



Well Read, Then Dead

Terrie Farley Moran

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First in a new series!

Nestled in the barrier islands of Florida's Gulf Coast, Fort Myers Beach is home to Mary "Sassy" Cabot and Bridget Mayfield—owners of the bookstore café, Read 'Em and Eat. But when they're not dishing about books or serving up scones, Sassy and Bridgy are keeping tabs on hard-boiled murder.

Read 'Em and Eat is known for its delicious breakfast and lunch treats, along with quite a colorful clientele. If it's not Rowena Gustavson loudly debating the merits of the current book club selection, it's Miss Augusta Maddox lecturing tourists on rumors of sunken treasure among the islands. It's no wonder Sassy's favorite is Delia Batson, a regular at the Emily Dickinson table. Augusta's cousin and best friend Delia is painfully shy—which makes the news of her murder all the more shocking.

No one is more distraught than Augusta, and Sassy wants to help any way she can. But Augusta doesn't have time for sympathy. She wants Delia's killer found—and she's not taking no for an answer. Now Sassy is on the case, and she'd better act fast before there's any more trouble in paradise.

Includes a buttermilk pie recipe!

Well Read, Then Dead Details

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Author : Terrie Farley Moran

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From Reader Review Well Read, Then Dead for online ebook

Betsy says

I loved the fact that the book took place in a cafe/bookstore. I also enjoyed the fact that several books were mentioned in this book. Some I am going to have to check out. Something was missing for me though. I did miss the quaintness that some cozies have. The book was just ok. 3 stars

Lesa says

Terrie Farley Moran strikes just the right note with her debut mystery, Well Read, Then Dead. Set in Fort Myers Beach, Florida, the author evokes all the history, beauty and charm of southwest Florida with her knowledge of the area, her research, and her use of local color. The tourist area with its secrets and past comes alive on her pages.

When best friends Sassy Cabot and Bridget "Bridgy" Mayfield left Connecticut behind, they moved to Florida, where they combined their dreams, opening a bookstore and cafe, Read 'Em and Eat. The customers can enjoy meals with book-related names, browse the bookstore, and participate in a book club or two. The regular book group members, though, are locals such as Augusta Maddox, a woman with a large personality and voice, and her shy cousin, Delia Batson. And, all of Miss Augusta's friends turn to Sassy when Delia is found dead, murdered in her own house. Maybe the new lieutenant with the sheriff's department is smart as well as handsome, but Miss Augusta demands some answers, and wants help from Sassy. Where's Miss Delia's missing locket? Where's her missing cat? And, did someone kill Delia because they thought there was treasure near the island she owned in the Ten Thousand Islands? A few too many people think Sassy is snooping, and it isn't long before she's warned to mind her own business, or else.

When an author chooses to set a book in an actual location, a reader should feel as if they are actually there. It's one thing if the setting is imaginary. But, I took issue before when an author's mystery felt as if it could have been set in any island community. Terrie Farley Moran doesn't make that mistake. She capitalizes on the rich history of southwest Florida, stories of islands, treasures, pristine locations. She celebrates the local characters, long-time residents with names that resonate in the area, names such as Smallwood. All of the local color creates a vivid backdrop for this debut mystery.

There are a few weaknesses. At times, Bridgy comes across as pushy, and seems an unlikely best friend. Sassy has a few of the flaws I dislike. She doesn't always tell the police what she knows, and, she makes one of those "Too Stupid To Live" mistakes, and even realizes it at the time. And, I felt as if the motive for murder was obvious. But, some of the characters are quirky and interesting; Bridgy's Aunt Ophie who shows up to help in a pinch, Miss Augusta, Skully, the reporter Cady. And, of course, it's always fun to read a mystery set in the world of books, with the discussion of titles.

Terrie Farley Moran's first mystery novel, Well Read, Then Dead, is entertaining. The rich background sets the scene for this debut, and beckons readers to enter a world with all kinds of possibilities for crime. What better location than a setting already rich with stories of treasures, piracy and murder, and, now, a location for tourists, treasure-seekers, and fortune hunters? Welcome to southwest Florida and Read 'Em and Eat.

