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Amanda Brice

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1. A dance of death.
2. When Dani Spevak stumbles over a dead body and gets into another crazy situation.

Aspiring ballerina Dani Spevak is back home for the summer, recovering from an injury. What was supposed to be a simple day trip into New York City to visit her friends at the Manhattan Ballet Conservatory turns deadly when Dani discovers that the world of professional ballet can be cutthroat – literally.

Don't miss Dani's first murder mystery, coming March 22, 2013!

Pas De Death Details

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Author : Amanda Brice

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From Reader Review Pas De Death for online ebook

Beth Pond says

I received a copy of this book through Net Galley in exchange for an unbiased review.

Pas De Death is part of a series in which a 15-year-old ballerina finds herself amidst a mystery, in this case, the murder of a young art critic and blogger, whose scathing reviews called for a big pool of suspects.

What worked: The killer was not predictable or at least not readily obvious from the very beginning, so the mystery aspect worked well. It wasn't the obvious choice, and when you realize who did it, there's a moment of "oh yeah, I remember that person." We then learn the motive.

What didn't work: The supporting characters were two-dimensional. I stopped caring which best friend was which because they basically played the same role, so really only one was needed. There were too many pop culture references. The first few were funny, but then it got really tiring. Plus, some of the pop culture references were too old for the narrator to really be making. If this is set in 2013, a 15-year-old would not be making reference to the Britney Spears "I'm not a girl, not yet a woman" lyrics. There's a storyline in which the Mom reveals she's pregnant. This was totally unnecessary to the plot. It was sort of like "oh by the way..." Now I'm going to mope about it for 20 pages while I try to figure out the murder. As it was, the book was pretty short, an okay length for MG readers, who I think the book is best suited for. It's more of an upper MG or lower YA that would like suit 10-14 year old readers, as there is no hot and heavy romance or vulgar language.

Overall, Pas De Death is a cute mystery. The mystery aspect works well for younger readers. Perhaps younger readers will identify with the narrator and abundance of pop culture references, but it wore on me.

Lauren at Live Read and Breathe Reviews says

eARC Courtesy of NetGalley for honest review

Still recovering from her injury and broken heart Dani stumbles onto yet another mystery.

With the help of her friends, her grandma and Craig. (WHAT?...Yep just happens to be in NY at the same time).

While following the leads Dani steps into a world of trouble and thank goodness for Craig and the police her save the day.

I do like this series. They are quick with loads of mystery and drama which totally makes my YA self love but the adult in me wants more with Craig and the relationship part. I know it really is a true YA book but a girl can hope.

Monica says

Dani Spevak is 15 and studying to be a dancer. Even though she has to take the summer off to recover from a knee injury, Dani intends to spend as much time as she can with her friends at the Manhattan Ballet Company. Little does she know her plans will be derailed when she finds the body of a popular blogger in an alley outside of the Company's building.

This fantastic murder mystery is told in a wonderfully authentic voice. There are pop culture references to the Kardashians, the Real Housewives TV series, and even a mention of the Gallagher Girls- a well-known series of teen fiction. Dani shares boy problems, technology problems (when will her parents get her a cool phone, already?), and crime solving problems. Like any 15-year-old, she doesn't always know what her next move will be, but she knows she's got to do something- especially if she's the only one who can.

This book recommendation has already been passed on to my school library media specialist friends, especially those in middle and junior highs. This is a murder mystery and it's a little descriptive, but overall it's clean in terms of sexual content and foul language.

Trish at Between My Lines says

3 Things you should know about Me

1. Ballet books are my auto-buy subject. God knows why, I'm a klutz with two left feet who struggles walking in high heels let alone on pointe.
2. I love whodunit books
3. I'm a blogger. Yes, I know if you are reading this on my blog that's obvious but work with me here!

3 Things you should know about Pas De Death

1. The main character Dani Spevac is a ballet student.
2. Dani discovers a dead body in an alley, a girl who she had previously sat beside on a bus journey and now has had her throat slit. Dani decides to try and solve the mystery herself.
3. The dead person is a blogger! I know! Maybe all those people around you muttering blogging will be the death of you might have a point.

3 Reasons I liked this book

1. Its good, frothy fun. Like a hot chocolate with a marshmallow and lots of sprinkles on top.
2. Dani is goofy, snarky and adorable. I defy you to read this book and not laugh out loud. Its full of wit and humour. See the name of the book for a classic example.
3. See above for the 3 things you should know about me – tick, tick and tick.

