



Yule Be Dead

Lorraine Bartlett, Gayle Leeson

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A Christmas crime shocks the merchants of a quaint shopping district in this latest installment of *The New York Times* bestselling Victoria Square series.

It's Christmastime, but not everyone is jolly--especially not Vonne Barnett. Her dead body has been found in Victoria Square. Katie Bonner, the manager of Artisan's Alley, happens to be at the tea shop Vonne's mother, Francine, owns when the news is delivered.

Vonne left a trail of men behind her so the suspects are many--but the clues are few. A broken teacup leads Katie to one of the suspects, but before she can investigate, she's attacked. Katie may be closing in on a murderer, but time is ticking because the murderer is definitely closing in on her.

Yule Be Dead Details

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Author : Lorraine Bartlett , Gayle Leeson

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From Reader Review Yule Be Dead for online ebook

Linda says

Katie Bonner is helping to get Artisans Alley ready for the Christmas holidays, when she receives a call from her former mother-in-law, Margo Bonner. Margo will be in the area and wants to spend some time with Katie...incredible considering that she never really wanted to spend time with Katie when her husband, Chad, was alive. But while she is attempting to process this, she first learns that Francine Barnett, owner of the Afternoon Tea, is considering selling the business because things aren't going well, and then second, the shocking revelation that Francine's daughter, Vonne, has been killed in an accident. Between Margot's visit, dreams about owning and running the Afternoon Tea, and her own suspicions about the cause of Vonne's death, Katie has her hands full. But her questions quickly lead her to be physically attacked, and thereafter she acquires her own personal bodyguards in the persons of Ray Davenport and her boyfriend, Andy. This is an enjoyable series, filled with interesting characters. There are several subplots here besides the murder mystery, including projected ownership of a new business, and helping out with Ray's daughters. I enjoyed how Katie and Margot work on mending their relationship, as well as how Katie and Andy look to further their own. It was also fun to watch a better friendship emerge between Katie and Ray. The murder itself provided several suspects and twists and turns. This is a series better read in order, to appreciate the characters' developments. Disclosure: I am voluntarily reviewing this book received from NetGalley.

Heidi (Yup. Still here.) says

Hoopla

Patty says

I was so excited to read this new book. I have missed this series.

Lisa Ks Book Reviews says

Like a lot of readers, I enjoy reading holiday themed books during the season they are set in (not a must, but fun) making YULE BE DEAD was of course a must.

I've missed the last two books in this series, so a few things have changed. But I had no problem catching up. It also helps that the author provides a character list at the beginning of the book. (More and more authors are doing that)

YULE BE DEAD was a good mystery and holds up to the others in the series. I didn't guess who the killer was, but protagonist, Katie Bonner didn't either, making me feel not so bad. There was a lot going on for Katie in this story. It's no wonder she couldn't figure it out. As for me, I couldn't see clearly beyond the twists and turns. Also, the killer wasn't made obvious to the reader.

Fans of this series are going to have a great time reading, YULE BE DEAD.

Melissa says

This was a fun visit to Artisans Square. Great mystery and was surprised by a couple plot twists, I am interested to see how they work out in future stories. Looking forward to the next one!

Book of Secrets says

3.75 Stars → Yule be dead — is that a great Christmas cozy mystery title, or what? This is the fifth book in the *Victoria Square* series, with Katie Bonner and her Artisan's Alley merchants gearing up for the busy holiday season. Things get even more hectic when the tea shop owner's daughter is murdered, and the questions Katie starts asking put her in hot water.

I've read one previous book from this series, so it was a delight to reunite with these characters. YULE BE DEAD is part mystery and part Victoria Square saga. Katie has so much going on in her life. She's managing her business, entertaining her visiting mother-in-law (mother of her late husband), dealing with two romantic interests, and eyeing the tea shop that's now for sale. While I enjoyed reading about all of those elements, I felt that the murder mystery got somewhat lost in the shuffle, and Katie's investigation didn't actually lead to the killer's identity.

While I was hoping for a stronger mystery, I still greatly enjoyed this book. The characters and their relationships are real and complex, and I'm also looking forward to seeing where Katie's new venture takes her.

