



Prime Time

Hank Phillippi Ryan

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In the cutthroat world of television journalism, seasoned reporter Charlotte McNally knows that she'd better pull out all the stops or kiss her job goodbye. But it's her life that might be on the line when she learns that an innocent-looking e-mail offer resulted in murder, mayhem and a multimillion-dollar fraud ring. All too soon her investigation leads her straight to Josh Gelston, who is a little too helpful and a lot too handsome. Charlie might have a nose for news, but men are a whole other matter. Now she has to decide whether she can trust Josh...before she ends up as the next lead story.

Prime Time Details

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From Reader Review Prime Time for online ebook

Kelly Moran says

Author Hank Phillippi Ryan is an award-winning investigative reporter at Boston's NBC affiliate. She has twenty-six Emmy's and ten Edward R. Murrow Awards, along with dozens of other national and international journalism honors. Her work has resulted in new laws, homes removed from foreclosure, criminals sent to prison, and millions of dollars in restitution. Before her reporting career, she was a proofreader, a radio reporter, an Editorial Assistant at Rolling Stone, and a legislative aide in the US Senate. Other titles include: Face Time (coming August 2009) and Air Time (coming September 2009.) She resides just outside of Boston, MA, with her husband.

Charlotte McNally knows that in the ruthless world of television journalism, you're only as good as your last story, and her latest one very well may be. In her forties, she also knows it is all too easy to get scooped and replaced. With the November sweeps coming quick, she needs to pull out all the stops or kiss her career goodbye. When an innocent-looking email offer turns into a multimillion-dollar fraud ring and murder, it's not just her job on the line, it's her life. Her investigation soon leads to Josh Gelston, a professor who is just a tad too helpful and way too handsome. The sparks between them fly, but can Charlotte trust him, or is he part of this diabolical plot? As tension mounts and more questions arise, she better figure this puzzle out, or she'll be the next headline.

Told in first-person point-of-view, this wasn't one of those dark, suspenseful reads, but rather more light-hearted and humorous, and I found it captivating. Between the emails, the secondary characters, the suspects, and the mystery to figure out- You'll keep reading until the end and wanting more. Charlie's producer, Franklin, was a phenomenal add to the story-line and I rather enjoyed him. The emails were neat to watch unfold, and quite immensely clever. This was a very well-paced book, too. The setting drew you in, and I liked learning more about Boston. The reader will learn a great deal about television journalism without realizing it, and be sure to keep your eye out for the What they don't teach you in J-school, entries...Hilarious! Typically, first-person isn't my favorite, but this goes to show what good writing and a great sense of humor can do for a book.

Prime Time, by Hank Phillippi Ryan is a fascinating glimpse into journalism, an intriguing mystery, and a sweet romance, with sassy, but loveable characters, amidst a laugh-out-loud dialog to liven any mood.

Kelly Moran,
Author and Reviewer

Doranna Durgin says

Wonderful characters who feel real to me, and an engaging setting--written as only someone on the inside can write it.

Note: First person, present tense. For some readers, this is going to matter.

Suzanne Adair says

If you jump for joy every time a white-collar crook like Bernie Madoff lands in the slammer, you'll cheer for Ms. Ryan's fictional TV journalist, Charlie McNally, who's assigned to cover the "accidental" death of a middle manager from Big Pharma but finds herself in the thick of murder, fraud, and greedy CEOs. I've always had trouble sticking with stories written in the present tense, but in Ms. Ryan's hands, present tense conveys the "I want it now!" environment of a journalist's double-espresso-zero-sleep world. Charlie has a bouyant sense of humor, just the right amount of snark and sophistication to make you laugh aloud. In her mid-40s and perimenopausal, she's a refreshing break from the ovulating hotties who populate so many (too many) novels. Her equally three-dimensional sidekick, Franklin, is her producer, ally, and dose of common sense. They make an invincible team for a pageturner. And don't believe the "romance" label attached to this mystery. Sure, there's the start of a romance in it -- no, not between Charlie and Franklin -- but sexual tension doesn't power the plot in this book. It's whodunit and suspense and wonderful escape.

Kathleen Hagen says

Prime Time, by Hank Phillippi Ryan, b-plus, Narrated by Margaret Baly, Produced by Harlequin Enterprises, downloaded from audible.com.

