch is trying to tell her something. It seems one thing after the other is happening and they all add up to a very interesting somewhat wacky but all together fascinating cozy mystery.

I love British mysteries and this one is a mix of Downton Abbey meets Midsomer Murders. You have the Dowager and her quirky family along with the village secrets and mysteries like in Midsummer Murders to be solved. Wow so much is happening and it is just plain fun and entertaining to read. I think this one was better than the last book in the series.

This is the fourth book in the series but it can be read as a standalone book too. I highly recommend this book it is one you will not want to miss.

I would give, in my rating system, this book 4 1/2 Bookmarks

I received this book from the author for my honest opinion and review.

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## **Leah says**

I wouldn't say *Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall* is the strongest book in the series, but it was certainly an entertaining read, though I definitely would not recommend it for newcomers due to the lack of character introductions or recaps of the previous novels. That said, I really do love this series and cannot wait for the next!

For the full review and more, head over to [The Pretty Good Gatsby!](#)

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## **Carla Joyner says**

I received my copy of *Murderous Mayhem at Honeychurch Hall* in exchange for an honest review. My very good friend recommended the author and series when I expressed interest in the cozy mystery genre. I haven't read the 3 previous books in the series, so jumping into the 4 installment as an introduction to Kat, Iris, and the Little Dipperton gang was a bit jarring. For the first several chapters it was a bit confusing to keep the many characters straight, so I jotted down character names and relationships. There is at least one

scene in the hall where the characters talk over each other and deliver so many witty asides that I had to re-read the scene to really grasp what they were talking about.

Once I figured out everyone's place and purpose, I settled in and enjoyed the engaging plot and witty dialogue. Kat Stanford and her mother Iris live on the grounds of Honeychurch Estate where everyone is busy preparing for the Skirmish, an historic re-enactment that floods the town with participants and tourists alike. The Skirmish provides the backdrop for a plethora of small village shenanigans: Iris's manuscript doesn't arrive at the publishers, vast sums of money (and other items) go missing, and the dead body of an ancestor is found in a grave with a knife in her chest and her head clamped in a horrific medieval device. When Kat and Iris involve themselves in finding Iris's manuscript, we meet the "regulars": Edith, Muriel, Rupert, Lavinia, Harry, Shawn, Violet, Eric, and Aubrey and become acquainted with their meet ups and put downs. The introduction of a few newcomers lends an air of suspicion and deceit. The dialogue flits easily between the false familiarity of fast friendships and the mother/daughter banter between Kat and Iris that's quite funny.

In the end, the mysteries are solved, identities are discovered, and all is well once again in Little Dipperton, but not without an otherworldly intervention and a seat-gripping climax that leaves Kat fighting for her life.

I was surprised by the inclusion of a spiritual element in this book and wonder if that is typical for this genre/author. The main character, Kat, comes off as much too pragmatic to believe in such things and her encounter seemed like an afterthought. At times, the speed at which the characters switched allegiances and backstabbed each other left me lukewarm. I often wondered, "Are they friends or not??"

Despite these small criticisms, I enjoyed the book very much and will most likely read first three, now that I've met everyone!

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## **Anne says**

Hello Readers! Fyi, I received an advanced copy of this book for my honest and truthful opinion.

I finished this book in less than a week, for it kept me that intrigued! The beautifully described charming setting in a quaint English village, multiple mysteries, and intriguing relationships held my attention. I found myself more and more curious about the characters and their lives the more I read! This was the first book that I have read in this series, and I am definitely planning to go back and read them all from the beginning.

The author writes beautifully. Her knowledge of English geography and culture, as well as antiques is clearly top-notch.

I liked the main character, and was interested in how the various mysteries would be solved. This being said, there were a few problems: first of all, I had no idea who some of the characters were & how they related to the others when they first appeared and/ or the author referenced them (Alfred, for example). Secondly, I felt the paranormal element was either too brief or too much. I felt the book needed a bit better focus - either stick to being a British cozy tea & manners mystery featuring antiques, OR an English cozy with haunted houses, psychics, and ghosts!

All in all, it was such good writing with such a great sense of place and many interesting mysteries waiting to be solved, that it kept my attention and makes me interested to read the earlier books in this series! It's definitely worth the read to discover this author and her clear talent!!

