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# HIJINKS & HOT FLASHES: PERIMENOPAUSAL WOMEN IN PARANORMAL COZY CRIME

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'Forty is the perfect age,' I said. 'There's finally that sense of being comfortable in the skin you're in. The best part is that confidence, the focus on living life the way you want, for yourself.'

Hijinks & Hot Flashes, Kiera Blackwood, pg 51

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## COZIES AND THE FEMALE READER

'[women] desperate to escape to a world with values unlike those that dominate our lives – specifically, misogyny, sexual abuse, and the media's objectifying women to sell products; the technology explosion that has led to stress, depression, and a loss of intimacy and empathy and the dramatic transformation of US economics, politics, popular culture and workplaces, prioritizing corporate profits over quality of life and social stability.'

Marty, S. Knepper, 'Contemporary Cozy Mysteries, Agatha Christie and the 1990s', *Reading the Cozy Mystery*

'A cozy is a brief escape from the troubles of the real world and I, for one, plan to take that escape over and over again.'

Amanda Flower, 'What Exactly is a Cozy Mystery?', *Publishers Weekly*, 18 May 2018.

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## YA AND THEIR READERS

‘Blume’s books do teach about sex, but not the mechanics of menstrual cycles or pregnancy or anything related to “the plumbing,” which is what sex ed classes have long covered. They instead instruct readers in the correct attitudes to take towards these things—not what a period is, but *how to feel* about getting one and how to expect other girls to feel about it, not what sexual desire is, but how to express it socially in the form of a “crush.” Blume’s books did not so much provide girls with new information about their sexual maturation or relieve their suffering over it as they heightened their sense of its importance in their lives, centering them as the sine qua non of coming of age.’

Rita Koganzon, ‘The Age of Adolescence: Judy Blume and the Eternal Young Adult’, *The Point*, 23 May 2023

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## CHARACTERISTICS OF A COZY

- Likeable, bright female amateur sleuth
- Gore free crime
- Murderer is an ordinary person
- Small town setting
- Mystery that readers can try to solve
- Intriguing setting
- Punning titles
- Romance element
- Series

(Drawn from Knepper's list in 'Contemporary Cozy Mysteries, Agatha Christie and the 1990s')

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# CHARACTERISTICS OF PERIMENOPAUSAL PROTAGONISTS

## LOSSES

- husband/s
- jobs
- youth
- urban life

## GAINS

- a 'perfect' setting (house, town, seaside, etc) (at a price they can afford)
- magic that grows from peri (including resistance and then acceptance)
- covens / female friends
- hot boyfriend

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# KEIRA BLACKWOOD: MIDLIFE MAGIC IN MARSHMALLOW SERIES

## Midlife Magic in Marshmallow



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## REMEDY FIRE

'I froze when I noticed my hand. A glow of flickering orange light surrounded my fingers, my palm, my wrists. It was a glove, no, a gauntlet of fire.'

“Yes, Aging Fairy, I'll take chin hair and premonitions, please.”

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## MOLLY CHOOSING 40

'I flipped my hands over, relishing the tautness and thickness of my skin. More than that, it was the strength I felt. There were aches and pains for sure, but it was nothing compared to what I was used to.

'I lifted a leg, leaning on my cane for support, and found my usually-sagging knees right up where they were supposed to be. There was a pleasant curve to my calves, and when I lifted my skirt a little higher, my thighs too.

'...I peeked inside my shirt and found my breasts alert, hanging inches higher, and quite a bit fuller than they had been.'

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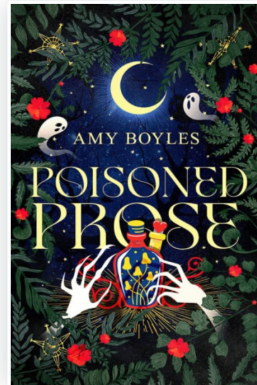
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# AMY BOYLES: THE ACCIDENTAL MEDIUM SERIES

## The Accidental Medium



**WITCH'S BLOCK**  
Book 1



**POISONED PROSE**  
Book 2



**SPELL, DON'T TELL**  
Book 3

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## PAIGE ABSORBER

'I looked at myself in the mirror. My jawline was still somewhat strong, but if I peered closely, I spotted a little dip just outside my chin. I also had a couple of sunspots that needed correcting. I was going to be the oldest-looking hooker ever.'

'We looked at each other appraisingly, as if we both admired the other for still being in their thirties.'

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# ANNABEL CHASE: THE BLOOMIN' PSYCHIC SERIES



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# MIA PSYCHIC

'I can't go to prison. I have to pee too frequently to wear a one-piece jumpsuit.'

'I definitely felt a blast of heat between us as we sat side-by-side. Or maybe it was a hot flash. Sometimes it was hard to tell the difference.'

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