Terrie Farley Moran's website is www.terriefarleymoran.com

Carol says

If I were going to teach a course on how to write a cozy, I would chose this one as guide! First of the setting is the Fort Meyers Beach close to the barrier islands of Florida. Already the reader wants to go to sandy beaches, see the wildlife and feel the ocean breezes. This book really made me want to go back to Florida.

It is easy to remember the characters, the main character Mary Sassafras “Sassy” Cabot and Bridget “Bridgy” Mayfield share ownership of the Read Em and Eat café and bookstore. Book club meetings are held there. Two regulars are Augusta Maddox who has a booming voice and a sureness of purpose and her dear friend and cousin, Delia Batson. Delia is quiet and very shy. There are secondary characters who are also wonderfully developed, any of whom would be very welcome in future installments of this series.

Delia, the shy one is found dead and her house has been ransacked. Everybody loved Delia why would this crime be committed against her? To add to the confusion, Miguel the chef at Read Em and Eat broke his leg and Aunt Ophie comes to the rescue. She literally cook up a storm, spreading flour everywhere in the kitchen, creating wonderful delicacies like a buttermilk Pie. Miguel knows Ophie and worried about his kitchen. Augusta’s demeanor changes, she seems to have shrunk and aged overnight. She wants Sassy to find the killer.

I think is the best cozy that I have read to date. I can hardly wait for more. There are just the right amount of characters, an enticing story set in a wonderful places, sparks of laughter that really tickle you and I really loved, love the characters.

Here is my recommendation, if you are a cozy reader, you have to read this book! If not, try it anyway.

I received this book as a win on FirstReads but that in no way influenced my thoughts or feelings in this review.

Laura says

I reviewed this book over at Criminal Element, so see that for my full review. Basically, this is an excellent debut of a cozy mystery series. As with most first-in-series books, it has a lot of backstory, but that is the only negative thing I can say. The characters were fun and interesting and fully fleshed out and the mystery was intriguing. The setting is a character in and of itself, and not to be dismissed. Get this one for sure!

Leslie aka StoreyBook Reviews says

First in a new series that combines several of my favorite things - food and books! Sassy & Bridgey are best friends that opened this restaurant/book store and have turned it into a hit in this small FL town thanks to some of the residents and the snowbirds. They have several book clubs with a myriad of interesting attendees - and some nearly come to fisticuffs! Then Miss Delia is found dead and her friend Augusta knows she was murdered...so it is Sassy & Bridgey on the case.

I think this is the first cozy I have read in awhile where there isn't a romance brewing between some of the main characters. I think that will come in future books so I'm interested to see who becomes involved, but I have my guesses. I liked that the restaurant employees are like one big family especially when the cook falls and breaks his leg, they rally around him to make sure he knows they want him back.

The killer is not an obvious one, although looking back I did not like this character and too see what the killer goes through near the end has you wondering about their sanity.

Well written and can't wait to see what book two has in store for us.

Fred says

Well Read, Then Dead is the first book in the A read 'Em and Eat Mystery series.

Business is going good for Sassy and Bridgy at the Read 'Em and Eat café on Fort Myers Beach. But things are about to change, Carlos their chef, slips in the kitchen and breaks his leg. The next morning, thru the magic of the internet, Aunt Ophie comes flying thru the door laden with grocery bags, ready to take over the kitchen. Truth be told, she'd probably like to take over everything at the café. Two of Sassy favorite regulars are Miss Augusta and Miss Delia, who are cousins. Miss Augusta loves to entertain everyone who will listen with tales of buried treasure in the area of Ft. Myers Beach. When Delia is found dead on the floor of her home, Augusta is devastated and insist that Sassy find out who had killed the shy Miss Delia. Everyone begins to look at the "wreckers", those you look for sunken treasure. But rumors begin that Miss Delia owned an island in the area of Ten Thousand Islands. Those closest to her just figured it was a good story.

This story has a wonderful cast of characters. Auntie Ophie is a take charge woman and Sassy and Bridgy wonder if they will recognize there café when Carlos returns. Miss Augusta is a "tough old bird" and look forward to reading more about her and her feisty character. There is Maggie and Holly, her daughter and a teenager, who will, maybe, bring a younger point of view to future meeting of the Classic Book Club. On the romantic interest side for Sassy are Cady, a local newspaper reporter and Ryan Mantoni, a handsome county deputy. Another character that I hope will be back is "Skully", he got that nickname awhile back, as he was seen carrying around a human skull. He's a reserved gentleman who does odd jobs and makes jewelry out of shells.

