



## Silenced by Sugar

*Catherine Bruns*

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# **Silenced by Sugar**

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From USA Today bestselling author Catherine Bruns comes another to-die-for culinary mystery...

Full-time baker and sometime-sleuth Sally Muccio is enjoying life as a new bride and only wishes that sales in her bakery would pick up. So when popular TV host Donna Dooley invites her and best friend, Josie, to be guests on *Someone's in the Kitchen with Donna*, it's the answer to their prayers. The pair is excited about the opportunity until they discover Donna's new assistant is none other than Josie's former nemesis from culinary school, Kelly Thompson.

Like cookies in a hot oven, temperatures rise, and their animosity escalates into a food fight during the taping—which then goes viral! But when a dead body is then discovered on the set, fingers immediately point to Josie, and Sal's usual sassy partner is at a loss of how to defend herself. Sal's world is once again plunged into chaos as she attempts to keep her friend out of jail, control a blast from the past that threatens to harm her marriage, and keep her crazy parents at bay as they film a commercial for a funeral home. Already knee deep in dough, Sal discovers a possible link between the current murder and an unsolved one from the past. But she'll have to work fast because a killer is on her trail and determined to silence Sal...forever.

**\*\*Recipes Included!\*\***

The Cookies Chance Mysteries:

Tastes Like Murder (book #1)

Baked to Death (book #2)

A Spot of Murder (short story in the "Killer Beach Reads" collection)

Burned to a Crisp (book #3)

Frosted With Revenge (book #4)

Silenced by Sugar (book #5)

What critics are saying:

"Catherine Bruns has whipped up another delicious treat with this delightful cozy. If you like your mysteries to taste sweet this one is a good choice."

—Night Owl Reviews, Top Pick!

"I want to visit more with all of the quirky characters just to see what crazy and outrageous things they will do next!"

—Fresh Fiction

## **Silenced by Sugar Details**

Date : Published January 16th 2018 by Gemma Halliday Publishing

ISBN :

Author : Catherine Bruns

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## From Reader Review Silenced by Sugar for online ebook

### RO G'ma says

Silenced by Sugar is the fifth book in Catherine Bruns' awesome Cookies & Chance Mystery series. The writing style flows smoothly in this fast-paced cozy whodunit. The storyline is well thought out with affable, well-developed characters, an interesting mystery to solve, and a perfect mix of mystery, friendship, romance, a few quirky characters, and lots of humor. There are plenty of twists and turns, red herrings, and suspects to keep the reader engaged. The villain's reveal came as a surprise to me.

Sally 'Sal' Muccio and Mike Donovan are settling into married life, and her cookie shop, Sally's Samples, located in Colwestern, New York is in its second year of operation. Sal's parents, Domenic and Maria, are always doing something to embarrass Sal and Gianna, her sister, and this time they're both in a funeral home commercial, Dominic has purchased a second coffin and placed it in his house, and announces that he's going to write a book. Sal and Josie Sullivan have been best friends since childhood, and while Josie's a paid employee, the superb baker is the shop's backbone.

After a busy holiday season, sales have slowed to a crawl, so when Donna Dooley, a popular Food Network talk show host invited them to appear on her show, Someone's in the Kitchen with Donna, because they'd won a Cookie Crusades competition for their original fortune cookie recipe, they were hopeful it would boost their profits. As luck would have it, Kelly Thompson, Donna Dooley's personal assistant and owner of a popular sugar free bakery, Naturally Delish, turns out to be Josie's former culinary school nemesis. Josie promises to hold her anger in check, but Kelly and Josie provoke each other and a food fight commences in front of a live audience. Since trouble seems to follow Sal wherever she goes, it shouldn't have come as a surprise when it's discovered that Kelly's been murdered and Josie is the prime suspect. Someone replaced the insulin in Kelly's vial with antifreeze and the only fingerprints on the vial belong to Josie. Sal is determined to prove her friend's innocence. Sal's investigation into the murder turns up lots of suspects and while Brian Jenkins, a Colwestern Police Force officer, isn't happy she's involved herself in yet another murder investigation, he praises her for her insightfulness.

