



## Gone With the Woof

*Laurien Berenson*

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"If you like dogs, you'll love Laurien Berenson's Melanie Travis mysteries!" --Joanne Fluke, *New York Times* bestselling author

Despite a toddler and a house full of Standard Poodles, Melanie Travis can't pass up an opportunity to help legendary dog breeder Edward March pen his life story. But her enthusiasm flags when the breeder's angry son Andrew demands she stop working on the book. Why becomes imperative once Andrew is killed by a seemingly intentional hit-and-run and Melanie becomes Suspect #1. To get herself out of the dog house, Melanie sniffs out every possible clue, only to run into dead ends as fast as she's running out of time. And the longer the killer stays unleashed, the sooner she may end up in the dog house for good.

"Berenson devises another story that will appeal to dog aficionados and cozy lovers alike." --*Kirkus Reviews*

"A wonderful reason to celebrate--Melanie Travis is back on the job in this always charming and clever series." --Earlene Fowler

## Gone With the Woof Details

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Author : Laurien Berenson

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## From Reader Review Gone With the Woof for online ebook

### **Lisa says**

At the urging of Aunt Peg, Melanie (who is now married and mother to a toddler and middle-school aged boy) takes a part-time job as a co-author. Much to her dismay, the book will not be about Mr. March's distinguished history in the dog show world but will instead be a memoir of his many love affairs. Just as she's trying to find a way to back gracefully out of the project, his adult son is hit and killed by a car. When the police discover it appears purposeful, they seemingly focus their attention on Mr. March himself, who was at odds with his son over their construction business. Mr. March convinces Melanie to find the true killer. In her quest to do so, she finds many suspects - some who may turn their attention toward ending her quest. As if her life weren't busy enough, Melanie and her husband contemplate adding a member to their family. It was too long of a wait between books for me, so I really enjoyed diving back into this series. Melanie's spouse and toddler are growing on me. And, I really liked the characters of Robin, Auggie, and Bonnie. Even though I guessed one part of the mystery very early on, I still greatly enjoyed the journey. Melanie and her family seem like nice people you'd want on your side in a bind. Reading this book was a nice way to spend a lazy, fall afternoon. I can't wait until the next installment!

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### **Barbara says**

Murder mystery set in the world of dog shows. The protagonist gets volunteered by her aunt of ghost write a book for a dog show judge that she thinks is going to be about his career. But he decides to make it a tell-all tale of his sexual conquests. When his son is murdered, the author sets about finding out who-done it. Lots of dogs & family relationships.

Good sleepy-time book.

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### **Bonnie says**

I always love reading about Melanie Travis and her family. Always feel right at home. This was another good read. Laurie Berenson is an awesome author!! Love her books, and always enjoy them and would recommend her to everyone. The characters are ones you just want to move in with and be around all the time.

I gave the book an A+ or 5 stars.

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### **Don says**

I am very fond of a terrific podcast called "What Should I Read next?" in which the host asks guests to name three of their favorite books, one book which they didn't especially like, and what they are looking for in their reading lives. Based on that information, she attempts to recommend their next reads.

The podcast got me to thinking about what makes me choose what I do from my ever growing "to read" list.

In this instance, the answer is clear. For the past several weeks, I've spent most of my workday filling out rather lengthy statistical forms which the federal government now requires us to complete for each client we serve. While they aren't difficult to do, the work is mind numbing and extremely time consuming and it takes me away from the part of my job I love, spending time with my clients. Filling out form after form leaves me totally exhausted at the end of the day. As is so often the case, books come to the rescue. At times like these, "escapist" literature really is the best medicine.

While perusing the list of new books added to the Braille and Audio Download site, I came across the most recent offering in Laurien Berenson's Melanie Travis series. Seeing that reminded me of just how much pleasure I got from earlier books featuring this dog loving mom. I decided that this is exactly what I needed after all that crazy paperwork and so I looked to see where I left off and discovered that the next entry was this one from 2013.

