



# Dating is Murder

*Harley Jane Kozak*

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Wollie Shelley, the plucky amateur sleuth *Kirkus Reviews* called “funny, brave, smart, and altogether the fetchingly crime heroine since the early Stephanie Plum,” returns to face suspect lovers and unlovable suspects in this hilarious sequel to *Dating Dead Men*.

Wollie Shelley is a greeting card artist struggling to keep afloat financially and to pursue—despite a series of recent disasters—the search for the love of her life. She reluctantly agrees to be a contestant on the reality television show *Biological Clock*. The show’s premise: Six eligible singles date each other, and the audience votes on which couple would make the best parents. Alas, Wollie isn’t having much luck finding a man she’d like to date “off the air,” much less father her child. As her own biological clock ticks away, Wollie gets caught up in a much more pressing demand on her time. Her friend Annika has vanished into thin air, and Wollie is convinced that she’s in grave danger.

When Wollie reports the disappearance to the Los Angeles Police Department, however, the detective assigned to the case seems more interested in dating Wollie than in finding her friend. So Wollie springs into action—and lands right in the middle of an FBI investigation into an international drug cartel. She soon finds herself being stalked by an assortment of threatening characters, including her fellow television contestants, who will stop at nothing to beat the clock.

With *Dating Is Murder*, Kozak delivers another sparkling treasure, a laugh-out-loud-funny, literate mystery for readers of Janet Evanovich and Sue Grafton and for Kozak’s own growing legion of fans.

## Dating is Murder Details

Date : Published March 14th 2006 by Broadway Books (first published 2005)

ISBN : 9780767921244

Author : Harley Jane Kozak

Format : Paperback 352 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Womens Fiction, Chick Lit, Humor, Cozy Mystery, Romance

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# From Reader Review Dating is Murder for online ebook

## Dlora says

A sequel to *Dating Dead Men*, this mystery is just as fun and quirky as the last one, although the plot was a little more screwball. I should have a bookshelf for humor, since my most favorite books usually have to have that element, and this one does. Wollie's love interest from the first book has broken their engagement and moved to Asia to try to get custody of his daughter and Wollie is missing him and his sweet daughter and bemoaning the fact that she isn't a mother--maybe brought on by being on a reality TV show *Biological Clock* focusing on the trials older women face getting hooked up and having children. One of the support crew, Annika, goes missing and Wollie gets more and more embroiled trying to find her, especially since the police aren't too motivated. I was amazed at how well the author made me love Annika little by little when we never even meet her throughout the book. Wollie dates and detects and deals with her quirky family and friends, runs from stalkers and hitmen, and delights me with her goodness and resourcefulness.

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## Kara Jorge says

Wollie Shelley is a thirtysomething single woman living in the greater LA area. She does a variety of odd jobs from designing greeting cards and painting murals to being a contestant on a reality dating show. She's working through the heartbreak of having her fiancé dump her and move to Asia with his daughter. This starts to take a backseat to intrigue when a friend of hers, Annika Glük, disappears.

Annika had been in LA working as an au pair for the Quinn family, plus working as a production assistant on Wollie's show, "Biological Clock." When Wollie investigates Annika's life, she finds a narcissistic ex-boyfriend, jealous au pairs, and hints at a dark lifestyle that seem at odds with what Wollie and Annika's other friends know of her. Wollie finds herself in the middle of some major intrigue with a drug czar, a new designer drug, and a federal co-agency investigation, not to mention getting over her heartbreak when a new love interest enters her life.

Kozak is touted as the new Janet Evanovich or Sue Grafton. She's not. She is, however, a strong new talent who weaves a decent mystery around a chick lit background. Wollie is a likeable heroine, attractive but unaware of it. I couldn't completely warm to her, however, because she embodies too many clichés. She's a wimp. Not just in a fight-or-flight situation, but in other day-to-day things like driving. Even though she's a voluptuous six feet, she's also a shrinking violet. When she does drive, or stick up for herself, it's almost an accident she makes it through. Another irritating cliché is Wollie's baby fever. She pines over other people's babies (but not children) and sighs over Baby Gap and strollers. Hasn't this theme in women's fiction grown a bit stale? And what's with all these characters who don't have real jobs or normal names?

