



Sharpe Edge

Lisa B. Thomas

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Buoyed by a new job and a spirit for the holidays, Deena Sharpe didn't know she'd be investigating the town matriarch's death at her own Christmas party. Everyone assumes it was an accident— everyone but her daughter, Estelle. Now Deena must rely on her craftiness to dig out the truth before anyone else gets hurt.

A little romance, some snarky suburban competition, and a lot of mystery will keep readers guessing in this cozy whodunit.

Sharpe Edge Details

Date : Published (first published August 12th 2015)

ISBN :

Author : Lisa B. Thomas

Format : Kindle Edition

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery, Fiction

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From Reader Review Sharpe Edge for online ebook

Norma says

(Format : Audiobook)

"A life lived. A life lost."

Almost Christmas and the social event of Maycroft, Texas, the fund raising party of wealthy Caroline Fitzhugh, saw Gary and Deena Sharpe invited: her brother was dating Estelle, only daughter of the hostess. Deena had recently retired from her teaching position and now worked for a local paper and enjoyed the luxurious splendour of the assembled guests and dinner. But, just as the cheque books were brought out, everything abruptly ended when Caroline, in her wheelchair, crashed to the bottom of the flight of stairs. She was dead, neck broken. Apparently an accident, Estelle was convinced it was murder and she asked Gary and Deena to investigate further. But who could possibly want to harm so pleasant a woman - apart, that is, from her heir, Deena herself?

Brightly colourful and interesting protagonists and an old fashioned atmosphere, this is an enjoyable mystery even if the who-done-it? aspect is rather obvious. A delightful peek into social separation, too. Narrator, Kelley Hazen does it full justice, reading with confident warmth with good intonation and expression. Good individual character voicings, too, which really helps bring them to life.

My thanks to the rights holder of Sharpe Edge who, at my request, freely gifted me with a complimentary copy, via Audiobook Boom. An enjoyable cozy mystery, notable more for the individual cameos than the story itself and recommended for pleasant light reading.

Readsandeats says

Really enjoyed this cosie read.

The characters are entertaining, the plot is good and an all round good read.

If you like your mystery stories without gore and guts etc then this is a book for you.

Well worth a read.

Mary Lou Hoffman says

SHARPE EDGE is the second book in the Cozy Suburbs series. While they mostly stand on their own, it is best to read them in the order of release, since there are multiple mentions of the previous case.

Like many women, Deena Sharpe doesn't know how to say "no" when someone we care about asks for assistance. Whether it is baking in two dozen cupcakes for the bake sale tomorrow morning (asked at the last minute) or, in her case, determining if the death of her friend is truly an accident or murder.

I like that these are "real people." Everything doesn't come easily to them. At 50-something, Deena has the wisdom of life experiences and the reliability and dependability of close family and friends.

The story had an easy flow that made it a perfect audiobook for my commute. I'd love to listen to more of the series.

The Narration: With the exception of the prologue and the last two chapters, the narration was a little flat with every sentence feeling as though it held the same weight and importance. I think it may have been caused by the forced Texas accent. Otherwise, the narrator's voice was clear and pleasant. Knowing there are many more books in this series, I think more practice with the characters will provide the familiarity needed to lose the flatness.

Note: while I was given this book as a gifted audiobook copy, my opinions are my own and are given freely.

Title: SHARPE EDGE

Series: Maycroft Mystery #2

Narrator: Kelley Hazen

Length: 6 hours 8 mins

Category /Genre: Cozy Mystery,

Recommended for: 18+ due to sexual content

Listenability: OK

Received from: Lisa B. Thomas (via Audiobookworm as an Audible gifted copy)

Katy says

This is an appealing cozy mystery with likeable characters, good details, and ever-growing suspense. There were a lot of characters, but Ms. Thomas introduced them a few at a time to make it easier to keep track of them. The only thing that puzzled me was the prologue. It was very well-written and brought me to tears, making this reader wish to read THAT story. In a way it overshadowed the present-day story for a few chapters. But fans of cozy mysteries will definitely like this one, especially if you, like me, live in a small town with its personalities and quirks....

FangirlNation says

Sharpe Edge by Lisa B. Thompson opens with a Christmas party for the upper crust of the Dallas suburb of Maycroft in the home of Caroline, the top socialite in the town, and Deena Sharpe gets invited with her husband for the first time, probably because her brother, Russell, is dating Estelle, Caroline's daughter. But as the evening ends, Estelle finds her wheelchair-bound mother at the bottom of the stairs with a broken neck and cuts all over. Everyone figures that she fell by accident, but Estelle is sure it's murder and asks Deena, a former high school journalism teacher now working for the local newspaper, to help her look into the case. Deena finds several potential suspects, but no one really stands out.

