



Death Comes to the School

Catherine Lloyd

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In the English village of Kurland St. Mary, few things are worse than having one's reputation besmirched. A struggling marriage is one. Murder is another . . .

Three years have passed since Major Sir Robert Kurland and Lucy Harrington, the rector's daughter, became husband and wife. Having established a measure of contentment among the gentry of Kurland St. Mary, the couple lately have found an unsettling distance grown between them. But when the small-village peace is disrupted by the arrival of an anonymous letter accusing Lucy of witchcraft, her as yet unfulfilled desire to be a mother becomes the least of her worries, especially after she learns she is not the only one to have received such a malicious letter.

Speculation in the village only escalates when the local schoolteacher, Miss Broomfield, is discovered murdered at her classroom desk. Was the unlikeable teacher the letter writer, and if so, who killed her and why? Despite her husband's objections, Lucy offers to help out at the school until a replacement can be found, hoping the schoolchildren might inadvertently reveal a clue, but by doing so she may be putting her own life at risk . . .

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Death Comes to the School Details

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From Reader Review Death Comes to the School for online ebook

Julie says

Not badly plotted mystery-wise, but I'm already tired of the supposedly independent, intelligent, bold, observant, insightful Lucy, now making silly and extremely unfair negative assumptions about the man she can purportedly look at and know how he feels and what he thinks, and never even ask him any questions about her fears and worries. Every time he tries to talk about it, she shuts him down. On top of that, she's now all over the place in her wildly unconsidered theories about who-dunnit.

Yes, Robert is fairly blind to how his actions (or in-actions) affect Lucy, and I am sympathetic to her recent recent devastating experiences, but that does not mean she has to turn into a complete idiot in response, and assume the worst of her husband all the time. If this keeps up, the only feelings either one can have for the other will be condescending slight affection.

Bring back the bright, thoughtful, direct woman we first knew, please. And it would not be unwelcome to have Robert grow somewhat in his self-awareness and attention to his wife's needs. For god's sake after 3 years of marriage, apparent mutual intelligence, love and affection, and much shared experience, please don't let either one of them not grow beyond being too self-absorbed to notice and deal directly with something as important as their marriage and possible misunderstandings.

Character development is wonderful, but in this outing it seems misdirected and distracts from the mystery to the point of being almost painful. It's not going to be interesting to observe 2 self-centered, unaware spouses with absolutely no sense of self or of each other blunder about trying to figure out a mystery. We have seen Lloyd do better with Lucy and Robert - I hope she and they will pull it together.

Alicia says

<http://wordnerdy.blogspot.com/2017/11...>

The fifth Kurland St Mary books finds our protagonists dealing with marital discord (after a pair of miscarriages) as well as the murder of the awful local schoolteacher, who may have been killed after writing a series of poison pen letters. Of course, the former could be handled with one honest conversation, but the latter is a fairly interesting mystery. I still enjoy this series a lot. B+.

A review copy was provided by the publisher. This book will be released on Tuesday.

Ellen says

This is the fifth in this mystery series which takes place in England in the early 19th century, three years after Lucy and Robert marry. Lucy wants desperately to give Sir Robert an heir to the Kurland estate, but after several miscarriages, and misunderstandings, their relationship is strained. When the local teacher is murdered, they combine forces to solve the mystery. With the usual banter between them, I enjoyed this fifth book in the series.

Susan in NC says

I really enjoyed this latest book in what has been an uneven series for me. Catherine Lloyd's Kurland St. Mary Regency mystery series has always had a Pride and Prejudice vibe between former Major Sir Robert Kurland and former rector's daughter Lucy Harrington.

As this mystery opens, the couple have (finally) been married three years, and Lucy has suffered two miscarriages within six months. Otherwise, all is well as the very active and involved lord and lady of the manor have opened a school for the children of the village. The first teacher worked out well but left to marry a local farmer; the new teacher was hired by Lucy's father while Lucy was bedridden after her miscarriage. She appears to maintain control of her students, but Lucy walks into the school just before Christmas and sees Miss Broomfield about to cane a small boy. Intolerable!

