



## Blue Smoke

*Nora Roberts*

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## **Blue Smoke** Nora Roberts

Reena Hale grew up with an intimate knowledge of the destructive power of fire. When she was a child, her family's restaurant was burned to the ground, and the man responsible was sent to jail. The Hale family banded together to rebuild, and Reena found her life's calling. She trained as a firefighter and then as a cop, always with the end goal in sight: to become an arson investigator. Now, as part of the arson unit, she is called in on a series of suspicious fires that seem to be connected-not just to each other, but to her. And as danger ignites all around her, Reena must rely on experience and instinct to catch a dangerous madman who will not stop until everything she loves has gone up in smoke.

## **Blue Smoke Details**

Date : Published October 4th 2005 by Berkley

ISBN :

Author : Nora Roberts

Format : Kindle Edition 470 pages

Genre : Romance, Romantic Suspense, Mystery, Fiction, Suspense, Contemporary Romance

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## From Reader Review Blue Smoke for online ebook

### Mo says

**“Why couldn't the merciful God turn down the sunlight so it wasn't blasting like a red furnace against his aching eyes? Because he'd worshipped the god of beer, that's why. He'd broken a commandment and worshipped the false and foamy god of beer. And now he was being punished.”**

I think one of the main reasons I like these Nora Robert's books is that her heroines are smart, independent and strong. The heroes are down to earth and likeable.

Catarina (Reena) came from an Italian family. So plenty of talk about wine, pizza, antipasto.

**He was a fucking cobra,  
just as patient, just as lethal.**

Bad guy was a sick fucker.

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### Paraphrodite says

3.5 stars. I think I might have read this before as the story feels very familiar. In any case, it's a solid book and Joyce Bean's narration was good as usual.

I liked the almost movie-like feel to Bo's first 3 glimpses of Rina (who became his "Dream Girl") before they finally met up 15 years later when she bought the place next to his... talk about fate working slowly...

The mystery/suspense side was very evident and I thought the final confrontation slightly anti-climatic. I really enjoyed Rina's family though. They were so loving, loud and fun.

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### Dana Al-Basha ????? ?????? says

The movie BLUE SMOKE tells the story of a young girl who sees her family's pizzeria burn to the ground, and she knows she wants to be a firefighter when she grows older. Little did she know that a pyromaniac stalker threatens her life and the life of all she loves and holds dear since that night till this day.

Reena and Bo are also soulmates, and I love how he fell for her from day one, and how later on he becomes her neighbor.

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## **LJ says**

BLUE SMOKE (Romantic Thriller-Baltimore-Cont) – G+

Roberts, Nora – Standalone

Putnam, 2005- Hardcover

When Reena Hale was 12 years old, events lead to her family's restaurant being burnt by an arsonist. With that, Reena was determined to become an arson investigator with the Baltimore police. Other fires have touched those known to Reena, but now it has become very personal and very dangerous.

\*\*\* I am a huge fan of Ms. Roberts work and applaud her moving more into stories where the emphasis is more on the mystery than the romance. This was a well-crafted story, beginning when Reena is young and traveling through experiences in her life to present day. The excellent characters, relationships, dialogue and sense of place, along with the romance and intimate scenes that are the hallmark of Robert's writing are all here. The only problem I had was that you know the villain from the beginning, so it does diminish the element of suspense. Still, it is understandable that Reena doesn't put it together until the end and the final scenes bring the suspense into the story. There is graphic violence and profanity, but it's realistic and clear that Roberts did her research on fires. Roberts is an excellent writer who has a permanent place on my "must buy" list.

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## **TL says**

DNF at page 282

It was: "Started off well went meh in the middle the briefly picked up again" By that time though, I didn't care anymore.

At first I liked Reena, even if she seemed a little unrealistic at times. I would love to have that good of a memory sometimes. Loved her family and the pizza place, the pride everyone took in it.