3 Reasons why I had to deduct some stars

1. It's predictable not what you really want in a murder mystery.
2. It's not complex enough. I know it's a short book but some extra layers would make it so much better and would rise it to a whole new level.
3. I was expecting a light read but it's an even paler of shade of light than I was expecting. Comparing this to a murder mystery is like comparing a court case to a Judge Judy case. Entertaining, great fun but not the real deal.

In summary : I'm filing this one under guilty pleasures. It was a quick, fun read and I'd be happy to read more by this author. If you share any of my bookish quirks, I recommend you give it a shot.

K.L. Lantz says

Amanda Brice's latest Dani Spevak mystery was released recently, and it is adorable!

That might seem like a strange way to describe a murder mystery, but you'll understand it in a minute. PAS DE DEATH is part of a series, but it works as a standalone because all previous relevant events are referenced in a way that keeps the reader in the loop. It is YA (young adult) and done in the first person humorous/light style a la Ally Carter (Gallagher Girls). In fact, there's even a funny part in the book when Dani says it's not like she's a Gallagher Girl. Yay for bookish pop culture references! Pop culture references abound in this book, from "binders full of women" to actresses I've never heard of and wondered if they were made up. The love interest (an 18-year-old ex-boyfriend for our 15-year-old protagonist) is basically Robert Pattinson but more charming. He's even an actor playing a certain broody vampire in the Midnight movies based on books by... Bethany Beyer. Yeah.

So that's the kind of cuteness you're buying when you buy PAS DE DEATH. Since I am a huge Ally Carter fan, I also appreciated the light, humorous tone of Amanda Brice. I'd definitely read the others in her series, and not just because there's a ballerina inside me dying to get out (although yes, that is part of it). Girls who liked I'D TELL YOU I LOVE YOU BUT THEN I'D HAVE TO KILL YOU, will also enjoy PAS DE DEATH.

A little explanation of the title from the blurb:

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I really love the title. And the blurb. Clearly, this is a clever author.

Now to the stars... I would put this somewhere between three and four stars (probably round up to 4), which is why this isn't featured on Afterglow. While I enjoyed it and would read more from the author, I felt it got a

little too thin at parts, especially the ending, which happened way too fast. I'd have liked a little more showing vs. telling in that part, especially the parting scene between the boy and girl.

I loved the characters, particularly the eccentric grandmother. Dani was fun to spend time with, and I think she acted the way you expect a fifteen-year-old to act, even though she is angry with herself for being TSTL (too stupid to live) at times, wandering into situations she could have avoided with a little forethought. I think that's just life at that age. You sort of know better, but you have to test the limits anyway. You have to fight for your independence even if it puts you in danger. So the characters felt real, Robert Pattinson look-a-like notwithstanding. :)

The mystery was pretty good. I had it figured out way before Dani, but that could be because I'm twice her age. *shrugs* I think teenagers who like light, humorous books would eat this one up. I mean, come on! It's got ballerinas!

Bottom line: It's a great introduction to the mystery genre for younger readers (Read: clean, not overly gory or sexual).

Daniel says

Clearly, as an older male, I am not the target audience for a book like this, but: 1) I really enjoy YA literature; 2) I like a good mystery; and 3) I studied dance, specifically ballet, in my younger days and still work in the entertainment industry. I guess that makes me part of the target audience after all.

This was a quick, easy read. Perhaps a little too easy for my tastes.

First, I never got a sense of urgency or impending death, despite the constant danger that our heroine, Dani Spevak, was in. From finding the dead body, to hiding from the police, to carrying a live bomb, to a death threat tossed through a window, to the nearly impending death at the very end... it all flowed so smoothly and evenly that I never once worried that this might be the last book in the Dani Spevak series. And without *feeling* a sense of danger, it was nearly impossible to be emotionally tied to the characters.

Early on I consciously was reminded of my early writing teachers' lessons of "show, don't tell" and how this seemed to violate that rule. It was because I was being told the story that I wasn't caught up in it directly.

Plotwise, I have to admit that I've always taken issue with characters that make astounding leaps in deductive logic... or buck authority because adult professionals are too stupid to understand. Yes, I've been a fifteen year old (have three teens in my house now, one 15), but any character brave and bold enough to be the focus of a series of mysteries needs to rely less on luck and more on making smart choices. This, above all, was the biggest strike against the book, to me.

However, because of it's true target audience, I've given it a bit of latitude. I can understand that there IS an audience out there that really wants mysteries in an arts setting and that would find this extremely attractive. There's enough story, enough mystery, enough dance for a quick fun read for the right audience.

