



Too Soon for Flowers

Margaret Miles

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Lust, deceit, and murder bloom in old New England....

Spring, 1764. While the specter of smallpox stalks colonial Boston, much of the city seeks refuge in the burgeoning countryside. Restful, bucolic Bracebridge is one such haven, and young widow Charlotte Willett and her neighbor Richard Longfellow, scientist and gentleman farmer, host a handful of guests undergoing the generally accepted procedure of inoculation.

Yet shortly after the quarantine begins, one of the patients is found dead and Charlotte and Richard are thrust into a whirl of rumor, conjecture, and fear. What, if not smallpox, caused the patient's untimely demise? Has the distraught physician in charge something to conceal? And who might have risked contagion to commit murder? Before these questions can be answered, another shocking death occurs.

Now, as some superstitious townsfolk blame both the Pox and the Devil, Charlotte and Richard are determined to follow logic and reason to the all too human source of the problem. But can they arrive at the truth before another victim is claimed?

Too Soon for Flowers Details

Date : Published July 6th 1999 by Bantam

ISBN : 9780553578638

Author : Margaret Miles

Format : Paperback 291 pages

Genre : Mystery, Historical Mystery, Historical, Historical Fiction, Literature, 18th Century, Fiction

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From Reader Review Too Soon for Flowers for online ebook

Kathy says

Interesting murder mystery with a slow beginning, but a fabulous ending! So happy I stuck with this book until the end. This mystery takes place in 1764 when a small pox epidemic hit colonial New England. After the quarantine begins, one of the patients is found dead with no cause.

Good read!

Kaceap says

smallpox inoculations

Ann says

Another enjoyable addition to this series. Even though I don't get the same thrill as I do when reading the first volume (since it doesn't have all the Halloween in New England elements that I crave), the mystery is still solid, although the ending is predictable. However, I don't really feel like it's supposed to be a big shocking reveal. I'm reading these more for the springtime atmosphere than for the plot, but I like both anyway.

Susan Miller says

The second book in the Bracebridge Mysteries. We meet Charlotte Willett and Richard & Diana Longfellow again. This time small pox is an issue for the area and Richard has brought a physician to help inoculate Diana to protect her from the dreaded disease.

Three subjects are sequestered at Charlotte's home. Diana, Phoebe & Lem. Diana & Phoebe take the inoculation by sniffing a powder, Lem by standard incision.

Diana soon has a new suitor one Mr. Pelham. Mr. Pelham is a recent widower and seems eager to wed again as he has inherited quite a bit of money and had moved up in social rank. Diana is smitten with flirtations even though Edmond Montegu is still in pursuit.

As it turns out Mr. Pelham, Dr. Tucker and Phoebe have all previously met. The tale unfolds as Phoebe is discovered dead one morning, small pox may not be the culprit.

Jen says

While this story was good, the first book in the series was much better.

Helen says

#2 cozy colonial with small pox

Julie says

Pleasant, unchallenging mysteries in an intriguing setting.

Paula says

This is book 2 in the series, following on from *A Wicked Way to Burn*, and like the previous book, *Too Soon For Flowers* is set in 18th century New England, still under the rule of the English but very much a place of its own in terms of culture. The local area has been swept by a smallpox epidemic and the small town of Bracebridge reluctantly agrees to allow a trial of the controversial new practice of vaccination.

Since this is a mystery novel, naturally there are more things going on here than meet the eye, and when one of the trial's participants is found dead, suspicion immediately lands on the doctor whose treatment she was recently given. Is the answer as simple as that, or is there something more sinister afoot?

As with the previous book, *Too Soon For Flowers* is enjoyable enough, although it's not the most exciting of reads - there seems to be something lacking in terms of the characterisation, perhaps in this case because there doesn't seem to be any peril for the main protagonists but only for supporting characters who are much less empathetic? The series continues in *No Rest for the Dove*.

Helen says

This second in Margaret Miles' series is better even than the first. She has the characters speak in the circuitous way a mixed group would have spoken about sexual matters, if they spoke of them at all, but we do understand and when it gets right down to the point things are actually named. She doesn't use archaic constructs just has the characters talk around issues and even occasionally leaves a sentence hanging. The flowers in the title are the eruptions of smallpox, which are watched for after the inoculations take. It was quite common for a patient to develop smallpox from the application of pus soaked thread (!) and you could die just as much as if you had contracted it in the normal way (just look at George Bernard Shaw, although he didn't die) but the usual result was a mild dose. I've never heard of sniffing up ground pox scabs as an alternative, though. She handles the fear everyone felt extremely well and it is easy to understand the feeling of being between a rock and a hard place where inoculation was concerned. I don't think we ever found out about the dead man who's found at the beginning, though. Unless I have very poor short term memory.

Beth says

This is a fun read though I don't feel that it provides much depth to the characters or historical info. Though it does a good job of giving background on inoculations.