In the midst of the investigation, a man shows up in Sally's Samples, announcing he's her father-in-law, Sam Donovan, who she's never met. All Sal could think about was how this would impact Mike since his dad had walked out on him and his drunk mother twenty-five years ago, leaving Mike with a traumatic childhood. Grandma Rosa, who is always mixing up the words in everyday cliché sayings, continues to give Sal sage advice.

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### Kristi Lewis says

Sally and her best friend have been asked to appear on the television show, Someone's in the Kitchen with Donna. This is a perfect opportunity to promote Sally's bakery. The host Donna Dooley's assistant is Kelly Thompson. Kelly is Josie's rival from culinary school. Tempers begin to flare between Kelly and Josie. Their excitement over being on the show abruptly ends after there is a murder. Josie becomes the prime suspect. Sally knows that she must do everything she can to locate the murderer. She is confident that Josie is not capable of murder. Sally's husband Mike has been estranged for years from his father. He suddenly reappears after 25 years of absence. This is a book that will keep you on the edge of your seat. It was fast paced and full of suspense.

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### **Danielle Eisner says**

Sally is back and now Josie's in trouble. I really enjoyed this book. I literally couldn't put it down. Every time I said I'd take a break after this chapter something exciting happened and I had to keep reading.

The mystery was very good. I couldn't really get a beat on who the killer was. That's always exciting for me because I can usually figure it out.

Sally's crazy family wasn't as present in this book, so I missed that, but it was a really good read. There was a talk of a trip with her grandma and I hope we get a book about that lol

I've really enjoyed every book in this series so far and recommend it completely. If you are looking for a cute and quirky cozy mystery, then this is the book for you.

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### **Thomas says**

Sally and Josie are to be featured on a cooking show, which will be a boon for their business. The assistant to the TV shows hosts is an old enemy of Josie's, and during the taping did everything she could to embarrass her. The end result is a food fight between the two, and Sal finding Kelly's body when she returns to get her cell phone that was left in the dressing room.

In the meantime, Sam, Mike's long negligent father makes an appearance wanting to reconcile because he is ill. Sal wonders if there is more to the story that he is telling.

When Josie is arrested as the prime suspect for Kelly's murder. Sal goes into investigation mode to clear her friends name and save her bakery. As she gets close to the answer of who killed not only Kelly, but others also, Sally finds herself once more in danger of losing her own life.

This is another great story from Catherine Bruns. Not only is there plenty of intrigue, but a good bit of laughter also.

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### **Linda says**

Sally and Josie take their cookie skills on the road again, when they agree to be on a TV show that highlights past winners from the Cookie Crusade Contests. Past bad blood between Josie and the show's assistant sours their appearance and casts a shadow over Josie when a murder victim is discovered. As with the other books in this series, the plot and the pace move towards a satisfying conclusion. Such an enjoyable read, I finished it quickly.

The recipes include Tiramisu, Lemon cookies, and more.

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### **Karen says**

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOUR BFF IS FRAMED FOR MURDER AND YOUR ESTRANGED FATHER INLAW SHOWS UP UNANNOUNCED. SALLY MUCCIO DONOVAN IS NOT HAVING AN EASY TIME LATELY BUT SLEUTHING TO CLEAR HER BUDDY IS ALL SHE CAN DO AS CHAOS RAINS DOWN AROUND HER. THE STORY LIKE THE OTHERS IN THE SERIES IS ACTION PACKED AND SUSPENSEFUL. THE END WAS A HUGE SURPRISE AS I NEVER ONCE SUSPECTED WHO THE CULPRIT WAS. I GIVE SILENCED BY SUGAR 5 FORTUNE COOKIES

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### **Mari Hinton says**

#### **Wonderful**

It's always fun to catch up with Sal and the gang. This time she has to figure out how is framing Josie for murder.

