



# The Good, the Bad and the Guacamole

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**Tex-Mex waitress and part-time reporter Josie Callahan is about to serve up some Lone Star justice in this spicy Taste of Texas Mystery from the author of *Here Today, Gone Tamale*.**

Tourists are pouring into the town of Broken Boot for the annual Homestead Days celebration. Opening the festivities at Two Boots Dance Hall is smooth-talking country singer Jeff Clark, the ex-boyfriend of Patti Lopez, Josie's best friend. When the charming Clark woos Patti onstage in an attempt to rekindle some sparks with his old flame, Josie fears her friend will end up just one more notch on the singer's guitar strap.

To impress her editor at the *Broken Boot Bugle*, Josie and her Chihuahua Lenny pursue the singer to Patti's house, hoping for an interview. Instead, they discover Clark facedown in a bowl of guacamole with a bloodied guitar at his side. With Patti suddenly a murder suspect, Josie must use her reporter skills to find out who had a chip on their shoulder—before the killer double-dips...

## The Good, the Bad and the Guacamole Details

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Author : Rebecca Adler

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## **From Reader Review The Good, the Bad and the Guacamole for online ebook**

### **Cyndy says**

Set in a small town in West Texas, this mystery has a dance hall, Tex-Mex food, a Chihuahua and of course a murder. Between shifts at her family's two businesses (Tex-Mex diner and the dance hall) Josie writes for the local paper and her dog Lenny writes a blog. As she investigates the murder of a country singer found in her best friend's home, her best friend sits in jail hoping Josie will find the real murderer.

The story was good, but I got to the end of the book and realized I still didn't have much of an idea of what Josie actually looks like. The characters seem pretty one-dimensional and I hope it is only because it is still early in the series. I would recommend and look forward to the next installment.

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### **JoAnne McMaster (Any Good Book) says**

When Josie's friend Patti Perez' ex-boyfriend Jeff Clark is set to play at Two Boots, Josie's uncle's dance hall, they go to see him. When Clark pulls Patti up on the stage to croon a song to her, Josie has a bad feeling. But bad goes to worse the next day when she goes to Patti's home to interview him and finds him dead in the living room.

After a cursory investigation on the part of the police, they arrest Patti and charge her with murder. But Josie knows Patti's innocent and begins an investigation on her own. While nothing really seems to speak to her, it's the bits and pieces she gleans that makes her realize that there's a killer still on the loose, and she might be the only one looking for them. Since the case seems to be all but closed, she realizes she has to act fast - with a little almost-too-late help from Lightfoot - to find the real murderer before Patti is locked away for a very long time...

I will admit that this book was better than the first, which was fair at best. But I never got the feeling that the police had any real evidence to convict Patti of murder. (view spoiler)

Aside from that BIG thing, there's the fact of Josie herself. She's pretty blah. She has no personality to speak of, and I can't understand why either man would be interested in her. She's nosy, of course, but doesn't have anything in the way of personality to set her apart. She's trying to set up the would-be love interests (which is fine since I don't really care for either one - they're both very blah also without any real traits to help carry the series; they're just dull); she's not funny, doesn't come off as particularly smart (just nosy), and seems so desperate to be a newspaper reporter again that I wonder why she's even working at the restaurant - when she does, which isn't often. In fact, she's so less-than-smart that she couldn't figure out the murderer until she saw their face. Any of the readers of this book would have figured it out before her. She really needs to find another line of work.

While I'm not a fan of this particular series, I will read the third book to see if there's an improvement; hopefully, the clues to the murder in the next book will get better, and both men will have found other love interests as well and maybe the author will actually introduce a man who might have some kind of personality to the mix.

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## **LORI CASWELL says**

### **Dollycas's Thoughts**

We arrive in Broken Boot, Texas, just in time for the Homestead Days Music Festival and this year it is personal for Patti Perez. Her ex-boyfriend is the star of the show. He seems to be winning her back and that has Josie worried. Josie has been trying to interview the country singer and when she finds out he is at Patty's house she rushes right over. But no interview for Josie. Instead she finds the man face first into a bowl of guacamole and the murder weapon right next to him. This makes Patti the prime suspect and Josie on the trail to find the real killer.

This was a fun story. I love Josie's Chihuahua, Lenny. He has his own blog and that is something I can relate to. The blog is Josie's way to share with others her opinions and viewpoints all from Lenny's point of view. Maybe one of my dogs need a blog

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## **James says**

I've completed reading all three cozy mysteries in the 'A Taste of Texas Mystery' series by Rebecca Adler with this one: The Good, the Bad and the Guacamole. Josie Callahan is a part-time reporter at the local small-town paper and a part-time waitress at her family's TexMex restaurant. In between, she solves murders despite trying to ignore them.