Read the rest of this review, more reviews, and other wonderful, geeky articles on FangirlNation

Emmy says

Where does Sharpe Edge rank among all the audiobooks you've listened to so far?
Somewhere in the middle

What was your reaction to the ending? (No spoilers please!)

I had figured it out and was tying the pieces together. Too typical of the cozies; the journey was more fascinating than the destination.

Which character – as performed by Kelley Hazen – was your favorite?

I have friends who were born in Texas and has moved to Texas. This narrator has a distinct Southern accent, but it didn't seem Texan. It was hard to stay with the book.

Did you have an extreme reaction to this book? Did it make you laugh or cry?

It was more humorous than other cozies.

Any additional comments?

There were several pieces that didn't fit or could have fit better:

Too much telling and not showing. There are moments the author will say something happened or what heard but we didn't know what it was, exactly. One note was how a character knew who was calling by the ring tone, but the ring tone isn't shared with us.

In chapter 10, we learn there is a bell over the door to signal for customers, yet Sandra keeps glancing in the store to see if anyone is in there.

In Chapter 20, we learn about Russell's hearing disability. Really? With less than 15% of the book left?! Yes, it was "written in the script". And how is he on the phone and sticking his finger in his good ear at the same time a couple chapters later?

Estelle's character grows as the plot calls for it, not as a natural development.

Seriously, this book needed a cat to blame for the unraveling.

"I was given this free review copy audiobook at my request and have voluntarily left this review."

Stephanie (Between the Coverz) says

A comical and entertaining cozy mystery!

Sharpe Edge is a cozy mystery that follows Deena as she tries to uncover another murder mystery. Set in Texas, I find the book interesting as I enjoy reading books with places that I know mentioned in them. I like how the author mixes in mystery with humor to create a unique and enjoyable read. Lisa Thomas has once again wrote a witty and adventurous mystery with a very intriguing plot that will keep you guessing at each turn. Ms. Thomas does a great job with the descriptiveness of how they go about their usual activities that helps make the characters appear realistic and connectable. The story is about ordinary people who have normal problems. I really enjoy the humor mingled with mystery that is in each book of this series.

Kelley Hazen does a good job with narrating the story. She was easy to understand and gave good articulation. She maintains the unique voices of each character with ease throughout the book. She does a credible male voice that is frequently difficult for female narrators. She brings out the personality of each character bringing the story to life and keeping it entertaining.

Sharpe Edge is part of a series however, it can be read as a stand-a-lone and you do not feel that you are missing anything. I recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a light and fun mystery that will keep you guessing.

Lidia says

This is my first book by Lisa B. Thomas and I have to say I liked it a lot. The audio version kept me listening and guessing "whodunit" along with the main character:)

When it comes to the book itself, I liked the plot a lot and I liked the characters, too. They were diversified, interesting people, some of them acting more suspiciously than others... The book itself starts a bit slow, but soon the pace grows and the plot engages the reader/listener... And the ending - when we find out who the murderer is - really does make you bite your nails:) I liked the last scenes of the book a lot - right from the point when we realize who the murderer is it's a real rollercoaster and it's described (and read by Ms Hazen) magnificently. But I can't write more about those scenes because it would be one huge spoiler:)

As for the audio interpretation by Ms Hazen:

It's a great listening experience. Ms Hazen is a very good narrator (it's my second book interpreted by her and I liked this one better than the previous one). She is very good at differentiating the female voices (I especially loved the elderly ladies' voices in this book) and although I still have some doubts as to male voices done by Ms Hazen they didn't bother me as much as in the previous book as they sounded more natural here. I also liked the tempo of the narration. Ms Hazen is also quite good at acting out the dialogues between the characters, which adds emotions to the plot.

Generally, it's a very good interpretation of the book.

(I was voluntarily provided this free review copy audiobook by the author, narrator, or publisher.)

Nina Silva says

I listened to the audiobook version of this story and have included notes on the audio quality as well as the story itself.

The Story

Who would want Caroline Fitzhugh dead? Although the police believe the town matriarch's death is simply an accident, her daughter Estelle believes it's murder and enlists Deena's investigative assistance. Deena is particularly motivated to investigate as Estelle is her brother Russell's love interest. The story gets juicy as we come across multiple suspects, each with convincing motives. Throw in nosy, bossy neighbours determined to 'decorate the halls' and you have a truly entertaining Christmas cozy mystery on your hands.

