



## **The Black Stiletto: The First Diary--1958**

*Raymond Benson*

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## **The Black Stiletto: The First Diary--1958** Raymond Benson

Could Martin Talbot's elderly, Alzheimer-stricken mother, Judy, really have been the Black Stiletto? When Martin discovers several volumes of her diaries hidden by his mother, he is stunned beyond all imagination. His mother, the underground heroine of yesteryear? The famed, still unidentified woman who battled Communist spies, took on the Mafia, and preyed on common crooks? The woman who exacted punishment on evildoers without mercy? But it is all described, in great detail, in the diaries. What caused her to begin her quest for justice. Her decision to act outside the law. Her feats as the famed and feared vigilante. How her reputation exploded. In short, how it all played out. Could it be true? Talbot is filled with doubt and disbelief. But the reappearance of one of the Stiletto's old enemies with a thirst for merciless revenge makes the story more than real and could imperil the life of not only the Stiletto, but her son and granddaughter as well.

## **The Black Stiletto: The First Diary--1958 Details**

Date : Published September 5th 2011 by Oceanview Publishing

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Author : Raymond Benson

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## **From Reader Review The Black Stiletto: The First Diary--1958 for online ebook**

### **Susan says**

I did not want to put this book down. Judy Cooper's survival spirit caught me right away and swept me off to New York with her, through her years of training and growth, and finally to the super hero clad in practical boots, a balanced knife, and chic leather outfit. The story was so believable, so every day life of masked crime fighter. Raymond Benson has created a kickass heroine in the super hero realm where so few clothed, practical, female crime fighters exist in literature. Judy is so very human with her flaws, her inner drive, her mistakes, and her questions about how and why she pursues justice.

The side characters were well placed, giving Judy a balance of friends watching her back and those enemies pretending to be chummy or ignoring her because they don't believe her a threat until too late. Throughout the tale, she keeps her secret identity to herself, with only a few close friends making some educated guesses. But she also has close friends that have no idea – an aspect that I also liked, as it gave Judy time to simply be Judy, a young single women in NY. The book also notes racial and gender inequalities, and the differences between NY and TX at the same time period.

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### **✿Aimee✿ Just one more page... says**

I have to say that *The Black Stiletto* was a fantastic read! Finally a believable backstory to an ass-kicking vigilante heroine!

Martin's mother is an Alzheimer's patient in a facility that rarely responds to him anymore. The family lawyer gives him a package that his mother wanted him to have when she was dead or incapacitated. In it he finds her journal about how she became the vigilante hero when she was in her 20's.

Judy (The Black Stiletto) is a completely believable character. We see her as a young girl in a poor family that suffers abuse at the hands of her step-father (trigger warnings). When she runs away, she survives and then thrives as she is drawn to learning how to defend herself.

The people that come into her life often help her out only because of her tenacity. We see the good and bad things that happen to her over time and how she evolves. Bring in the mob and other assorted baddies. We see her fledgling attempts at being a vigilante and how she grows through these attempts.

The book is told from both the Judy's diary entries and her son Martin's point of view in the present day. Both worlds will collide in a satisfying ending.

I'm looking forward to reading more about The Black Stiletto as the series continues!

*Thank you Netgalley for a free digital copy in exchange for a review.*

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### **Lou says**

A fresh pleasant surprise of a story. I only wished I read it when it came out.

The main character the black stiletto is a vigilante, a living lethal weapon, a woman who can kill.

She fights crime and protects the innocent.

A woman who's not the typical woman of the 1950's, she's trained herself and learned the art of fighting and molded herself to become an unstoppable force of a woman.

This history of her reign is delivered in diary fashion, which she kept and wrote. Her son discovers it and narrates it to us. He never knew of her past and he's shocked, she's now an aged and ill woman. To find out your mother was once a heroine is great but he also discovers her dark sad past and the reason she had to stand up and be a fighter. A horrible crime against her close to home propelled this woman in a vengeful journey that ends with a deadly payback.

The son also finds many items which possibly we will hear more of in other novels. He failed to discover the significance of them, they were a JFK campaign button, Smith and Wesson handgun in a secret closet and a Gold key.

I loved this femme-fatal character and the story was thoroughly entertaining layered out in crisp and nice writing.

He has another Black Stiletto book out end of May 2012.

Review also can be viewed @<http://more2read.com/review/the-black-stiletto-the-first-diary-1958-by-raymond-benson/> along with a book trailer.

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### **Diane S ? says**

While the premise of the book was interesting and the writing was very good, super heroes and mythical spies are not my genre. A woman, who has Alzheimers and is put in a nursing home, leaves a series of letters and diaries for her son. Reading these he finds out she was the Black Stiletto and a player in many of the politics and captures of mob figures during the fifties and sixties. Characters were interesting and well drawn, book mostly in diary form. Enjoyed it but it was just okay for me.

