



Lucky Stiff

Annelise Ryan

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It's Christmas Day in the sleepy town of Sorenson, Wisconsin, but instead of unwrapping presents, deputy coroner Mattie Winston is at the burnt remains of a house, where a charred body has been found. The victim is none other than Jack Allen--a paraplegic who recently won a huge casino jackpot. Upon closer inspection, Mattie and detective Steve Hurley are convinced Jack was murdered to steal his winnings, giving the phrase Black Jack a whole new meaning. . .

But as Mattie investigates, even her cutting-edge forensic skills keep coming up short in a case with as many suspects as twists. After her odds-on-favorite turns up dead, Mattie and Hurley must race to find a killer before another victim cashes in his chips.

"A puzzler of a mystery. What a thrill ride!" --Jenn McKinlay

Praise for Annelise Ryan and her Mattie Winston series

"Has it all: suspense, laughter, a spicy dash of romance. . ." --Tess Gerritsen

"The funniest deputy coroner to cut up a corpse since, well, ever." --Laura Levine

"Mattie Winston is a likable, humorous heroine. . .lighthearted and fun." --*Romantic Times*

Lucky Stiff Details

Date : Published March 5th 2013 by Kensington (first published January 1st 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Annelise Ryan

Format : Kindle Edition 384 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery, Fiction, Romance

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From Reader Review Lucky Stiff for online ebook

Betty says

This series keeps getting better has Mattie continues to develop her character. From hurt and depress woman in the first book. She is not able to handle things better. The minor characters of Izzy, Don and officers show more depth. Steve and the animals could be developed more. In this book, Mattie is back as deputy coroner knowing she cannot have a relationship with Steve. It is Christmas day and Mattie is called to a house fire where the firemen found a victim in the house. He turns out to a paraplegic who just won the jackpot at a casino. He keeps his cash in a home safe and it is missing. Mattie and Steve struggled to find answers. Mattie decides she can win a Jackpot also and starts gambling. Several directional changes are found in the plot before the answer is apparent. This author is adept at keeping the who done it a secret. I have yet known the answer before I finished. This book can be read as a stand alone.

Iris says

I'm starting to get annoyed with the "Woe is me!" for Mattie. It started off as an awesome series, but now it's becoming overkill. The descriptions are repeated over and over again for each and towards the end, when we found out that last bit of information that ANOTHER dilemma to a certain couple...yeah.

Other than that, it was a quick, fun read. I just hope the author can go back to the original feelings of the first book, where it was more than just funny as hell and intriguing.

Barb says

I picked up Annelise Ryan's first book in the Mattie Winston series because it takes place in a fictional town based on the place my daughter and her husband were living. And I loved it! Since then, I've read each of them voraciously as soon as I can get my hands on a new title. What a unique premise! Mattie is a former nurse who now works as an assistant coroner. She works with hunky cop Steve Hurley, and the two of them are madly attracted to one another, but their jobs preclude a romantic relationship. Add to the mix that Mattie, all six feet tall, size 12 shoes, seems to be accident prone, and is frequently caught in awkward situations involving things like falling in mud puddles or being bitten by hundreds of fire ants!!! Her supporting cast of characters are quirky, too, and provide comic relief for the serious business of cutting people up to find out how they died. LUCKY STIFF features two suspicious deaths and a large group of suspects. I love Ryan's books because I can't figure out whodunit until the bitter end. And for those of you who are followers of the series, you won't believe the plot twists in Mattie and Steve's relationship!

Courtne says

I feel betrayed and thoroughly jerked around.

This book committed one of the worst offenses to me as a reader. It ended on an absolute terrible note after a rather significant tug of war that looked like it was going to end okay. So with that, I'm going to write a no-holds-barred review and just get everything out of my system.

So, spoilers ya'll.

I praised Mattie so highly in my last review. And this book just friggin' called me liar and then set my pants on fire.

Right off the bat, Mattie ticks me off by trading tit-for-tat with a nobody character, Ryan writes:

"I know that saying nothing at this point will be taking the high road. However, Catherine has managed to hit one of my sensitive buttons, so I go crawling in the mud, instead."

Oh, this irked me. The problem is that Mattie crawls in the mud a couple of times in the book, but never when it really should have been done. Why she lets every WOMAN get under her skin while never standing up for herself with any of the men is beyond me. You know who you should be crawling in the mud with, Mattie? David! Why not say something biting and clever to the cheater and his new fling? And along the lines of saying how you feel in a big way, why can't you have a conversation with Hurley of real consequence? Why can't you stand up to yourself to Izzy instead of being shamed by ONE night of reckless drinking and gambling that really only harmed yourself?

And while I'm on THAT subject...

What the holy heck in bottle is with the gambling schtick?! This literally made me cringe. I cannot buy that this super puzzler solver that is Mattie Winston could somehow think that the solution to her money problem is by spending thousands of dollars gambling - and not just after 1 or 2 devastating nights of loss, but 3. I really like Mattie's character as someone who can screw up but still be lovable, but there isn't anything lovable about being willfully stupid.

Speaking of stupid. What is with every stupid woman in this book brazenly propositioning Hurley? Is this supposed to be part of the funny? I found it as far from FunnyLand as possible, like way over in It-Hurts-My-Heartdom. In this book alone Mattie deals with Candy, Tonya and that evil sucker punch at the end when really the point could have been made with any ONE of the three - the point being that Mattie would

rather dig out her heart with a spoon than be a spectator to a new romance in Hurley's life.

But that ending?!

O-M-G. It's like climbing to the top of the mountain and in the middle of celebrating how glorious life is, your guide pushes you over the side and points and laughs while you tumble all the way down to the bottom.

