



Studs and Stilettos

Bev Pettersen

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Studs and Stiletto Bev Pettersen

Her dreams of stardom are complicated by a hot wrangler...and a ruthless murderer.

Winner 2013 Reader Views Reviewers' Choice Award

Winner Aspen Gold Readers' Choice

Winner NEC-RWA Reader's Choice Bean Pot Award

CRW Award of Excellence Finalist

Write Touch Readers' Award Finalist

Heart of Excellence Readers' Choice Finalist

Emily Murphy isn't afraid to swap her fancy wardrobe for a borrowed pair of barn boots. Working on the set of a Kentucky movie might be just the ticket to landing a real acting job and proving to her sister she can accomplish something worthwhile.

Dan Barrett knows a lot about hard work and even more about horses. And while he's drawn by Emily's beauty and pluck, he wants a stay-at-home ranch girl. But fighting their attraction is difficult, and soon they both realize that what they thought they wanted isn't what they really need.

Unfortunately, Dan isn't the only person watching Emily. And the other one is a ruthless killer determined to keep an old secret buried.

Studs and Stiletto Details

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From Reader Review Studs and Stilettos for online ebook

Donna Porter says

I loved this story so much. There were so many aspects to this western romance that I loved. It was the story of Emily a struggling actress, and Logan a movie horse trainer. Emily goes on the movie set to try out for background work and catches the eye of Logan. He is fascinated by her wit and charm. She applies for special work and tells them she is good with horses and has worked a lot with them. He hires her for a few days to help with his injured contracted horse. There is a mystery involved in the movie about a horse named Reckless and his groom, Tracey. She disappeared years before with no trace and it greatly affected the horse. It took years for him to recover. Emily and a friend named, Judith get embroiled in this mystery. This is a great love story and I could not put it down. You will love it. Congratulation Bev on a great story

Valerie Mcqueen says

Ok so I read the whole book and realized that it was actually a sequel to another book. THE great thing here is that it doesn't matter if you have read the first one or not. Emily's story is a great stand alone in addition to being a serial book. Emily is a spoiled and pampered young lady. Chasing her dreams of becoming an actress has seriously overtook her life. When a chance incident left her with a wrecked car, she immediately took a job as an extra in a local movie.

Now in order to get enough work to pay to fix her car is the mission. She doesn't want to get sidetracked by love, or does she?

I love animals, so I love this author's style in these books. Not only is it entertaining, but it is accurate as well. I was actually choked up at what the horse had to go through in the story. I couldn't imagine. I don't want to give the story away but you will find not only is this a love story, it is a cold case story as well. One of the most enjoyable books I have read this year. Now I have to go read part one over again!!!!!! Definite recommended read, you don't want to miss this one. Hot men, beautiful horses and a movie lol!

Paula Legate says

I really enjoyed this book. Read this book after you have read thoroughbreds and trailer trash. This book had a lot of knowledge in it. The author did her homework about making props for movies, and about horses. I loved the suspense of the book. The book was about them making a movie about a famous horse, and his trainer that just disappeared.

Emily had been attempting to break into the world of acting. She got onto a bus full of other people that would be extras for a day and was driving two hours away from Louisville. She was down to her last dollar, and her car was in the shop with no money to get it fixed. She was so tired of calling up her sister and asking for help. Emily got the chance to get a small part working with a horse. She grew up around horses, and loved them. She found out she had to be back at 8 am for the part, but the bus would not be making the trip. Emily made the best of a bad situation, she made a bed out of hay and slept in the barn with the horses. Dan came by to check on the horses before going to bed. He found Emily sleeping, and didn't want to leave her unguarded. Dan had just met Emily that day, and I thought it was so sweet that he slept in a chair nearby Emily to keep her safe. He left before she woke up, so Emily thought no one knew where she had slept. This

is how the book started out, and it only gets better from here.

Julie says

Even though this is the second book in the Hearts and Hoofbeats series, I didn't need to read Thoroughbreds and Trailer Trash in order to thoroughly enjoy Studs and Stilettos. I never felt lost in the story and I appreciate that it was written in a way that didn't require a synopsis of book one at the beginning in order for me to get started reading. I'm not a romance junkie and I'm not a horse person, and you don't have to be either to enjoy this well-written romance-mystery novel.

Emily is a lovable character who is stumbling along in life and just not getting it right. She feels she hasn't lived up to her potential or her older sister's expectations. While pursuing her acting career, she meets the dashing horse trainer/wrangler, Dan Barrett, whose history with performers has left a foul taste in his mouth.

