

PATRICIA GUIVER

The
Beastly Bloodline



A Delilah Doolittle Pet Detective Mystery

Praise for Patricia Guiver's Pet Detective Mysteries

“*The Purloined Pooch* may be Patricia Guiver’s first mystery, but it reads like the work of a seasoned pro. Her narration flows smoothly from scene to scene. Drama builds from the initial discovery of the first body to the final denouement.... Part of the charm of this delightful series debut includes how very British Dee remains despite her many years in America.”

—*Mystery News*

“Humor mixed with pets of all kinds and plenty of unsavory villains leads to murder and mayhem [in *The Motley Mutts*]. This is definitely an animal lovers’ delight, but anyone will get a kick out of Delilah and her motley crew. A perfect blending of pet antics, human characters, humor, and mystery.”

—*Rendezvous*

“The latest addition to Patricia Guiver’s ‘pet detective mystery series’ is as witty and entertaining as the wonderful previous works. *The Careless Coyote* includes a first-rate mystery, but the novel, filled with interesting trivia, will especially be enjoyed by Anglophiles and animal lovers.”

—*Midwest Book Review*

“*The Missing Macaw* is a charming mystery with pet lore, sure to delight the animal and mystery lover. Patricia Guiver not only spins a fine tale but she presents the reader with fascinating information about pets in general and the black market for rare animals.”

—*Romantic Times Magazine*

“Few books give me more pleasure than a new Delilah Doolittle.... Guiver depicts the varied locales authentically. And her gift for dialogue makes each character distinct and memorable. In fact, Pat Guiver’s voice is her strong suit. You really must read this series, to hear it in your mind.... Animal lovers are going to gobble [*The Canine Chorus*] up! Best ‘brew-up’ before starting it. You’ll feel the need for a ‘cuppa’ too, before long.”

—Geraldine Galantree, *Cozies, Capers & Crimes*

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A DELILAH DOOLITTLE PET DETECTIVE MYSTERY

Patricia Guiver

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Perseverance Press / John Daniel & Company

DEDICATED TO

Redwings Horse Sanctuary
United Pegasus Foundation
Wild Horse Sanctuary

I have never cared to read about animal suffering, no matter how satisfying the eventual outcome. Certainly, I have no wish to inflict such reading upon others. Writing the Delilah Doolittle stories provides me with a welcome relief from the cruelty and ignorance I sometimes encounter in my volunteer work on behalf of animals. Even so, as I wrote this book, the plight of unwanted horses was never far from my mind.

The high-priced race horse past its prime, the unadoptable wild mustang, the pet horse abandoned by an owner unable to afford its keep, many of these unfortunate animals end up at feedlots on their way to slaughter.

*It is to those horses,
and the fine organizations who work
to rescue and rehabilitate them,
that this book is
dedicated.*

Cast of Characters

People

Delilah Doolittle, *pet detective*

Evie Cavendish, *her best friend*

Tiptoe Tony Tipton, *London Cockney, senior surfer, and petty thief, retired (he claims)*

Detective Jack Mallory, *Surf City Homicide Division*

Sergeant William Officy, *Surf City P.D.*

Ariel, *Delilah's neighbour*

Hilda Dorsett-Bragg, *horse breeder; distant cousin to Evie*

Robert Dorsett-Bragg, *her son*

Fiona Dorsett-Bragg, *her daughter, and Evie's god-child*

Joseph Dorsett, *deceased, Hilda's father*

Daniel Bragg, *deceased, Hilda's husband*

Lucy, Robert's wife, niece of

Doris Carpenter, wife of

Hank Carpenter, horse farm manager, father of

Buck Carpenter, dude ranch manager

Donald (Scottie) MacDonald, caretaker of mission church

Charles Bragg, Hilda's brother-in-law

Austin Tully, DVM, horse vet

Seymour Hicks, accountant

Anna Banning, local sheriff

Dr. George Kendall, his wife Marsha, and two teenage sons

Rusty, a wrangler

Curly, chuckwagon driver

Animals

Watson, Delilah's Doberman sidekick, confidante, and protector

Trixie, Tony's Jack Russell terrier

Chamois, Evie's Maltese terrier

Hobo, a three-legged ginger feral cat, who hangs out on Delilah's porch.

Dolly, Delilah's cockatiel

The Duke of Paddington, poisoned champion stud horse

Nifty, Hilda's Yorkshire terrier

Assorted mutts, owned by Scottie

CHAPTER I

Death of a Duke

The morning I learned the shocking news about the Duke of Paddington, Watson and Trixie were having a bark-up in the back garden and I could barely hear the caller on the other end of the line. It was unusually warm for April and I had opened the kitchen window to enjoy the breeze wafting up from the Pacific Ocean a half block from my house.

“Watson! Trixie! Quiet!” I shouted from the window.

Watson, my red Dobie, obeyed immediately, but Trixie, the Jack Russell, continued to bark at an unseen foe. Finally, the object of her wrath, Hobo, the half-wild ginger tom tripod who condescends to lodge in my garden, emerged from the oleander bushes, stretched lazily, then fixed the terrier with a rebuking stare. That not having the desired silencing effect, he fetched the dog a well-placed swat across the nose.

I closed the window, effectively muffling the sound of Trixie’s yelping retreat in the direction of the doggie door.

“I’m sorry,” I said to the caller. “I must have misunderstood. Did you say someone’s been killed? Surely you must call the police?”

“No, not someone,” the woman’s voice exclaimed impatiently. “A horse. One of my prize stallions, the Duke of Paddington.” She