



Stamped Out

Terri Thayer

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First in the Stamping Sisters mystery series.

Featuring small-town stampers who are sure to leave their mark.

A professional rubber stamper who creates intricate patterns on walls, April Buchert is back home in Aldenville, Pennsylvania, helping her father restore the famous Winchester mansion.

But when a human skull tumbles out of the rubble, all eyes are on April's father, who oversaw the construction twenty years ago. As unexplained deaths pile up and a dangerously handsome carpenter becomes a pleasant distraction, can April chip away at the truth before another innocent victim is stamped out?

Stamped Out Details

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Author : Terri Thayer

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From Reader Review Stamped Out for online ebook

JayeL says

I have had this book on my shelf for a long time and finally read it. I needed a break from all of the quilting, design and creativity books I have been reading.

I was really pleased with this book! I don't know that much about rubber stamping, so I was concerned I wouldn't get main portions of the book.. I think that Terri Thayer did a great job writing about stamping in a way that didn't talk down to people who weren't stamping experts. Yes, I still have questions; this isn't a how to stamping book, after all and I wasn't bored by stamping detail. I also didn't finish it thinking that the author was talking down to me.

I liked the relationship between April and Deana as well. Not perfect, but a committed friendship. I felt that Thayer wrote well about April's relationships with her parents. I think a lot of times authors make everything ideal. This book was more interesting, because the relationships were more realistic without the 'gore' of real life. ;-)

I think that Thayer's hard won writing experience shows as well. She had a few books under her belt by the time she wrote this one and I felt it was a lot clearer. I liked the way it started. It drew the reader in without a crisis. I had enough information about the characters to know what was happening and want to keep reading. Throughout the book I did not feel as confused as I have felt reading other mysteries.

I don't have the sequel, but may have to buy it.

Mary says

I am getting to find too many cozy mysteries that I can't put down. This is the latest one that has caught my interest. April Buchert has left her cheating, lying, stealing husband and her business and gone back to Pennsylvania to work with her father Ed. Ed has a construction business that he runs with his life partner, Vince.

15 years ago Ed left April's mother for a man! Since they live in a small town in Pennsylvania, they were the talk of the town. April left town to find a new life in California.

When she comes back Ed's business is back on track and she is going to work with Ed and Vince. But then a Skull is found on one of their properties and the police want to blame it on Ed. April tries to find the true killer and the story gets more interesting as she gets involved in the plot and gets in trouble with the people in town.

The story line was well plotted and kept my interest and I am looking for more books by this new to me author! I will recommend it to other people on my friend list.

Drebbles says

After the bitter breakup of her marriage which left her penniless and her professional reputation in shatters, April Buchert reluctantly moves back home to Aldenville, Pennsylvania to work with her father. April is desperate for money and to get her life back together, but Aldenville has painful memories for her. She tries to bury those memories, but some come rushing back when, while helping her father on a job, a human skull is found. All signs point to murder and April's father quickly becomes the main suspect. Now April is not only fighting to rebuild her reputation but to clear her father's name as well as her growing attraction to Mitch Winchester.

"Stamped Out" is the first book in the new Stamping Sisters mystery series and it is a pretty good beginning. Author Terri Thayer populates the book with some of the most interesting and complicated character I've seen in a mystery, including April herself; her parents Bonnie and Ed who are also divorced for a reason that bothered April for years; Ed's partner Vince; her best friend Deanna; the Stamping Sisters, and more. Thayer does an excellent job of portraying what life in a small town is like, where everyone seems to know your secrets yet somehow dark secrets remain hidden, where it is impossible to escape your past, and friends are fiercely loyal. April is a richly developed character as she struggles with the breakup of her marriage, living close to her parents, creating a new life, and dealing with past events that still haunt her. Most of the characters are realistic although some, like Barbara Harcourt, are a bit of a stereotype and over the top. The mystery itself is intricately plotted, although I did figure out who the killer was. If I have any complaints about the book it is that April is a little too trusting of her father's workers (surprising since her husband was less than trustworthy) and she never asks questions when she should, instead standing by passively. Hopefully her character will develop a bit more in future books. Also, the stamping aspects of the book could've been explained better.

"Stamped Out" is a nice start to what looks like a promising mystery series.

JoAnne McMaster (Any Good Book) says

This book just didn't make any sense. I think the heroine, April, is bipolar. She goes through the entire book alternately disliking/forgiving her parents for breaking up. She accepts her gay father's partner, but can't understand what her mother's boyfriend would see in her mother. What business is it of hers, anyway? She's 31 and hasn't been home for 14 years so she can just butt out. To wit: April grew up in a small town and moves back home after 14 years. She left Pennsylvania at 17 to go to college in San Francisco and never came back. Since she is an only child, I can't see her parents just saying, "oh, sure, honey, go to California at 17. It's okay with us!" NOT if she's an only child from a small town. There would definitely be a fight (if the parents loved her at all, and she never mentions anything about a fight).