The story is warm and quirky. It is eloquently peppered with humor and the seeds of a mystery. I loved that Dan and Emily didn't immediately fall into bed or spend the entire story thinking about sex. This relatively chaste love story was just right—not too predictable and not too saccharine. The secondary characters are interesting and well developed; they all play a role in the reader really getting a sense of what it is like to be a part of a movie production. The plot was well paced. The characters were believable; no one was perfect, and no one was portrayed as a caricature of a hero or a villain. I was pleasantly surprised by the addition of a mystery element to the story. As the mystery reached its zenith, I was surprised by the outcome. No spoilers here—so I won't say more!

All and all, a well-balanced, delicious escape that has left me wanting to read more books by Bev Pettersen.

Heather Andrews says

I am in love with this series, with each book I read gets better and better. I always love Bev's lead males, and Dan was no exception, "but he hesitated, his protective instincts surging. She must be uncomfortable, and cold. The urge to scoop her up and carry her back to his warm trailer was almost unbearable." He cares about what happens to Emily, "he cupped her chin, tilting her head so he could see her face. "A friend of mine is involved in a Louisville movie about university hazing. He needs more background performers. It might last six weeks. I'll give you his number." He's so sweet at times, "obviously I don't want you to leave," he whispered, pressing his mouth against her neck, savoring the scent of her skin." He just doesn't want to leave her after a little naughtiness, "I really have to go, sweetheart," Dan said for the third time that morning. But he made no move leave. Instead he propped himself on an elbow, caressing her cheek with a finger, as though memorizing her face." When Emily is pi**ed she lets it all out, "no need." She hid her despair with a flippant laugh. "I don't generally charge for sex. And never with well-connected movie people." He just really cares about her, "he caught her hand, wincing at the reddened welts. "I was hoping my room," he said, "but wherever you want to sleep is fine. Just stay."

Jennifer says

I didn't think I would enjoy it as much as *Thoroughbreds* and *Trailer Trash* because in the first book Emily came off as a really horrible person. But as a main character she was much more sympathetic and fun. A fun, light read.

Eli says

I really like Bev Pettersen's books. I love horses and I love her knowledge of them. I think it is great how she also takes another subject to intertwine with the horses. In *Studs and Stilettos*, it was film making. It really gives you a look of how movies are made from a novice point of view. This makes the book very enjoyable. The mystery in the book was a bit predictable. The romance between Dan and Emily is cute. Emily is inexperienced in the way of life and very naive. I think this is a nice light read especially if you like horses.

Zarith dol says

ARC given by netgalley for an honest review

First of all, I never read anything involving cowboys, ranch, mention horse or thereof, it is really not my cup of tea. But I made exception for this book, which is a relieved as it is a very good book.

The story start with the heroine Emily, living under her twin sister's husband good grace (he is a millionaire so...). She is an aspiring actress, move job-to-job to include her or lack of auditions as well as funding.

Desperate for money, she audition for extras in the movie involving a mysterious disappearance of a horse trainer who said to be the mistress of wealthy ranch owner. During the shooting, she meet the rugged handsome movie horse trainer (i think the title) Dan. Tried to avoid any involvement with any actress, Dan focus on his passion in horses. But the sparks that ignite btw him and the newly appointed actress cum horse trainer Emily, trampled his good intention. With accident after accident happen in the movie set, who is the shadow trying to stop the filming and possibly hiding a murder? Will Dan past burn by his newfound relationship for the future?

Good job for the author for writing a very good plots for the story. Not to mention a very click chemistry btw the main characters. I also like cameo from the past couples as well as secondary characters involved. Love a good romance thriller, this one include. 4.5 stars

?Karlyn P? says

This was such a fun read starring Emily Murphy, the little sister from *Thoroughbreds* and *Trailer Trash*. She is all grown up and has big dreams, even if those dreams keep changing. After deciding to become an actress, and spending far more money on agents, photo shoots, clothes and auditions than she could afford, she takes a sub-par roll doing background work. The movie is based on a famous race horse, and set on the actual ranch where the horse lived.

This turned out to be far more a mystery read than a romance, but there is still a fun bit of romance too. And a pretty good HEA! Emily is immediately taken with the handsome, famous horse trainer Dan Barrett. After

a chance meeting, he offers to help her find a small bit part. He is well known in the industry for not bedding the actresses, but damn, his desire for Emily is a lot to resist.

