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The Minnesota State Fair - the beloved home of 4H exhibits, Midway rides, and everything on a stick. The festival fun is riding high until the recently crowned Milkfed Mary, Queen of the Dairy, a Battle Lake native, is brutally murdered while her regal likeness is carved in butter.

Can Mira James, covering the fair for the Battle Lake Recall, expose a deadly State Fair secret and win a blue ribbon for caging a killer? You bet your last deep-fried Nut Goodie!

September Fair Details

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Author : Jess Lourey , J.H. Lourey , Jessica Lourey

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From Reader Review September Fair for online ebook

Petula says

September Fair (fifth installment of the Murder-by-Month Mysteries) is probably one of the most unusual and entertaining murder mysteries I've read in awhile. The characters are described by Jess Lourey in such a colorful way that I could literally picture the attire they wore and the strong personalities they flaunted around The Minnesota State Fair where the majority of the book is centered.

The fair is hosting the Milkfed Mary court all of whom are in line to have their likenesses carved in butter. Yea, butter. LOL. Mira James, a freelance reporter, is attending the event for the Battle Lake Recall, and it seems like an easy gig. Things take a dramatic turn when the newly crowned Milkfed Mary, Queen of the Dairy, is murdered during her carving.

After that Mira is on a mission to get to the bottom of the murder mystery not only for her own peace of mind, but to provide answers to the victim's mother and get the complete story for her home paper. Her investigations, however, put her in the line of sight of the killer.

Often surprising and always funny, it'll be hard for you to put this one down.

Leslie says

2.5*

This cozy mystery, set in Minnesota, avoids most of the pitfalls (or more accurately my pet peeves) of this subgenre by which so many of the recent examples I have read are plagued. The writing could be better but I wouldn't mind reading another in the series.

Sara says

Was this the best book I've ever read? No. Was it entertaining and easy to read? Yes. I really liked that it took place at the MN State Fair! Will probably get around to reading the rest of the series eventually.

Dan says

Bodies in a pile!!

A real ball at the fair. Such shenanigans! A good story with colorful characters. A good who dunnit. Mira gets into so many things from her favorite fair candy to a pile of dead bodies. Plenty of murder and mayhem with quirky characters.

Cathy says

A guilty pleasure book. I lived in Minnesota for thirteen years, and one of my favorite things was the State Fair with its silly but sublime traditions. I especially loved the annual tradition where the dairy princesses had their likenesses sculpted in butter. This mystery reminded me of fairs gone by, and the author obviously knows the area. A quick read.

Jessie says

Best one yet

Dalene says

Original review posted at [A Date with a Book](#).

Characters: There are quite a few characters, but several you really get to know. Johnny, Mrs. Berns, Kennie Rogers, Aeon, Lars, Janis and a few of the dairy princesses. My favorite characters were Mrs. Berns and Kennie Rogers. They are Mira's homies from Battle Lake and stay with her nearly the entire time of the fair. Quite characters themselves, they find plenty to do on their own, as well as adventures for Mira to join in. I hope they are in other books of this series.

Location and Setting: The location and setting is the Minnesota State Fair. Livestock, food, and entertainment. Be careful if you're reading the book while hungry, Mira describes all of the fair food. Made me very hungry and made me feel like I was there. The fair is was described as being quite large. According to Wikipedia, it is the largest state fair in the United States in terms of average daily attendance. I do like how the author has made this fair its own cozy town.

Crime: The murder happens right in the beginning of the book. The details about solving the crime is written very well through the rest of the pages of the book. Mira's adventures while trying to find "who dunit" are quite entertaining. When she's alone, the book and story don't lose their steam.

Romance: Very mild. However, I do have to wonder if there will be competition in the next book.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. I can't believe I waited so long to read it. I have a few others of this series on my Kindle. I hope I can get to them soon.

Lchamp says

Another fun read. A little bit of suspense, a little bit of humor and a few hours reading. I like that!

Jenny (rapid tortoise) says

I liked it less than the previous 4 in the series (which I devoured). I guess it has something to do with the fact that the murder victim is a teenage girl. Other than that - a solid mystery. 3,5 stars

Gigi Ann says

This is the first book I've read by this author, Jess Lourey. The novel's setting is at the Minnesota State Fair—where the heady aroma of grease, beer, and livestock compels folks to consume anything on a stick. The Fair has become a murder scene. Someone has poisoned the newly crowned Milkfed Mary, Queen of the Dairy, while her regal likeness was getting carved into Grade A salted butter—a Fair tradition. Will Mira James, covering the fair for the Battle Lake Recall, expose a deadly State Fair secret and win a blue ribbon for caging a killer? Will she discover who killed the malicious teen pageant queen? You can bet your last deep-fried Nut Goodie she will!

