

FALL # 1

HYGIENISTS IN PRINT--RDHs & DDSs--FICTION & NON-FICTION – LOIS FOSTER HIRT

POLLY DENT LOSES GRIP –S. Dionne Moore (Heartsong ISBN 978-1-60260-261-8 PB) to order –
www.humblecreek.com

How could you not like a book with a title like this? [[Moore comments: “I’m delighted you saw the wit in my title. Because it takes place in an Assisted Living facility, and the character who dies is named Polly Dent, I thought the title appropriate.”]] This is the 2nd in the series. The 1st is MURDER ON THE OL’BUNION. [[Moore states Book 1 also has the same mention--that Hardy needs dentures. He has a gold front tooth that he flashes throughout the first book (mostly to charm his sassy wife), but there are also spots where LaTisha muses on Hardy’s inability to chew because he needs dentures.]]

LaTisha & Hardy Barnhart move his mother Matilda into Bridgeton Towers, an assisted living facility an hour away from their home in Maple Gap, Colorado. To make sure Matilda gets settled in, they stay there a few days. While there some snacks get mixed up for the diabetic & non-diabetic patients. That gets them worried since Matilda is diabetic. LaTisha & Hardy aren’t exactly thrilled with Otis Payne, the director of Bridgeton Towers. The Barnharts meets Polly Dent when they move Matilda into her room. Polly was told the room would be hers when it was available by Payne. She wanted it so she could be next door to Thomas Philcher, a popular man with the ladies. She is very unhappy that she didn’t get the room and lets people know this. Not too soon after that, Polly & Hardy argue. Right after that Polly is discovered dead in the exercise room after hours on the treadmill. The doctor calls it an accident, and Payne doesn’t want the cops brought in. Fatal falls in retirement places aren’t uncommon. A couple of years ago, another resident fell and died. La Tisha, having solved a murder not too long ago, somehow doesn’t believe that is what happened to Polly. Listen & you can possibly learn something when someone is talking even if it is in rhymes, which is how one resident speaks. La Tisha has to go back to their house for something and has to stay overnight. She ends up having some trouble when she does this. Also, one of the residents starts to get quite sick. La Tisha wonders about that also.

The book is filled with tooth bits. Hardy has a gold tooth, & it appears a number of times. He evidently doesn’t have the best teeth or that many. For example, “You better shut your big trap before I knock that last tooth down your throat. You’ll really be digging for gold then.” 1. “Otis’s smile stretched from ear to ear, but it was 100 percent pure plastic.” 2. Otis “fidgeted with a pencil—bite marks evident all along the eraser tip. My boy Shakespeare did that. Awful habit.” LaTisha explains how she cured him of it. He bit into the eraser once and got jabbed in the jaw with a splinter. Had to take him to the dentist to get it removed, and if there’s one thing Shakespeare hated more than liver, it was going to the dentist. Course, me and the dentist had a good talk before he ever extracted that splinter. A *good* talk. Dentist took his own sweet time extracting that splinter—mostly so he could lecture on pencil chewing.” 3. “Her smile revealed nice white grillwork.” & other grillwork mentions. 5. Hardy—“Wish I had a toothpick.” LaTisha “You could use the strap on my purse to floss with. Hardy puffed out his lips, ‘Guessin’ it’s time to make that appointment with Dr. Cryer.’ Dr. Cryer is Maple Gap’s dentist, and the truth is, it was way past time for Hardy to be seeing him.’ I’ll make one tomorrow when I’m in town.’ Hardy’s eyes went wide. ‘No use rushing things.’ Gertrude’s laughter vibrated her entire body. ‘I’m not fond of the tooth guys myself.’ In her favor, she did possess a nice set of pearly whites. ‘I’ve had two cavities in my life. Got good teeth from my daddy.’ 6. When LaTisha goes to her house, she realizes she left her overnight bag downstairs & didn’t feel like getting it. “I’d just have to use a spare toothbrush and make do. Turns out the only spare toothbrush happened to be the one with hard bristles that Hardy hated to use, which is why he left it behind. He never could throw something away that still had some use in it. It made me smile big when I imagined his look of horror as I used his brush. If I’d had enough energy, I might have planted a blob of something slimy on the bristles to accompany my story of using his toothbrush.” 7. One sat across from me, a rather hunched black man of at least eighty, who turned his teeth on high beam as he greeted me, ...” 8. “Mary flashed me a sparkly smile, dimmed by the reality of her yellowed teeth but still full of heart, and hopped onto the elevator.” 9—“You’re as scrawny as a toothless man eating chicken necks.”