A very interesting new series and am most definitely looking forward the next book.

Ellen says

"Well Read, Then Dead" by Terrie Farley Moran.

Characters:

Read 'Em and Eat Café -known for it's food but most of all it's books and The Books Before Breakfast club.

Sassy-Co-owner of the Cafe and BFF with Bridgy.

Bridgy-co-owner with Sassy her BFF.

Miss Augusta-member of the book club with Miss Delia Batson and frequent customer at the café.
Miss Delia Batson-cousin to Miss Augusta and member of the book club.

Miguel-cook at the Café.

Ophrie-Bridgy's Aunt Ophelia and excellent (but messy) cook while Miguel is out of commission.

Ryan Mantoni-deputy Sheriff with the Lee County Sheriff's Dept. and good friend to Sassy.

Lt. Frank Anthony-a no sense of humor investigator that leaves no stone unturned regardless of who's feelings get hurt.

This was one perfect beginning to a wonderful new cozy mystery series. Loved it from page one until the end.

Sassy and Bridgy are in a fix. Miguel has broken his leg while cooking away in the kitchen of the Read 'Em and Eat Café. They need a replacement and fast, but who can they get. Then Bridgy remembers her Aunt Ophelia is an excellent cook and gets in touch with her pronto. The girls soon find out that cooking is not all Ophrie is good at. Their kitchen is in shambles with everything tossed hither and yon. It's clean-up time for the girls.

The book club has it's usual bickering between members but after one meeting something horrible happens. Miss Delia is found murdered in her home. How could such a quiet person end up murdered and why?

At the same time as Sassy and Bridgy swing into investigators mode they realize there's much more to this than they thought. Sunken treasure off the west coast of Florida in the Gulf and Miss Delia's ownership of small islands thereabouts. Is there a connection of those clues to her murder?

Highly recommended for all cozy mystery enthusiasts. This story has that down home feel with realistic characters and a café I could visit with every page. Excellent mystery.

Lisa Ks Book Reviews says

One of my top three favorite new mystery series of 2014!

I have never read the first book of a series and the first published book for an author and been this blown away.

Any time a book grabs me on the first page and won't let go, I know I am in for some of the best reading time I have ever spent. WELL READ, THEN DEAD, did that and more. I so enjoyed the book, I found myself smiling while reading and the real world around me fading away.

The characters and settings mix wonderfully and draw the reader in. It was a delight to get to know Mary "Sassy" Cabot and Bridget "Bridgy" Mayfield—owners of the bookstore café, Read 'Em and Eat. They are two of the most enjoyable characters I have read this year. And wait until you meet Aunt Ophie! She'll have you laughing out loud. There are shelves lined with books, delicious menu items, such as Old Man and the

Sea Chowder, Miss Marple Scones and honest to goodness, Green Eggs and Ham, tables named after famous authors, and book groups like the Books Before Breakfast club. Beyond a doubt, if I had a real life Read 'Em and Eat near me, I would spend so much of my time there you'd think I was on the payroll!

What about the mystery element of the book? Perfect! Even after reading the back cover blur, I forgot who the victim was until I started reading the book. I cried when I read she was dead, because in just the short time I had been reading, I knew that woman would be someone I would love to spend a lot of time with. With the suspects that kept popping up, it became harder to guess who the murder was. I was in suspense the entire time and more emotionally invested than I have been in a story in ages. And with a twist that I didn't see coming, it's no wonder when I closed this book I just sat there and said "Wow".

This book is a must read for all cozy fans and the perfect book to gift someone if you would like to introduce them to cozies mystery.

Linda says

4-1/2 Stars! Welcome to the beauty of Fort Meyers, FL, and the Read 'Em and Eat Cafe and Book Corner. Best friends, Sassy Cabot and Bridgy Mayfield co-own the business. The ambiance beckons as great food is prepared and served, and interesting book club groups meet at the cafe. Two cousins, Augustus Maddox and Delia Batson, actively participate at the book club meets. They talk about how they own family land that pirate treasure could be buried on. When Chef Miguel falls and breaks his leg, it's Bridgy's Aunt Ophie to the rescue! She's a southern cook; believes you should be mannerly; and sets things awhirl when she arrives to take over the kitchen!