I found the plot was well-laid out. New characters were introduced throughout. Clues were interspersed well. There were a couple cleverly plotted red herrings and secondary stories running. I must admit though, it wasn't too hard to figure out the culprit. But still, I enjoyed the story.

This is a nice, feel good Christmas cozy that I would definitely recommend, especially if you like a Southern flair!

I give this book 4/5 stars

I received this audiobook at no-cost from Audiobookworm Promotions. The gifting of this audiobook did not affect my opinion of it.

Narration: The narration was well-done for this audiobook. The character distinction was not only clear, it was outright entertaining. The narrator is very animated. Exclamations are believable and create nice theatrical effect. The narrator displayed commendable tonal range. I honestly felt as though I was listening to a show, at times. Kelley Hazen may have spoiled me for all other narrators! (5/5)

Production: Sound quality was good. The audio was clear and sound levels were consistent. Spacing between chapters or shifts in perspectives could have been a little longer in some places. I found the changing perspectives a bit confusing in the beginning as the perspective changes frequently and many new characters are revealed. Later on, this settles and becomes easier to follow as we get more familiar with the characters and what environments they would be in. (4/5)

Overall Experience: Overall this story translated to audio quite well. My biggest issue would be that perspectives changed quite frequently and this would be a bit confusing even while reading, but was a bit more challenging as an audio. I enjoyed listening. (5/5)

Lisa says

#2 in the series, and already Deena Sharpe has a reputation as a sleuth from her previous case, whether she wants it or not. When the hostess at a fancy party ends up dead, seemingly pushed down the stairs in her wheelchair, the daughter asks Deena to look into it, especially when the local PD seem to think it was an accident, not a push. Since the daughter is dating Deena's brother, Russell.

Thomas writes a convincing tale, filled with believable characters. Deena is a reluctant sleuth, and she doesn't call her husband at the drop of a hat, but neither does she run in without thinking. The secondary characters play real roles, not just filler parts: Estelle, Marie, Irene, and Carolyn.

Lori says

3.5. stars

This was a entertaining, interesting and enjoyable cozy mystery. This was just a good clean fun afternoon listen. The story pulled me in right away and kept my attention until the end. A bit of suspense, a little humor and a healthy dose of mystery and intrigue. Don't let the Christmas setting put you off. It's an enjoyable mystery anytime of year.

Interesting and quirky cast of characters both likable and unlikable. Although I think Russell was my favorite character. There is just something immediately likable about him.

There are no shortage of suspects even in a small town. While I had an inkling who I thought the "culprit" was, the story has enough little twists to keep you guessing if your right or not. Just when you have your mind made up, something would happen and make you second guess your suspect. Keeping you wondering if you were right in the first place.

Kelley Hazen does a really good job with the narration. She has a pleasant voice that is easy to listen to for

long periods of time. The narration was clearly spoken with a nice even pace. Good character voices and accents. Even her male character voices were good with just a slight difference from the female voices. She was able to bring the characters and the story to life. Very enjoyable.

I was provided this free review copy audiobook at my request and voluntarily provided this review.

Liz Terek says

This book was great fun. Suspects & theories go back & forth quickly. Readers will be nearly finished before they can definitively decide what is what. Deena is a fabulous heroine, gutsy & honest. The townsfolk are all a little quirky as we'd expect from Smalltown, USA.

As for the plot, the death of someone wealthy may not be new per se, but this is definitely a new spin. It isn't a typical holiday story either which makes it all the more fun. I look forward to more 'Sharpe' books in the future. I give it 5 stars.

Randi Robinson says

I enjoy Lisa Thomas's Cozy Suburb Mystery series. Her characters are well developed and very human and the situations they get themselves into are believable. There is a good amount of mystery with some humor and the stories flow to a satisfying but not predictable ending. Deanna Sharpe, a 50 something former journalism teacher and now newspaper reporter in the small town of Maycroft, Texas, is an unlikely heroine, which makes it easy to identify with her. She seems to find mystery everywhere she goes. At a Christmas party at the home of the town's richest citizen, the hostess ends up dead. Deanna's brother Russell has recently started dating the daughter of the victim who thinks it was not an accident but murder. Deanna becomes involved and starts looking at the guests at the party and their possible motives. The narrator of the audiobook, Kelley Hazen, did a good job with Southern accents and the different characters' voices. I would like to thank The Audiobookworm for giving me a copy of this book to review. I enjoy this series very much and look forward to reading more.