Disclosure: I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

Amy says

Katie Bonner receives a phone call from her former mother in law Margo Bonner. Margo would be passing through and would like to spend time with Katie. Really?! Now?? Why, as they were never close when Katie was married to her son Chad.

Artisans Alley was getting ready for the Holidays.

When Francine's daughter Vonne is killed in an accident, Katie thinks there is more to be checked out.

Katie is also thinking of buying Afternoon Tea, as Francine is seriously considering selling it as business has not been good.

So much going on, a murder with twists and turns, suspects, relationships, teenage issues and possibly a new business.

I love these characters, watching them develop, going back to be with old friends and new friends to get to know.

Thank you NetGalley and Berkley Publishing for the opportunity to read this book.

Jenifer says

I just finished reading Lorraine Bartlett and Gayle Lesson's book: Yule Be Dead. It was my first time reading the Victoria Square Mystery and while I do prefer cozy witch mystery, I thought that reading another kind of investigation would be fun! The book is from Berkley Prime Crime and is the fifth by Lorraine Bartlett.

Katie Bonner is the manager of Artisans Alley and she is a young widow trying to relink with her mother in law, find time with her boyfriend, maybe buy a tea shop and still be able to supervise the Artisan Alley. Her sudden interest about tea shop is related to the fact that the boutique just lost a co-owner in a car accident... but the more we learn about this accident, the more it turns into a murder.

And the murderer might even be one from Artisans Alley! (Gasp!)

Right from the start, I am going to confess that I did not enjoy Yule be dead as much as I thought I would. I know, I am guilty of once again, buying a book for its cover. I thought it was about cats and Yule and while they are both in the story, it wasn't doing it for me. To be honest, it lacked cozy and had a very (very) serious drama vibe attached to it.

While the main character was interesting enough, I could not connect with her at all. Her romantic life is mainly the main subject of the book, a testosterone fight between two men trying to save the damsel in distress.

I thought that there was so much stuff going on in Katie's life that the story about Vonne Barnett (the victim) was left in the back and only popped up once in a while. The book is good, rest assured, but I keep thinking that it shouldn't have been linked to a Christmas theme. It is not, personally, the kind of murder investigation I like to read for the holiday. I thought there was more *violence* than the other cozy mystery books I have read. It did not find myself picturing me living there wishing suddenly to bake a gazillion cookies. Wait, what? I am the only one reacting that way after reading a cozy mystery book?

I don't recall reading a scene with a cat at a supper (the cover) in the book...Was it just to lure crazy cat lady like me to read it?

While Yule Be Dead (great title by the way) is a good work and it can be read on its own, it was not quite what I expected.

Christine says

3.5 stars

I've read all the books in this series and was looking forward to this one. It started out really good, but it became clear the murder investigation would be taking a backseat to Katie's various issues. The book became repetitive as Katie weighed her options on possibly purchasing a new new business and moving on from her late husband, if only she could decide which man she loved. Although the repeated debates and pondering are probably realistic, after a while they weren't entertaining.

Things do wrap up in both the investigation and Katie's personal life. I wasn't completely on board with one of her decisions but a door opens at the very end of the book that gives me hope she may change her mind. If you're a fan of the series, you will be interested to see the developments in her life. This book does stand alone for those new to the series and is a good introduction to the characters, but if you like the book, you may want to go back to one of the prior books where Katie does more investigating and less talking.

Paula says

Yule Be Dead by Lorraine Bartlett with Gayle Leeson, is the fifth book in the Victoria Square mystery series. The holidays are right around the corner and Artisan Alley is buzzing with activity. Katie Bonner's former mother in law is coming to visit her. She's not sure why and it's making her nervous. Someone from town is killed in what appears to be a car accident. Katie must figure out what is going on before the holidays are ruined.

I enjoyed this book from beginning to end. Visiting Victoria Square, was visiting an old friend. I felt right at home. The characters are wonderful. Katie is a strong young woman that took over Artisan Alley and turned it around. Vance, Rose and the other artists add flair to the story. I see myself strolling around, looking for amazing handcrafted treasures to bring home or give as gifts. I imagine walking over to Angelo's Pizzeria for lunch or one of his new yummy treats.

The mystery of this book hooked me in from the very start. With its many twist and turns, it kept me guessing until the very end. I could not put it down. I had to keep reading to find out the answers to all of my questions.