This is the first in the Charlie McMally series. Charlotte, (Charlie) is a 46-year-old investigative reporter on fictional Channel 3, Boston. She's seeing signs from others that they may think she's getting too old for this spot on t.v., even though she still does good enough reporting to win the station an Emmy each year. But this might be the year that doesn't happen as she has very few weeks or days to find the story that will win them the prize this year. The first in the Charlie McMally series. Charlie is sent, because no other reporters are available, on the "vulture patrol" to get a comment from the widow of someone who just died in an accident. But the innocent-looking widow is interested in whether or not Charlie had gotten, or replied to, an e-mail from her husband about whistle-blowing for his company. Charlie becomes involved in a plot of possible insider trading and other dangerous pursuits that almost gets her killed and finds her a romantic interest after all these years as well. A more light-hearted cozy than I usually read, but it was entertaining and constructive regarding women in television reporting.

Jonathan says

As always, Hank Phillippi Ryan wrote a great book that I thoroughly enjoyed. I will be reading the next one!

Elizabeth Noah Astle says

Tjis is the book I have read by Hank Phillipe Ryan and I loved it.

Charlie McNally is a 46yo journalist who is worried that her career is about to end. Always worried about the sweeps rating in November and the big story.

Charlie fills in on a news brief and her mind starts yo think about the stories she just talked about on air. One story is about a man who was missing but found a few days later and has committed suicide. Charlie let's her imagination run wild about this. Charlie gets an interview with the widow who is wonderi bf why she never

replied to an email the deceased sent her.

Charlie looks into this and uncovers what she thinks can be a huge cover up and a big story.

The story line was great, never slowed down and made it almost impossible to put down at times. The characters made me laugh at times like Charlie describing herself. It never dragged or was a bore.

I can not wait to read the next in the series as I have found a favorite author.

Cindy says

Award-winning investigative reporter Hank Phillippi Ryan is on the air at Boston's NBC affiliate. Her work has resulted in new laws, people sent to prison, homes removed from foreclosure and millions of dollars in restitution. Along with her twenty-six Emmy and ten Edward R. Murrow Awards, Hank has won dozens of other regional, national and international journalism honors for her hard-hitting investigations. Hank began her television career reporting and anchoring the news in Indianapolis and Atlanta. She's also worked as a proofreader, a radio reporter, a legislative aide in the United States Senate and—in a two-year stint as editorial assistant at Rolling Stone magazine—helped organize presidential campaign coverage for Hunter S. Thompson. She and her husband live just outside Boston.

In the cutthroat world of television journalism, seasoned reporter Charlotte McNally knows that she'd better pull out all the stops or kiss her job goodbye. But it's her life that might be on the line when she learns that an innocent-looking e-mail offer resulted in murder, mayhem and a multimillion-dollar fraud ring.

All too soon her investigation leads her straight to Josh Gelston, who is a little too helpful and a lot too handsome. Charlie might have a nose for news, but men are a whole other matter. Now she has to decide whether she can trust Josh...before she ends up as the next lead story.

"...you're only as good as your last story." Investigative reporter Charlotte McNally, better known as "Charlie", is forty-something now and in order to keep her job, she has to stay on top of the younger generation clamoring for her position. With sweeps coming up, she needs something big and isn't too happy about being sent to interview a widow (where's the story in that?) by her manager, who has made it clear if she doesn't make a stand, this might be her last year with them. Charlie knows she's good at her job and she wants to keep it that way.

But then the interview with the widow takes an unexpected twist. Brad Foreman's car accident may not have been an "accident" after all! Apparently he had been sending Charlie emails and his widow wanted to know why she never returned any of his messages. With Brad's recent spotlight and then his sudden death, combined with the messages he had sent Charlie, this all combined sent out an alarm to Charlie's experienced gut instincts, so she checks out her emails. What she uncovers winds up being a scam—and it was also now possible that Brad Foreman's so-called "accident"... might really have been a murder!

Charlie and her producer, Franklin (loved his character!) are on the brink of something really big. They're sure of it! The investigation leads Charlie to Josh Gelston. But Charlie is not sure if she can trust him and to make things worse, she also can't deny her attraction to the man.

Hank Phillippi Ryan delivers mystery, murder, romance and knowledge in the field with humor, and her

familiarity of Boston makes Prime Time a riveting, first-person POV (usually a pet-peeve of mine) and I look forward to more books from this author. She's dynamic in real life and it reflects in the dialogue and plotting of her writing as well.

A real page turner from a promising new author!

Tamara says

Review to come later.