In this caper, her bestie, Patti, has been accused of killing her ex-boyfriend, mega musician who's come back to town to play in a local concert hall. Did Patti do it? Doubtful, but the police have arrested her. What jerks, right? So... Josie and her Chihuahua, Lenny, along with the rest of the Martinez family, try to find the real killer. A band-mate? A jealous girlfriend? An agent? Someone from the outside? Who did it?

I'm giving this one 3.5 stars. Of the three in the series, it's the one I like the most. I have the same concern with this book as I do the whole series. There's something slightly off in the interaction and dialogue between all the characters. I feel like the author knows what she's saying in her head, but a line or two is left out. Sometimes I'm not sure who's speaking; other times, a random narrative appears that I can't quite figure out the connection to the rest of the happenings. All-in-all, it's not enough to stop me from reading the series, but I find myself puzzled enough to pause and re-read. When that happens, I know there could be a stronger focus on the overall flow and tone in the book.

That said... there are major positives. It's full of clear suspects with definite motives. I like the setting and backdrop. Josie is a good sleuth. I like the budding relationship with Lightfoot or maybe Ryan. I enjoy the family restaurant dynamics. And the mysteries are always complex. I look forward to reading the next one.

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## **Melina says**

This one started out kind of slow for me and I was a little lost because I did not read the first in this series. But once I was able to catch on, the story picked up and flowed really well. I really liked the character of

Josie, she seemed like someone I would like to get to know. When Josie finds the dead body of her best friend's new boyfriend, she is truly devastated for her friend. I really liked how genuine Josie and Patti's friendship was. Of course, there are not a lot of suspects, so Patti is the prime candidate for the murderer. So Josie has to find out who the real killer is. This is a great story. I am not really familiar with Tex-Mex, but I enjoyed reading this one. It kept me guessing till the very end.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher.

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## **Robin Reynolds / October Woman says**

\*I received this book for review from Cozy Mystery Review Crew\*

It was nice to revisit Broken Boot, Texas, and follow waitress-slash-newspaper reporter Josie Callahan as she got involved in the second murder mystery to occur in the small town since her arrival home. Once again, Josie is the lucky soul who happens to discover the body. But the murder is much more personal this time around – Josie's best friend, Patti, is accused of doing the dirty deed and locked up.

Jeff, the deceased, is a playboy singer who's band is booked at the local bar, Two Boots, which is owned by Josie's family. He's also an ex-boyfriend of Patti's, and a witness has reported hearing Patti and Jeff arguing shortly before he was killed. In Patti's house.

This time around we don't see Josie interact as much with the locals who were involved in the previous book, other than her family, Deputy Lightfoot and her own ex, Ryan. I was disappointed that Ryan was no longer dating the beauty queen from the first book, as I really enjoyed her spiteful interactions with Josie. We do meet several new characters - the other member's of Jeff's band, plus his skeezy agent and a strange mother/daughter duo who traveled with the band.

I actually kept up better with the mystery and the plot this time. But there still seemed to be a little something missing. Despite the story being set in the same small town, it didn't have quite the same small town feeling, I think just because the local townsfolk weren't as involved and I wish they had been. But overall it was still a fun, breezy read, and while I liked the first book just a little more, I hope there will be a third book and look forward to more from this author.

Review first posted on my blog.

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## **Mark Baker says**

It's time for Homestead Days in the town of Broken Boot, Texas, and the big draw this year is up and coming country singer Jeff Clark, who happens to be the ex of Josie Callahan's best friend Patti. At the opening night concert, the two seem to be reconnecting, but the next morning, Josie finds Jeff dead in Patti's living room. Naturally, the police think Patti makes a great suspect, and with pressure to wrap the case up quickly, they aren't looking for many other suspects. That means it is up to Josie to clear her best friend. But can she do it?

This is a fun second entry in the series. I did find the book needed another pass to truly smooth out a few of

the scenes, but it was still definitely worth reading. The characters are unique for a cozy and truly so much fun. The plot gives us great suspects and twists right until the can-only-happen-in-Texas climax.

NOTE: I received a copy of this book.

Read my full review at Carstairs Considers.

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### **Karen says**

I love Texas. I always have, reading this Tex-Mex themed cozy was a special virtual visit for me. The Good The Bad and the Guacamole by Rebecca Adler was a fun and family centered mystery. I liked that this story and mystery was centered around two friends, one of them, main character Josie has a huge family in a small town, who help her navigate her return to the small town of Broken Boot Texas, giving her the support and sarcasm of a loving family. I really enjoyed the dynamic. From the mention of food in their family restaurant to the way the Josie's grandmother interacts with her and the family it was a good read. I also love that her dog Lenny has his own blog. The mystery was a fun one and I loved the dynamic between Josie and the local police. This is the second in the series and a fun read. Out November 1st this is lighthearted and fun cozy to enjoy.

