



Miss Dimple Suspects

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With the country in the midst of World War II, you can be sure that the small town of Elderberry, Georgia, will pull together to find a missing child. And you can be equally certain that first-grade teacher Miss Dimple Kilpatrick will be in the rescue party - especially since Peggy Ashcroft is one of her students. Miss Dimple carves out a search path all her own and, once again, the sharp-as-a-tack teacher is right on point. She finds Peggy in the woods, but the child is too sick to walk and it's too difficult for Miss Dimple to navigate the uneven terrain in the dark. Luckily, she comes upon the home of an elderly artist, Mae Martha, and her young companion, Suzy, who help ensure that Peggy returns home safe and sound. A few days later, however, Miss Dimple receives a frantic call from Suzy: Mae Martha has been murdered and Suzy is considered the most likely suspect because her family is Japanese. Miss Dimple and her fellow teachers, Annie and Charlie, don't buy it and set out to prove Suzy's innocence, only to discover danger where they least expect it. Quick thinking and loyal to a fault, Miss Dimple is an amateur sleuth who will always stand up for what's right.

Miss Dimple Suspects Details

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From Reader Review Miss Dimple Suspects for online ebook

QNPoohBear says

Christmas is coming and everyone is looking forward to the season. When little Peggy Ashcroft goes missing, it puts a damper on the festivities and sets into motion a mystery that Miss Dimple has to solve. Newly adopted Peggy ran off after her cat and while everyone believes Peggy returned to the site of her original home, Miss Dimple, as Peggy's teacher, knows right where the girl should be- if she can find it. With the sky growing dark and the temperature growing cold, Miss Dimple nearly gives up, but is helped by a protective German Shepherd dog guarding the little girl. The child is too heavy and too sick for Miss Dimple to carry down the hill but the dog leads her to the home of a reclusive artist Mae Martha and her nurse/companion, an Asian woman named Suzy. When Suzy saves Peggy's life and probably Dimple's too, Dimple politely keeps her suspicions about Suzy's background and secretive ways to herself. When Mae Martha is found dead only a few days later and Suzy becomes the chief suspect, Miss Dimple knows the young woman is NOT a murderer. She owes the younger woman her life and will not stop until the mystery is solved. Helped by Charlie, Annie and Virginia, Miss Dimple is on the case.

The mystery is engaging enough. I had a short list of suspects and I wasn't wrong. There was a slight red herring but not enough to make the identity of the villain a surprise. I still stayed up until 2 am reading so I could find out what happened. I skimmed a lot of the descriptive details that make this series stand out. I focused on the mystery. What I really wanted to know was what was happening with Charlie and Annie's boyfriends. They were left out of the story aside from some brief mentions. I felt like the characters accepted Suzy too quickly. I can see why Miss Dimple trusted her and I suppose the others trust Miss Dimple but Emmeline and her witch hunting seemed a little more accurate for small town America at that time... or now One little anecdote about Willie was taken straight from [book:A Christmas Story. Those are really my only complaints. I figured out the secondary mystery right away.

The new characters center around the mysteries. There's Mae Martha, a kind-hearted, reclusive painter. She has no idea of her talent. She has a big heart and it was absolutely terrible that she was murdered. I was so sad. Suzy also seems nice. I don't blame her for being secretive. I figured out why she always made herself scarce in front of strangers and I didn't think she would murder Mae Martha but I wasn't sure. She was a long-shot suspect in any case. Mae Martha left behind two nephews. Esau and his wife Corinne are not all that likable, especially Corinne. Something about them bothered me, whether or not they are murderers. Nephew Bill, a blacksmith, hardly makes an appearance. When he does, it seems like he loved his aunt, but he handles all her finances so he could be a murderer. Then there's the handyman Bill Pitts. He gave me the creeps, sneaking up on people when they least expect it and always disappearing. He made my suspect list too. There's also Lottie Nivens, a newcomer to town. She takes over helping out with the church Christmas pageant while her husband is overseas. I had her on my suspect list as well. Her husband is in the navy so she has good reason to blame Suzy.