Then, the book states that she's a "restoration expert", but she doesn't know anything about restoring a mural. Excuse me? So what is she a restoration expert in? Rubber stamps! Somehow, I don't think homes built in the 1800's and early 1900's would have rubber stamped walls. You would think the term restoration expert would mean someone who could restore old homes to their former glory, not rubber stamp the walls and say you've restored the home.

Plus, there are a group of women she rubber stamps with, and the way they go at it you'd think they'd never seen a craft before. I AM a crafter, but I don't act the way these women do. For example, for a funeral, they make cards that have rubber stamps of what the deceased liked in his lifetime (fishing, bowling, etc.). For a

funeral? Really? If someone handed me something like that at a funeral I'd think they'd gone bonkers. And these women are NASTY. They are back-stabbing petty women who talk behind each other's back. Another scene has a character 'kidnapping' April's mother with a heat iron because the person found a picture of a skull on April's phone. What on earth does her MOTHER have to do with that, and why would her mother know about the skull?? Does she check her 31-year-old daughter's phone for pictures? Maybe they're all bipolar.

Plus, when she starts to investigate the murder. she's as subtle as someone throwing a chair through a window. She practically accuses everyone in town of being the killer (except her best friend, and probably because she's her ONLY friend). Then, it turns out nearly everyone she comes in contact with had a secret from the night the guy was killed. (For example, One of the women says, "Well, Suzi doesn't know her Aunt Martha (or Mary) is her real mother." Huh? Since this Suzi is NOT a main character, only one of the stampers, and doesn't even say much of anything when she DOES show up - which is in about 6 or 7 pages of the entire book - WHY would someone mention that, and what does it have to do with any of the book? This is never mentioned anywhere before, during, or after that sentence and has nothing to do with the murder). What kind of town is this, anyway? Peyton Place?

And don't bother with the "stamp project" in the back of the book. It looks like something a child could and would do, and unless you like skulls (I don't), you wouldn't be interested in it anyway.

Bottom line: This book has an angry heroine (that everybody ends up liking, although I don't know why), and most of it doesn't make any sense.

B.C. Deeks says

The author introduces a fresh new series in the crafter style cozy mystery genre. The heroine is likeable and well developed in a story that weaves the craft of rubber stamping into a strong plot set in her small hometown. A skull rolls up to the feet of April Buchert, as she works on a renovation with her contractor father's company. Updated characters introduce family tensions as the plot unfolds and the reader is swept along as the heroine faces issues from her past entwine with her present circumstances.

Veronica Noechel says

Great little cozy mystery! I'm already excited to read the next in this series. The main character is likeable, intelligent, and is able to be at the center of the action without making me feel like she's being an idiot for getting involved or making me think that the cops in this town must be completely inept. I love that she has believable, imperfect relationships with her parents who she's just begun living near again after having her life completely screwed up by an estranged husband. Her mom is bossy, annoying, but also kind and talented at the same time. Her dad is remarried to the man she believes he left her mother for. As his daughter, she has mixed feelings about the way he left her mom, but also loves his husband, who is a genuinely great guy, imperfectly human (not just a gay character thrown in to be "the gay guy"), and a perfect foil to her dad's nervous personality. I'm happy to see a realistic gay couple represented in a cozy mystery. Sometimes I think authors misunderstand the genre and think "cozy" = dowdy. It's a great start to a series I look forward to reading further.

Kasia says

Unable to continue her married life in San Francisco, April Buchert returns to her roots in Aldenville, Pennsylvania. She is done with her husband Ken who turned out to be a crook and decides that a change for scenery would do her good, even if it means dealing with her divorced parents, Bonnie and Ed, who love to meddle with her personal and professional life. Coming back home turns out to be more of a necessity as she is in desperate need to work again, earn money and to clear her head from her heartache. Instead of helping her dad, the owner of a construction company, with simple tasks she gets tangled up with restoring an original mural and eventually discovers a skull in a small Castle by her new job, which had to be demolished. Everyone looks at her father for answers since he was in charge of constructing it over fifteen years ago, expecting an explanation of the missing body and a skull with a hole in its side, clearly not an accident. With her father taken into police custody by an overly eager officer Yost, who seems to have a real hunger to bring her family down to its knees, April decides to try to solve the mystery of the skull and of a haunting night from her youth that might have something to do with it.

With the support of her childhood friend Deana, and the Stamping Sisters club - a small group of local women who have been friends and craft project fanatics, April takes on the task of sleuthing as once again she's getting familiar with the town she grew up in and which she left in a hurry after finishing school. Things have changed and so have people, someone who's pretending to be a friend has killed a man and left him in her father's construction. April must find out who did the crime, not only for her father's sake but for the safety of everyone involved, as more people associated with the incident seem to be dying in mysterious ways. The more she gets involved the more she realizes that people who seem innocent have more skeletons in their closet than the wilder characters.