SPECIAL TOPICS IN CALAMITY PHYSICS =Marisha Pessl- Brilliant 16 year-old Blue van Meer’s mother died in a car accident when Blue was 5. Fortunately she wasn’t with her as she normally is. Her mother was an expert & collected butterflies, & often would stay up to all hours of the night working on them. This time the lack of sleep killed her. Blue’s distinguished, handsome college professor father Gareth does not stay with any 1 university usually more than a year. He basically doesn’t even date. While driving all over the country to the next college, Blue learns a lot of book knowledge from him. During those times. we get most of the story when Blue spends her senior high school year at prep school St. Gallway in the small mountain town of Stockton, NC. At the story’s beginning, we learn that St. Gallway film teacher Hannah Schneider is murdered, even though the police keep saying it is suicide. We never find out. There is a group of co-ed kids in a group called the Bluebloods who try to befriend Blue basically because Hannah wants them to. She met the van Meer’s before school started.. She resists in the beginning, but finally gives in. They in turn are extremely friendly with Hannah, who has them over to her house all the time. There is the matter of the man who dies at a dinner party Hannah gives. Blue tries to find out about him & his family. It is her insistence, though the kids really don’t want to go, that they all go camping. It is there Blue finds Hannah’s body stung up with an electrical cord.

There is much English lit, & other educational aspects that Blue throws in, with explanations. She even throws in a Final Exam. Be prepared!

1. Blue is talking to Sergeant Harper at the police station after Hannah dies. I became acutely aware (particularly from the way her eyes gradually drifted away from me before being jerked by a certain emphatic word of mine, back to my face) she’d seen my type before. House wives, pharmacists, **dental hygienists**, banking clerk, undoubtedly they’d all come to plead their cases too, with their hands clench, their perfumes rancid, their eyeliner skid-marking their eyes.) Other dental includes. To make it look authentic Blue’s father would put “a piece of paper towel into his gums to re-

you or don't you want to hear the icing, the cake, the double whammy, the Crown Jewel, the Jewel après orthodontia,..." 4. "her top lip stretched tight over her teeth like Saran Wrap over left-overs." 5. a guy named Floss Cameron-Crisp, 6. A poster on the wall featuring a kid wearing braces and a seat belt in the Driver's Ed classroom. 7. Though it wasn't one of those Orwellian gated communities like Pearl Estates (where we lived in Flitch) with identical white houses lined up like post-orthodontics teeth..." 8. "He grinned, revealing two severely crooked front teeth, one peeking out from behind the other as if it had stage fright." 9. Blue sees this on the news, "Up next, it's the little things in life you take for granted. Today, as part of our 'wellness' series, we'll show you a lot of time and money goes into designing that little thing your **dentist** wants you to use twice a day. News 13's Mary Grubb has the story of the toothbrush." 10. "L'Avventura' Dad said, "has the sort of ellipsis ending most American audiences would rather undergo a root canal than be left with, not only because they loathe anything left to the imagination—we're talking about a country that invented spandex, but also because they are a confident, self-assured nation." 11. "Clearly, I had to accept the notion of Dad's kidnapping being up there with the Tooth Fairy, the Holy Grail or any other dream concocted by people bored to tears with reality, wanting to believe in something bigger than themselves." 12. "...or if they flossed their teeth next to each other three hundred times)." 13 "They stare up at me with evenly weirded-out faces, half-smiles caught up in their teeth like skirt hems caught in pantyhose." 14- His lips hit my teeth and his tongue darted into my mouth like a tadpole escaping from a jar.

THE SATURDAY WIFE —Naomi Ragen = Delilah Goldfarb went to an orthodox Jewish college which probably wasn't the right one for her. She is sexy, pretty, and really doesn't want to marry a rabbi. Her mother has other plans for her also. But when things get out of hand with a "religious" student, her plans don't go as she thought they would. Chaim Levi the rabbinical student she ends up marrying isn't what she really was looking for in a husband. She definitely isn't happy when he takes on the job of assistant rabbi in his grandfather's congregation or even becomes the head rabbi when his grandfather dies. She hates their apartment, she has to go to work as a hygienist, She convinces him to apply for a job in New Jersey for a wealthy congregation that has had trouble getting a rabbi. There is a reason for that. Chaim applies to please Delilah and lo and behold, they go for him. They find out, all is not greener on the other side. Hobnobbing with the wealthy has its problems also. Even having a baby doesn't help Delilah & Chaim's situation.

