



# The More the Terrier

*Linda O. Johnston*

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## **The More the Terrier** Linda O. Johnston

When shelter manager Lauren Vancouver finds out that her old mentor, Mamie Spelling, is an animal hoarder, no one is more shocked, and she jumps in to help re-home the cramped critters. But Mamie's troubles don't end there. She's accused of murder when the CEO of a pet shelter network is found dead. And Lauren's dogged determination to clear her former friend of murder may put a killer on her tail.

## **The More the Terrier Details**

Date : Published October 4th 2011 by Berkley

ISBN : 9780425243794

Author : Linda O. Johnston

Format : Paperback 304 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery, Fiction, Animals



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# **From Reader Review The More the Terrier for online ebook**

## **SHERRY says**

The series is getting better.

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## **LORI CASWELL says**

The story is exciting with a very current topic of hoarding. I have to admit until I read this book I never thought about someone hoarding pets and it really opened my eyes.

This series is really packs more of a one-two punch, they stories are fun and entertaining but they also make us aware of a huge over population of pets in the United States. I almost feel we should have a Bob Barker moment to remind ourselves "to have your pets spayed or neutered". I also feel that adopting and giving pets "forever homes" is an uplifting experience. We have 3 rescued kitties under our roof. If you are looking for a pet to love, start out at a shelter and save a life that will love you unconditionally immediately.

Like cozy mysteries, like animals, you will love this book! Your invisible tails will be wagging with delight!!!!

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Berkley Prime Crime. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. Receiving a complimentary copy in no way reflected my review of this book. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission's 16 CFR, Part 255 : "Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising."

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## **Marlyn says**

You've heard of hoarders? You know those people who obsessively gather STUFF until their homes are hazardous mazes of clutter? According to the Mayo Clinic, "[s]ome people also collect animals, keeping dozens or hundreds of pets often in unsanitary conditions".

This is what Lauren Vancouver, manager of a private, no-kill animal shelter discovers when she visits her old friend and mentor Mamie Spelling after receiving a panicked call from her. Mamie is afraid of Bethany Urber, the ambitious and aggressive CEO of a shelter network, who threatened the older woman when she refused to join the network.

Lauren feels that the only thing she can do is contact Animal Services, who move the animals to their own shelters, and arrange for psychological evaluation for Mamie.

Shortly after Mamie is released, Bethany is found in her office, shot. Unfortunately, Mamie finds the body, and having vocally castigated her in public, she becomes the main suspect.

Lauren is aware that Mamie is unstable, but still certain that her friend is incapable of murder, and takes it upon herself to prove it.

With the Pet Rescue series, Johnston has found a palatable way of conveying information about issues that are unpleasant but very real. (The first installment of the series was about another serious problem, puppy mills.)

Linda O. Johnston also writes the Kendra Ballantyne, Pet-Sitter mysteries. She volunteers at no-kill shelters in Southern California, and become a dog adoption counselor.

\*FTC Full Disclosure: Many thanks to the publisher, who sent me a copy of the book for review purposes.

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## **Christine says**

Lauren Vancouver, manager of the HotRescues animal shelter, hasn't heard from her former mentor Mamie Spelling in almost seven years. Then, out of the blue, Lauren receives a hysterical phone call from Mamie who tells Lauren someone is threatening her, but then abruptly hangs up. Lauren decides to pay a visit to Mamie's Beach Pet Rescue to make sure she is okay and is shocked at Mamie's haggard appearance and what she finds inside Mamie's home. It seems Mamie has become a pet hoarder and her home is filled with hundreds of cats and dogs - all filthy and malnourished. When the person who has been threatening Mamie is found shot, Mamie finds she herself facing charges of pet hoarding and murder!

While this book is a mystery and is about the murder of pet shelter network CEO Bethany Urber, the book is centered on the topic of animal hoarding. While animal hoarding is a serious offence, I like the way the author addresses the issue by having Lauren show conflicting feelings about Mamie's hoarding. While she hates the conditions in which Mamie was keeping the animals, she can't help but pity the obviously disturbed woman.

It is clear the author loves animals and is very knowledgeable about animal rescue efforts. The many details about running an animal shelter are included throughout the book and are an integral part of the story. This book is the second Pet Rescue mystery and I have the same complaint with this book as with the prior "Beaglemania". Lauren manages a large shelter, and she oversees every aspect of its management. In addition to all the paperwork, budgeting, PR, and security of the shelter, she personally interviews every applicant that wants to adopt an animal, as well as makes several home visits, announced and unannounced, before and after the pet adoptions. I don't know how she has time to do her job, run her household, have a romantic relationship with Matt Kingston of LA Animal Services, and still find time to investigate crimes!

