

“Killing Kate” by Julie Kramer. Atria Books, 2011. \$23.99, 322 pages.

For most people, homicide never has an upside. For television reporter Riley Spartz, however, a homicide can mean a lead story on the evening news, a spike in ratings, or on occasion, a threat to her life. Although, that last one’s not really an upside.

Recently, it seems that every journalistic investigation Riley undertakes culminates with one of the previously mentioned threats on her life. Because of this, her animal-loving boss Noreen has forbidden Riley from doing any more stories on violent crimes, but when the body of Riley’s college roommate’s younger sister turns up, brutally murdered, she cannot help but launch her own inquiry into Kate Warner’s death.

When Riley learns that someone who was probably not a police officer left a chalk outline in the shape of an angel around Kate’s body, her inquiry leads her to a series of murders that might or might not be connected to Kate’s death. With nothing to connect the crimes except the thinnest threads of supposition, Riley dives headlong into an investigation determined to uncover the truth of what happened to Kate and if she can, raise her ratings as well.



In addition to looking into Kate’s secret life to try and find what got her killed, Riley is also dealing with a disgruntled and possibly dangerous dog owner who was the focus of a news story that resulted in a backlash of negative public opinion against him, and who puts all the blame squarely on her shoulders. With the murder investigation, the angry dog owner, and a YouTube video of her breaking down into sobs live on air going viral on the internet, Riley has more than enough to deal with without worrying about her parents, her boyfriend, her boss, or her former college roommate all needing her attention.

“Killing Kate” is the fourth entry in Julie Kramer’s Riley Spartz series, and while it might be helpful to start with the first book, “Stalking Susan” and read through “Missing Mark” and “Silencing Sam” it is not necessary to have read the previous titles to be able to keep up with “Killing Kate.”

Kramer has written another fast paced thriller with a clever plot that weaves together several storylines into an entertaining and exciting read. Her characters are endearing, her dialogue witty, and her plotlines intricate and intelligent. “Killing Kate” will keep any mystery fan turning the pages until late into the night.

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