This is just some of the dentistry that flows through the story. 1. We learn almost in the beginning about her enrolling in hygiene school & what she thought of it—"She finally enrolled in the associate program to become a dental hygienist, enjoying the idea of leaning over strange men and telling them to open wide, but the classes were a bore. She could barely keep her eyes open through Dental Hygiene Theory I, Dental Materials, Infection and Immunity, Ezekiel and Gaonic Literature II." 2. Her plan after getting her license "was to get a job in some very affluent dental practice and work there for clothes money until she got pregnant." 3. "Delilah graduated in June with a license to practice dental hygiene. But instead of looking for a job, she did nothing. The idea of scrapping off bicipids in the mouths of strangers suddenly nauseated her." 4. She was tired of cleaning out people's neglected, debris-filled mouths" 5. While still a single student, Dalilah thinking about an abortion clinic, "A trip to the clinic—they were clean and efficient, and it wouldn't be worse than going to a dentist" 6. While Chaim is still in college, his mother states "she would really like him to be a dentist, "which in her mind lacked all such drawbacks." Then Chaim laments about what dentistry involved, information he got from a distant cousin who had just set up an office, like the tuition, the cost of setting up a practice, who you work for, people's breath in your face the drill sound, and the materials you had to work with." 7. "Through Bernstein's placement service, she found a dentist in Riverdale in an absolutely beautiful home.....The clients were all professionals or academics....And very soon she had a regular clientele, mostly middle-aged men who came in monthly for a cleaning, even though it really wasn't necessary." 8. "And then they would throw her out of school with no degree, all that tuition and studying about plaque down the toilet, 9.-"And if He answered her, she would finally and absolutely know there was a God, and He wasn't just a mythical being like the tooth fairy or Santa Clause,..."

VENGEANCE CUTS LOOSE—Joani Ascher Avalon Books ISBN-0-8034-9649-4) (If you are interested in reading the book, you have to order it online.)

In Florida top hair stylist Garth Berkley is stabbed to death almost in front of his clients. It turns out Garth wasn't the most loved or honest person around. There were lots of reasons to kill him. Amateur sleuth Wally Morris and her elderly mother-in-law Tillie are there at the time. Tillie is in a cast & needs help to get to places. Tillie knows what she thinks she might have seen, another friend from her retirement home thinks she saw something else. Meanwhile Wally is planning her daughter's wedding, trying to get clues for her future son-in-law who is an assistant prosecutor for the case. On top of everything, Wally is trying to figure out what is going on that isn't right at the retirement home.

The dental drops in because 1. Dominique Scott the detective on the case, and her husband is a DDS. [[Why a DDS? Asher replies, I wanted him to be a professional, but not a lawyer or a doctor. I wanted him to have a good career, but time enough to share with his wife, who sometimes cannot make the time for him. His income is high enough that she would not have to work in order for them to survive, and I thought that would be good tension, since he is ready for children and she is not.]] 2. We discover this when she calls Wally about Garth's murder. Wally knew that this wouldn't be a social call. "Even though the Morris had become friendly with Dominique and her husband James, and had even started seeing James professionally when their old dentist retired, this was not a call to chat. [[Ascher says, Wally knew it would not be a social call because she was in the middle of a murder investigation. Dominique would not have time for chit chat.]] " 3. Based on what she told him of her life with James, her husband was outclassed too. Of course, Dominique never said anything so blatant, but James's dental office is the only place he was in charge." "James is singing the baby blues again. [[This is here because James was outclassed in the sense that his wife was stronger in getting her desires than he, but it did not reflect badly on his marriage. The women in my books don't give in easily when they want something, but they do love their husbands.]] 4. Wally takes Tillie to the dentist because

Wally instead. Wally asks her why she didn't speak up & Tillie claims the receptionist started the whole situation. [[Ascher adds, Your second question(I asked about the receptionist's behavior) refers to behavior I had noted when I was a caretaker for my mother. She was as sharp as ever, very intelligent, well spoken, and yet, because she walked with a cane and was elderly, many receptionists and some medical personnel directed all their comments to me. I felt it was demeaning.]] 5. When the DDS came into the room & took out Tillie's dentures, Wally turned around so she didn't see Tillie without her teeth. Tillie looks out the window & watches the UPS driver while the DDS is working on the dentures. Then someone behind her mentions who the driver is & another mentions his name. It was the receptionist & 1 of the "nurses." 6. There is some conversation with Tillie & the DDS.