With the exception of her micromanaging, Lauren is a likeable character. She has a good relationship with her college-age son and daughter who make a brief appearance in the book. She is a good manager to her employees and volunteers and deals with a situation in which animals are being anonymously dropped off at her shelter with understanding and compassion. She is also a good friend to Mamie and gets involved in the murder investigation to protect Mamie even though she is appalled at the way Mamie was neglecting the animals under her care.

Lauren's friendship with vet and host of cable TV animal health show Dr. Carlie Stellan is interesting, although we don't really get to know Carlie. Lauren and Matt's romance has potential, and while Lauren says she isn't ready for a relationship, she seems to spend a lot of time with the handsome animal services

captain.

Unfortunately, the mystery itself isn't as interesting as the parts of the book dealing with the animal shelter. Lauren talks to a lot of different shelter owners in trying to find out who killed the domineering Bethany. Part of the reason so many people disliked Bethany was the way she forced people to join her network of pet shelters, but I was never clear as to why Bethany takes such extreme measures to get new members. Lauren eventually solves the mystery after an unbelievable scene in which she escapes from the murderer.

While the mystery and depth of most of the supporting characters is lacking, animal lovers will enjoy the many details about animal shelters and enjoy meeting some of HotRescues furry residents. If you enjoy Cynthia Baxter's Reigning Cats and Dogs mysteries, then you may want to give "The More the Terrier" a try.

This review was originally written for The Season E-Zine. The book was provided to me in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Kaye says**

Lauren Vancouver is the administrator of HotRescues, and once again finds herself in need of her sleuthing skills. Her old mentor, Mamie Spelling, is an animal hoarder, so Lauren assists with the rescue and rehoming of Mamie's animals. However, in addition to helping Mamie, she meets the woman Mamie says has been threatening her, Bethany Urber from Pet Shelters Together, a network of pet rescues. Unfortunately Bethany is found dead, and Mamie is accused of murder, so Lauren has to find answers quickly sometimes with the help of Matt Kingston, the Animal Services Captain. Other characters are a cross over from Linda O Johnston's other series Kendra Ballantyne, Pet-Sitter Mysteries, including Kendra and Dante DeFrancisco the CEO of HotPets and HotRescues. This was a good read, and dealt with some of the real problems of small animals that need rescued and rehomed

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### **Puddlediving says**

Amateur sleuth! She keeps digging into a murder because a friend of hers is suspect #1. Doesn't that describe most amateur sleuth fiction? This was a fun read, and gave me a bit of an idea how a pet rescue is run. I'd have a hard time not overextending myself to rescue more animals than I could accommodate. Her shelter has the luxury of deep pockets of a benefactor, which allows a bit of time for her to gather evidence herself to clear her friend. Her friend became an animal hoarder, and the book addressed the needs to curtail hoarding while nurturing positive relationships with animals. My daughter's dog is a rescue, and I can imagine it came from a situation similar (although a bit worse) than the woman shown in the book.

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### **Carol says**

Lauren Vancouver is the manager of HotRescues in the San Fernando Valley. Mamie Spelling was Lauren's mentor and later competed against Lauren for the manager's job. Mamie was deeply disappointed and the two lost contact with each other. One day, Lauren gets a frantic phone call from Mamie. Mamie says that she is being threatened. Lauren goes to her house and is instantly hit with a bad smell. Lauren realizes that her

mentor is now pet hoarder, her house was filled with dogs and cats. The animals although dear to Mamie's heart have not had enough to eat and the house is no longer clean. There is no way that Mamie could afford to feed or have the energy to even begin to take care of that many animals properly.

Lauren seems to be very judgmental and critical of everyone that she meets. I began to wonder if I could finish the book. It was very difficult for me to understand. But then the author, Linda O. Johnston, had Lauren confess that she really loved animals more than people and I understood her better. I knew someone who was the same way and now I wish that I had read this book before I met that person! Everything fell together and I just accepted that was the way that Lauren was. After that, I settled down to learn more about animal rescues places. I already knew something about them but there was a lot new to me. If the people in the book are like me, they would not like to have a surprise visit when they haven't had time to pick some clutter or even feel like it if they are sick or if they getting ready to go to work. I think it is would be more polite to call first and see if a visit would be alright.

