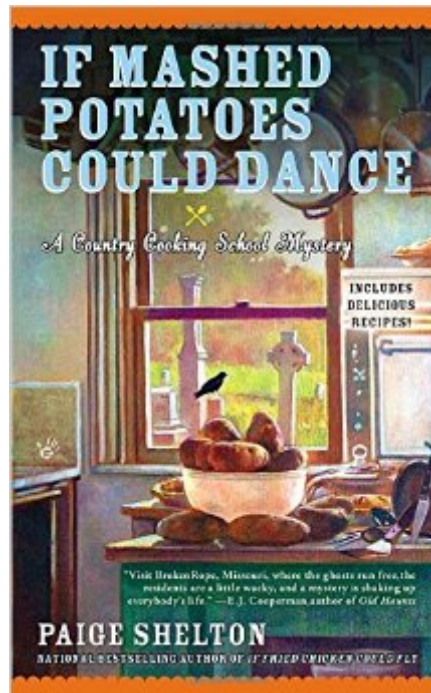


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If Mashed Potatoes Could Dance (Country Cooking School Mysteries)



Synopsis

At Gram's Country Cooking School in Broken Rope, Missouri, Isabelle Betts and Winston and her grandmother share the secrets of delicious home-style recipes. But there's one secret they keep from their classes—their ability to talk to ghosts from the town's colorful past. Betts and Gram agree to help their friend Jake at Broken Rope's Historical Society by accommodating some foodie tourists for the night and occupying them with cooking lessons. It couldn't be worse timing when the pair encounter the ax-wielding ghost of Sally Swarthmore, one of Broken Rope's legendary murderers, who pleads with Betts to help find her diary—a diary that could prove that Sally was really a victim, not a villain. But they soon have a modern-day murder on their hands when one of the tourists turns up dead with a noose around his neck and two other tourists are nowhere to be found. Now Betts needs to put the cooking classes on the back burner to untangle two knotty mysteries and rope in a cold-blooded killer.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If Mashed Potatoes Could Dance is the second in this delightful new series by Paige Shelton. Betts and Grams are planning on getting started on the midsummer cleaning on their cooking school. But then the town's fake sheriff, millionaire and town historian, Jake, volunteers them to put up a bunch of tour bus foodies, their hotel rooms having been overbooked. Fortunately for everyone involved better accommodation are found nearby. But Betts and Gram soon agree to hold some cooking

classes, in hopes that everyone will be happy. That evening Betts finds one of the tour members on the bus apparently looking for something. The next morning they learn that three of the tour members are missing and soon one is found dead in front of Jake's storefront office. Betts soon seeks out her former boyfriend, Cliff, who is a policeman, to get and give information to. The current day mystery was well done and with interesting characters, but for me the best character is the "ghost" Sally Swathmore. Sally is blond and top heavy and carries an ax, reportedly the one she was using to kill her parents with. Gram and Betts are the only people that can see and communicate with the ghosts. Sally wants Betts and Gram to find out if she did in fact kill her parents. The reader doesn't need to believe in the existence of ghost to enjoy this series, just enjoy the stories the ghosts have to tell. I really enjoy this series and am looking forward to the next book. Recipes for different potato dishes are included.

If Mashed Potatoes Could Dance is the second book in the country cooking mystery series. I enjoyed the first book in the series If Fried Chicken Could Fly so I was eager to read the second book. It did not disappoint. Betts and Grams run a cooking school in Broken Rope Missouri. A group of foodies need accommodations due to a mix up on a bus tour. Jake (Betts's best friend) contacts Betts to help find accommodations for the group. The group is eventually sent to new Bed and Breakfast where a barn is set up like a dormitory. The regular Bed and Breakfast rooms aren't ready yet. Soon three of the foodies disappear and one is found murdered. There is a second mystery going along beside the foodie mystery. Betts can see and talk to the ghosts in Broken Rope. Sally Swarthmore who is carrying an ax appears to her along with a scent of lavender. I actually enjoyed the secondary ghost mystery more than the foodie mystery which I liked also. Broken Rope is rich in history of notorious characters and actions occurring in the past. Sally died in jail after being sentenced for killing her mother and father with an ax. Sally wants Bett's help in finding her diary to find out what really happened. Sally is an engaging and entertaining character. Betts and Jake are very likable characters. The location of Broken Rope with its history and cemeteries is just filled with stories to tell. There was a scene in the Monroe House that was quite suspenseful. This series is quite enjoyable. Looking forward to the next book.

I'm a bit of a push-over for talking ghosts. Add in high school sweethearts, a wealthy best friend, and law enforcement that does not mutter "leave the investigation to the Professionals".....Just my kind of read.

Isabelle (Betts) Winston and her grandmother, Gram run a country cooking school in the historic western town of Broken Rope, Missouri. Tourism is the number one industry in Broken Rope. Second, to the Winston family is talking with ghosts in their town. Yes, Betts and Gram are able to communicate with residents of their local graveyard. Jake, Betts best friend, and portrayor of the Sheriff of Broken Rope telephones Betts and Gram and asks for their help in housing a bus load of retired folks that are foodies. Reluctantly, the Winstons agree. That is until three of the members of the bus go missing. One member is found dead with a noose around his neck in front of Jake's fake Sheriff's office. Betts joins Jake is trying to solve this mystery. Meanwhile another crime is under scrutiny, that of Sally Swarthmore and the killing of her parents a mere hundred years ago. Betts is back and forth with both cases and with the help of her friends and family she just may discover the truth of both crimes. Delightful story and characters with the bonus of delicious potato themed recipes. I truly enjoyed this novel.

I've said many times in reviews that my favorite cozies contain a modern day mystery and a historical mystery. So when the historical mystery involves an ax-wielding ghost from the Old West, I'm in pure heaven. Paige Shelton certainly has a knack for creating her ghostly characters. In the first Country Cooking School Mystery, *If Fried Chicken Could Fly*, I confess I fell a little bit in love with Jerome, as did Betts. In this second book in the series, *If Mashed Potatoes Could Dance*, Sally Swarthmore became one of my all-time favorite fictional ghosts. Accused of murdering her parents with an ax, she is desperate for Betts and Gram to help her find her diary that she is certain answers many questions about her life. She roams Broken Rope still holding an ax, and announces her arrival with the scent of lavender. She is strong, yet incredible sweet, feisty, sympathetic, and I just adored her. I was so incredibly touched by this character and the sad life that she led. The entire time I was reading the book I was remembering the Lizzie Borden story, and lo and behold when I got to the author's Afterword, that is exactly the true-life event she was channeling as well. I was so happy that by the end Sally got the answers she was looking for. I liken this series to PJ Alderman's Port Chatham mysteries, which is a huge compliment because I *adore* that series. With both books I have been drawn into Betts' life in modern day Broken Rope, and the world that her ghostly friends draw her into. One of my favorite cozies of 2012.

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