Ellen says

Originally posted on The Canon! (<http://canireadeverything.blogspot.co...>)

I don't know if I've ever described a murder mystery this way: Pas De Death is kind of...cute...

Yeah. That was strange.

Coming off of a J.D. Robb binge, Pas De Death was like eating cotton candy after Thanksgiving dinner. The biggest reason? The main character's personality. 15-year-old Dani is everything that a young aspiring - and currently injured - teenager/ballet dancer should be: spunky, young, innocent, and insanely curious. These four main character traits get her into a mountain of trouble as she continues to dig into the death of arts critic blogger, Jen. To be honest, I found Dani's character a little annoying at first. It felt like the author was trying too hard to emphasize her protagonist's youth, making her sound like an annoying salesgirl in my mind. It was the inherent innocence in Dani that grew on me as I kept reading and I began to enjoy her character's narrative (although there were still spots that made me roll my eyes). She is observant and curious by nature, which made her perceptions interesting to read, a must in a mystery. Dani has an inherent innocence and sweetness about her, one that made her more endearing to me as I read.

Pas De Death is a quick, easy read that has somewhat of a breezy murder plot. For me, it felt like the mystery part of the story didn't start until halfway through, even though the victim is killed off near the beginning. Once the action actually begins, the book is hard to put down. I found myself thinking about it at work, on my commute...it was one of those novels that sticks with you. You do have to be willing to go along with the story, however. There were times that I doubted the realisticness (not a word...) of this novel. Dani's story reminds me of a Nancy Drew-ish novel - you have to leave a certain amount of reality at the door for the mystery to work. The mystery plot of Pas De Death requires the same sort of faith.

I think my favorite part of this novel is the critique of today's pop culture. I've read a couple of reviews that argue this makes the book unrealistic, but the references to Stephanie Meyers' Twilight made me laugh aloud. These references lent the book an air of almost goofiness, making it a light, lovely read.

I had some issues, however. Dani's two best friends in this novel felt very extraneous. They essentially acted as the same person, even sharing the same basic personality. I did come into this series in the third book, with little reference to what happened before. I felt like maybe we could have had one best friend or the other, but having them both was too much. It felt like there were extra plot lines as well: Dani's mom announcing her pregnancy halfway through the novel had absolutely no bearing on the story. In fact, it was mentioned in a few chapters, then never mentioned again. Thinking about this later, I wonder if Brice was setting up the series for the next story, which would make sense. I just wish she had incorporated some element of it into this text.

Final Thoughts: I'm a bit on the fence here. On one side, I would have liked a denser mystery plot, one with red herrings and deeper characters. On the other, this book delivers exactly what it promises: a fun, light mystery story. I think I like the latter better.

Wall-to-wall books - wendy says

Another great book in this series! This one was fun for me to read because my friend Jen won a contest or auction or something and got to be a character in this book who gets killed - fun fun! Well you certainly don't want to see your friends get killed in real life - but in a book - its OK!

Full of young, fun, quirky and outgoing characters, this book was very easy to get into. This whole series was very quick and easy to read. Nice books for a younger teen, like I said before I think I only saw one swear word in this one too, and no sex (just one kiss).

Here are a couple cute quotes -

"Why did I always resort to verbal vomit whenever I was nervous? Made me sound like a whiny, neurotic person with a possible side order of crazy"

"Really? I thought Canadians were suppose to be nice."

Craig smirked. "I think they generally reserve their enthusiasm for Tim Horton's coffee and hockey. The arts don't exactly fit into their hierarchy." - My hubby and I love Tim Horton's! There are 2 of them near where we live but they are originally from Canada.

I found out that there will be a forth book coming out in 2014. I do hope to be reading and reviewing that one as well.

Allison says

I'd read the first two books earlier this year as part of a 2-book set. It's written for a younger audience than me (I'm in my 30s), but I still really enjoyed them both enough to pick up the third book.

And I'm really glad I did. This book featured a murder mystery for the first time (the other books featured sabotage and kidnapping), and the plot was cleverly written. It didn't have as much dancing as in the first two books because the heroine was home for the summer and going to physical therapy after a bad injury, but the hint was there that hopefully she'll be back to her regular dancing self in the next book.

I think this series would make a great Disney Channel or ABC Family Channel TV series aimed at teens and preteens. I recommend this for the young and young-at-heart.

Annice22 says

Courtesy from NetGalley for an honest review.

I thought this was a fun read. Dani Spevak a ballet student who was nursing a knee injury found herself in the middle of a mystery. Along the way she got a little help from her friends, her ex-boyfriend and her grandmother to help find the killer.

I enjoyed this, I just wish it was longer.
