



The Dead and the Beautiful

Cheryl Crane

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Realtor Nikki Harper is often privy to the kind of celebrity secrets the tabloids would kill to hear. But the latest murder case to rock Tinsel Town is truly shocking. Ryan Melton is well known as the arm-candy husband of former child star Diara Elliott. Beautiful and ambitious, Diara appears on the TV series “Casa Capri,” which stars none other than Nikki’s mother, Victoria Bordeaux. In fact, Nikki recently met Ryan and Diara at one of her mother’s parties. Now Ryan’s lifeless body has found by his swimming pool, and the security tapes have been mysteriously erased.

The prime suspect is the last person to see him alive: his dog walker Alison Sahira. Nikki can’t imagine the mousy mom killing a fly. But Alison is harboring a dirty little secret that could implicate a set of A-listers. Sorting through a tangled web of lies and innuendo, Nikki is racing to find the truth—before she becomes the next target.

The Dead and the Beautiful Details

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From Reader Review *The Dead and the Beautiful* for online ebook

Annie says

I enjoyed this book very much, and the characters are wonderful. This is the first of the three that I've read, and I will definitely be picking up the others to read.

Patricia Reding says

Reviewed for Readers' Favorite at www.ReadersFavorite.com.

In *The Dead and the Beautiful* (a *Nikki Harper Mystery*), Cheryl Crane reacquaints readers with Nikki Harper, the daughter of a famous movie star from the golden days of Hollywood, Victoria Bordeaux. The story opens when Victoria hosts a garden party. There, Nikki meets "Disney's Fab Four," young stars who had made it big a few years earlier when they co-starred in a Disney sitcom. When Ryan Melton, the husband of one of the Fab Four shows up dead a short time later, Alison, the sister of Nikki's love interest, is accused of the murder. Nikki follows the clues to uncover the real culprit in an attempt to support Alison in much the way that Victoria had supported Nikki years earlier when Nikki herself had been accused of a murder.

As the daughter of Lana Turner, Cheryl Crane is uniquely qualified to tell the story of an adult child of a Hollywood star. With a "smile" ingrained in Nikki since childhood—one that is not fake, just "rehearsed"—Nikki is at home among the rich and famous. Readers will enter Nikki's world, as Crane surrounds them with designer handbags, shoes and clothing, posh and beautiful homes and home furnishings, and Hollywood's elite, in *The Dead and the Beautiful*. In the midst of this world of wealth and fame, Nikki befriends people who, enamored with the fame of her mother, are eager to assist Nikki as she attempts to solve the mystery. All the while, readers will be drawn closer and closer to the ultimate question: will Nikki identify the real murderer before she becomes the next victim?

Also posted at www.oathtaker.com. Linked to www.facebook.com/PatriciaRedingAuthor. Post tweeted and cover pinned.

bella says

Real estate broker, Nikki Harper, is enjoying life in L.A. with her boyfriend, Jeremy Fitzpatrick. However life gets complicated when Jeremy's sister, Alison, is accused of murdering a young actresses' husband, Ryan Melton. It seems like there is no reason that Alison should be accused of murder, apart from the fact that Ryan was strangled with a dog leash and Alison walks Melton's dog in her job as a dog walker to the stars. However as Nikki starts to investigate she learns secrets about the young stars of her mother's tv show and also about Alison's past that make her question what she thought she knew.

If anyone has the credentials and experience to write a mystery set in Hollywood it is surely Cheryl Crane. Cheryl is the daughter of Lana Turner, the popular actress in the 40s and 50s. As I was reading *The Dead and*

the Beautiful I saw a lot of Lana Turner and Cheryl Crane in the mother and daughter duo, Victoria Bourdeaux and Nikki Harper. Victoria is a Hollywood icon and together the pair make a great detective duo.

The author's experience in Hollywood certainly carries through in *The Dead and the Beautiful* and I found myself wrapped up in a realistic mystery about the stars of Hollywood that I could imagine gracing the tabloids. Ryan Melton is the arm-candy husband of Disney superstar, Diara, and I liked how the Disney stars are dubbed as the "Fab Four".