Fans of more hard boiled sleuths will like this one. I like less matter-of-fact sleuths and a good deal more romance. I still want to know what happens to Charlie and Annie's boyfriends so I have to keep reading!

Karen Blinn says

Miss Dimple and her friends are back to their detecting in the World War II town of Elderberry, GA. With

almost all of the men gone, it's up to the school teachers to help out the county's sheriff. In this adventure, a new resident to the area, artist Mae Martha Hawthorne is murdered. Suspicion immediately falls on her Japanese caregiver, Suzy. Miss Dimple and her fellow teachers, Annie and Charlie, decide to clear Suzy's name. In doing so, they are almost dispatched to their eternal reward on a couple of different occasions. Author Ballard does a good job conveying the atmosphere of small-town America during all of the rationing, etc. that happened during World War II. This is a pleasant, quick-read that offers a fair amount of suspense as part of the package.

Wendy says

Great cozy series set in small town Georgia in WW II. Miss Dimple is the perfect teacher and a delightful friend. Each book in the series has brought home the hardships of life in the US during that time but the mystery on this outing is particularly compelling as it focuses on the prejudice faced by Japanese Americans.

Terri Lynn says

I am enjoying this series by Mignon Ballard so much. Set in World War 2 in a small North Georgia town near Atlanta, first grade teacher Miss Dimple Kilpatrick and her friends get involved in yet another murder mystery. One of Miss Dimple's first grade students, Peggy, sneaks out of her home while sick and home alone with a 16 year old babysitter to look for her missing cat. When the townspeople go out on a freezing December evening to search for the child, it is Miss Dimple who finds her nearly dead with pneumonia being guarded by a German Shepherd named Max. She struggles to carry the child to where Max leads them- the home of a reclusive artist Mae Martha who lives with a mysterious young woman doctor of Japanese ancestry who is hidden out here when all of the people of Japanese heritage (Suzy was born in California) were being locked up in nasty camps due to the racism of President Roosevelt and many other American bigots (notice they didn't lock up the white Americans of German or Italian heritage though we were at war with them too). In this isolated home in the woods, Suzy had been caring for her medical school classmate's relative (he died in the war). This is fortunate for Peggy and for Miss Dimple too for Suzy is able to keep Peggy alive.

Miss Dimple and her friends become friendly with Mae Martha and Suzy but before long Mae Martha is brutally murdered and Suzy has to go into hiding because people think as someone of Japanese heritage that she must be the killer. Miss Dimple and her friends find and hide her at the librarian Virginia's home but she has nosy neighbors.

The ladies decide to help Suzy by finding out who did kill Mae Martha but keep getting caught and before long find a man who has been murdered, a man who was fond of Mae Martha. Soon the women are in danger and almost killed but through their determination they never give up. There are some realistic descriptions of a World War 2 Christmas with the men they love at war and with rationing. There is also a lovely side story of a girl kidnapped long ago returning and finding her brother (both parents are dead).

Lynn says

A very entertaining installment in this well done historical mystery series. A dependable cozy when a cozy is

in the cards! One of the elements I admire in Ballard's writing is the very skillful integration of background historical information. Very interesting tidbits enrich the story without seeming to be purposeful. Here for example, because of the war production needs, there is no tinsel for the Xmas tree and tonsillitis can be extremely serious, even life-threatening for a child. Ballard also presents a picture of the virulent anti-Japanese sentiment that existed and, as always, depicts with humor, the cultural life of a small town where everyone knows everyone else's business.

Michell Karnes says

Another great mystery from this author. Dimple Kilpatrick and her teacher friends have solved the mystery of a country painter and keep her young companion from being arrested. Love the small town background of this WWII mystery!

Mandolin says

The cowardly bombing of Pearl Harbor by the Japanese had repercussions much greater than just forcing the United States to finally enter World War II. It gave the American people a target for their anger and desire for justice and revenge. Japanese Americans who, despite living on American soil for many generations and proving their loyalty as American citizens, were easy to identify because, unlike their German and Italian counterparts, their physical appearance and culture was so different from the general population. Easy to single out, they were forced from their homes and businesses and segregated into camps that, though lacking the atrocities of the German concentration camps, were just as morally reprehensible. Those who were not subject to this terrible wrong still suffered from the stigma placed on them by people who needed an enemy, needed an outlet for their anger.