Travis has now quit her job as a special education teacher in favor of becoming a stay at home mom. This has proved so time consuming that she really hasn't done very much else and her loving, though meddlesome, Aunt Peg is determined to change that. Peg volunteers her niece to work with retiring dog show judge Edward March on a memoir which he plans to call "Puppy Love." Melanie reluctantly goes along with the plan; she loves dogs after all and her aunt may be right when she says that Melanie needs to lead a more complete life. Both Melanie and Peg are quite surprised when they discover that March doesn't intend to write about his experiences with dogs. No, this book will tell all about his many exploits with women. To make matters worse, March's son is killed in a rather suspicious car accident.

If you are looking for a book that will forever change your life, this isn't it. But if you want a few hours of fun with characters you'll come to love along with an intriguing mystery to solve along the way, you can't go wrong with this one.

I was delighted to discover that there are three newer titles in the series which I have yet to read and that one of them has a holiday theme. It's very likely that I will begin my Christmas reading by once again spending time with Melanie and Aunt Peg which will clearly put me in the holiday spirit.

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## **Suspense Magazine says**

Melanie Travis is a housewife with a small child, a teenager and dogs, dogs and more dogs. Life had become a little mundane for Melanie, as her Aunt Peg repeatedly tells her, so Aunt Peg finds her something to do with her time. She has decided that Melanie should help a former dog show competitor and judge write a book about his life in the "dog" world. Having lived her life in the world of show dogs, she reluctantly accepts the job. How hard could it be really?

Believing it to be nothing more than helping out a friend of Aunt Peg's, Melanie finds her new employer, Edward March, to be nothing more than a mean old man with a closet full of skeletons. And his book is not about dogs, it's about letting all of those skeletons out of the closet. He wants the world to know he was the Don Juan of the dog show world and he doesn't care who knows what about whom. He even sends a mass email to all of the subjects that will be chapters in his book. Needless to say, some of them don't want their "affairs" made public, including his adult son Andrew.

Andrew demands that Melanie not help Edward write the book. She refuses and is now more determined

than ever to write it with him. Unfortunately, Andrew is struck by a hit and run driver in front of his home and left for dead. And dead he is. And the number one suspect is none other than Edward March himself. Edward decides to put the book on hold and tells Melanie, in no uncertain terms, that her new job will be to find out who killed his son and why.

She can handle this new assignment, but as she begins to investigate the dog show world, she realizes that she might have taken too big a bite out of the biscuit.

A wonderful novel. Even better if you read it with a dog on your lap.

Reviewed by Sherri Nemick for Suspense Magazine

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### **Jewett says**

I have always loved this series. Of course, I love poodles so that helps. This one with a toddler and poodles is just great.

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### **Emily Cullen says**

Melanie's Aunt Peg thinks Melanie's brain is going soft because she is just being a stay at home mom so she offers Melanie's services to be a co-author on a legend in the dog world, Edward March. Melanie learns that the book is going to be more of a tell-all book, but the book is put on hold when Edward's son, Andrew, is killed by a hit-and-run. Edward knows that Melanie has done some sleuthing in the past and asks her to look into things. I love the "Melanie Travis Canine Mystery" cozy series, especially that with every book the kids grow older and that the series is done in real time.

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### **Nancy Narma says**

“Canines, Confidences and Crime”

In this latest “Melanie Travis Crime Mystery”, we find Melanie is now a stay-at-home Mom since the birth of son, Kevin. With her daily schedule pretty well mapped out, things are going along smoothly—much to the dismay of highly opinionated Aunt Peg, who feels Melanie’s life is boring. When Aunt Peg learns that legendary dog show judge/founder of March Homes/breeder of award-winning Irish Setters, Edward March is planning to write a book and is looking for a “Co- Author”, she wrangles an appointment (calling on past friendship) for Melanie so she can apply for the position. As you will learn, you don’t say no to Aunt Peg! Crusty curmudgeon, Edward March will not be the easiest person to work with, but due to Melanie’s outspoken honesty (and beauty)—they seem to hit it off and she is hired, and Mr. March’s young assistant, Charlotte is more than pleased. Being the owner of five Standard Poodles and a dog show person herself, Melanie is interested to hear the plethora of tales from Edward’s days in and outside of the ring in the world of dog shows. Is she ever surprised when this supposed volume, tentatively titled ‘Puppy Love’ turns out not to be about canines at all! A growing number of people are not happy about the upcoming book—especially Edward’s arrogant, over-bearing son, Andrew—so when he is found dead, accusatory fingers start flying in several different directions, including toward his Father. At Edward’s urging and Aunt Peg’s nudging, (like