I recommend this book to readers who love a story with a small town feel, wonderful characters that feel like a family and a mystery that will keep you up until you find out how it ends.

I received my ARC copy of this book from NetGalley and Lorraine Bartlett for review.

Debbie says

"Yule Be Dead" is a cozy...romance? The book started out as a mystery: a woman is found dead in a staged car accident. Katie asked some questions relating to why someone would want to kill the woman. But she was quickly distracted by her visiting mother-in-law, debating whether or not to buy a tea shop, two men competing for her attentions, and by the shenanigans happening in her current store. When she angered a suspect about a current crime, he attacked her. Is he the murderer? That thread got lost in the male posturing about who will keep Katie safe. Whodunit was uncovered in the end by the drunk murderer coming to Katie and basically confessing.

While the characters were likable, this was more romance than mystery or suspense. There was occasional use of bad language. There were no sex scenes. This novel is the 5th in the series. You don't need to read the previous novels to understand this one, and this story didn't spoil the whodunit of the previous books.

I received a review copy of this book from the publisher.

Kim says

With Christmas just around the corner, Artisan's Alley and the rest of Victoria Square are getting ready for their busy season. Everywhere Katie looks things seems to be in chaos, the vendors at the Alley keep having conflicts, Katie's former mother-in-law is coming to town, and Katie and Andy are having a hard time finding time to spend together. All these issues make a great storyline as well as the mysterious death one of Victoria Square own-Vonne. Vonne's death seems to bring to light some secrets that someone might want kept secret. As the secrets are revealed my thoughts of Vonne's death changed. This book definitely kept me guessing. In addition to this being a book for enjoyment author Lorraine Bartlett brings to light some real-life issues such as eating disorders (there are others discussed but I don't want to give too much away).

I recommend this book as either a stand-alone read or another great book in the series. I received an ARC of this book in hopes I would supply a review. All thoughts and opinions are my own and in no way have been influenced.

Taryn says

In this next book of the series it's Christmas time and there are many goings on at Victoria Square. While visiting the tea shop across from Artisan's Alley Katie learns that one of the owners, Vonne Barnett, has been found dead. It looks like it might have been due to her drinking but as the police investigate more it turns out to be murder. Katie wants to help in anyway she can when it comes to solving the crime but with an upcoming visit from her previous mother-in-law she isn't sure how much investigating she can actually do. She is worried about the visit because the two have never really cared for each other and she isn't even sure why she agreed in the first place. Vonne left a trail of men in her wake, some of them even married. Could one of them have had it in for her? Could a disgruntled wife be mad enough to kill her? With all that Katie has going on she realizes just how daunting looking for a murderer is going to be, there are tons of places to look for clues not to mention suspects. Things seem to be going okay with her mother-in-law but other issues are popping up left and right as each day passes. Follow along as Katie deals with some rude mini-ballerina's, a kleptomaniac, and a young girl with an eating disorder. Will she be able to resolve all these issues while looking for a killer? She also has the opportunity to buy the tea shop, the other owner is looking to sell because things haven't been going well for the business and she is ready for a change. Will Katie jump at the chance to make part of a life long dream come true? This is such a wonderful series filled with a ton of unique characters that will have you excited for the next book. I look forward to seeing what direction the author takes the main character Katie to next!

I received an ARC of this book, all thoughts and opinions are my own.

Jacque says

Katie has turned Artisan's Alley into a success, but then her former mother-in-law calls to say she would like to visit Katie for a few days. Katie and Margo were never close, but that soon becomes the least of her worries. The nearby tea shop isn't doing well, and the owner wants Katie to buy it. Then the current owner's daughter is killed. When Katie is run down and has a broken leg, the suspicions run rampant. Are the two events related? Who has motive? And to top it off, Katie's boyfriend is awfully friendly with his new

employee. A great holiday story with a mystery and mended relationships thrown in.

Cheryl says

Katie is still running the Artisan Alley and trying to decide if she should buy the Afternoon Tea or not. The owner is found dead in what they think first is a car wreck but later find out is really murder. Katie is trying to get alone with her former mother-in-laws visit, take care of problems at the Artisan Alley and decide which boyfriend she is really in love with.