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### **Lisa Ks Book Reviews says**

If you liked book one, HERE TODAY, GONE TAMALE, you're going to love this second offering in the Taste of Texas Mystery series.

It was so fun to be back in Broken Boot, Texas. With me being an "I love cold weather" kind of gal, this series allows me to enjoy the Texas climate. Of course I wouldn't enjoy it half as much without main character Josie Callahan and her best friend Patti Perez. These two besties get into a little bit of everything. Even murder Come on, it is a mystery after all. ;-) Oh, I almost forgot, Lenny, Josie's Chihuahua I just love that pup!

Like its predecessor, THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE GUACAMOLE is a witty, wonderfully written mystery with eclectic characters and plenty of mayhem to keep the reader glue to their seats. From the discovery of the victim, through the investigation, until the shocking reveal, if I wasn't holding my breath, I was laughing out loud. Author Rebecca Adler knows how to really bring it.

You're going to want to read THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE GUACOMOLE.

This book includes growling tummy inducing recipes!

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### **Jeanie says**

I love this series that started late last year! Josie and her family are even more exciting than in their first mystery, 'Here Today, Gone Tamale'! Second in the Taste of Texas Mystery series, it can be read as a

standalone.

Josie waitresses at her Uncle Eddie and Aunt Linda's Tex-Mex restaurant since returning to West Texas. She also works for the local newspaper doing articles that don't begin to match up to her investigative journalist's dream of making a difference. Now she might have the chance to write an actual crime series, but not under the circumstances she would have wanted.

Josie's BFF Patti, also known as a local Goth princess, heard from Jeff, a man she used to date until learning she wasn't the only song in his repertoire. The water from that had long since flowed under the bridge, but it sounded as if Jeff was interested in getting to know her again. He and his band had a well-attended gig at the Two Boots dance hall, also owned by Josie's uncle and aunt. Unfortunately it was to be a one-night-stand, as Josie went to Patti's house the following day to get an interview with him, only to find him dead with his face planted in the guacamole and a hole in his head that didn't come from the salsa or chips. The main suspect, in spite of the evidence, is Patti, and the sheriff is under pressure to solve the murder quickly. Josie, much to the annoyance of Deputy Quint Lightfoot, won't take this one sitting down. She is on the move to get her friend out of jail, and is more concerned with the ends than the means.

The author's characters are like people one would meet every day. Josie and Patti are the two we learn the most about, particularly Josie, as we see the story through her eyes. She is a loving niece, having been raised by her aunt and uncle after her parents died. She is a loyal friend; her reaction to seeing what being in jail does to Patti is how many of us would respond. We see the members of Jeff's band and roadies through Josie's eyes, and what she sees isn't always flattering. Detective Lightfoot is no stranger to the family as he worked the case about a previous murder. While at times it seems that he has an interest in Josie beyond the cases, at other times it seems he has more of an interest in Patti. Who is the most consistent? I would have to say Lenny, Josie's Chihuahua and faithful companion. He lives with her in the tiny apartment over top of the restaurant, enjoys going for walks loves getting attention.

The brightly-colored cover design hints of a fun, colorful Tex-Mex novel, and the fast-paced mystery doesn't disappoint. The story captured my attention very early on and held it throughout. There is an assortment of suspects. It seems as soon as one is vetted and discarded, two more pop up to replace it. Several band members and roadies might also have motives. I was somewhat surprised when learning who the bad guy/gal is, and overall satisfied with the outcome of the novel. I highly recommend 'The Good, the Bad, and the Guacamole' to cozy mystery fans who are 'foodies' as well as appreciative of well-written mysteries.

With a grateful heart, I received a complimentary copy of this book and as a courtesy, I am posting my honest review. No compensation was received.

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## **Judi says**

This is the first of Rebecca Adler's Taste of Texas Mysteries that I have read and I thoroughly enjoyed it! The story began a bit slow for me as I got caught up on who the characters were but then flowed nicely.

Josie Callahan, a part-time newspaper reporter, part-time waitress at her family's businesses, and aspiring amateur detective, lives in Broken Boot, Texas and is just recently back from being left at the altar. She has a bad habit of finding dead bodies (2 to date) and this time it's in her best friend's living room! What's worse is her best friend is being framed for the murder. Josie makes it her mission to gather all of the evidence she

can find to both write a story for her local newspaper and free her friend. Along the way she manages to step on the toes of a local Sheriff's deputy several times. She eventually develops something of a good working relationship with the deputy and, between them, they finally figure out "who done it".

