

### ***A Brush with Murder* by Bailee Abbott**

This is the first book in Bailee Abbott's Paint by Murder Mystery series, and it's a fun, if predictable, cozy read. Like in a lot of cozies, the main character moves back home after a failed relationship and/or career, and starts working in a quaint little shop. In this case, Chloe Abbington leaves her artist life and ex-boyfriend in New York City to return to the small upstate New York town of Whisper Cove to work in her sister's new paint party business, Paint with a View.

Pretty much immediately after Chloe gets back in town, she and her sister Izzie receive a bad review from the local newspaper critic, Fiona, and then Fiona winds up dead behind their shop. Since Chloe is the one who found the body she is the prime suspect. So, obviously, she starts investigating in order to clear her name. Fiona was not well-liked around town, so there are a lot of possible suspects.

The town of Whisper Cove sounds lovely, several of the characters were very interesting, and I love the paint party business is a very different choice for a cozy mystery setting, but the reveal of the murderer felt rushed and like there were too many red herrings pointing in so many other directions. Also, Chloe wasn't the most likeable protagonist, and Izzie wasn't around enough to feel like she was actually in charge of the business. I'm hoping that there is more character development in the rest of the series. I'd give this a solid 3.5 stars out of 5 and I'll give any further books in the series a shot.

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