

### ***Survival of the Fritters* by Ginger Bolton**

This is the first book in the *Deputy Donut Mystery* series. First off, I have to say that I had originally written off this series without even reading it because I thought the name was just too silly. Without actually reading anything about the book, or even looking at the book cover, I had imagined that Deputy Donut was a person. But then I found out that the series name comes from the donut shop owned by the book's protagonist, and the donut shop was named after her cat. Deputy Donut, otherwise known as Dep, is a torbie (tortoiseshell-tabby), and I am a sucker for a tortoiseshell or calico cat on the cover of a book. So then, I had to give the book a chance after all!

On to the book itself! This was a pretty solid cozy mystery. The book is set in the fictional town of Fallingbrook, Wisconsin. Deputy Donut is a very successful shop owned by Emily Westhill and her father-in-law, Tom. Tom is a retired police chief, and many of the current members of the force stop by the shop for donuts and coffee every day. Emily is concerned that one of her regulars, Georgia, hasn't come in for the knitting group that meets at the donut shop each weekday morning. So after closing, she and the Knitpickers go to Georgia's house to check on her. What they find is the disturbing scene of Georgia's murder that includes some donuts from Emily's shop. Who would want to murder this sweet old lady? Does it have a connection to her own son's murder five years previously? That crime was never solved. Emily's husband had been on the case of the murder of Georgia's son before he was killed in the line of duty. So between that and the donuts found at the crime scene, Emily feels compelled to help figure out who the murderer is.

Emily had worked as a 911 operator before her husband's death, so she has some good instincts that benefit her in her amateur sleuthing. That's not to say she doesn't make some big mistakes that almost get her killed though. But that's the case in most cozies. She works closely with her new neighbor, her first-responder best friends, and her husband's old partner to make sure that the right person ends up behind bars. The characters are well-developed, the setting is cozy and quaint, and the mystery is just twisty enough. Overall the book is great, but I was left a little unsatisfied with the ending, since it seemed to wrap up too quickly after everything that happened. I definitely liked it enough to go ahead and start book two in the series though! (And it's very good so far too!)

The donuts, fritters, and other sweet baked good made in the donut shop sound absolutely delicious. To the point that I found myself craving pineapple fritters and maple-bacon donuts. Thankfully there are a few recipes in the back!

GK