I really enjoyed the quirky cast of characters in Josie's life – most especially her Abuela, Senora Mari, and her long-haired Chihuahua, Lenny. I found myself laughing out loud throughout the book:) Little Lenny even has a blog that is really gaining readership as the story goes on!

I think I would have gotten into the story more quickly had I read the first book in this series but I plan to go back and read that next! Adler writes a great story and I would highly recommend this book to anyone looking for a new cozy mystery series:)

I received an ARC from the author (via the Snazzy Elite Review Crew) in exchange for my fair and unbiased review.

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### **Foxyj says**

This second book in the "A Taste of Texas Mystery" series by Rebecca Adler was a great addition to the first, filling you in on a little more about the main character, Josie. The newspaper report role fits perfectly with the solver of mystery. This go around it was nice to have a few new characters to get to know. The author has the characters well developed and the plot flows nicely. She gave you the length of the book to put the clues she left you. I wouldn't say it was a complete page turner but it had good speed. I am looking forward to future books in this series and would recommend you giving this book a try along with the first one.

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### **Jeanne says**

The Good, the Bad, and the Guacamole is the second book in the Taste of Texas Mystery series by Rebecca Adler.

I haven't read the first book in the series. This can be read as a standalone book, but it took a bit to figure out all the characters and their relationships.

I love Lenny, the Chihuahua, and his blog. Josie was a little too scattered for my liking. She got herself into situations that she wasn't prepared for and didn't always tell the police when she had important information. On the plus side, there is an interesting cast of characters and a lot of potential.

I was definitely hungry for tacos while reading this book. The food descriptions were fantastic. There is a nice variety of recipes included at the end of the book.

Overall, it was an enjoyable read and I've bought the other book in the series to read.

I voluntarily reviewed an Advance Reader Copy of this book.



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## Caryn says

Following the very entertaining *Here Today, Gone Tamale*, *The Good, the Bad and the Guacamole* finds the West Texas town of Two Boots gearing up for the annual Homestead Days celebration. Music is one of the main focus points of the festival and things get rolling with the well known singer Jeff Clark who just happens to be the ex flame of Patti Perez. Patti, for readers who may not have read the first book in the series, is the best friend and side kick of protagonist Josie Callahan. Patti's relationship with Jeff is long over, but when he asks Patti to meet him backstage she not only goes, but agrees to meet him again after the concert as well. Fast forward to the next day, and Josie who is eager to get an interview with the singer, goes by Patti's house where Jeff ended up the night before, and finds the singer face down in a bowl of guacamole and very, very dead. Patti immediately becomes the number one suspect and Josie leaps into action to find the real killer. Along the way, the author gives readers a glimpse into the country music industry which gives the book more of a Nashville feel than West Texas. This brings me to my one quibble with the book and for that matter the series.

Adler has set this series in West Texas, an area around Big Bend National Park often referred to as the Borderland region of Texas. It has a unique beauty found no where else in the country that in fact spans two countries. The culture too spans easily across the Rio Grande. But aside from having the protagonist's family own a Mexican restaurant and the very occasional mention of the Chisos Mountains, the books in this series could take place in Nashville, or Memphis or Cleveland. She has all of the Chihuahuan Desert, Big Bend National Park and the blended mix of Native American, Mexican and American culture to work with but it just doesn't come through. Working more of these elements in would help make the series stand out from the more than ample supply of "girl returns home after failed relationship, helps in family business and solves crimes" series available. I like these characters and have enjoyed the first two books, but I find that they lack that something to set them apart and make them special. Giving readers more of a sense of place would go a long way to that end.

*The Good, the Bad and the Guacamole* is the second entry in the "Taste of Texas" series. The mysteries well plotted and are fun to solve. While the protagonist is likable, the supporting characters well defined and an interesting mix of people, this good series could be even better if the author did more with the West Texas setting than the food.

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## Rosemary K says

Josie Callahan came home to her family in Broken Boot after being left at the altar. However, her life in this small Texas town hasn't settled down. She seems to attract trouble. When she goes with her childhood friend as she visits with an old boyfriend, she doesn't know that she'll be involved in another murder investigation and the Patti will be in jail charged with his murder. With Lenny, her Chihuahua, as her assistant, Josie will find who did the deed and clear her friend. Josie won't give up. She understands how things work in Broken Boot and knows how to get the truth. I love the atmosphere and the interesting characters who are both quirky and humorous. There are plenty of suspects who wanted this up and coming country star dead. I couldn't stop reading until I knew that Patti was in the clear. I was drawn to Deputy Quint Lightfoot. He is a strong and honorable man who keeps his own council. I would like to see more of him. Rebecca Adler did a great job with *The Good, the Bad and the Guacamole*. I didn't know who the murderer was until the very

end. I'm enjoying this series (Taste Of Texas Mysteries) and I'm looking forward to more.

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