When one of the elderly cousins is found dead; motive needs to be determined, and quickly! Who is Skully - the mysterious codger who lurks around town, yet makes lovely handmade jewelry? Could treasure hunters seeking sunken ships bounty have a hand in the murder?

New Cozy Author, Terrie Farley Moran, paints a vivid portrait of the Florida coastline history; deftly mixing details into her plot as she swirls all the clues around and around for readers to guess whodunit. The characters are friendly and you can see yourself as a regular, eating at the cafe and being one of the book clubbies. And, yes; a cat named Bow is a sweet addition to the story. Enjoyable reading!!

Yvonne says

I love reading brand new cozy series. I feel like I'm getting in on the ground floor and meeting new "friends". The characters in this one were so easy for me to get to know and I already adore them.

First, the setting is a bookstore café in Florida - so it immediately won me over. Sassy, along with her best friend, Bridget, are the owners of the "Read 'Em and Eat" café. Sassy loves the bookstore side, while Bridget is all about the café part. Each table is decorated with a specific author theme and quotes from that author. Customers might find themselves sitting at the Agatha Christie or Emily Dickinson table. I would so love to have a shop like this in my area. The closest thing we have is a chain bookstore with a café in it and that's not quite the same. I could feel the ambiance at the "Read 'Em and Eat" café right through the pages of the

book.

Our amateur sleuth this time is Mary Sassafras Cabot – “Sassy” to her friends. At first I was a bit annoyed because the entire town seemed to rely on Sassy to do everything for them, but then I saw what a close knit group the town was and how much Sassy loved them. She will do anything for the people she loves and cares about.

Sassy runs several different types of book clubs. When a soft spoken member is found dead, one of the victim's relatives asks for Sassy's help in finding out who was responsible. She never expects to uncover that the victim had so many secrets and finds villains in some interesting places. It's up to Sassy to stop them before someone else is killed, since she's getting no help from the police.

The author does an amazing job with developing the characters such as Sassy, Bridget, Aunt Ophie, and Miss Augusta. They were so realistic to me. Aunt Ophie and Miss Augusta made me smile. Eccentric characters with a heart of gold.

The story moves along at a great pace and keeps readers guessing until the end. I know I didn't guess who the culprit was until the end and I was pretty surprised.

I'm sure the author will be giving us many more books in the future. I can already tell this series will be an interesting ride and I can't wait to get back for another visit to the “Read ‘Em and Eat”. Great series debut and a very talented new-to-me author! What more could I ask for?

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

OpenBookSociety.com says

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/we...>

Brought to you by OBS Reviewer Jeanie

Beware of Spoilers

This is a great book! I truly enjoyed this first novel in the new cozy series, A Read ‘Em and Eat Mystery! Kudos to Terrie Farley Moran on her first full-length novel, who has proven her writing skills with short stories and wows everyone with this offering.

First, I really like the concept – a bookstore and cafe combined into one place, the Read ‘Em and Eat. Served up in unique style are a variety of pastries or fast, tasty sandwiches (many named after books turned into novels or well-known authors). Book clubs hold regular meetings there, (such as Potluck Book Club) and some folks insist on sitting at the same table every day (such as Judge Harcroft at the Dashiell Hammett table). Owners Bridgy Mayfield and Sassy (Mary Sassafras) Cabot have a thriving business that is well-liked by their regular clientele and tourists alike in Fort Myers Beach, Florida. It is the kind of place I wish was in my neighborhood!

The opening introduces the reader to some of the regulars squabbling at the Books Before Breakfast Club, then Miguel, chef extraordinaire, falling from a ladder and breaking his leg, rendering him unable to cook for several weeks. Deputy Ryan Mantoni arrives at the cafe as one of the first responders for the accident, introducing his new lieutenant, Frank Anthony.

The following day, Bridgy's Aunt Ophie comes to fill in as chef. She enjoys getting to know the customers, but tries to change how the regular dishes are prepared. Elderly Miss Augusta, one of the regulars, arrives without her cousin, Miss Delia, which almost never occurs as one rarely sees one without the other. While Ophie introduces Miss Augusta to her version of iced tea, Sassy has a surprise visit from her friend, Cady Stanton, newspaper reporter. He beckoned her outdoors where he told her the terrible news – Miss Delia was discovered dead in her home by the mailman, and the Sheriff's Department was looking for Miss Augusta. The sad news was given to her, and Sassy began to help her with her needs. Deputy Ryan and Lieutenant Frank later broke the news that Miss Delia had been murdered – yet it is Sassy to whom Miss Augusta directs her request to find whoever killed her beloved cousin.

