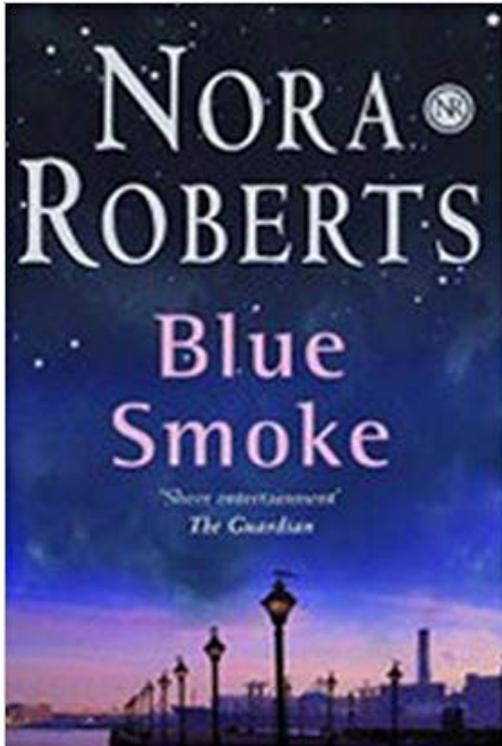


UC Exp Blue Smoke *by* Nora Roberts



0515141968



ISBN: 0515141968

ISBN13: 978-0515141962

Author: Nora Roberts

Book title: UC Exp Blue Smoke

Publisher: Jove

Language: English

Size PDF version: 1405 kb

Size ePUB version: 1722 kb

Size DJVU version: 1373 kb

Other formats: doc txt mbr lit



Reviews of the **UC Exp Blue Smoke** *by* Nora Roberts

Cetnan

Another excellent book by Nora Roberts! This book was full of vibrant characters. Rena comes from a large family. She has two older sisters and a younger brother. Gina has been her best friend since childhood and is as good as family. Bo was an only child, but has a couple of great friends. I thought the first time Bo and Rena actually had a conversation (when she moved in) was hilarious. Bo was making no sense whatsoever (to Rena). I found his decade-long love for "dream girl" both odd and very sweet and romantic. I absolutely adored the dynamics between the characters in this book. Rena's exuberant family provided endless entertainment. The story line of the book was interesting. This book is HEA with no cliffhanger.

Mr_NiCkNaMe

While the killer is known long before the end of the book, the motives keep you in suspense until the very end. Well written and the story moves along at just the right pace. Being a male, I was a little apprehensive about reading a Nora Roberts novel due to the stereotype of Romance being the precursor in many of her works. I must say, although there were some steamy intimate scenes

interspersed here and there, it was by far not the sappy dribble I was expecting. I am already reading another one of her works and may have found another Author to follow... HIGHLY RECOMMEND!

Rishason

While I am not a huge Nora Roberts fan, I do appreciate her ability to spin a yarn. She does an excellent job of making her characters seem real, someone we all could know and her plots are above the average in this genre. Where I am not a fan is in her research, I have read several of her books where calibers of guns were wrong, equipment misnamed, and other flaws that while some readers might not recognize the error, more than a few will. And these were easily preventable errors.

Others have criticized her stepping away from the purely romantic fiction, but I applaud her ability to branch out in other areas. And this is not new, she has just as many mysteries as she does romance novels and she does them very well.

I think this particular book is one of her better mysteries. Her descriptions of the fires is pretty accurate, her information of evidence left behind by a fire is also accurate, and as a retired Deputy Medical Investigator, serving as a volunteer fireman while married to a volunteer Fire Chief, I have been through many seminars and scenes which bear out her information in this novel.

I think if you are looking for a good mystery to occupy your attention, this could be it. If you are a person who does not like the nitty gritty of crime, steer toward the romance side, of which, she has an abundant supply.

Way to go Nora, you did good.

Westened

Blue Smoke is a very good book. It deals with fires, arson, vengeance, family values, and romance. The romance is kind of quirky because the two main characters keep crossing each others' paths for years and never quite make contact until the heroine moves next door to the hero. There is a lot of humor in their meeting and an din their developing relationship.

The book also has some dark pockets as when the arsonist deliberately kills friends and lovers known by the heroine. I was happy to see the end of him, even if it was gruesome.

The family members are also a highlight of the book. Passionate, funny, nosy, and caring.

Malodred

Expect an endearing hero, a heroine whose toughness is tempered by a wounded heart, a passionate, supportive Italian family and touches of genuine humor. Unlike some reviewers, I didn't find the violence especially graphic. Yes, there are graphic depictions of dead bodies, but in all but one case, Roberts is careful to make it clear that the victims of her killer arsonist were killed quickly, before he set the fires.

Seriously, I'm more squeamish than most about graphic depictions of brutality and torture. I try not to subject myself to books and movies that I know will have a torture theme, and I wouldn't recommend this one if I had found it particularly gruesome. The villain is nasty as can be, but the romance is so perfect and the extended family so delightful, the romantic fantasy was more than worth the few pages that made me squirm.

Now, about the romance that's at the heart of Blue Smoke: it's absolutely lovely, with one of the sweetest and most playful build-ups to a sizzling relationship that I can remember reading.

Early on, Reena's father talks about how he fell in love with her mother at first sight. The hero falls for Reena that way, across a crowded room at a college party, and spends years fantasizing about her, frantically looking for her when he spots her at a shopping mall or in traffic, and boring his friends with his talk of "Dream Girl." Fate finally brings them together, and although Reena is initially protective of her heart, the love that grows between them seems as genuine as her parents'.

When she realizes that her stalker/arsonist may also have been responsible for the deaths of two young men in her past - and that his next target could be the man with whom she has finally found love - the suspense is all the more palpable because the affection between the two characters seems so real and was so hard-won.

Who wouldn't love a man who is great in bed, handy around the house, loves you to distraction, has a sense of humor that keeps him from being sickening about it, likes your family, and can hold his own when he's being interrogated by your parents? (When Bo asks Reena's brother if he has anything to fear from her father, the answer is, "Ever watch the Sopranos?")

I bought the Audio CD (unabridged) to keep me entertained during a long holiday car trip. As always, actress Joyce Bean - who has also narrated romantic suspense novels by Linda Howard, Sandra Brown and Karen Robards - does a marvelous job of separating the characters without making them caricatures. Her low-key, husky reading of love scenes makes them sizzle, aided by her subtle, unforced way with voicing male characters.

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