Those things aside, because I'm sure they do appeal to a portion of the populace, this was an enjoyable book. I can't say I'll rush to my bookseller for more Kozak, but I'd pick up another one of her books if I found it lying around.

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## Birgit says

Wollstonecraft (kurz Wollie) ist nicht nur mit einem einprägsamen Namen gestraft, sondern auch mit Geldsorgen, Männerproblemen und dem Drang, Dingen auf den Grund zu gehen. Nachdem ihre Freundin, ein Au Pair Mädchen, auf mysteriöse Weise verschwindet, lässt sie nichts unversucht, dies aufzuklären, da sich scheinbar sonst niemand so wirklich für deren Verschwinden interessiert.

Mag es solche Ideen schon in zigfacher Ausführung von anderen Autoren geben, so ist diese besonders gut gelungen. Die Charaktere sind glaubwürdig ausgearbeitet, bisweilen schrullig, aber vor allem liebenswert, genauso wie die Geschichte selbst ohne Hänger bis zur Auflösung führt.

Während ich mich in Wollie sofort hineinversetzen konnte, musste ich mich in H.J. Kozaks streckenweise etwas holprigen, aber ungemein witzigen Stil erst einmal richtig einlesen. Das hat im Endeffekt aber dem Lesevergnügen keinen Abbruch getan.

Kurz: Spannende chick-lit, so wie ich sie gerne habe!

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## **Blow Pop says**

Content warnings: drug mentions, alcohol use, alcohol mentions, mention of dismemberment, mention of death

So I have to say this one was a bit more interesting than the one before it. And more enjoyable.

I mean there was a bit of predictability but I come to expect that in fluff/mysteries. And Hollywood is described pretty well as far as location goes, geography, and how immune people who live in LA/Hollywood are to things being filmed. Though I really doubt things are filmed as much as the books make it out to be. But since I abhor LA and don't live in it and avoid going to LA every chance I get that may be my own bias.

Wollie's new boyfriend is interesting. But he would drive me bonkers with secrets and stuff.

Joey and Fredreeq are quite the interesting characters and friends. And personally sometimes I'd rather read about either of them rather than Wollie (since a lot of Wollie is whining about always needing money and it's the same thing over and over and it gets tired and repetitive).

There's not a lot I can really say without spoiling the book and I'm trying to avoid that so. Decent read. I could see it functioning as it's own standalone book.

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## **Rebecca says**

Wollie is back and so are the shinanigans! Wollie, desperate for help in the health insurance dept, signs on to a bottom-of-the-barrel reality show. It's bad enough that there is barely any budget and the director, creative front-runner and all around annoying pest is constantly yelling at everyone, but her best friend is there trowling on the make-up and dispensing unsolicited advice on every turn.

To make things worse, her new friend and math tutor goes missing and no one seems interested. What's a Wollie to do? Go looking, of course. Enter tall, dark, and scary warning her off, her new friend's boyfriend ends up missing, her best friend engages in b&e and Wollie gets stuck in a window. The threat heats up as Wollie finds herself embroiled in an international scary scene. Good thing she's got that guardian angel looking out for her...in more ways than one!

If you're a fan of Stephanie Plum, you'll get a giggle out of Wollie. She's delightful and fun to watch bumble around only to piece everything together just from sheer determination. Makes you believe anyone can be a hero.

Great fun read.

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## **Chantel says**

Dating is Murder (Wollie Shelley, Bk 2) (Audio CD) (Unabridged)

Author: Bernadette Dunne (Narrator), Harley Jane Kozak

Wollie Shelley, a greeting-card artist in Los Angeles, California, is featured. Wollie is struggling to keep afloat financially and to pursue—despite a series of recent disasters—the search for the love of her life. She reluctantly agrees to be a contestant on the reality television show Biological Clock. The show's premise: six eligible singles date each other, and the audience votes on which couple would make the best parents. Alas, Wollie isn't having much luck finding a man she'd like to date “off the air,” much less father her child. As the biological clock ticks away, Wollie gets caught up in a much more pressing demand on her time. Her friend Annika has vanished into thin air and Wollie is convinced that she's in grave danger.