Quick thoughts: Being a HUGE fan of HPR's Jane Ryland series, I was curious to try her previous series (now recently re-released by Tor/Forge!)

While the story was enjoyable and the writing was good, I just didn't care for Charli like I do Jane. I'll give the next book in series a try to see if Charli grows on me.

Bottom line: worth a read and an interesting plot.

Authors Express says

"...you're only as good as your last story." Investigative reporter Charlotte McNally, better known as "Charlie", is forty-something now and in order to keep her job, she has to stay on top of the younger generation clamoring for her position. With sweeps coming up, she needs something big and isn't too happy about being sent to interview a widow (where's the story in that?) by her manager, who has made it clear if she doesn't make a stand, this might be her last year with them. Charlie knows she's good at her job and she wants to keep it that way.

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A real page turner from a promising new author!

Jessica says

I'm not sure why but for some reason every time I picked this book up to read it something made me not want to. It was a pleasant little book and definitely not your typical Harlequin. The action and mystery portion of the plot was very interesting and well written but how it started didn't make the most sense...it was too random I guess to be believable. Our heroine was very realistic and a good character but not terribly likable most of the time-switching between overly vain and overly paranoid. The romance portion wasn't bad but it felt like an afterthought like the author was just fulfilling the bare minimum to make this a Harlequin. Thankfully the book wasn't the ott sappy that many Harlequins are, it was well written and I did like the plot. I liked that the author wrote a character that was a little older but I wish it would've been one that was aging gracefully rather than whining about aging all the time.

Bottom line: a decent couple hour read if it shows up on your shelf but probably not worth buying since once you've cracked the story a reread wouldn't be very interesting.

Laurie says

Fun new mystery series starring an emmy-winning investigative reporter who's facing middle age. Rings true -- probably because the author is an emmy-winning investigative reporter. I always enjoy books set in Boston.

Sue says

Prime Time is the first book in the Charlie McNally series that has been updated and will be re-released during 2016. Ms. Ryan is a new author for me but after totally enjoying Prime Time, I am anxious to read the rest of the books in this series and read her other books, too.

Charlotte "Charlie" McNally is an investigative reporter for a TV station in Boston. At 46, she is worried that she will soon be replaced by a younger news reporter. Sweeps week is coming up and she's being pressured to come up with a big story. Even though she has Emmy Awards and has had a successful career, she knows that the next story is always the most important. Her reporter instincts lead her to a story that may be the best story of her life if she is successful or it may cause her to lose her life if she isn't. It's a definite mystery and the ending was a real surprise to me.

What I liked most about this novel was the main character of 'Charlie'. It's so nice to read a book with an older female main character who has flaws and questions herself and her abilities like Charlie does. There are other good characters in the book but Charlie was the one that was the most real to me. I can't wait to see what happens to her in the next book in the series Face a Time that will be available in April. Air Time will be available in June and Drive Time in August.

Note: Prime Time won the Agatha Award for First Novel and the Romantic times Reviewers Choice Award. (Prime Time was given to me by Tor/Force Publishing for a fair and honest review.)

Regan says

Face paced fun mystery. At times she uses that first person present tense which I'm not a fan of. It makes for a disruptive read for me, especially when it's not consistent. Love Toxie the kitty (of course). And there's some solid suspects.

Carrie Smith says

Charlie McNally is an incredibly likable character. This is a very fun read!

Amy Corwin says

I have to admit it was nice to read a thriller with a protagonist who wasn't either just out of college or already retired for many years. Not that I don't enjoy stories with characters in all age ranges, and the closer I get, myself, to retirement, the more I like the older characters. But, it was nice to find one in the middle range.

This is the first in Ryan's series of mysteries featuring Charlotte McNally and it brings to life the work of journalism in a very realistic, yet witty, way. You could tell that the author has experience in this area as it creates a very gripping and real feel to the story--you feel like she knows whereof she speaks.

When the story starts, Charlotte is searching for a big story for the "November sweeps" and hoping to find that big story that proves experience and skill still make her competitive with the younger/prettier talent getting restive in the wings. Her boss, Angela, was not exactly the nicest person in the room, either, which puts a bit more pressure on poor Charlotte.

An email from a dead man and an interview with his wife toss a curve ball at her and the game is afoot!

I won't go into too many plot details. Suffice it to say that Ryan's writing is well executed and she draws you into the story with every deft pen stroke. Charlotte is an interesting character and this series is sure to develop well and delight readers who like complex, fun mysteries.