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## Donna Townsend says

It's so good to be revisiting Little Dipperton and Honeychurch Hall! Back among my favorite Brits and the mischief and mayhem they so often find themselves involved in. Kat Stanford, former TV host of *Fakes and Treasures*, is probably the only "normal" one in this zany cast of characters. She's left broadcasting to open her own shop on the grounds of Honeychurch Hall, where her Mum, who secretly pens racy novels, also lives. Mum's brother, recently out of prison, assists her in her intrigues, real or imagined. After Mum, my favorite character is the young son of Lord Honeychurch, Harry, whose alter ego is Squadron Leader James Bigglesworth and who, complete with goggles and a commanding tone, leads his troops (and Kat) into action.

The historical setting and modern tone of the story are nicely meshed. The village is planning "Skirmish Day" celebrating a long ago English Civil War battle. A centuries-old body is discovered on the estate, the victim of a long-ago murder. While unraveling this murder, another occurs. Toss in stolen Skirmish funds, a missing manuscript, a sexy playboy, an escaped prisoner, an affair or two and strawberry jam and you have a fun, engaging chapter in the lives of Dippertonians!

This is not your usual cozy. The story is intricately woven and unpredictable. I love that this setting and the characters enchant me; the mystery is well crafted, for sure. But it's the various scalawags and silliness that keep me wanting more! I received this book from the author for an honest review and I so look forward to the next installation!

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## Jenn says

I'm gonna go with a solid 3.5 stars for this fourth edition to the cozy mystery series featuring Kat and her mother Iris Stanford. This series was new to me, and I admit fully that I did not read the previous three books before jumping into this one. Although it can be read as a standalone for the mystery, it really is best if the other books are read first, so that you can get the backstory for all of the characters relationships -- both friendly and not. So any lack of connection to the characters or confusion I'll put the square fully on me, not the book. That being said there were a few instances of plot points I wasn't too interested in, but I'll get there.

Kat Stanford works in antiques and is a former host of *Fakes and Treasures*. Her mother, Iris, also has a secret -- that she's really a writer of a very popular romance series and goes by the pseudonym Krystalle Storm. Iris bought a place on an English manor in the village of Little Dipperton with Kat following her, and although Kat longed to live in London, she is working on setting up her business and making this new path in her life work. Kat has been unlucky in love and her mother unlucky in getting herself into predicaments that attract police attention. The villagers and acquaintances are a mixed bag. We have the nosy, gossipy postmistress Muriel, the Lord Rupert Honeychurch and his wife Lavinia, brothers, new wives, adventure seeking children, former friends and possibly new love matches. There are questions of fidelity, theft, family history and feuds, and even maybe some ghosts.

I loved Kat and her wit, her personality, and her charm. The mystery threads kept me interested and they



clues were subtle enough. Iris is sending off her latest manuscript when she discovers it never made it out of town, cars and other items go missing, antiques stolen, and a woman's corpse is found long buried with a family dagger in her. I thoroughly enjoyed many of the side characters as well, specifically Lavinia and Alfred. Also, the romance pieces never overshadowed the rest of the story and I enjoyed that Kat left her options, even if there was a murder and thief on the loose (ha). Overall, the pace felt solid.

A few bits that I didn't find interesting was the Honeychurch family history or really, this book's setting "backdrop." Every year the town puts on a local reenactment of the "series of skirmishes before the siege of Honeychurch Hall during the English Civil War." While it gave the characters something to talk about or Iris costumes to make, nothing really *happened* at the Skirmish to have the book really revolve around that *and* the missing manuscript, the dead body on the grounds, and the theft of other items. It just felt a bit cluttered at times. I'm also not sure how I feel about the small paranormal element thrown in. Had it been something that I felt building throughout the story, maybe I'd have felt it fit in, but it seemed a bit odd. As for the family history, that made up a huge part of this book, and I imagine it's a consistent thread throughout the series. I'm sure many love it, and had I been interested in it, the information would have worked.

Really cute series and I'm sure I'll go back and read the first three.

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### **Alison says**

Set in North Devon, England we encounter Kat Stanford as she is trying to establish her new antique business. She is quickly pulled into the antics of her mother Iris and Uncle Alfred. What appears to be an initial mystery of an uncovered skeleton turns into a manuscript not being sent in to a robbery and then another murder. This all happens while the town is trying to prepare for the Skirmish festivities.

I thoroughly enjoyed the historical aspects of the book. This includes the research on the family history to the details on the family portraits as well as the church. I also appreciate the amount of work it takes to properly put on the Skirmish.