There are several fun secondary characters that I also enjoyed. The mystery was captivating, even if the 'killer' was obvious early on. It was a nice mix of light laughs, passionate romance, and a captivating mystery. I loved seeing Jenna and Burke again too.

As I mentioned already, Studs and Stiletos was more mystery story than romance story. Unlike other books by this author, the mystery takes up most of the pages and the steam factor is quite mild. The story used 'fade to black' sex scenes, leaving it all up to the readers imagination. If that works for you, then I highly recommend this book. And while it stars the little sister from a previous book, this one stands alone and can be read in any order.

Jeannie Zelos says

Studs and Stiletos, Bev Pettersen

Review from Jeannie Zelos Book reviews.

I loved Bev's Colour my Horse so when I saw this in the lists I had to ask for it...I was one of those horse mad kids who never grew out of it...use to drive mum mad asking if we could convert the outside loo of our council house into a stall, so I could have a pony on the commons during day and home at night. Of course the answer was no :) and it took me over 30 years til I finally got my dream of my own horse. Now I have an elderly mare living in my garden, just as I dreamed of all those years ago....so any book with equine link gets a second look.

Bev clearly knows the horse world well, I felt as if I was there with them, could almost smell them. We horse people love that smell, oddly those who aren't "horsey" don't seem to share our love for that scent though! After (another) fall some years ago where I'd lost consciousness, the nurse at the surgery was complaining about how the horse smell lingered after I'd left. I was still not quite "with it" so it rolled of me :) Still, enough ramblings – back to the book. Emily, she was so sweet and I felt for her, always been looked after by big sister Jenna, it had been just the two of them for so long, but now sis has found the love of her life Emily was a bit lost, and looking for something of her own. She'd tried lots of jobs but still was missing that spark, so her latest choice was acting, hoping her sister would be proud of her if she saw her on screen. Then things go wrong, and she has to try for some background work on a movie, hoping to finally impress Jenna and get enough money to tide her over. Its based around a famous racehorse, and having had her own pony (Peanut – the old guy was still living with Jenna) and worked at an equine rehab centre, she did a bit of skill fluffing and managed to get some extra work as a wrangler to pad out the pay, and keep her around the movie set in case of more chances of work. She makes friends with another background actor – Judith – who gives her lots of tips and help. Then she meets the delicious Dan, horse trainer and well renowned. He's attracted to Emily, but his motto is to keep away from on-set romances – cause too much problems after, and he doesn't want a long distance relationship – his parents marriage didn't work and he's determined not to go the same route. Still, she's got under his skin, he admires her tenacity and things slowly develop.

Part of the lure of the film is that the horse was tipped as a Derby winner, then his girl groom went missing mysteriously two weeks prior to the race and he just flipped out and lost everything, becoming really difficult to handle etc. Emily finds out a bit about the missing girl, some of her possessions are in the house of the elderly caretaker – he's seems to have some memory issues and isn't taking care of himself. Emily

having come across him by accident feels she needs to help him, and found a bag of the missing girls belongings while tidying his house. After that Judith seems to become obsessed with the missing girl and the dangers start to stack up. Things between her and Dan are on and off, and there are lots of misunderstandings before finally the story comes to a life threatening conclusion.

Its a stand alone novel, (hurrah) and has a neat conclusion wrapping up all lose ends. I didn't see what was going to happen, had a bit of an idea from clues thrown in but the aggressor came as a shock to me. It reminded me a bit of Dick Francis novels, thrillers set in horse world, and I've read most of his. Now I enjoy those with a strong romance base better, and Bev has done that perfectly here. Its priced at £3.17 for 376 pages, so plenty of length to allow lots of minor angles that add interest to the story – such as the jealous Lizzie who twisted round what Emily had done to show her in a bad light to Dan...I like some jealous/nasty parts, it's boring if everyone is nice.

Stars: Four and a half, great read.

ARC supplied by Netgalley.