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### **Wendy says**

The premise was good: a guy finds old diaries in his mother's dilapidated house; she's in assisted living for Alzheimer's; reading the diaries, he discovers his mother is the Black Stiletto, an avenger of evil in the 50s & 60s. Can it be true? Did she really kill people? Unfortunately, I didn't think the book fulfilled its potential. Most of the book is straight from her diaries (as he reads), and it seemed a little juvenile to me. I realize she was naïve and young, but..... And I didn't need to read about every blow during the fights. I got bored BUT was intrigued to discover if the killer she helped put in prison for 50 years would find her when he got out. The book was fine, but I'd had more than enough by the time I got through.

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## **Mike (the Paladin) says**

[ Judy originally leaves home because she is raped a 13 by her step-father. (hide spoiler)]

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## **Rhonda says**

I thought it sure a different way to hear about super hero. Martin Talbot mother's lawyer gave him a letter and lockbox and it he learned that his mom was the black stiletto. She was famous back in the 60's and he had no clue. In the box was blueprints of their house and it had a hidden room in basement. Their house has been up for sale for two years.

Martin found the hidden room their house and in it was

a bunch of journals two costumes, the knife, gun and other things. So Martin reads the journal and puts the rest in safe deposit box.

From Judy diary he learn about the changes in her body when she 12 better hearing, didn't need glasses anymore and could tell if someone was honest or tellings lies. Tells how after her stepfather raped her she ran away to New York and her life . She learned boxing, karate and then how to use a knife. How after the murder of her friend she became the black stiletto.

It also contains chapters of Roberto and his getting out of jail and what revenge he is planning.

I like that Judy seamed like a real person with faults. Liked how she stopped crimes. Did not agree with revenge killings.

Still have more questions I want to know, so I hope their is going to be more books about the Black stiletto. I will gladly read them kept me interested through the whole book.

I was given this ebook in exchange for honest review.

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## **Tara Chevrestt says**

This was a book that I should have loved.. and could have loved if it hadn't been for a few irritations.

Why I shoulda loved it: A guy finds his mom's old diaries and learns that his mother, now suffering from Alzheimer's in a nursing home used to be the equivalent to Catwoman. She was the Black Stiletto during the 1950s and 1960s, a woman vigilante that ran the streets of NYC avenging the death of her Italian lover, taking revenge on women beaters, bringing down muggers, and even at one point, unveiling a spy ring. She was a boxer/karate expert who was tough as nails.

The action was great though I gotta say it was unbelievable at times. However, it is a comic book type heroine. The problem was not lack of excitement, but the way the excitement was told... TOLD. All the good stuff is in Judy's journal. Yep, 3/4s of the book is a diary. I love some diaries, but not that much. I would have preferred flashbacks so that I could actually experience Judy's parts, rather than being told what she experienced.

The modern day parts were minimal and focused on the son reading the journals a gangster just out of jail who will let nothing stop him from killing the Black Stiletto. I liked the gangster's parts and the humor and sarcasm. (Imagine not driving for fifty years and suddenly discovering power steering!) I wish Judy's parts had been more like his, writing style wise.

Another thing I didn't like: the occasional "ha ha's" in Judy's diary. For some reason, that put me off. Everytime a "ha" popped up, it seemed to ruin the momentum for me.

Pretty exciting read, however, and will be enjoyed by fans of comic book heroines.

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### **Robin says**

This is an enjoyable romp with a great, kick ass heroine, The Black Stiletto- even if it was far fetched on occasions and a couple of times the heroine did things that were downright stupid. I liked the two stories running concurrently - the diary in the 1950s and then how it impacts on her son, Martin, in the present as he's reading it. An ending that obviously lends itself to a sequel.

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### **Diana Brockelbank says**

Indeed a very unique book. The Black Stiletto, in her youth, was a vigilante of sorts- killing off the bad guys or capturing them and leaving cryptic notes for the police. In her "golden years", she has Alzheimer's and is in a nursing home. Her son visits her frequently and more so when he finds her diaries and learns of his mom's alter ego. He is astounded that his mom did all the things she did. She was bold, brave and fearless. But only after months of training in judo and karate did she have the guts to go after those who had harmed her or her friends.

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### **Denise Johnson says**

I enjoyed reading the book. It was just what I wanted after a couple challenging non-fiction titles. I enjoyed the descriptions of Odessa, Texas, and New York, NY, because I've lived in Ny and in Midland Next to Odessa. It adds to the enjoyment of a book when the author has details I relate to in dome way, just right. The plot was a fun romp. I was as incredulous as the character Martin at the things his mother did. But that is what fiction is in some part of its core. I look forward to reading the second tile in the series.

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### **Laura Greenwood says**

<http://a-reader-lives-a-thousand-live...>

Title: The Black Stiletto: The First Diary

Series: The Black Stiletto (#1)

Author: Raymond Benson

From: Netgalley

Genre: Superhero

Release Date: 5th September 2011

Challenges: 2016 Blogger Shame, 2016 Netgalley & Edelweiss Challenge

Links: Goodreads - Amazon

When Martin is bequeathed his mother, Judy's, diaries when she is stricken with Alzheimer's, the last thing he expected to discover was that she was the Black Stiletto, a masked vigilante who was active in 1950s New York. Reading her first diary takes him back to discover how she became the Black Stiletto and the adventures of her first year, including how she became involved with the Mafia and the New York underworld.