Nikki is a charming sleuth, not over the top or pushy, and I liked her interaction with Detective Cutie-Pants, as she dubs him. I'm looking forward to reading the next book in this series to see what's in store for Nikki and in particular her love life!!

If you're looking for a fantastic beach read for the last remaining days of summer, pick up *The Dead and the Beautiful*. This charming mystery will leave eagerly awaiting more sunny adventures!

Dorothy Timm says

This book was just OK. Characters just ran around being mentioned, no in depth coverage. And as often happens, what especially annoyed me was that the motive for the murder wasn't found out until nearly the end of the book. Also, there seemed to be several references to this author's previous books about this character, and whereas it doesn't seem as important in other cozy mysteries to read as "stand alone", in this one, I felt it really made a difference if you'd read previous books (I hadn't).

Miranda Owen says

This is Book 3 in this author's "Nikki Harper" series. After enjoying the previous book in this series I was looking forward to this one. Happily, it did not disappoint. I normally enjoy cozy mysteries and, while the setting for this story was not in a small town, it had many elements of a cozy mystery. The main character and amateur sleuth is Nikki Harper – real estate broker and daughter of legendary actress Victoria Bourdeaux. The victim in this story is Ryan Melton. He is only famous for being the husband of actress Diara Elliott. Victoria and Diara are currently working on the same TV show. Nikki gets involved because the chief suspect for police is dog walker to the wealthy and famous, Alison Sahira. She is the sister of Nikki's boyfriend. She is also a mother trying to retain custody of her teenage daughter and of a slightly nervous temperament. Although never particularly close, Nikki doesn't believe Alison is a murderess and that she needs somebody to be in her corner. Her empathy comes from drawing a parallel between Alison's situation she currently finds herself, and an incident in Nikki's past. Her constant defense of Alison is a source of contention between Nikki and her boyfriend Jeremy. He has trouble believing his sister because of criminal activity in her past. It's not so much what part she played in what happened long ago that bothers him, but that she lied about it. As with the previous book, I loved Victoria. She is such a class act, and I love her relationship with Nikki and also what she brings to the story. I also like Nikki's hot but gay movie star buddy Marshall Thunder. He is a fun character and a great friend. I like how the author once again makes it seem plausible that Nikki would get involved in this murder case, and her ability to get information from witnesses. Nikki's status and connections really come in handy in this case, since the main players in the murder mystery are Hollywood movers and shakers. The mystery itself kept me guessing and kept me interested from start to finish. Nikki is very relatable, likable, and grounded, in spite of her privileged

background. I loved the chemistry between her and Lieutenant Detective Tom Dombrowski, or as Nikki refers to him – Detective Cutie-Pants. It's not that I really dislike her current boyfriend. I just feel like she has more chemistry with Tom, so I'm hoping they might be a couple in the future. The resolution to the mystery was interesting and satisfying. I can't wait for the next book in the series!

Linda Smatzny says

This is the third book in the Nikki Harper Mystery series. Nikki Harper is Hollywood real estate broker who gets involved in murders. This time she believes that Alison Sahira is innocent of killing one of her dog walking clients. Alison is the sister of Nikki's boyfriend. Nikki is the daughter of Victoria Bordeaux, a legendary actress, who helps Nikki solve the mystery. It is a cute, easy read.

Val says

I enjoyed this book. It was an entertaining look at Hollywood and the entertainment industry with a side of murder. The character development is good and the mystery, decent. I like the handsome police detective - I think Nikki is going places with him - drop the dentist already - he has trust issues! I like a mystery series where the characters take shape over time and grow with each installment. I can see this happening here.

Linda says

Another quickly moving, quirky tale of Nikki Harper. This time the story involves the adult lives of four childhood starts and their spouses. Squeaky clean public personas yet Nikki's boyfriend's sister, who works for all of them, ends up being accused of murder. As usual, well done, fast paced and quite enjoyable. Looking forward to #4.

Melissa says

I really enjoyed this series, they were great. Loved all the returning characters especially Victoria. I liked that were got more of Nikki's past and how it effected her relationship with her mother.

