

Ellen Withers has a gift for creating dual time mysteries.

— Beth Westcott, award-winning author of
The Three Sisters series.

I am carried away with the descriptions of that time in history—Ellen makes it come alive ...

— Julia Wilson

Ellen's characters are like old friends. You can't wait to get together and share some tea.

— Linda Vamprine, retired insurance fraud
investigator

SHOW ME SKULDUGGERY



SHOW ME MYSTERIES – BOOK THREE

ELLEN E. WITHERS



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*To Susan Erdel Atkins and Nancy Erdel Oliver, beloved cousins
among many beloved cousins, and to my lifelong friend, Joy Oliver
Keith.*

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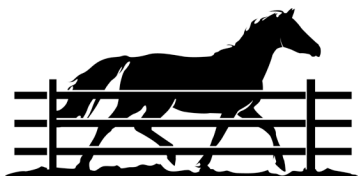
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Chapter One



The Angel of Justice

Katherine Mull was blissfully unaware she was going to depart this earth before the next sunrise. A smile tugged at the corners of my lips. I would serve that vengeance.

She strolled out of her modern three-story mansion right on time. The only positive habit she possessed was her punctuality, and it would factor nicely into my plan.

The sundress she wore was figure-enhancing and eye-catching, precisely the fashion statement she tended to make. A salute to a 1960s-style patterned print of orange and blue. Katherine always stood out—a tier or two above the masses.

Her hair, transformed into sun-streaked blonde tresses by a skilled stylist with high-tech coloring solutions, was twisted into a messy knot at the back of her thin neck. Rhinestone studded sandals completed her look and brought attention to her manicured toenails. Genuine diamonds sparked at her earlobes and on her right wrist.

With a quick glance toward the blistering morning sun, she adjusted her sparkling sunglasses, then walked to her mailbox. The large stucco replica of her home was unrecognizable as a receptacle for official mail delivery by the United States Postal Service.

Everything about Katherine was an ostentatious display of affluence, from her mailbox, her acres of property, to her *palace* with an attached three-car garage. If her goal was to establish a grandiose demonstration of wealth accumulation, she'd succeeded.

She bundled the gathered mail under her arm and made her way to the silver Corvette parked in her driveway. Soon, the engine purred to life, and she completed a three-point turn, picking up speed as she whipped onto the road.

I stood sucking in air, clearly visible on the sidewalk of her neighbor's home, but she didn't spare me a glance. Typical. I was no one to her. Just a jogger with ear buds. She focused on what actions she could take to increase her wealth or how to make herself appear richer and more fashionable.

When her sportscar disappeared from my view, I spun and jogged with energy into the woods along her property line. I retrieved the final two gas cans I'd hidden among the bushes. Although the cans were large and cumbersome, I'd made several trips through the thicket this week and had learned how to handle them.

For two weeks, I'd been dropping off plastic cans of gasoline inside her garage. Because she appeared to focus only on herself, I figured she'd never notice.

Reaching the house, I hid in the overgrown landscaping beside the garage and accessed the code to open the door. The main garage door slid open soundlessly when I overrode the security system.

Katherine hadn't disappointed me. As planned, the red gas cans were in position, ready for use this evening.

I hustled the recent additions where the previous cans awaited. Once satisfied with their placement, I exited the garage, shut the door, and restored the security system.

My ease at accessing Katherine's castle and treasures would horrify her. She'd find out later, and I'd get to see her surprise. Now, to sprint home and change. My next stop was her bank. I wanted to witness the stink she'd create there.

Who would dare mess with her money? Who was brave enough to take away the golden idol she obviously cherished more than God?

Me.

Must. Run. Faster. Can't miss the fireworks show she will put on at the bank.

Little did she know, this was only the beginning. The relocation of her funds launched her punishment for being worthless and uncaring.

Death loomed on the horizon.

I was through waiting for God to right the score. Why had He allowed her to continue her horrible ways for so long? Now I would stop her cruel behavior.

My mission would make her understand she could no longer hurt people. Her actions would have consequences.