What? This isn't a romance? Oh, that's right. It's a cozy mystery. I almost forgot because the book was so busy throwing pieces of my sanity into the wood chipper.

As for the mystery. Well, it was just okay. It seems like two different homicides would be enough to keep it interesting, but I had the farmer pegged shortly after his post, and as for the other guy? I could barely bother because we took some weird detour into the twilight zone with a conference trip from hell that diluted the whole mystery and by the end I just skimmed through Fletcher's reveal because I was like, WHO CARES, HURLEY'S BOINKING TONYA AND I NEED A BEN & JERRY'S TOO!

With all that out of my system, I still downloaded the next book within 5 minutes of finishing this one. It would have been more like 5 seconds after finishing this one, but I was trying to really exercise restraint and show the book who's boss. Unfortunately, I read a spoiler accidentally that is two books from now and I just want to get there and I have no self control.

But seriously? Band aids don't fix bullet holes Annelise Ryan, I'm on to your tactics now.

Maureen DeLuca says

Sorry folks, but this Mattie Winston book was so very hard to get through. To tell you the truth, towards the end, I skimmed through it AND , then I went to the last few chapters to see how it was going to end. The whole gambling theme was all wrong, and I'm so tired of the " WOE IS ME" This is the 4th in this series..... the first book "working stiff" was FANTASTIC- I loved it- then as I read books 2,3 and now 4 - my book ratings have gone down. I will continue this series, for I do know ALL books in a series cannot be good.... All the characters I like and even get a chuckle here and there. I guess it is so disappointing when you know for a fact that this book could have been better! I can tell you that IF I read books out of order and I picked this one up first- I'm not sure that I would read the series... having said that- because I do know the series is good (for the most part) I'll chuck book 4 off as a DUD and later on pick up book number 5 --- and just HOPE for the BEST!

Tammy Thompson says

You know I really love this series, but Ms. Ryan how could you leave us hanging!!?? LOL

I do have a couple issues, first and foremost the gambling. Ok I can understand the first go around, especially since she had a tiny taste of beginners luck, but to go back and blow money the second time? Really. I know Mattie doesn't always make good choices but you'd think she'd be more careful with money. And now what is she going to do? Which brings me to my second issue...

Unemployed, really? First off Izzy had no business promising that job to anyone until Mattie resigned in writing. For someone who wants Mattie to play everything by the book and above board, he isn't very professional. Second, since it was a informal conversation, he most certainly doesn't have the right to expect her to still resign. It would be unprofessional at best, but the fact that they are friends... sorry very bad form. All in all I think this annoys me the most.

Poor Mattie & Hurley are they ever going to catch a break? I could see that he couldn't toss his ex and kid out, regardless of not knowing he was still married or had a daughter, but he could have been more supportive with Mattie.

It's going to kill me to wait another year to find out how this all works out... if it does. :(

*** Jennifer says**

[Honestly, Mattie really believing she can double her divorce settlement through gambling is just a really bad move on the author's part - as a reader, it just pissed me off. (h

Marcy says

I love the characters and settings and mysteries of this series. However I am heartily sick of the contrived obstacles put in Mattie's life and it's sucking the joy out of the books for me. I mean gambling away all her divorce settlement, quitting her job then losing her new one before she starts and an old wife and kid? Seriously?

Keri says

I didn't like how, as usual, Mattie was left in an emotional mess.

Betty says

Fire And Gambling

This series keeps getting better as Mattie continues to develop her character. From hurt and depressed woman in the first book. She is not able to handle things better. The minor characters of Izzy, Don and officers show more depth. Steve and the animals could be developed more. In this book Mattie is back as deputy coroner knowing she cannot have a relationship with Steve. It is Christmas day and Mattie is called to a house fire where the firemen found a victim in the house. He turns out to be a paraplegic who just won the jackpot at a casino. He keeps his cash in a home safe and it is missing. Mattie and Steve struggled to find answers. Mattie decides she can win a Jackpot also and starts gambling. Several directional changes are found in the plot before the answer is apparently. This author is adept at keeping the who done it a secret. I have yet to know the answer before I finished. This book can be read as a stand alone.

Anastasia says

Lucky Stiff by Annelise Ryan is the 4th book in the Mattie Winston Mystery series. Coroners assistant Mattie Winston is called out to a fatality at a house fire, the victim a paraplegic who had recently had a large casino win. Mattie's drinking and gambling and poor choices seemed out of character for her as she always seemed capable and sensible. Otherwise an interesting and entertaining book although it seemed a little drawn out.

Heidi (Yup. Still here.) says

3.5 stars. I really really love this series but this book had a few eye rolling moments so I could not justify a 4 star rating. I really like all of the characters in this series and also like learning more about the protagonists profession. I also really like the love story and all the drama and snarkiness that goes along with it. My main issue with this particular installment had to do with the protagonist acting "out of character" a few times -- especially where it came to gambling. Anywho I sincerely enjoy this series so much that I am still looking forward to book 5 and forgive the author any "silly" moments in this one.

Jonathan says

Amazing, I absolutely love this series. It's become one of the go-to series for me when I'm in a book hangover. Highly recommend!

Sue Huhn says

I didn't like much of the plot in this book.

Mattie wouldn't be so stupid as to gamble away 10% of her settlement. And it's stupid that David can block her return to the hospital. And the ending with Hurly, really. Too much that just doesn't work in this book. I'll try one more, but if the author continues to make Mattie so stupid, I'm done.

Melissa says

This series always provides me with a fun, quick read. I enjoy Mattie's character, she's sassy, smart, and my height! I don't want to spoil anything so I'll just say there were a few choices Mattie made in this book that left me scratching my head. I look forward to continuing the series.