In *The More the Terrier*, there was a network of rescue places in this book called Pet Shelters Together run by Bethany Urber. Bethany did care deeply about the dogs and cats that were rescued but not so much about people, including the other managers of rescue place, the volunteers and the people who came to adopt. She had started and made a success out of a cosmetic company previously. But her ways of handling people's feeling did not make her a bit popular. Mamie was seen arguing with Bethany recently at a meeting. Mamie called Lauren and told her that Bethany was dead. The police thought that Mamie had killed Bethany. The mystery takes a back seat to the details of what actually goes on in a rescue place. I didn't mind that at all, because I enjoyed the stories. The mystery was a kind of bonus. This book was never boring and I want to read more by Linda O. Johnson.

I would highly recommend this cozy mystery to those cozy fans who don't mind if the mystery is not the main focus of the story. I want to read more of the author's books.

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## **Carol Gibson says**

This is the first book of the author's that I have read. I didn't really enjoy it. It is not that the writer is a bad writer. It was the subject matter that got to me. First of all hoarding is a mental illness and the protagonist attitude to her friend suffering from it really bothered me. She would go back and forth between being understanding and then not. Sometimes her worry over the fate of the animals over the fate of another human being really bothered me. I love animals and have worked rescue for years. I have seen hoarding issues that were pretty horrible. In this book none of the hoarded animals died. But humans with mental illness deserve compassion not contempt.

Secondly I really dislike how the protagonist thought it was perfectly acceptable to drop by people homes unannounced to do spot checks. I know a lot of rescues do this and I think it is invasive after you adopt a child and it is approved by the courts that is it no more home visits and I think it is insane that some rescues make it harder to adopt a dog than a baby.

It also annoyed me that she really didn't start investigating the mystery until the last third of the book the rest was just about her life, the rescue and her romance. While I like the romance and seeing glimpses of the protagonist life in cozies you still need to investigate. After all it is still a mystery.

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### **Sherrie says**

I enjoy the pet rescue mysteries and a great main character and descriptions of the furry friends. This one had many twist but a good plot.

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### **Margaret Oneal says**

I wish I could give this book more than 2 stars, but heh, it had an unintended laugh track and I doubt you should reward an author for that sort of success. I found it funny because the book had a cut and paste to it. I know you have to summarize plot points from Book One in a series, but this book suffered from the sheer amount of references and from the way they were inserted into it. I would discuss the new content, but I suppose that would be seen a spoiler, so I'll pass on that.

But on the plus side, I am glad I read it because it dealt with animal hoarders, rescue volunteers who don't get along, etc. Lots of interesting issues where the victims are animals. As far as educating people on important issues, I'd give this little series 4 stars. I just wish the writing was more interesting. The author is capable of much better than this.

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### **Shazza Maddog says**

Lauren Vancouver manages HotRescues, an animal rescue facility associated with HotPets, a nation-wide pet store. When she finds out her old mentor, Mamie, has been accused of pet hoarding, she leaps into action, helping her mentor and the animals by calling animal services (and Lauren's boyfriend, Matt). But another animal rescue manager, Brittany, comes along to the rescue to start a fight with Mamie.

And then Brittany turns up dead.

Lauren feels she has to help Mamie out of this predicament and figure out who actually murdered Brittany. There are quite a few suspects, as Brittany is a universal pain in the bupkus, but Lauren's determined to find out if Mamie actually could kill someone.

A decent storyline and fun characters.

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### **Sheila Beaumont says**

Animal shelter manager Lauren Vancouver's old friend and mentor Mamie has become an animal hoarder. Lauren comes to the rescue, moving the filthy, malnourished animals out of Mamie's home, and trying to help Mamie, who is facing charges of animal abuse, deal with her legal situation and psychological problems. Then, to make things worse, the very aggressive CEO of a shelter network, who has been bullying Mamie to join her organization, is murdered, and Mamie is the prime suspect. Lauren has doubts about her friend's guilt and is determined to find out whodunit.

This "Pet Rescue" mystery is a good, suspenseful cozy, with a sympathetic heroine and likable supporting characters. It's just the thing for animal lovers, especially those interested in learning more about subjects like animal hoarding, dog and cat rescue, pet adoption, and all that's involved in running a no-kill shelter.

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### **Amanda says**

I did not enjoy this novel as much as I did the first in the series, but it was still an interesting adventure.

I look forward to reading more adventures with HotRescues.

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### **Sachiko says**

i'm not into cozy mysteries, but thought i'd give this a go. it's not bad, just not my thing. a lot of repetition- almost felt like filler/created a disjointed feeling. there are worse ways i could have spent a midweek afternoon.

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### **Kris Neri says**

Another wonderful edition to this pet lovers/pet rescue series. I really enjoyed it!

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