Imagine, then, how much worse it would be for those who, by some unlucky twist of fate, found themselves as suspects in crimes they did not commit. It would be easy for them to become the easy scapegoat, quickly condemned by the communities who feared them already because of their foreign appearance and suspected allegiance to the enemy. Suzu Amaya, a young Japanese American physician, finds herself in just that situation when the aging and reclusive artist she has been living with is found murdered. Though most sanely thinking people would see how very unlikely she is as a murderer, the people of Elderberry, Georgia aren't thinking too sanely at the moment. Stirred up by gossips like Emmaline Brumlow, the members of the town quickly believe the worst of Suzu (or Suzy, the name she's been using to better fit into the caucasian society.) All, that is, except our beloved Miss Dimple and her friends. Having been the recipient of Suzy's compassionate care and witnessed her healing talents at work with a little girl who nearly died in the woods before she found her, Miss Dimple knows that Suzy is innocent. But with few people willing to believe her assertions, Dimple also knows that it's up to her to find the true murderer before Suzy, who is being sheltered at the home of Dimple's friend Virginia, is discovered and hanged for the murder. Will Miss Dimple, with a little help from fellow teachers Charlie and Annie, be able to get to the bottom of the mystery before the murderer strikes again? Even more importantly, will they be able to save Suzy from the wrongful wrath of Elderberry?

With its Southern charm and down-home feel, this installment in the Miss Dimple mystery series is the best to date! The author's handling of the delicate subjects of racial discrimination and the second world war, which is tempered by her light tone and subtle humor, adds a depth to the story that makes it stand above

other cozy mysteries of its kind. As the series progresses, the characters are maturing and becoming familiar, making a visit to Elderberry feel like a trip home. Like its predecessors, its focus on friendship and bravery in the face of trying times is satisfying and uplifting. Readers who enjoy a good mystery that makes one think and leaves behind a positive glow will certainly enjoy this book.

Suzi says

Best of the bunch so far. Suzy topic handled well. I didn't solve the mystery early this time, so that was nice. I look forward to the inevitable Hugh-Suzy hookup. ?

Nancy says

This is my second Miss Dimple mystery book. I enjoyed this cozy story. It takes place during World War II, and most of the young men are fighting in the war. The setting of the story is in a small close community. Suzy is working for Mae Martha in a remote area. She is of Japanese heritage, and her parents have told her not to come back to California. The Japanese Americans, are being removed to re-location camps, and her parents have been moved to one in Utah. When Mae Martha is murdered, Suzy reaches out to Miss Dimple for help, because she fears she will be blamed for the murder.

Miss Dimple and her friends investigate the murder, and a couple of the mother's also get involved in the case. Of course they become so tangled in the investigation, that their lives become endangered.

Kate says

When my grandmother first ate lobster, she ate the whole thing, carefully and enthusiastically. "What did you think?" My mother asked her. "Well," she said, "If I never eat lobster again, that would be alright."

That's how I feel about Miss Dimple. Fine, but I never need read another. Too many characters with too similar names and voices, too many leaps in plot, a pointless subplot that carried on with no interaction from the main characters, and a persistent racism that, though likely true to the time and place (WWII Georgia), grated on me. I was quite pleased when the audiobook was over.

Sallee says

This is definitely a Southern cozy, laid back and slowly paced taking place during WWII. A teacher, Miss Dimple and her friends find themselves involved in several murders after Miss Dimple takes refuge with a lost child in the cabin of an artist. As the story moves along we take part in the era in which it was written with simple honest people worried about their family members off fighting the war and the simple but hard life they lived. It was a comfortable read with a nice mystery. The main character, Dimple Kilpatrick, first grade teacher, shows her great intuition in solving the crimes.

Sandy says

This series does not include angels; but has some of the same characters. Miss Dimple is a teacher in a small town in Georgia during World War II. There are small details about living in America during the war that add to the realistic feel of the story. There is a murder, as well as prejudice against a young Japanese woman that Miss Dimple and her friends are determined to solve. This is a quick, easy read with a satisfying cast of characters and a satisfying ending.