I actually enjoyed parts of the book but it had a lot of issues. Overall it was a typical light cozy, and the scenery was described beautifully, all the nature, the interiors and exteriors were colorful and full of life, in fact the only thing I had no clue about its appearance was April herself. The author left the imaginary process completely to the reader; I wish that could have been embellished on since everything else was well described. The arts and crafts aspect was cute but didn't really make the book any more solid, April didn't get to do much with her stamps or even with the mural (which she had no clue how to restore, something she was hired to do), it seemed that the cozy factor was a way to lure readers to get the book and the project included was a bit silly, not really useful for anything. Worst of all the women in the stamping club were bit annoying and catty, I couldn't imagine being friends with many of them, and there was a lot of tension going on; the finances and the construction work being in danger since the murder put it to a halt were little nerve wracking. In these days I read to get away from daily grind, not to read about peoples money problems and their parents divorces. I felt like the murder took a second seat and I hate to say it but the mystery/death itself was not very interesting. It happened long time ago, the character wasn't even in the picture unless I got to read about people recollecting the past and believe it or not I guessed who the villain was, not really too hard if you pay attention in this book. So the mystery was lukewarm but the book was okay, I will read the next in the series because I am curious how the characters evolve. I enjoyed reading about April and her mom, it seemed that their relationship benefited greatly from all the changes. Not a bad book but nothing to rave about, it was a fast read but when it came to sleuthing it skated on thin ice or ridiculousness.

gail says

I got an autographed copy as she is a local author... although this book includes a stamp project but no recipes! Does she not know the only way to sell a mystery in the aughts (00's?) is with a *recipes included* subtitle?

Tari says

Glad I gave this book a try

I normally kind of stay away from books where I read a lot of 3 star ratings but I'm glad I tried his one and stuck with it. I have to admit it wasn't quite as compelling as some other books I've read but I came to like the main characters and cared what happened and how the mystery would be solved. It did get fairly exciting at the take-down. And it had the good ending I hoped for. I'll probably read more in the series since I do know a little about stamping and found it an interesting background for a series.

Michele says

I liked the quilting series. I really like this series. I rthink like the characters better. I feel like I know them in real life. I can relate to them better, so I am really enjoying this series.

Lauri Saplاد says

Cool new series featuring April, an almost divorced woman whose horrible husband stole from her and her design customers -- infuriating her & ruining her business reputation. So now she's back home in Pennsylvania working for her dad. Her specialty is designing rubber stamps for use on wall treatments in period reproductions. Unusual enough so that this should occupy a unique niche in the cozy mystery world. April comes back to old & new friends in a small town that has changed so much she finds herself at once comforted and off-base.

But it is true that you can't really go home again. On her first day at work for her father's construction company, they encounter a human skull which essentially shuts work down. Now the race is on to solve the old murder. Just remember that things are never as they seem...

Erin *Proud Book Hoarder* says

A decent mystery that doesn't involve a current body - rather, it involves a discovered skull that's years old, and the book waits to discover this until after page 45. The story is focused heavily on the protagonist's life and struggles, as well as the small town residents. It's entangled especially with her father, who left them when she was younger because he was gay, and his struggling business. There's also the side-story involving her mother, a woman who never quite let go of the past. The nursing home story was a little confusing and seemed to be thrown in either as a wrench to the reader guessing what's going on, or else the author was originally going to do something else with that storyline and then changed her mind.

The ending offers a convenient wrap-up, with the murderer but also with a personal problem involving a job renovation. As far as mysteries go, it's semi-decent but it's hard to feel invested. I couldn't care about the victim since I never met them, they weren't introduced until much later in the story, and the motives were all old ones that didn't become clear till the end. Hard to care much about it, other than the worrying about the protagonist's father being unreasonably indicated. Still, it's clear he would never have charges stick long since there was no evidence at all, only suspicion from a paranoid cop.

While the mystery part wasn't strong, it was intriguing how the author put so much controversy in the personal lives of the characters. As a series, this would hold promise for future installments. The writing style is well-done and focused, characterization realistic enough, but there's not much warmth here other than some brief insights into April's life. The set-up with the love interest is rather obvious from the start, and I didn't care much about what happened with it.

The townsfolk are okay - the parents are not typical, so that's a refreshing change. It was funny how everyone kept treating her differently since she had previously been living in San Francisco. She even compared it to being compared to a Martian. I also liked the author's ballsy move to throw in the husband woes - she left a bad marriage with a gambler, not something touched upon enough for this kind of story. They usually get something more direct and clean, here it was realistic without being melodramatic or wishy-washy.

Nothing original really - and stamping isn't my idea of fun for a cozy theme - but it was not a bad book. The sequels will probably be better now that the introductions are out of the way.

Monica says

I saw this is a 3 book series so I'm hoping they're all tied together and that this book was the introduction of all of the people so it can get built on in book 2. I was confused by so many names introduced so quickly together but by the end, I had enough info on most. Mystery was ok. I figured out the killer pretty early on. Too much about Ken, the soon to be ex, but again, hoping that was only in book 1.

Linda says

3.5 stars. I think this was very good for the first book in a series. The ending was very good and as always I didn't figure out who did it ahead of time. I enjoyed that they were solving a crime from the past, it always fascinates me. I also enjoyed the dynamics between the characters.

Sandra says

Another fun book by Terri Thayer.