Apparently the new teacher has a vicious streak, and when Sir Robert goes to the school to fire her he finds her dead at her desk, a quill pen stuck in her eye...Lucy immediately wonders if the teacher was behind the hateful poison pen letters being received throughout the village. Lucy gets a particularly hurtful one claiming she'll end up barren and alone, and her worries about her marriage provide another layer of concern to her preparations for Christmas and her and Robert's investigation into the murder of the teacher.

It was a very well-done and interesting story; obviously investigative techniques of the Regency era are slower than today, with letters and deductive reasoning taking the place of technology as the couple struggle to discover a motive from the victim's sparse possessions and seeming lack of family connections. This series has done a good job, also, of illustrating the limited roles available for ladies of good birth (as opposed to poor women) and the ultimate importance of marriage, as a lady's happiness and well-being so often depended on the temperament and standing of her husband.

I DNF the last book in the series, (Death Comes to the Fair) but will probably try again in the new year; each book could be read as a stand-alone, but I like to read all of a series in order so I don't miss character development. I am so glad this author appears to have this series firmly back on track, and I look forward to future installments.

Gail says

I am a big fan of this little gem of a historical cozy, so I was anxious to read the latest installment, set three years after the marriage of Lady Lucy (the Rector's daughter) and Sir Robert Kurland (local gentry and injured war hero). Part of the charm of the series has been the evolving relationship of the pair, each of whom in the past has had no trouble expressing an opinion.

This entry finds them mourning significant loss that had led to uncertainty and misunderstandings in their marriage. Despite health issues and against her husband's wishes, Lucy begins investigating the death of the new schoolmistress, who had no fans among the village children or their parents. It also appears that Miss Broomfield possessed a fabulous jewel collection. So why was she working as a teacher? Who disliked her enough to kill her? And was she responsible for writing poison pen letters to the residents of Kurland St. Mary, including Lucy?

While I enjoyed my Christmastime visit with this now familiar cast of characters and found the mystery to be multilayered and well done, I was disappointed regarding the depiction of the relationship between Lucy and Sir Robert. Their misunderstandings, which threaten the very essence of their marriage, could have been cleared up in a couple of pages of dialogue at the beginning of the book; instead the process drags on until

book's end. Given the frankness of both characters in previous books, this plot point did not ring true and felt forced. Hence, four stars instead of five.

Nevertheless, I will be looking forward to seeing more of one of my favorite cozy couples in future books, hoping they will return a bit more true to form.

Full Disclosure--Net Gallery and the publisher provided me with a digital ARC of this book. This is my honest review.

Ceki says

I hope the author will continue writing the sequels, this is such an enjoyable cozy mystery series.
RTC

Kiki Belle says

1 1/2 stars.

1) This book was light on mystery and heavy on marital discord. I didn't want to read about the marital discord at all. It wasn't interesting. Also the time jump from them getting married to them being married three years wasn't the best choice in my opinion. I already have doubts about how much they like each other. Cutting to three years and two miscarriages later doesn't improve on their marriage at all.

2) I straight up don't know how I'm supposed consider Kurland an investigator. It always seems to be like he doesn't totally care and he finds out less useful information

3) My main gripe--which I believe was my gripe about the last book too--is that Kurland, despite having solved 4 murders with her, tends to dismiss Lucy rather easily. He says he admires her intelligence, but I've never seen any evidence of it. He is high-handed and often dismissive of her less reasonable theories even though she is just speculating and is often at least partially right. This is not a partnership of equals, and before anyone tells me it's set in the 1800s, let me remind you it's goddamn fiction where a baronet and his wife solves mysteries. They've worked together enough times before so I really don't understand why the author continues to have Robert dismiss her. It's frustrating to read in every book. I won't be picking up the next one.

4) Actually now that I've thought about it some more, I absolutely hated the mystery in this one. The culprit is guessable, while their motivations are kind of ridiculous. It's a mystery that seems to happen only to tie into the marital discord. It's a murder that has zero suspects.

Helen Howerton says

The latest entry in the Kurland St. Mary series. In this, the unloved village schoolteacher comes to a bad end, and Lady Lucy and a (reluctant) Sir Robert are on the case. There's hints of blackmail, poison pen letters, and under all is the ongoing tension in the Kurland marriage. I could have done with a lot less marriage angst, and all the internal dialog that accompanies it, but it's a minor quibble. Will all come right in the end? Read

and see.