Tonya says

This was such a fun read. I can't wait to read the other two of Nikki Harper's adventures. As a classic film fan, I loved the muse Cheryl Crane had in her lovely mother, Lana Turner, for Victoria. Though I'm not much of a mystery book fan (yet I love such shows on TV), I loved this story. The pacing, the characters, the settings. I was anxious to find out just whodunit and even when I got to the end, I found myself missing Nikki and company! I hope to see more of Detective Cutie-Pants. After all that, Jeremy needs extra consideration.

Amy Lignor says

This is the third 'Nikki Harper' mystery, and each one of these books just seems to get better and better.

We open at a party being thrown at the fabulous home of Victoria Bordeaux, the beautiful, former movie goddess, and mother of Nikki. Hollywood folk are meeting and greeting; the rich and famous are mingling...when Nikki suddenly spots Alison Sahira.

Alison is temporarily living with her brother, Jeremy Fitzpatrick, a former child star who's now a Doctor of Dentistry. Alison fills her days with a dog walking service to the stars. Some of her clientele are all acting in a T.V. show at the moment; a cast that includes; Victoria Bordeaux. Diara Elliot, and Diara's husband, former child star, Ryan Melton. One and all are at the party having a grand time.

Ryan is soon found strangled to death by a dog leash, making Alison the chief suspect in his strange murder. Needing to hide some of her past experiences, Alison is not ready to tell the police or her brother just where she was and what she was doing at the time of the murder. Her silence definitely does not help her case.

Nikki, our lovely little snoop, with the help of her glamorous mom and other friends, delves deep into the sleuthing biz. Nikki tries to help Alison, much to the dismay of brother Jeremy, but she promises not to stop until she knows the truth.

A wonderfully fun, well-written book that will grab mystery lovers right away, Nikki Harper is sure to one day become a true iconic character, much like the author's own mother, Lana Turner.

With her background deep in the world of showbiz, Ms. Crane certainly knows the ins-and-outs of L.A., which makes her absolutely perfect to deliver this truly great 'Hollywood Sleuth'. Enjoy!

Susan says

Real estate broker Nikki Harper has known and loved Jeremy--once a teen idol, now dentist to the stars--for a long time, so she knows his younger sister Alison, now living with Jeremy after her ugly divorce. So she knows that Alison did not kill the handsome client of her dogwalking service whose wife is acting in a television series with Nikki's mother, a superstar in her own right. A tragic event in her own past compels Nikki to investigate the crime, even though it puts her at odds with Jeremy, who suspects his own sister, and also with handsome detective Dombrowski, who seems to be flirting with her.

Lissa says

I enjoyed this book thoroughly. The main character, Nikki, is the daughter of Hollywood elite with famous friends and an interesting life. Her boyfriend's sister, someone she doesn't particularly like, involves herself with a celebrity's murder. Nikki goes to great lengths to prove her innocence. I really enjoyed the characters, especially Nikki, her mom and the sexy police detective. The only negative part, which is common for these

types of books, is the fact that Nikki, a realtor, seems to always find herself around dead bodies.

Overall, this is an excellent book and I can't wait to pass it along to friends. This is a Goodreads Firstreads Giveaway.

Sallee says

I really enjoyed this book. Cheryl Crane has made good use of her lifestyle in her writing of the Nikki Harper mysteries. Her characters are reminiscent of her own life in a way. Nikki, the main character has a mother is a famous movie star. She is friends of the rich and famous and this story there was mention of the fact that Nikki had in her younger days shot and killed a man who was going to kill her and her friend. I loved that she had two Cavalier King Charles spaniels as pets as I have one also. Nikki is down to earth, is not shallow like many of the people she knows that are in her type of lifestyle. The story moved nicely along, the plot was well turned and the ending if not totally unexpected, was very good.

Beatrix says

I thoroughly enjoyed this book, possibly even more than the first two books in the series. I admire Nikki Harper, the lead character. The other characters populating all of the Nikki books are interesting. I was sorry to finish the book. I can't wait for Book 4.