Kit Donner says

Better than most "cozy mysteries"

I hate the term "cozy mysteries", especially since most of them are murder mysteries. There is nothing cozy about a murder, even if nobody uses profane language and there are no graphic description of sexual intercourse. God created human beings as animals that procreate by sexual intercourse and have the capability to enjoy it, so a disrespect for sex is a disrespect for the divine being that created it! But that same divine being gave ten commandments, one of which forbid murders. So there is never anything cozy about a murder mystery, and it is about time to abolish such disrespectful language.

That said, I prefer mystery stories where the decent people outnumber the hateful, corrupt, vicious people by

a wide margin. In my limited experience of my 66 years in this lifetime, that is much more realistic than peacetime situations where everyone is a creep or a scoundrel.

This author does a very good job of creating murder mysteries where most people are imperfect but mostly very good in spite of flaws and in spite of dealing with difficult circumstances. So the few people who are bad enough to commit murders are all the more shocking by the contrast with characters who are struggling against much worse circumstances and not even tempted to break that commandment!

Not quite as well written as most of the books that I give a rare five stars review. But an especially good picture of human strengths and weaknesses in a variety of challenging circumstances, and how character triumphs over adversity while weakness makes excuses for horrible behavior while yielding to temptation at the slightest provocation. In other words, the bad guys are bad because they choose to be bad, not because they were in a horrible situation. Good people remain good even in more desperate circumstances. Character matters.

Audie says

This book was given to me for free at my request and I provided this voluntary review. Thank you Audio Book Boom, Lisa B. Thomas, and Kelley Hazen! Sharpe Edge is indeed pleasant and enjoyable - it's actually the perfect book to fall asleep to. At any given time I've got three novels going; one in my car (must be very stimulating as I must be alert while driving), one to listen to around the house (must be very engaging as I get bored while doing housework), and one at my bedside. The one that I use to "read"; me to sleep is very important; it's got to be interesting enough to be enjoyable yet not overly stimulating (nothing too dark or disturbing) or I'll lose sleep. Nighttime books have to be inherently soothing and the reader's voice plays a huge role in this. If you're as particular about your audio books as I am than you've probably noticed that cozy mysteries are ace when it comes to reading oneself (or being read) to sleep. There appear to be infinite options out there for cozy mystery fans but despite the quantity it remains difficult to find good quality. I'm thrilled to get to know Lisa B. Thomas as I think she's got what it takes to be a great cozy writer. Don't be thrown off by my '3' scores...I never give cozies more than a 3 out of 5 on Good Reads, etc.; it's more of a reflection of my relationship with the genre than writer/reader/story quality. I gave a 5 to 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea, Shelley's Frankenstein, The Life of Pi, Career of Evil...my tastes are diverse. Anyhow, back to Sharpe Edge...here's what's great about it (in no particular order): 1) I didn't read book #1 but book #2 was totally entertaining, nonetheless, 2) The characters were amusing and I was interested in their stories, 3) Sharpe Edge is actually pretty witty and had me chuckling quite a bit at points, 4) It was an acceptable level of far fetched for the cozy genre...believable enough w/ no massive plot holes, 5) I'd be happy to continue following these characters in subsequent books and I'd even read book #1 for completion's sake. I'd also like to give a shout out to the reader, Kelley Hazan. I think she did a great job with this audiobook! Her voice is soothing, interesting, and diverse. She did a bang up job with one character in particular....a cantankerous old lady with a drinking problem. Every time that character popped up Ms. Hazan had me laughing out loud. I literally felt as if I was back in middle school hanging sharing hilarious impressions of a most formidable lady gym teacher with my friends...it was great! Oh, one more thing I'd like to say about Sharpe Edge...bit of a spoiler here, so, beware. Anyhow, the book opens with an interesting mini-story which takes place in 1940. A couple faces unthinkable tragedy over and over again as they attempt to build a family. When they finally end up with a child the mother names the child Caroline in an act of grace and forgiveness that most people would never consider doing. The story of Sharpe Edge then begins in the present day when this same "Caroline" is an elderly matriarch. I love how Ms. Thomas opened the book with a back story narrative demonstrating Caroline's origins in forgiveness and sacrifice and then we come full circle to find Caroline really living up to her adoptive mother's sentiment nearly a century later.