A REUNION TO DIE FOR Lauren Carr --(If you are interested in reading the book, you have to order it online.) The book gets dental when a cold case of a DDS is brought in. In fact I would call it DEATH IN THE DENTAL CHAIR because that is where the DDS was supposed to die. Joshua Thornton is the newly elected prosecutor in a small W. Virginia town. He is a widower with 5 kids. The 20th reunion of the high school is coming up. A cheerleader Grace Henderson is found shot to death. That brings up the 20 year-old case of cheerleader Tricia Wheeler who "committed suicide". It was hard to believe she did that, but the police closed the case fast. Gail Reynolds who graduated 20 years ago has made a name for herself as a journalist. She has come home to write about Tricia's suicide. Now people are wondering & tying this new case together. Some people have come home recently but a lot have stayed in town & work there. Like a typical high school, there were the popular, not popular, trouble makers, bullies, boyfriend & girlfriends & just plain friends, etc. Also 18 years ago, Margo Sweeney Boyd Connor's 1st husband Dan Boyd, DDS, was murdered. She was his receptionist for a while in his well established office. She left to study real estate because the receptionist job bored her. His son has always wanted his case kept alive since he didn't believe it was just a druggie who killed his father. One person wondered if it wasn't N2O2 instead of drugs they were looking for since DDSs don't keep lots of drugs around. Margo's alibi was that she was having a dinner party at their home when Dr. Boyd was stabbed. Twenty years later some people are still acting like high schoolers & not letting go of their crushes. With this new murder comes more.

One victim bit her murderer when he punched her in the mouth so they have his DNA. She lost 3 teeth. They have an impression so if they find someone with a bite mark that matches, the cops have their killer.

Dr. Boyd stayed late at his office the night he was killed to see a new patient at 7 PM. He let his receptionist leave. Later it was discovered the appointment book had "cancelled" by the new patient's name, but the receptionist said no one cancelled while she was there. The murderer slashed Dr. Boyd throat in the dental chair. He did try to protect himself. Dr. Boyd was a big Agatha Christie fan. He was determined to show who killed him, the killer told him who hired him to do the deed. He had enough strength to get out of the chair, go to the receptionist's desk & leave clues. However, it wasn't until Joshua looked into his murder did he realize what Dr. Boyd did. He died under the receptionist's desk. The killer is discovered & there's lots of details about Dr. Boyd's murder in his office.

We get a whole thing on Tad, the coroner, brushing his teeth & rinsing.

MAMA DOES TIME- Deborah Sharp --Mace Bauer works for the parks department in the small town of Himmarshee, Florida. Rosalee Deveraux her mama is arrested one night at the Dairy Queen after the bingo game because of the Weasel", AKA Jim Albert's dead body found in her trunk. The new detective in town from Miami, Carlos Martinez, doesn't care what Mace and her sisters say about how good Mama is, he puts her in jail overnight. That doesn't sit well with Mace, Marcy, or Maddie, Rosalee's daughters. Mace is out to show him a thing or two to prove her mother innocent. The girls aren't happy about Salvatore Provenza, "Big Sal", Mama's boyfriend from New York. They are worried he might have something to do with Jim's murder. As in a lot of small town, everyone knows everyone, and not all are as innocent as people think.

The dental darts in with Mace grabbing her keys from "inside the tooth grin of a stuffed alligator head" she keeps on her coffee table. She & her cousin wrestled it from a swimming pool.(They make a few appearances.) 2. I think Martinez was still picking pieces on my own head out of his incisors." 3. "I know there's nothing stuck in my teeth, because I haven't had a bite to eat all day." 4. Do I see the tiniest smile cracking through the granite in Martinez's jaw?" 5. The set of her mouth was as hard as the steel bolts that screwed the chairs to the floor." 6. "Teensy's (the dog) territorial nature beat out his sweet tooth." 7. Talking about the alligator-"Biting strength more fearsome than a lion's 80 razor teeth; a tail that can break a man's -or a woman's- leg."8. "I can think of about 20 places off the top of my head that I'd rather be than in the woods. And that would include sitting in the chair at my dentist's office." [Sharp responds "Oh, gosh ... now I feel awful about that mention in the book, because I absolutely LOVE my dentist, Dr. Howell Goldberg (though I must admit that, like many people, I don't LOVE going to my dentist's office quite as much as I love him)"]].9. He flashed a real smile this time. I returned it, hoping chocolate wasn't coating my teeth." 10. I whirled around & saw acres of teeth in a mile of jaws." [[Well, if you've ever seen a Florida alligator up close and personal, you'd know why I used that particular description. That's a LOT of teeth.]] 11. "Not even my tears could deflect criticism from Maddie, who's a toothbrush-on-your-knees-type house cleaner." [[That line is there because "Even though I keep MY toothbrush where it belongs in its holder on the bathroom sink, have you ever known one of those people who scrub tile grout on their floors and countertops with an old toothbrush? I have. My mother-in-law. 'Nuff said.]] 12. picked my lower jaw off the table, 13. There are numerous white teeth & teeth mentions also.

