

Highland Treachery

The priceless heirloom quilt bequeathed to Sofia Parker has already led her on several forays into the mysteries of the past, and the latest square she begins to research doesn't disappoint her.

A swatch of Scottish tartan was sewn into the patchwork, and according to the diary accompanying it, the tartan dates back to Sofia's ancestor, Lady Isabelle Ripa, and the mid-18th Century. In the days of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the claimant to the English throne has amassed an army near Edinburgh and war is eminent. But when a close friend and advisor to the prince suddenly dies of seemingly natural causes, Lady Isabelle suspects treachery.

Isabelle, an herbalist and healer, suspects Lord Lochmere has been poisoned. Worse, she fears the deadly concoction comes from her own store of salves and tinctures -- and that she may be under suspicion as a spy and traitor to the prince and his cause. Will she be able to solve the mystery of the murderous plot before the noose tightens around her neck?

Back in present day Vermont, Sofia and her family are attending a Highland Games festival, and she finds herself embroiled in controversy. She is able to enter a prestigious baking contest at the games, but only after one of the entrants suddenly -- and suspiciously -- dies. Resented by the other close-knit bakers, Sofia sets out to win the contest -- and win the hearts of the other women as well. Sofia is determined to channel the courage of her Scottish ancestor and face the subterfuge that seems to plague her work at the festival. But will she be able to solve the widening mystery of treachery in the American Highlands?

A Matter of Wife or Death

No friend is dearer to Shannon McClain than Coleen Douglas. Shannon and Coleen have been through thick and thin together, both in their native Scotland and in Oregon, where Coleen has visited Shannon in her new Apple Grove home. But now, on the eve of the wedding of Coleen's daughter, Shannon is thrown into a murder mystery and the evidence points straight to Coleen as the culprit.

Shannon and her friends from Purls of Hope, the knitting circle of amateur sleuths who have helped Shannon solve several murders in the states, have traveled to a beautiful castle in Scotland for the wedding. Little did they know that the wedding planner at the facility heard her last wedding bell toll just before their arrival.

Now the police clearly suspect Coleen, who had a violent argument with the wedding planner mere hours before her death, as the murderer. Shannon and the Purls must get to the bottom of the mess in time to save Coleen from jail and her daughter's wedding from ruin. But will Shannon's investigation lead her into the path of danger again?

Led by a tenacious detective, Inspector Watson, the Scottish authorities intently follow each lead, but even Shannon must admit that Coleen is the most likely candidate. Much to her dismay, Watson orders Coleen to not leave the island the castle is situated upon until the investigation is complete.

Shannon usually relies upon Michael Stone to pull her out of sticky situations. But this time Michael, a security expert and an ex-cop, is back in Oregon, thousands of miles away when Shannon and Coleen find themselves in trouble. And trouble lurks in every hidden staircase and alcove in the centuries-old castle.

Will the gothic clues lead them to the real killer? Or will one of them become the next victim?

If Looks Could Kill

Despite trepidation about temporarily shuttering their new bakehouse, Laura Donovan, Molly Ferris, and Carol MacCallan are leaving Loch Mallaig, Michigan, behind for an overseas adventure. They're crossing the pond to attend a baking workshop at Glenellen Castle, a historic Scottish estate complete with labyrinthine gardens, secret passages, and rumors of buried treasure. Between being the guests of genuine nobility, learning new techniques from a famous pastry chef, and discovering that Molly's favorite television show, *A Highland Lass*, is filming nearby, the women know they're on the trip of a lifetime.

The dream vacation soon nosedives into a nightmare, however, when Laura happens upon the dead body of the show's lead actress, Charlotte Martin, floating in the loch. At first, Laura believes Charlotte died after plummeting from the cliffs overlooking the water, but the situation takes an even darker turn when local police reveal the terrible truth—Charlotte was murdered, strangled by a tartan scarf.

Unconvinced that the police's top suspect, the castle's kindly gardener, killed Charlotte, the Bakehouse Three split their time between attending class and following clues to uncover the real murderer. Unfortunately, their suspect list is long and the potential motives are many. Did the actress's ex-boyfriend strangle her in a fit of anger? Maybe so, but her attacker could just as easily have been her vapid co-star, the show's temperamental director, or even a local lord with whom Charlotte had a clandestine meeting.

Struggling not to lose their way—both within the castle's intricate grounds and as they navigate the tangled web of Charlotte's personal baggage—the American women fight to separate fact from fiction. Can they unpack the mystery surrounding Charlotte Martin's death before someone else at Glenellen Castle ends up getting kilt?