This was an amusing story full of over-the-top crazies, who love all the fatty foods offered at State Fairs. For me it was just too much attention given to things and people that (in my opinion) became filler for the story. There were a few funny moments, but for me they were far and few between. It was an okay cozy, but I struggled to get the book read. It wasn't a favorite of mine, but it was an OK read, therefore I awarded it 3***

Katie Casey says

This was a free Kindle download, and I am so happy I found it! With colorful characters that even Carl Hiaasen would be proud of and a spunky female lead that reminded me of Janet Evanovich's Stephanie Plum, this was definitely a fun read and I will probably check out some more of the "Murder-by-Month" series.

Lighthearted says

Leaving Mrs. Berns in charge of the library, Mira James packs her press badge and heads to the city to report on Battle Lakes' representation at the Minnesota State Fair. As part of her coverage of the Milkfed Mary contest, Mira's snapping photos of Battle Lakes bad girl Ashley Pederson as she has her head sculpted in butter. Mira has a moment to wonder what's wrong with Ashley before the lights go out. When the lights come back on, Ashley is a strange shade of red and quite dead.

Never one to wait for the results of a police investigation, Mira determines to solve Ashley's murder. As she digs for information, she uncovers secret love affairs, embezzlement rumors, freaky compulsions and a big business cover-up. On the lighter side of things, she'll find herself sharing a trailer with Mrs. Berns and Kennie Rogers, throwing granny-panties at Neil Diamond and indulging in the ultimate decadence, the deep-fried Nut-Goodie on a stick.

I'm really enjoying this series! In addition to crafting a good mystery, Lourey offers quirky, eccentric characters and laugh-out-loud humor. Mrs. Berns and Kennie may be a bit over the top (particularly Kennie) but oh, they are fun. In this series installment, Lourey adds a touch of seriousness as she draws attention to the dark side of the dairy industry—I have to admit, I'm still a bit squeamish.

Beth Peninger says

I started, and finished, this book quickly. This book is #5 in a series by Lourey called "Murder-by-Month" but it's the first book of hers, and the series, that I have read. And it wasn't bad, not at all. Lourey's girl "detective" is a part-time librarian and part-time newspaper reporter for a small town in Minnesota that just so happens to run across dead bodies quite a bit. Completely realistic. *wink*

In this installment the Minnesota State Fair is the scene and the dead body is the newly crowned Milkfed Mary, Ashley Pederson. Someone takes Ashley out while she's having her head carved out of butter. The question is who and why? Mira James happens to be there covering the State Fair for her town of Battle Lake and since she's already run across dead bodies in the past few months it makes sense for her to investigate this death. Along for the investigation is the colorful Mrs. Berns and Kennie Rogers from Battle Lake. As Mira investigates the reader is introduced to a cast of characters, some helpful and others not so much to solving this crime. Lourey also takes the reader on a State Fair food journey, some of it made me want to be sick - Mira too. Some of the things people think up to eat...ick. Also, as part of the storyline, Lourey tackles the controversial topic of growth hormones for bovine in this title. Either she's playing devil's advocate or Lourey herself is a vegan or vegetarian. That part interested me quite a bit.

It seems, since this is book 5, that Lourey is continuing to develop Mira's character and past in this installment. There are references to things about Mira that if I had started with book 1 would probably make a lot more sense in book 5. This book was decent enough, like some other series that I use as fillers, that I will pick up the other titles from time to time and see the series through.

Stephanie says

Totally enjoyed this. Murder at the Minnesota State Fair. One of the best parts was the arrival of Johnny the second time. Reminded me of the intro of the blonde mechanic as Thor in "Adventures In Babysitting" years ago.

Jeannine says

Fairly (no pun intended) standard cozy mystery. This year Mira James keeps finding dead bodies. At least this time she wasn't alone while watching Milkfed Mary, Queen of the Dairy have her face sculpted from butter during the State Fair, only to have her found dead after the lights went out and were turned back on. Covering the event (well, both events - murder and fair), Mira is on the search (with some friends) for the murderer, as well as the best of Fair food. The beauty queen was a real piece of work, so suspects abound. Very enjoyable.