Well Read, then Dead is a triumphant first novel with a plot that continues to twist and turn as first one, then another suspect is checked out by Sassy and Bridgy even as they are discouraged by Cady, Ryan and Frank. Sassy diligently helps Miss Augusta with the necessary tasks of funeral preparations, finding Miss Delia's cat, Bow, and finding a home that the cat would find comfortable. Risking her own life, Sassy is led through labyrinthine paths to the murderer – yet will she survive to tell the tale?

This mystery was very well planned with enough twists that kept this reader happily on her toes. The characters are a delightful mix from the very prim and proper to the eccentric. Each are three-dimensional folks that you could expect to find in Any Small Town, USA. Generations-old secrets are as plentiful as the potential suspects, making the resolution of death by murder somewhat like putting together a puzzle while some of the pieces are hidden in other people's pockets.

The cover designer is a whiz, lending an alluring scene of the story inside while asking the reader to 'come in and set a spell, enjoy a pastry and buy a good book.' While I'm not sure how many words are in this mystery, the art is definitely worth at least a thousand words!

I highly recommend this novel to young adults and adults of any age who enjoy mysteries with a small community filled with friends, a unique cafe with book lovers, and even the pets who accompany them. It received rave pre-publication reviews by notable cozy mystery writers – and even one of my cats gave its approval – as when I retrieved it to finish reading, there were a few bite marks from a happy cat which have not been left in the past! If Well Read, then Dead is any indicator, the next offering in this series is sure to be an even greater delight!

OBS would like to thank the publisher for supplying a free copy of this title in exchange for an honest review as part of their ongoing blog tour!

Sarah says

I have so many series that I read that when a new one is released, the 1st thing I ask myself is, do I need to add another to my list? In the case of Well Read, Then Dead, the answer is a resounding YES.

I had been waiting for this one to be released and available at my library and I wasn't disappointed when I

finally read it! Well Read, Then Dead centers around a small breakfast/lunch cafe called Read 'Em and Eat in the Fort Meyers beach area of Florida. Unique to this particular cafe is that it is half a bookstore where the owners host several different kinds of book clubs in addition to serving up delicious food.

The mystery surrounds the suspicious death of Delia Batson, an older lady that owns a few of the private islands in the Fort Meyers area. Sassy and Bridgy, co-owners of the cafe start digging into the mystery as Delia is one of their favorite customers. Introduced along the way are Bridgy's aunt Ophelia (sort of an annoying character), Miss Augusta, Delia's cousin, Miguel the cook in the cafe, and several others.

Terrie Moran transports her readers directly to Fort Meyers, a place where I hope to visit soon as my dad has a condo there, and it's beautiful, peaceful beach setting. It makes me hope that there is a place like Read 'Em and Eat just like the one described in the book. In addition, Moran gives us a cast of pretty likeable characters that we want the chance to meet, read about and grow to love.

I look forward to the second book in this charming series!

Nidah (SleepDreamWrite) says

This sounds like my kind of place that mixes books and food? And that cover. Love it!

In this, you got not only a book club, but a bookish theme restaurant and a library. Add a bookstore to the mix and we're set. Unless I missed it but other than that, there you go.

Anyway what haven't I said about cozies that have a bookish theme to them? A new series that of course have heard nothing about.

I can see potential with some of the characters and like that while there isn't a hint of a romance, exactly, you're curious to see what the series will do with it. Nice surprise and change of pace with that.

Another fun read and start to a new series that I hope to keep up with. Thanks to the other bookish theme cozies I need to catch up on.

LORI CASWELL says

Nestled in the barrier islands of Florida's Gulf Coast, Fort Myers Beach is home to Mary "Sassy" Cabot and Bridget Mayfield—owners of the bookstore café, Read 'Em and Eat. But when they're not dishing about books or serving up scones, Sassy and Bridgy are keeping tabs on hard-boiled murder.

