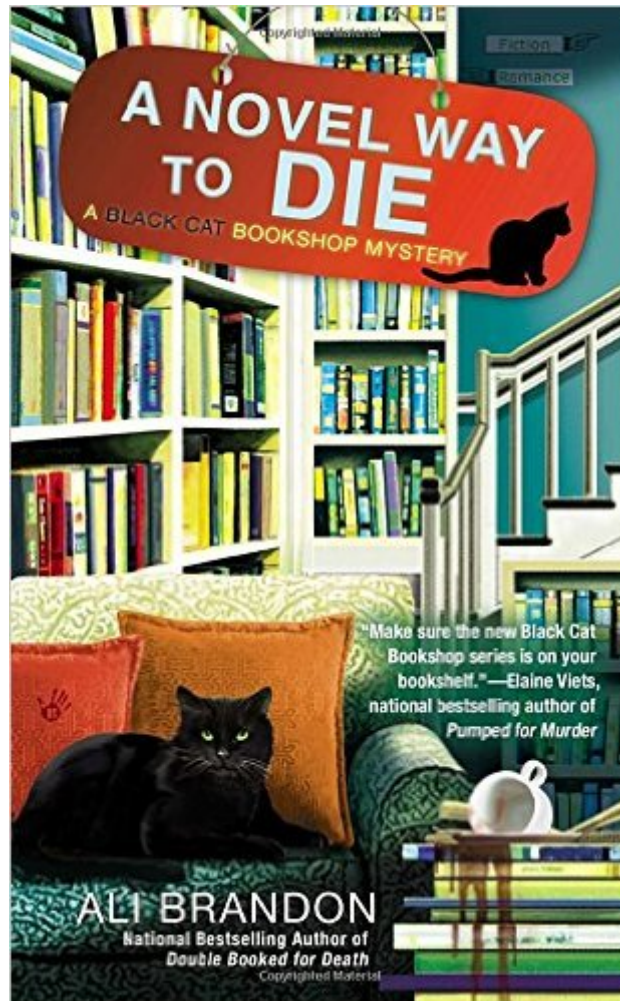


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A Novel Way To Die (A Black Cat Bookshop Mystery)



Synopsis

Darla Pettistone may have inherited her great aunt Dee's Brooklyn bookstore, but it's the store's mascot—an oversized black cat named Hamlet—who acts like he owns the place. And when someone turns up dead, Hamlet smells something rotten in Brooklyn. As the owner of Pettistone's Fine Books, Darla is settling nicely into her new life, even reaching an uneasy truce with Hamlet. Unfortunately, when she needs to hire a new clerk, the finicky feline decides to lend a paw to the hiring process. He chases away applicants who don't meet his approval, finally settling on an unlikely candidate: Robert, a book-loving Goth kid who has a secret only Hamlet knows. And Hamlet can't seem to stay out of trouble. One of the bookstore's regular customers, a man who is renovating a local brownstone, claims he's seen Hamlet prowling the neighborhood. When the man's business partner is found dead, Darla discovers that Hamlet may have been the only witness to what could be murder. With the crafty cat's help, she wonders if they just might be able to pounce on a killer...

Book Information

Series: A Black Cat Bookshop Mystery (Book 2)

Mass Market Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Berkley (November 6, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0425251691

ISBN-13: 978-0425251690

Product Dimensions: 4.2 x 0.8 x 6.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (74 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #407,512 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #98 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > History & Criticism > Books & Reading > Booksellers & Bookselling](#) #1684 in [Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > Cozy > Animals](#) #10535 in [Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > Women Sleuths](#)