When Wollie reports the disappearance to the Los Angeles Police Department, however, the detective assigned to the case seems more interested in dating Wollie than in finding her friend. So Wollie springs into action—and lands right in the middle of an FBI investigation into an international drug cartel. She soon finds herself being stalked by an assortment of threatening characters, including her fellow television contestants, who will stop at nothing to beat the clock.

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## **Sheila says**

Cute cozy. Wolfe is on the lookout for a missing nanny.

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## **Marfita says**

Contains serious spoilers - you have been warned. This story was going okay. The previous book was better, but the author made the time-honored mistake there of relenting the sexual tension and letting the main characters hook up. She had to undo it to free up Wollie in this next situation of date fodder for a reality show. That's understandable. And we were going along just fine until the earlobe business. Yes, it was gruesome and I can tolerate a certain amount of that if we don't have to actually see it (it's just hinted at with the sausage-making imagery etc.), but no Martha-Stewartesque type person would be so inept as to let *an earlobe*, much less one with an identifying earring (!!!!!) get away from her. First of all, she'd probably know better than to try to kill someone by cutting their throat. That is way too messy. You'd never clean that up, no matter how Martha-Stewarty you were. If the M-S type were going to kill someone and dispose of the body,

she would be much, much more organized. Kill first and then cut up. Much less messy. And she just wouldn't let an earlobe get away. An experienced cook wouldn't hack away like that. I don't have an alternative, but this did make me set the book aside and put my head in my hands.

Also, the victim went to Pepperdine and I just don't see that type with that kind of earring, especially the son of a senator.

The characters other than that are nicely realized and likable. The detecting stuff was delightfully screwball, but I didn't think much of the reality show stuff. Then again, I haven't watched tv in a couple of decades now and the author is in the bizness, so I shouldn't judge that.

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## **Lynda says**

Thoroughly enjoyed!

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## **Coby says**

Wollie Shelley, artist and reality show contestant, becomes involved in searching for a German au pair that goes missing, which leads to a much more involved adventure including the FBI and DEA. This book started very slowly, but picked up speed as the plot thickens. A fun read if a little silly.

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## **Julie Hendricks says**

Quite a talented writer. The killer wasn't hard to spot, but the writing and characterizations are so well done that you really don't mind. This genre has a lot of writers who really should never have been allowed to publish - their lack of talent is cringe-inducing. It sounds like an insult to say Kozak is a little too good - this is a genre I enjoy reading, so I don't mean to denigrate it by saying she could write anything, not just a particular type, but I do think she would not need to stay within the set parameters of one genre. I certainly enjoyed the book.

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## **Angela says**

I must have been the only person that did not like this book. I did not like the plot - and the only interesting portion of the book - which actually held my attention, occurred in the last 30 or so pages. I won't go into a long discussion about what the book is about - but I just felt like the plot was disjointed - as if the author was driving around in circles, getting nowhere in particular. I didn't understand the point of having the game show Biological Clock as the center theme. And for all this - who won? Maybe that was something I missed.

I honestly don't believe I'll read any other books by this author. But there is a silver lining to all this - I did like the little tidbits about Wollie and her frog paintings. I like frogs. But if you're not into frogs, I'm sure you thought that it's strange - a woman paints frogs as a part time job? Really???

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## **Kim says**

This was ok, but it seemed to be slow in starting.

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## **N Barr says**

Ugh. Maybe not my type of reading material. I was bored. I wasn't interested in any of the characters. Everyone was flat.

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## **Jill Bratcher says**

Sequel to "Dating Dead Men", this book is equally fun and funny. We catch up with Wollie Shelley shortly after her ex-fiance "Doc" (whom we met in the first book as her would-be-kidnapper, former high school teacher, ex-felon love interest) has broken up with her and left for Asia to pursue custody of his daughter, Ruby. Having participated in a "dating project" in the first book, greeting card artist Wollie now is cast as one of three female 'contestants' on a low-budget reality TV show called "Biological Clock". When her math/science tutor disappears after "wanting to talk to her about something important", Wollie vows to find the German au pair, putting her smack-dab in the middle of a federal investigation into a new designer drug. Wollie crosses paths with a "stalker" whom she finds strangely attractive and who keeps warning her off the case.

As with "Dating Dead Men", Kozak provides not only a good mystery involving characters about whom we care, she does so with Los Angelino flair and great humor. Another wonderul, quick read filled with laughter.

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