Lesya says

Fans of old-fashioned mysteries, or stories that remind you of Georgette Heyer or Jane Austen, may appreciate this fifth book in the Kurland St. Mary Mystery series. .Death Comes to the School by Catherine Lloyd is a quiet story involving class differences and role differences for boys and girls.

Three years after the events of Death Comes to the Fair, Major Sir Robert Kurland and Lucy Harrington are married, but their marriage has some problems. While he is patient and understanding, Lucy suffers from poor health and anger after a series of miscarriages. However, Lucy is interested in the state of the school she and Robert established for the local children in their small village of Kurland St. Mary. When she hears that some of the children have not been treated well by the teacher, she confronts her. But, someone else is unhappy with Miss Broomfield. It's not a pretty sight when Robert visits the school to talk to her, only to have an upset student report she found the teacher murdered.

There are so many reasons to suspect the teacher of stirring up trouble in the village. Lucy, along with some of the other women, have received venomous notes. Some of the parents have not been happy with Miss Broomfield's treatment of their children. And, when Lucy finds valuable jewels hidden in the teacher's rooms, she suspects theft. While Lucy asks questions of the women in the community, Major Sir Robert takes his role as local magistrate seriously, questioning local residents. It's unfortunate that it takes a murder investigation to bring Lucy and Robert back together.

Lloyd's portrayal of the characters in Death Comes to the School is excellent. Kurland's servants, as well as the villagers, are well-drawn and not forgotten in this Regency mystery. In fact, in many cases, they come across so much better than the higher class characters. The mystery is intriguing. However, the relationship between Lucy and Robert will bring readers back to the series, even more than the mystery itself. It's a solid, well-written portrayal in a quiet mystery.

Bebe (Sarah) Brechner says

This is truly the perfect series for those who love quiet, intelligent, period mysteries with a strong female protagonist. Lloyd's series, the Kurland St. Mary mysteries, are set in Jane Austen's era and feature perfectly rendered stories of a strong-minded, rather plain, rector's daughter, Lucy, and her life in this small English village. Naturally, there is a titled man in the picture, and the series brings together these stubborn, misfit intellectuals who clash and meld while solving local murders. It's fascinating reading to see how Lloyd develops these stories, always keeping the tone and action accurate to the period. Very well written and intriguing series. Perfect for those who love their mysteries English, historical, and intellectual. Jane Austen fans will adore Lucy! Pick up the first one and then relish the next two. Lloyd keeps the plot steady, building on each one. This third one continues the superb work. Enjoyable!

QNPoohBear says

1820-Lucy and Robert have been married three years already. Lucy has had two miscarriages in the last six months and is wondering what that bodes for her marriage, especially when she receives some poison pen

letters indicating she is to blame. Her sister Anna is still unwed and stuck caring for their father and little brothers. Lucy and Robert have endowed a village school to educate the children and adults on their estate. When Lucy finally gets around to meeting the teacher, Miss Broomfield, she does not like the woman. Lucy feels Miss Broomfield should not be teaching impressionable young children and vows to find a new teacher ASAP. When Robert discovers Miss Broomfield dead at her desk, he knows it wasn't a natural death and as magistrate, needs to investigate. He would prefer Lucy to NOT get involved given her fragile state of health. Lucy takes Robert's suggestion as a guideline and promises only to supervise the children as they learn Christmas carols, but she can't help wondering whether Miss Broomfield sent the nasty notes and was killed for it.

It's been awhile since we last saw Lucy and Robert and the village of Kurland St. Mary's. This mystery shows the reality of life after marriage for the couple. The mystery was complicated and very hard to figure out. It was nearly impossible with so many suspects and so many twists and turns. I did suspect that person of something else but I was shocked at the reveal.

The writing is sharp and flows well. I did catch one slight anachronism but it apparently dates to 1826 so close enough to be used orally without formal documentation. There may be others I didn't catch. The historical details are really good though there's nothing specific to set this story in the year 1820 but the year is a natural progression of the series and the other books have more details. I really liked how issues about class and reform came up. Robert, as a land owner, would not be so whiggish but his arguments seem plausible for his character.