There is always laughs with Grandma Rosa and Sal parents and tenderness with Mike.

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### **K.A. Davis says**

SILENCED BY SUGAR, the fifth book in the Cookies & Chance Mystery series by Catherine Bruns finds protagonist, Sally Muccio Donovan, celebrating six months of blissful marriage to Mike. This newest book shows a more emotional side to Sally, with a different focus than previous books. Instead of detracting, it reflects the natural progression in real life and adds to the story. I love how the author has allowed Sally to grow over the course of the series and how she now exhibits an inner strength that wasn't apparent at the beginning. Even her best friend, Josie, notices. And that's saying a lot because Josie is quite the spitfire!

Sally's strength and determination are soon put to the test when Josie is arrested, accused of murdering her former nemesis. I loved how, in addition to Sally getting involved in trying to prove her friend's innocence, her entire family rallies behind Josie. It's just one example of the close-knit relationship Sally and her family have, despite the hijinks of her parents... who, by the way, are quite a hoot! Sally's investigation into the murder turns up lots of suspects. So many people could have wanted the witch (with a capital B) dead! Sally must sift through a lot of clues to find the truth and I'll have to admit, I didn't see the suspenseful ending coming. Ms. Bruns provides enough twists and drama (the good kind!) to keep the reader turning pages until the very last word is read.

I was provided an ARC with the hopes I would review. All thoughts and opinions are my own.

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### **Jodie says**

Sally Muccio has been happily married for 6 months when this book begins. She has been having slow business at her bakery, when TV host Donna Dooley invites her and best friend, Josie, to be guests on her show. They are excited until they find out Donna's assistant, Kelly, was Josie's former classmate and enemy

from culinary school.

Josie ends up getting blamed for a murder that happened after their taping. Sally has to use her best investigating skills to try to keep Josie out of jail.

On top of everything else, someone from her husband's past is back in their life. They have to decide if this person is worthy of their love.

It was a pretty good story. I hope another comes out soon.

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### **Missi Stockwell says**

I cannot get enough of the Cookies & Chance Mystery series by Catherine Bruns and I cannot stress enough that YOU have got to read them !!! There is so much to love in this series .... from the people to the storylines to the murders to the relationships to the quirkiness of Gramma Rosa !!!

As I've said before when I've discussed this series reading these books is more than the story ... you are part of a family !!! You will completely fall in love with Sally and her new husband Mike as well as her loving Gramma Rosa, crazy parents, down-to-earth sister Gianna, and her best friend and partner Josie. And the relationships among them all is just plain AWESOME to read !!

Everytime you finish reading one of the books in this series you are left with so much. Even though you close the book and put it back on the shelf, you won't be able to forget about the devotion, strength, courage and funniness surrounding the Muccio/Donovan family.

It always amazes me the talent and imagination that authors have when I read their books. And some authors stand out a little more .... Catherine Bruns is on a level all of her own !!! I mean come on !!! You have Sally and Josie running a cookie shop that is best known because the customers get a free fortune cookie and some times these fortunes guide the story. And then there are Sally's parents....her father has this infatuation with death and everything that surrounds it to the point that there is a coffin in the living room !!! And Sally's mom dressing and acting like a hot teenager but what can ya say she looks the part !! And Gramma Rosa who always knows what to say even if she messes up the sayings (for example - you can't judge a book by it's picture). And the only "normal" member in the family is her younger sister Gianna who is a lawyer....but wait she's dating the grandson of their neighbor Mrs. Gavelli who hates Sally. You don't even need a murder to solve when all this other stuff is going on but it does add spice to the mix....

But when you are reading the books, this is all normal and understandable and completely acceptable but mostly off the chart entertaining !!!!

If you read any of these books and you are not moved by the author and the stories, I don't know what to say..... Maybe read it again ? Although reading them again isn't such a crazy idea.....

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### **InD'tale Magazine says**

3.5/5.0

There is much to like in this book.

Read full review in the 2018 Oct issue of InD'tale Magazine.