While a quick read, at times I was struggling with which plotline was the mystery that was being solved, or if one was being solved at all. The author did a nice job in the end to tie everything together, which was no small task with so many moving pieces.

This is the fourth book in the series, and the first one that I read. While I was able to read this book as a standalone, I think I would have picked up on some of the references much faster if I had read the others first.

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### **Danielle The Book Huntress (Back to the Books) says**

This installment was darker than previous ones. I guess it's the subject matter. Plenty of smalltown shenanigans that are familiar, even if it's small town England and not the United States. Enjoyable, intricate mystery.

## **Lynn says**

This is one of my favorite cozy series. I have read all four books and looked forward to this book being published. In *Murderous Mayhem*, a mysterious female skeleton from years past is found. Who is she and why did she have a scold's bridle on her skull? There was a Honeychurch dagger with the skeleton. It was murder.

There is a missing manuscript that was mailed from Little Dipperton's post office to London. However, Iris's editor never received it and there is only one copy. There are many thefts such as cars, a doll and many small items. The town is preparing for a event called a skirmish when many new people will come to town to participate or observe.

I like this series mainly for the zany characters and humor. I always liked Kat and Iris (Kat's mother) relationship. Iris seemed a little too over the top in this book. Also, there was a paranormal element briefly added. I like paranormal in some cozies but felt if this series was going somewhat paranormal, it isn't needed. It is almost too much. The series stands strong on its own. I am looking forward to reading the next adventure in Little Dipperton.

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## **Daniele says**

*MURDEROUS MAYHEM AT HONEYCHURCH HALL*, the fourth book in the Honeychurch Hall Mystery series, is delightful reading fun, striking a nice balance between silliness, mischief, and murder.

Kate Stanford, a former TV show antique appraiser, has opened her own business in the gatehouse of Honeychurch Estate and hopes the village's upcoming "Skirmish" reenactment of the English Civil War will draw some badly needed traffic. The whole tiny village of Little Dipperton in Devon traditionally gets involved, and this event provides a nice backdrop that ties the whole story together. Kate's mother Iris, who is secretly a wildly successful romance author, mailed her latest manuscript to her publisher but is beside herself when she discovers it never arrived; the only copy of the book is missing. Add to this drama the discovery of a centuries old murder victim, small items gone missing, money stolen, a car theft ring, a family feud that dates back to said Civil War, infidelity, the postmistress's murder, and a ghost, and readers can indeed see how easy it is for the mayhem to ensue. Author Hannah Denison does a great job of weaving these numerous plot threads together. In less skilled hands, this whole book could have been a royal mess, but everything comes together in a dramatic climax, and all threads are neatly resolved to provide an exceptionally satisfying read.

Each of the various mysteries is compelling on its own, but the story surrounding the unearthed skeleton is my favorite. The rich local history and the plethora of records dating back hundreds of years are fascinating and awe inspiring to me in contrast to my own "young" American history. Everything to do with the Honeychurch lineage and the family's far reaching responsibility to the village is intriguing. There are frequent laugh-out-loud moments, and some of the situations are frivolous, but I reveled in every moment.

Of note is a scene involving buttoned up Lady Lavenia unencumbered by Vicodin.

I think Kate and I could be good friends. She is intelligent, inquisitive, and pragmatic, all of which make her a fine amateur sleuth. I do feel like she needs a sidekick, though, to help her in her investigations. I realize she has her mother and DI Shawn Cooper, but Iris is far too unreliable. The supporting cast of characters is charming, every one of them quirky, and even those who are unpleasant are still likable. I especially enjoy young Master Harry, Lord and Lady Honeychurch's son. His enthusiasm and imagination, combined with his innate sense of aristocratic entitlement, makes him quite endearing. Muriel is the quintessential nosy gossip, and it is unfortunate that she is one of the victims. I confess that I do not care for Iris. Lying comes far too easy to her, and she makes poor choices.

Hannah Dennison has created an enchanting world in the Honeychurch Estate and adjacent tiny Devonshire village. The historically rich setting is a nice foil for the contemporary narrative, and the wacky characters are engaging. I look forward to reading many further adventures featuring Kate and company. I highly recommend this complexly plotted and well written lighthearted mystery to Anglophiles and any cozy fan.

I received an ARC of this title from the publisher and voluntarily shared my unbiased opinions here.

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