The new characters here include a variety of people in the village of Kurland St. Mary. The Greenwells, a gentry family, have moved in nearby. Mr. Greenwell seems kind and progressive but the women are not likeable at all. Mrs. Greenwell and her daughters are gossips of the worst sort. I expected Mrs. Greenwell to be a Mrs. Bennet type but she's not quite that bad! The Greenwells have a ward, Josephine Blake, who lives with them as sort of a companion to the ladies. Sixteen-year-old Josephine seems beaten down by her situation and a nervous type. I felt really bad for her. She is a student at the school and helps out the younger children. Josephine seems to have been affected by Miss Broomfield's dour manner. Miss Broomfield is a fan of the switch and preaches hellfire and brimstone to the children. She labels most of them sinners and scares the poor children half to death. This woman was a nasty person but didn't deserve to die like that. Josephine's fellow student/student teacher is Rebecca, the daughter of the local smithy. I really liked Rebecca's intelligence and cheerful manner. She should go far in life.

Other suspects include a mysterious man who may or may not be who he claims to be. His story was intriguing but I didn't like him. Grace Turner, the village wise woman, also has reason to be angry with Miss Broomfield. Did she do something to cause the other woman's death? Lucy trusts Grace but given her family history, I'm not sure I would. Given the nature of the death, I don't think it's likely Grace was involved. There's also Mr. and Mrs. Jarvis of the local inn. Mrs. Jarvis is an overly friendly sort who claims to have known Robert in London in his younger days. Could one of them have killed Miss Broomfield?

The recurring characters make up a lot of drama and comic relief. Lucy and Robert's relationship hits a bumpy patch. Writing about infertility is a tricky subject, especially for this time period, but I think the author does an admirable job of dealing with Lucy's thoughts and feelings. I really didn't like the angst and wished Lucy would just talk to Robert. She never had problems talking to him before and never doubted his love. I understand she is grieving and she sounds depressed, but it was little too grim for me. Anna's fears and doubts about marriage and motherhood are very valid and I can easily see myself having the same doubts at that time. The secondary romance was brief but sweet. There's another pairing that was obvious though the couple does not seem suited for one another. Penelope Fletcher nee Chingford is still snippy but I kind of like her. She reminds me of Caroline from the Poldark series. Her sister Dorothea is more kind and deserves a happy ending of her own. Dr. Fletcher is an intelligent, good doctor who obviously loves his wife and the village. Again, much like Dr. Enys in the Poldark saga. Sophia, Lucy's best friend, appears in and out

of the story to support Lucy but she's a little too happy and cheerful to understand what Lucy is going through. I didn't find her insensitive, but just a bit too perky.

Aunt Rose comes to stay and she adds some cheer to the story with her good humor. I feel sorry for her that her children are so awful. Foley, the aged butler is the best secondary character. He is very devoted to the family, especially Lucy and his kindness is touching as well as a bit funny.

Another great Kurland St. Mary mystery! It needs an epilogue so we know what happens to everyone.

Barbara Rogers says

Series: Kurland St. Mary Mystery #5

Publication Date: 11/28/17

Another outstanding new book in the Kurland St. Mary Mystery series. As always, the mystery is outstanding, full of twists and suspects and keeps you guessing right up until the end. It is a well-written, well-paced and very well executed book – both romance and mystery.

Robert and Lucy have been married for three years and they are going through a bit of a rough patch. It is not that they don't love each other, it is that Lucy is horribly depressed and Robert doesn't know how to help her. He tends to order her around, demands that she take care of herself, etc. Frankly, I'm not sure what else he could actually do because she is inconsolable after going through two miscarriages within six months. Robert is afraid of losing her in childbirth and while he'd love children, he wants her more. He just isn't good at actually making her understand that. She feels inadequate as a wife because she doesn't think she can give him the heir he needs and wants. Most of the problems, as usual, fester because two people just don't actually talk with each other.