Sharp adds "I had no idea I'd mentioned mouths, teeth, jaws, lips, and etc. so much. Clearly, I have a thing about teeth. Maybe I should have been a dental hygienist instead of a mystery writer?"

DEATH OF A COZY WRITER = -- G.M. Malliet = --(Midnight Ink---ISBN 978-0-7387-1248-2 TPB) ---

A well-to-do male cozy writer invites his children and ex-wife to his house to meet his fiancée. The kids aren't happy and as it turns out when they get there, the writer informs them he & his fiancée got married last week. That is almost the last straw.

The dental begins with “the secretary, for it was he, flashed him a blinding white smile, displaying the results of a lifetime of proper oral hygiene.” 2. “Again he flashed the fluoridated smile that could have launched a thousand ships, or at least, lighted them safely past the shoals, bouncing exuberantly on the balls of his feet.” 3. Her pronounced overbite became more pronounced when she pursed her lips with displeasure, which was often during the interview.” 4. He was dipping a slice carefully in his tea before gnawing on it with new, ill0fitting dentures, courtesy of the National Health Service.” 5. She greeted him with a brief smile, revealing that she had kept many of her teeth,” 6. Again, she gave him her Stonehenge smile.”

DEATH AND THE LIT CHICK = ==- G.M. Malliet= ==(Midnight Ink---ISBN 978-0-7387-1247-5 TPB) —

Kimberlee Kalder is a beautiful, young, unbelievable fist time novelist seller with an attitude. Her publisher invites her, as guest of honor, and some of his other well-known writers, who aren’t doing as well as Kimberlee, to the Dead on Arrival conference, where writers & mystery fans will gather. Det. Chief Inspector St. Just is invited to talk also. There wasn’t enough room at the hotel where the conference is being held so they put up at Dalmorton Castle. Kimberlee doesn’t have time to enjoy all her accolades because she is murdered there. The way the castle is set up, moat included, it had to be someone there who killed her. It could have been anyone of the people there since they basically all hated her.

We get dental with “She smiled a somewhat stiff and lop-sided but endearing smile because of the hardening mask, like a dentist’s victim before the Novocain has worn off.” & “...his mouth flew open, exposing some impressive dental veneer work.”

MIND SCRAMBLER—Chris Grabenstein— When Sea Haven, N. J., police John Ceepak and Danny Boyle, go to Atlantic City, things take a turn they never expected. They bump into Danny’s friend he knew since they were young & former crush, Katie. She is working as a nanny for a well-known magician at 1 of the casinos. They are deputized & put on the case when Katie is found dead & in a somewhat weird way. There is more involved especially when the magician believes another magician is coming to see his show to steal his tricks. Dental, 1. “And her smile? the Mona Lisa gets jealous.” 2. The magician also catches a bullet in his teeth fired from a pistol as 1 of his acts. 3. A Dora the Explore toothbrush and Cherry-flavored Crest show up. 4. “The kids were frying the camera lens with their bright teeth, too. I wondered if they bought tooth bleach in bulk-sized barrels at Costco.” 5. “She’s been helping them run it (motel) since she was old enough to fold towels or put a plastic-wrapped toothpaste cup next to a sink.”

Check out James Patterson’s & Maxine Paetro’s **4th OF JULY** to see the DDS mention & a couple of other tidbits. This is 1 of the Women’s Murder Club series.

Cynthia Baxter’s **TOO RICH & TOO DEAD** gives us , “When he smiled—something he appeared to do easily and often—he revealed two rows of perfect, dazzling white teeth. From his thick, gleaming silver hair, carefully styled into place, Mallory suspected that he was in his mid-fifties, implying that he had enlisted the aid of a cosmetic dentist somewhere along the line to obtain the million-dollar-smile effect. And given the Bermans’ taste in cars, he might even have spent that much.” This is from her travel writer protagonist series. She writes the traveling veterinarian series that has done dental.