

The Kill Fee

Fiona Veitch Smith

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Set in London in the 1920s, *The Kill Fee* is a lighthearted cozy that follows Daily Globe editor Poppy Denby as she seeks to solve her latest mystery, the theft of a valuable museum piece. The second in this series, *The Kill Fee* is set in a rich historical world, with characters as light and playful as Poppy Denby's name.

When Poppy goes to cover a Russian art exhibition for the *Globe*, she doesn't expect to find an armed robbery instead. A famous Fabergé egg is stolen, valuable not only for its monetary worth but for the secrets that it contains. At first, Poppy launches herself excitedly into the investigation, rooting out suspects that include a Russian princess and a suspicious Russian ambassador. But when someone within the newspaper becomes a suspect as well, Poppy realizes that she must find the egg and the thief before anyone else's lives are destroyed. The discovery of another body only increases the stakes, proving that the conspiracy may be much larger than some are willing to believe.

From the maps in the beginning to the brief discussion of the differences between White and Red Russians at the start of the novel, Smith's passion for her setting is readily apparent, and the backdrop of the mystery is just as rich as the action itself. Poppy's enthusiasm for her investigation is infectious, and the reader is invited to work out the investigation along with Poppy, who gives clear insights into her line of reasoning as each clue is delivered. *The Kill Fee* is enjoyable and upbeat, perfect for cozy-mystery fans who appreciate historical settings.

STEPHANIE BUCKLIN (Winter 2017)

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