Customer Reviews

Darla Pettistone inherited her Great-Aunt Dee's bookstore, Pettistone's Fine Books, is getting used to life as a bookseller, alongside Hamlet, the bookstore cat she also inherited. Hamlet is picky about who he hangs out with and as Darla is quickly finding out that means searching for new employees can be very difficult. While trying to find a new employee that Hamlet gets along with, she becomes

involved in murder when one of her customers is found dead in the brownstone building next door. I really enjoyed Ali Brandon's debut mystery, *Double Booked for Murder*, and I was excited to see what adventure Hamlet (and of course, Darla) were going to get up to next. *A Novel Way to Die* very much lived up to my expectation, and was a thoroughly enjoyable mystery. As is to be expected Hamlet absolutely stole the show. If you are a cat-owner and cat-lover you will no doubt recognize many of Hamlet's adorable personality traits and the efforts he goes to make sure the attention is always on him!! His sleuthing skills are top notch and even goes as far as to pull books off the shelves to leave hints for Darla and her friends to help them solve the crime! Besides Hamlet, the most standout character of the book is newcomer, Robert, who appeared briefly in the first book. He appears to be here to stay and the ex-goth teen has a special bond with Hamlet, that readers will have to read to find out more about! Let's just say it's well worth the read just to see a fist bump between a cat and a teen!! *A Novel Way to Die* is a great mystery that kept me guessing, even after the killer is unmasked. I'm hoping this is the beginning of a long series for Ali Brandon and I can't wait for *Word with Fiends* to hit the shelves.

Robert, Robert, Robert...I'm in love with this new character in Ali Brandon's fantastic *Black Cat Bookshop Mystery* series. A tough kid with a heart of gold...his "fist bumps" with Hamlet made me grin from ear to ear. I loved watching Darla and Hamlet grow closer in this book as they teamed up to solve the murder of a man (the business partner of a potential love interest for Darla) who is in the process of renovating a local brownstone. Whacked over the head with a crowbar in the basement, it appears Hamlet was the only witness. The sleuthing feline has a very unique way of revealing clues as he knocks relevant books off the store shelves. This is a real page-turner of a mystery, and I was quite surprised by the identity of the killer. I adore this series and can't wait to spend more time at Pettistone's with Darla and the gang.

Darla Pettistone has inherited her Great Aunt's Brooklyn, NY book store and cat, Hamlet. In this second book of the series, we slip right back into the story as Darla finds new challenges to adjusting to her new life. The book store is flourishing and Darla is making friends in her new life far from Texas. Darla needs a new part-time worker and the one obstacle is Hamlet who is very particular as to choosing his friends. Enter Robert, a young eighteen year old that has his own mysteries. Hamlet likes Robert and although Darla isn't sure of the Goth child, she is open to giving him a chance. This just might save her life. Also, Darla is hoping to find some companionship in dating. Finally a man, Barry, is showing some interest in her. The handsome homicide detective

from the first novel in the series, Reese hasn't shown any interest in her...sigh. Barry and his business partner, Curt are remodelling a brownstone. Barry invites Darla over to see their improvements on the building, when instead, Curt's body is found. Hamlet begins to leave clues about and Darla finds herself involved in solving the crime as neighbourhood friends and business owners become suspects. This is a fun and imaginative series. I love the cat's talents and the growing friendships in Darla's life. I also enjoy the dialog, especially inside Darla's mind. I often find myself chuckling aloud.

Ali Brandon's Black Cat Bookstore Mysteries are an enjoyable twist on the cats in mysteries sub-genre. This is the second book in the series and I'm already eagerly waiting for the third. Darla Pettistone, still new to living in New York, new to owning a bookstore, and new to owning a cat (if any one could actually "own" Hamlet, the store cat), would like to have a new man in her life. But her first almost date with Barry Eisen ends before it begins when she and Barry discover the body of Curt, his business partner. Worse for Darla, bloody animal paw prints lead away from the body and Darla is convinced the prints are Hamlet's and that Hamlet knows the identity of the murderer. The characters in *A Novel Way to Die* are well drawn and engaging. They remained real people throughout the book while still having that touch of eccentricity so enjoyable in a cozy mystery.

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