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### **Barbara Hackel says**

What a fun book in a series that is already wonderful! This time Sally and Josie are on a television show, Someone's in the Kitchen with Donna, to showcase their winning cookies and the bakery. All would have been fine, except the assistant to the host is someone who went to culinary school with Josie, and to put it mildly, they hate each other. So when the assistant ends up dead, Josie becomes the target for the police. They are sure she is a murderer, and Josie is put in jail.

Meanwhile Sally and her attorney sister Gianna, are trying to solve the murder and get Josie cleared. They meet with opposition everywhere they go, yet they never give up. Many surprises are uncovered along the way, and in the end they exceed expectations.

If that wasn't enough for an excellent book, newly wed Sally meets Mike's father as he inserts himself in their lives and her family. Because he is dying, Sally urges Mike to listen to his father (who walked out on him some 25 years ago) and give him a chance. More sleuthing results in a surprise discovery!

Easy to read and get lost in, this series is a favorite because it revolves around family, friends, good values, and some kookie characters. Fun!

PS Recipes in the back have some yummy cookies and Italian specialties too!

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### **Sherry says**

#### **Cookies to Die For!**

What's not to love? Silenced by Sugar is a delectable concoction of intense action, quirky characters, & sweet romance. Catherine Bruns has another winner!

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### **Marsha Holz says**

#### **Another great book**

I highly recommend this book and series. It is great from beginning to end. It has it all too some humor and mystery and all. Enjoy reading it.

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### **Kathleen says**

“Silenced by Sugar” earns 5+/5 Sweet Treats...Karma 5, old Nemeses 0!

Karma has returned to Colwestern, New York, and Catherine Bruns is brilliant at putting it center stage! This fifth book in her Cookies & Chance Mystery series finds Sally Donovan (finally married to Mike) and Josie Sullivan (her BFF and head baker at Sally's Samples) being invited to be guests on Someone's in the Kitchen with Donna, a popular show on the Food Network. The host, Donna Dooley, has purchased the Cookie Crusade contest and hopes to revisit past winners highlighting their signature cookie recipes and plugging their businesses. What an absolute honor and the wonders it would do for the bakery's bottom line is incalculable! But, enter Josie's former culinary school nemesis. Kelly Thompson, Dooley's personal assistant and owner of her own popular 'sugar free' bakery Naturally Delish, sabotaged Josie's work at the culinary school, and now, does not miss an opportunity to insult and demean Josie at every turn. Even when Sally and Josie (promising to hold her anger in check) shows up at the studio to tape their spot, Kelly goads Josie into a violent reaction when she reveals to everyone the very personal reason Josie left the culinary school without graduating. Josie will seriously regret the ensuing 'cat fight' when Kelly ends up Karma's next victim...I love it!

Catherine Bruns has penned another well-paced mystery with more than Josie on the list of suspects that would have loved to see Kelly 'out of the kitchen' for good: On set conflicts? Professional jealousies? Secrets and lies? Karma has a lot to choose from! Bruns provided clever clues to follow, engaging descriptions and dialogue, and a realistic investigation style for Sally, although she admits multiple murders have forced her to improve her sleuthing skills. Catherine's story is the signature exciting page-turner, but it's the character driven plot lines that keep me coming back for second, third, fourth, fifth helpings. I love Sally and her quirky family, and the new challenges with which she is confronted in her newlywed life. I enjoyed the spotlight on Josie's background, too, as well as the friendship between Sally and Josie that is more like sisters. Fans, like me, will be thrilled with this new book, but newbies should not shy away even though a lot has already passed. There are references made to background and character connections, but no spoilers to interfere with going back and enjoying the other books. Start here to satisfy your sweet tooth, then go back at book one, "Tastes Like Murder." Be sure to get baked, burned, and frosted and you'll be a fan, too!

Easy-to-follow recipes are once again included: Lemon Crisp Cookies, Tiramisu, Frangelico Chocolate Pie, and Double Chocolate Chip Cookies!

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