Melanie really needed a push?) she dons her sleuthing cap, intent on learning the identity of the killer and why. Who would want him dead? Who would profit? Who might have had an “ax to grind” with the young COO? This is the first of Ms. Berenson’s books I have read and it started out a little slow since I hadn’t been previously acquainted with the characters, but it picked up like a locomotive on track. I only have one request. Since I am not familiar with dog show jargon and protocol. I wish the Author would explain some terminology and practices associated with same more fully. If you’re a dog lover as well as a cozy lover, don’t miss this one.

Nancy Narma

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### **Jennifer Golden says**

I enjoyed this book. For me the early Melanie Travis books are still the best. (The first 5 or 6). When Melanie was showing the Poodles and we learned a little about dog shows and how they work. I do not think new readers will enjoy this book nearly as much as someone who's read the series.

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### **Mary Corso says**

#### **Second time around it is still good.**

I liked all of the books in this series. The information on dog show and handling is enjoyable, and the information on poodles makes me want one for myself! In fact, my dad told me once that I should have a standard poodle instead of Shepards .... well, maybe one more GSD and then switch to poodles. But they need hair cuts and all that .... anyway, This book is interesting from beginning to end, and the action at the end goes quickly.

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### **Nese says**

Here is a cozy with wonderful pets, dysfunctional but loving relatives, suspenseful murder mystery, a fast-paced and descriptive story telling style, and overall warm and hopeful feelings throughout the book. It is so enjoyable reading about Melanie’s day to day life with her family without any personal or family problems, unlike most people’s lives. The murder mysteries in each of the books in the series are suspenseful and well-developed, but I especially liked the new characters and the story in this one because it does such a good way of telling the complexity and duality of close relationships one has with one’s family. Four and a half stars.

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### **Darlene Wilson says**

? Despite a toddler and a house full of Standard Poodles, Melanie Travis can't pass up an opportunity to help legendary dog breeder Edward March pen his life story. The breeder's angry son Andrew demands she stop working on the book. Suddenly, Andrew is killed by a seemingly intentional hit-and-run. Melanie sniffs out every possible clue, runs into dead ends as fast as she runs out of time. The longer the killer stays unleashed, the sooner she may end up in the dog house for good.

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### **Liisa says**

This book was a 5 star book with regard to simple enjoyment of the story right up to finding out who, why, and what happened....

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### **Marty says**

Yes there were dogs involved ... the story revolves around people who breed and show dogs, but thankfully, the dogs do not control the story or do anything much more than be dogs. I hate the stories where the animals are “superhuman” and help the human solve the crime. Here, Melanie is hired to help an elderly dog show judge (Edward March) write his memoirs, but instead of a story about his life with dogs, he wants to write a tell-all story about his love affairs with women in the dog show world... one of whom is Melanie’s Aunt Peg, an opinionated dog show judge herself. Melanie isn’t sure she wants to co-write such a book when Edward’s only son, Andrew is killed in a hit-and-run incident that the police think is actually murder. It’s a good quick read without too many surprises.

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### **Tracy Weber says**

I thought I had already rated this. So nice to see Melanie and the gang back for another installment after much too long! I miss more of Aunt Peg and Melanie as a school teacher. The stay at home mom thing leaves me cold, but that's probably because I don't have kids! LOVE this series and am waiting for the next installment!

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