Includes a buttermilk pie recipe!

Dollycas's Thoughts

The Read 'Em and Eat sounds like a perfect escape if you ask me. Delicious food served at tables named for famous authors with author and book trivia encased in the tabletop. Plus you are surrounded by shelves and shelves of books without all the hustle and bustle of a major chain store. And did I mention the beaches!! This store is on an island south of Florida in the Gulf of Mexico. I would get there and never want to leave. It would be an idyllic place to write this blog, but I am getting ahead of myself. This is a location in book...not

a real place, but if it was I would be there! The author has brought so much life to this place and these characters I was packing by bags to go visit but I will have to settle for a virtual trip.

Mary Sassafrass (“Sassy”) Cabot and Bridget (Bridgy) Mayfield are fantastic characters. They are partners and best friends and are trying to grow their business with good food and book clubs.

They have quite an eclectic group of regulars including Miss Augusta Maddox and Miss Delia Batson, they are elderly cousins and true Southern ladies and expect everyone to mind their Southern manners. You rarely see one without the other. Then there is Judge Harcroft, he always sits at the Dashiell Hammett table and let's just say his “Dash” humor is an acquired taste and most times he is the only one tasting. Jocelyn Randall is the pastor's wife and very manipulative. I have no idea how the pastor put up with her, he definitely has my sympathy.

Miguel is the cook at the Read 'Em and Read and comes up with the most wonderful tasty treats like the Swiss Family Robinson Cheeseburger and Robert Frost Apple and Blueberry Tartlets. When Miguel has an unfortunate kitchen accident Bridgy's Aunt Ophelia shows up to help before they can even call her.

“Facebook, my darlin' girl. I saw your status about Miguel...” She would have arrived sooner but she had to wait for the grocery store to open to get the ingredients for her famous buttermilk pie! She is definitely a force to be reckoned with but Bridgy and Sassy know they need her so they will adjust.

Miguel is not the only one out of commission. Miss Delia missed her ride to the shop with Miss Augusta and Sassy knew something was wrong. Soon after Miss Augusta arrived Sassy got word that Miss Delia was found dead in her home and that she was murdered. Breaking the news to Miss Augusta was hard but when she asked Sassy to track down the person responsible Sassy had no choice but to say yes. She knows the sheriff's office won't be happy, especially a certain new lieutenant, that she is doing a bit of investigating herself but she can't let Miss Augusta down.

I absolutely loved this story. Friendship was the basic theme throughout the story and not just the friendship between Sassy and Bridgy. Delia and Augusta had been friends forever and they had such a rich history. It is going to be hard for Miss Augusta going on without her cousin but she is part of the Read 'Em and Read family so I know she will have people looking after her.

Well Read, Then Dead is an excellent start to the Read Em and Eat Mystery Series. Fabulous characters, awesome setting and a fantastic whodunit. I can't wait to see what the author serves up next on Sassy and Bridgy's menu!!

Tina at A COZY GIRL READS AND WRITES Blog says

Every character in this debut cozy mystery are so quirky and charming well except maybe the killer but that's another tale for another day. Read 'Em and Eat is a quaint little bookstore/cafe run by Florida's own, Sassy Cabot and Bridget Mayfield. The bookstore being a dream of Sassy's and the cafe being a dream of Bridget's. The book meetings are in full swing at Read 'Em and Eat and many Florida's resident book lovers attend. Delia Batson is a regular of the meetings along with her best friend Augusta Maddox but Delia is a shy somewhat recluse.

To the shock of all at Read 'Em and Eat including Sassy and Bridget they find out that Delia was murdered.

Sassy and Bridget rally to comfort her best friend Augusta in her time of grief. Augusta wants to know who murdered her best friend and asks Sassy to help her and Sassy gladly accepts but realizing she needs to protect everyone she loves before it's too late.

I was so in love with the bookstore/cafe Read 'Em and Eat. Fighting for and protecting a friend had me hooked from the start. A touch of a long lost romance too a only true romantic could love. Books and food are always make the best cozies in my book and in well read, then dead makes it even better but murder is never far behind, and Well Read, Then Dead kept me reading. It had everything you could want in a cozy even a lovable cat and what cat and animal lover would not love that? Not me that's for sure. I can't wait to read and review the next in the series