Sarah says

Ok so I saw this was a sequel so I went and got the first book as I read it I was like omg I was not a fan but I wanted and hoped that it was a little better. I started the book out and it was a slow go at first. If you can get to chapter 8 the book picks up and it gets really good. The book is way better than the first one. It goes up and down but the downs are a lot less. The book is about Emily who is working to find a job in the movie industry to show her sister that she can be an individual and not have to rely on her and her husband. When she finally thinks she has a break she starts to realize maybe this is not what she wants, maybe she needs to look at this a little bit differently. The author did an amazing job telling Emily and Dan's story as well as the other characters in the story. I can't say this was just Emily and Dan's story because there was another storyline going on at the same time. The way that both stories were told was done well and did not take away from the other. Like I said if you can just get past the first part of the book this is a story that will keep you on the edge of your seat to the end and you will find yourself not wanting to put the book down until it's done. I am now getting ready to get book three of this series just to find out what's going on with Jenna, and Emily and Burke.

I was given a free copy of this book from netgalley to give my honest review

Kimberly says

Was given an ARC by the publisher via Netgalley in exchange for an honest review

Due to downloading difficulties, I was not able to read this book.

S.L. Hoyte says

Reviewed for Reader Views

I was excited to have the opportunity to read and review this book because the author came so highly recommended, and “Studs and Stilettos” by Bev Pettersen beyond doubt lived up to everything I’d heard!

Emily Murphy has dreams of becoming a famous movie star some day. Meanwhile, in desperate need of money and too ashamed to turn to her sister for another “hand-out”, Emily finds herself on a bus headed for Kentucky to work as an “extra” in a movie about a famous racehorse and past Kentucky Derby contender named Reckless. Emily will do whatever it takes to “make it big” and prove to her sister that she IS somebody. Dan Barrett is the expert horse trainer on the set and is driven by hard work and his love for horses. Dan is completely immune to all the beautiful women vying for his attention, as puts more value on what’s inside a person. While Dan and Emily work hard to downplay and even fight their attraction to each other, someone else on the set is working just as hard to make sure old secrets about Reckless and his former groom stay hidden.

Pettersen writes with eloquence and passion – the story flowed so seamlessly that before I even realized it I had come to the last page! “Studs and Stilettos” is the sequel to “Thoroughbreds & Trailer Trash”, which I didn’t even realize until after I had finished the book. That being said, “Studs and Stilettos” stands on its own strengths and I found I did not miss a beat. I really didn’t like Emily in the beginning but she seemed to grow up a lot during the story and I became a big fan! All of the characters were multifaceted and I just loved that the big strong gorgeous leading man was also sensitive, gentle and had issues of his own – he wasn’t just a hero on a pedestal but someone real and relatable. Pettersen is someone who clearly knows a lot about horses and I felt she was able to translate her knowledge into something an inexperienced person could appreciate without feeling like they had to learn and understand all the terminology.

Overall I think “Studs and Stilettos” was an excellent read. Romance, mystery, drama, a happy ending: what more could a girl want?

Callie says

I didn't realize that this book was a sequel to Thoroughbreds and Trailer Trash until I got several chapters into the book (that was my mistake). This was the perfect sequel. We got to check in with the characters from T&TT (Jenna, Burke and Peanut, plus some others) which is always fun.

I loved the chemistry between Dan and Emily. Dan was a little rough around the edges. It took me a little while to get past his gruff demeanor to the likable man that he really is. He keeps a wall around him self due to some issues when he was growing up. He really had feelings for Emily, but his mistrust of women in the showbiz industry held him back. Partly.

Emily was a tough cookie. I really loved her. She did some serious growing up during the course of the book, which was fabulous to see. She started the book as this insecure girl who felt like she needed to hide behind a

mask of makeup and pretty clothes so that she could succeed and prove to Jenna that she wasn't a complete failure. She learned that she was more than a pretty face, that she was important and that she was needed.

It took a while, and some heartache but Dan was able to show Em that she was more than just a pretty face...and Emily learned by herself that she was capable of so much more than she (and some of the people around her) gave her credit for.

I wasn't expecting the mystery of the death of Tracey to be solved, and I definitely didn't expect the person that actually committed the crime to be the one that did it. I was thinking it was someone COMPLETELY different. I was left guessing "who dun it" until the very end.

This book made me miss having horses around, and made me want to read all of the res of Bev's books. She's not an author to miss. Once you pick up one of her books, you won't want to put them down.

I was given a free copy of this book for an honest review. All thoughts and views about the book are my own. I was not paid by the author or the publisher for this review.

Lynda says

Too silly for me

14% into the book I quit. Did not respect main character who acted more like a 10 year old. No grammar or word misuse gets it two stars. Felt like I was reading a 40 year old Harlequin romance. You know the confirmed bachelor of 36 meets an 18 year old beauty and falls head over heels in love.