I really liked the way that The Black Stiletto was told. There was a split in POVs between Martin and Judy. Martin's POV was in the present and offered a look into how he felt about the information, as well as a way to see a modern day Judy, whereas Judy's POV was written in a diary form so included reflection and the ability to report events in retrospect.

It was interesting to see the origins of a vigilante/superhero and the fact that there is the slight moral grey area that goes with it. Judy's childhood, particularly the teenage years, were explored in a way that made it clear events influenced her, but she also did things that would definitely be considered illegal. More than that some of her acts were pure revenge, and that added a different dimension to the story.

I must say though this book had a great mix of romance, action and adventure and it really did keep you reading. I don't know what I was expecting when I started The Black Stiletto, but I was definitely surprised at just how pulled into the story I became. There was no way of knowing what would happen and that made it a good read.

I enjoyed The Black Stiletto, and it was an entralling read.

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### **Jessica Bronder says**

Martin Talbot is an accountant with an ex-wife, a daughter that wants to be an actor instead of getting a business degree, and a mother with Alzheimer's. He gets a call from his mother's lawyer. The attorney tells him that his mother wanted him to have an envelope and locked box if she passed away or if she became incapacitated. Martin opens the envelope and box and learns that his mother was The Black Stiletto.

He goes to their old house and finds a secret room in the basement with her costume, newspaper and magazine clipping, other Black Stiletto memorabilia, and a collection of diaries. Martin starts reading and gets sucked into her story.

The book starts with the past and the year 1958. Judy Cooper grew up in Texas with her mother and two brothers. Her father died during the war and her mother remarried Douglas, a roughneck from the oil fields. After an assault from Douglas, she runs away from home. She gets to New York City and makes a living for herself. There she finds that she is drawn to helping others. She starts learning boxing, karate, judo, and how to use a knife. This leads her to becoming The Black Stiletto.

Back in the present time, Martin is bitter that his mother never told him any of this before. He is also having a hard time at work and dealing with his daughter's career choice. We also meet Roberto. He has finally been released from prison after doing his time for murder charges. He is 78 and has a personal vendetta toward The Black Stiletto. So Roberto begins his hunt for Judy.

I really liked this book. Judy was the best character; it's great to see someone rise about their beginnings. What's nice is I have learned some of the techniques that she used to defend herself and it helped me to

relate to her. Martin had his own issues and I admit that I was not impressed with him as a person, great for the character though. I loved how the book goes through 1958.

I can't think of anything that I was not impressed with and can't think of a single thing. I have to say that I can't wait to get the next book in this series. If you like thrillers and super heroes, I think that this is one book that you need to read.

I received this book for free from netGalley in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Pat aka Tygyr says**

I found this to be a gem of a book. I loved comic books and super heroes as I was growing up in the 50's (really wanted to be Wonder Woman). The Black Stiletto is a female superhero in the 50's. She runs away from her abusive stepfather and learns to box, takes martial arts, and works her way up to a black belt. She is living in NY and falls in love with a mobster. He teaches her to use a knife - her favorite is a stiletto. He also teaches her to use lock picks. When he is murdered, she decides to exact some justice on his behalf. She makes a costume and manages to kill or see jailed his murderers. In the present she is a patient in an Alzheimer's ward. Her son Martin and her granddaughter (his daughter) visit her. Her home has never sold. Martin goes to look at it and see if maybe something needs to be done in the way of better upkeep. While there he finds a secret closet he never remembers from his childhood. In it is a costume and diaries. The story is told as flashbacks as Martin reads his mom's diaries. She did not stop trying to mete out justice. The more he reads his mom's story the more he understands and sees the courage in his own daughter. There is a 2nd book. The 1st ends with Martin not knowing who his father is. Maybe the 2nd book helps him figure that out, but I don't know. While I really enjoyed this book, at this time I have no plans to read the 2nd one.

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### **Dianne says**

First, I have to say, this book rocked me back on my heels! I had NO idea what I would find or how much I would get involved in the story!

The diaries of an aging Alzheimer's patient reveal the story of a young woman driven to becoming a legendary 'superhero' fighting for justice, against any evil that gets in her way.

Imagine being the middle aged man learning the secrets of his mother's past through a series of diaries she had written long ago. Mind boggling, to say the least, because her entries can be verified! Judy did not claim to possess super powers, other than a keen sense of right and wrong, and the ability to detect the darkness within people she has known. Armed with training in a boxing ring, training with a martial arts teacher, her own natural athletic abilities and streetwise grit, young Judy creates her own version of a masked avenger-type costume, becoming the crowd's hero, the law's thorn, and the Mafia's downfall!

Young Judy is raped and abused by her stepfather, she runs away at 14, and learns to survive on the streets of New York City, determined NEVER to be a victim again! The rest is a history she has kept hidden for fifty years.

Mr. Benson has created a spellbinding read! He has nailed the diary entries as completely believable! Judy IS the hero you root for, love, want to know, and really can believe in! The jump from the past to the present is well-seamed, tying together beautifully! I have never read a book like this before! It was fun, serious, emotional, larger than life! And the ending????? Perfect!

This edition was provided to me by NetGalley and Oceanview Publishing in exchange for an honest review!

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