Cheryl A says

I love sweet, funny interconnected Southern stories, especially those set in the 30's and 40's. I've read the previous two Miss Dimple adventures and was looking forward to this one.

Miss Dimple, 1st grade teacher of a certain age, joins the hunt for a missing student. When she locates her, they take shelter in the isolated cabin of a local primitive artist, Mae Martha and her companion, Suzy. Shortly after, Suzy contacts Miss Dimple and begs her to come to the cabin. Miss Dimple arrives with fellow teachers Charlie and Annie, who discover Mae Martha dead.

As the mystery unfolds, Miss Dimple, Charlie and Annie try to discover who killed Mae Martha and where Suzy is, as she is the primary suspect. Their investigations put them in danger, but they finally ensure that Suzy is safe and the culprit is brought to justice.

The author captures the feel of a small Southern town during WWII. The sacrifices that the average citizen makes as well as the prejudices of the time are handled well. I found the massive number of characters a bit difficult to follow, and there was a fair amount of repetition, which I find bothersome.

Overall, this was a nice sweet little novel, a historical cozy mystery that read quickly without overtaxing the reader.

Amy Lignor says

Miss Dimple Kilpatrick (who has appeared in two fantastic tales by this author) returns.

For those who do not yet know, Miss Dimple is a first-grade teacher in the tiny town of Elderberry, Georgia. It's the 1940's and while the men of the town are off fighting in WWII, the women are taking care of the home front. But the home front is about to get some shocking news.

Peggy Ashcroft, a student of Dimple's, had just been on the playground jumping rope with her classmates when the following day she simply comes up missing. The townspeople gather to hunt for Peggy, but as night comes they get ready to put everything on hold. Miss Dimple, however, continues. Going off on her own, she soon discovers Peggy in the home of an artist, Mae Martha Hawthorne and her companion Suzy, who has been living with Martha in order to help her recover from an injury.

Peggy is fine but ill, and the two women help get the child back home. Sometime later Miss Dimple receives a worrisome call from Suzy and she, along with her friends, rush to the cabin to discover that Mae Martha has been killed. The authorities immediately suspect Suzy, who apparently disappeared after she made the phone call. But Miss Dimple thinks that the girl is just afraid, seeing as that her family is Japanese and America is at war with Japan. On instinct, Miss Dimple goes looking for the real killer, and a cast of characters from Mae Martha's nephews to a handyman to several neighbors become suspects.

Whether Mae Martha's death has to do with a valuable painting that many would like to get their hands on; or the fact that Suzy is a Japanese spy, remains to be seen, and only Miss Dimple will be able to find the answer.

A very well-written cozy with a great plot, this author writes with extraordinary humor and heart when it comes to the beloved 'small town life' during the harsh time of War.

Kathy says

On a cold December evening in WWII era Georgia, a young girl goes missing. First-grade teacher Dimple Kilpatrick sets off as part of the community search to find her student. She believes she knows exactly where to look, but no one else believes little Peggy Ashcroft could possibly go that far on foot, especially given the girl was ill. Cold and alone, Miss Dimple finds Peggy in the woods, burning with fever. Miss Dimple knows it will be nearly impossible to find her way down the hill in the dark and frigid temperatures carrying the sick child. Thankfully, a strange dog leads Miss Dimple to a small cottage owned by Mae Martha Hawthorne, an elderly artist, who lives there along with her companion, an Asian woman named Suzy, who nurses Peggy through the night until help can be called. Little does Miss Dimple know that this miraculous meeting will lead her into a deep mystery involving Miss Mae Martha's death, for which the prime suspect is Suzy, a fact complicated by her Japanese ancestry.

I really tried to like this book, but this book was virtually unreadable. I felt like I was once again teaching, reading a story written by a slightly advanced fifth-grader. The characters were flat. The dialogue was stilted. The POV changed multiple times within a single paragraph. There was no arc to the story. It was simply stagnant. There really wasn't anyone or anything to attach oneself to as a reader. Therefore, it was impossible to truly become wrapped up in the story as one should be in a good novel. I am very disappointed in this book.