What does it take to perk Lucy up? Well, a murder will do it nicely. Lucy has just met the new school teacher and did not like her at all. Normally, she would have been heavily involved in the selection of the new teacher, but she was ill and since Robert was concerned with Lucy's health, both of them basically left it to Lucy's father. After doing some checking, they have discovered that the teacher was dismissed without reference from her last position. When Robert goes to confront the teacher and to dismiss her, he finds her dead with a quill lodged in her eye.

Robert does his best to keep Lucy out of the investigation, but she'll have none of that. As she gets more involved in the investigation we see more and more of her old spark come back. That delights Robert, but he still worries about her overdoing. Even with the spark of health coming back, something is still bothering Lucy – a lot. You'll have to read the book to see what it is and if the relationship survives it.

Who murdered Miss Broomfield? Who is sending the incendiary notes to people in the community? Are they also being blackmailed? Do we have one perpetrator? Two? More? I'll not tell – and you won't guess. You'll just have to wait until you get to the end of the story!

We get a couple of lovely new romances in this story as well – so they get their HEA's. They are lovely romances and one of them will probably surprise you because we've known those two characters through all of the books.

Check out my reviews of the other books in the series:
Death Comes To The Village

Death Comes To London
Death Comes To Kurland Hall
Death Comes To The Fair

Please check out my reviews at:
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"I requested and received this e-book at no cost to me and volunteered to read it; my review is my honest opinion and given without any influence by the author or publisher."

Kristina says

Death Comes to the School by Catherine Lloyd is the fifth book in A Kurland St. Mary Mystery series. Christmas is quickly approaching in 1820. Lady Lucy Harrison and her husband, Major Sir Robert Kurland are having issues in their relationship since her last miscarriage. Robert hopes to improve Lucy's spirits by bringing Aunt Rose Armitage to town who dives in to help Lucy plan the Christmas ball. Then Lucy receives an anonymous threatening note and she is not the only lady to receive one. Who is sending them out and why? Robert goes to the schoolhouse to speak with the schoolteacher, Miss Broomfield about her teaching methods and discovers her dead in her chair with a quill through one eye (someone making a point). Did Miss Broomfield write the threatening notes? Over her husband's objections, Lucy starts asking questions and nosing around. Will the killer be apprehended before the Christmas festivities commence?

Death Comes to the School can be a standalone. However, you will miss out on the early years of Lucy and Robert's relationship. I found the story to be nicely written and have a good flow. I did, though, tire of the miscommunication and bickering between the couple. I missed the easy rapport we normally experience between the couple (who are usually open with each other and very frank). It was present throughout the whole book and took away from an otherwise enjoyable story. It was odd and did not fit with the characters. I found the mystery to have several layers, and it was appealing. The killer's identity can be discerned long before the reveal (which was disappointing to me) despite the author's attempt at misdirection. I always enjoy visiting A Kurland St. Mary Mystery characters. They are well thought out and developed. It was nice to see how Christmas was celebrated in Kurland St. Mary and that time-period. The author certainly captured the era in this series with the events, how they communicated, method of travel, clothing, and language. My rating for Death Comes to the School is 4 out of 5 stars (I liked it).

Cindy Ladensack says

I love the premise of this series, but the execution of this one didn't quite live up to it for me. Mystery-wise, I felt the plot line of the letters wasn't really fully explored, and the denouement came quite out of the blue (sometimes that's a good thing, but I felt in this case it was a bit unexplained/ not foreshadowed quite enough). I also felt like the fertility issues between Lucy and Robert, while a refreshing change from the "perfect marriage" scenarios featured so often in these types of books, were a little overdone. And the characters (particularly the secondary ones) seemed more like "characters" than fully-fleshed people—their actions and traits somehow not quite believable enough.

Anne says

This book takes place three years after the last one of the series, Death Comes to the Fair--so there was some catching up to do. So much of the book focused on some angst between Robert and Lucy. Still, though they had some misunderstandings, they were able to communicate fairly well and to solve the murder. And the other characters suffered through varied degrees of misunderstandings that seem I inevitable in the time and place. Since I enjoy the relationships as much as the mystery, I was well satisfied. I'm certainly ready for the next one since the characters in many of these English cozies are not as honorable, intelligent and loving as these two.
