

Glycerine: A Detective Lane Mystery

Garry Ryan

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Ryan's narrative successfully ebbs and flows with tension and ease, intrigue and clarity, with the characters and community coming to life.

Sales of glycerine are up in the city of Calgary, and there are also reported thefts of sulfuric and nitric acid. Mixing these chemicals together in the correct combination can create the notoriously unstable—and deadly—nitroglycerine. Meanwhile, tensions are heating up between the members of a Christian church and a local Islamic Center, and a known religious fundamentalist has been seen around town. In *Glycerine*, a dynamite book and the seventh in Garry Ryan's Detective Lane series, the gay detective is asked to investigate and thwart a potentially explosive situation.

Detective Lane and his new partner, Nigel Li, are sent to a home construction site where the body of a migrant worker has been discovered. While attempting to determine his identity, Lane and Li learn that he had been hired by John A. Jones, a cult leader who believes he is carrying out God's will. With the news of the recent thefts, Lane suspects the worst and needs to find out the potential target before Jones can carry out his plan.

Stress at home and a fracturing of family dynamics are added to Lane's pressure as he deals with a depressed partner, an absent niece, and a nephew with PTSD. Ryan deftly works in story lines from his previous works without interrupting the flow or giving unnecessary enumeration.

With glimpses into the lives of both John and Donna, just enough information is given to create the suspense needed to keep the pages turning. Ryan also shows his skill at creating an encompassing view of the unfolding drama by sprinkling the quiet thoughts of the characters into the dialogue, giving added depth to their personalities. Additionally, the newspaper articles at the beginning of each chapter set the stage for what is to come.

Even if the previous six books have been skipped, *Glycerine* is a superb read. With hints about what lies in Lane's future, there is hope that Garry Ryan will continue with Detective Lane and his cast of characters.

SHANNAN SPITZ (Spring 2015)

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