Reena started to lose her appeal... not that she got on my nerves exactly, I just stopped caring. While I loved Bowen Goodnight, I never felt the chemistry between them, even during the two love scenes I read (my eyes glazed over a couple times actually). The baseball game date was cute but \*shrugs\*

We go through different periods of Reena's life, and while it was probably necessary to build her history and

character up it just felt overlong. It was around page 170 I did the mental equivalent of checking my watch.

I guessed who the 'firebug' was pretty early but it didn't sour me any against the story, but I never felt the danger from him really. He was disturbed sure but I just couldn't muster any strong feelings toward him.

I stuck it out till the above mentioned page count but I just couldn't anymore.

A miss this time unfortunately but oh well, on to the next read.

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### **Ira says**

I'm in the middle of moving, ton things to do made me unable to finished a book without stopping a lot. If after I stopped I don't interested to continue it later, I pick other books! That's why I have so many currently reading. But this one is so good and I read till very late last night!??

An arson investigator heroine, very interesting and dangerous job.

I don't know why, but she reminds me to a softer version of Mrs. Roarke! Lol. Oh maybe I do, she saw too many victims in her line of work, and have a cool head just like Eve.

And a hero who fell in love and have a crush to our heroine and never actual met her for 13 years! ?.

He saw her three times in 13 years but never able to approach her, she was his 'dream girl' since forever ❤??

I like this one very much! ❤?❤?❤?

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### **Jennifer says**

Prior to reading a book, especially when I have several other books to read on my "to-read" shelf, I check out Amazon.com's reviews. There were quite a few positive reviews for this book but more than a fair share of people slamming the book for one reason or another. Not certain what I was getting into, I read the book with lowered expectations and was pleasantly surprised.

When she was eleven, Reena watched her parents' Italian restaurant burn. It was arson, the culprit went to jail, and Reena found her life's work - investigating arson fires. The novel starts when Reena was eleven and in the first couple of hundred pages follows her at various points in her life as tragedy takes the life of her boyfriend, an almost boyfriend, and another fire is set to frame her. The isolated incidents take place over the course of 10 years, so while it is obvious to the reader that Reena is being singled out, it is not obvious to her.

At thirty-one, Reena buys a house next door to Bo Goodnight (great hero, but seriously horrible name, how high of a cheese factor can you get?). Bo has glimpsed Reena through the years at various points, once at a party, another time at the mall, once in traffic, but he has always been thwarted from actually being able to meet no matter how hard he tried to reach her. One of the highlights of the book is Reena stepping out into her back yard and meeting Bo for the first time. This is a funny, endearing scene that really had me liking Bo.

For those who are fans of J.D. Robb, this book will be a fun and great read for you. I'm a Nora Roberts fan, and I am also the first to admit that not all of her books are winners (the Key trilogy was unreadable). "Blue Smoke" is a fun book and an entertaining read. Reena has a large family that she is close to and spends a lot of time with, people in the neighborhood know her, and reading about her life and her neighborhood was enjoyable.

The romance is enjoyable, too, with two characters who do not treat each other horribly or get into stupid misunderstandings or fight for no reason. I particularly like to read romances where the main characters are not stupid or mean with each other, and this is a great example of that. The most believable romance stories to me are the ones where the characters like each other, respect each other, and have a fairly easy going relationship with each other. This novel illustrates the joy of that type of relationship.

In reading the unfavorable reviews, I think that Nora Roberts is in a very difficult position. There are many people who love the familiarity in a Roberts novel, the known happily ever after, the type of hero and heroines she writes, the kind of families she showcases. I think that when she writes books with these signature elements some people really enjoy them and some people wail "She's in a rut!"

However, when she branches out and does something different with her novels, as she does here, the reverse happens, people are upset that they had to read almost 200 pages before the main romance kicks in, while much of the book is relegated to solving a mystery that the readers have solved from page one.

None of these factors really dulled my enjoyment of the book. I tend to like Roberts' work, especially when she does something out of the ordinary. She writes well and even the beginning parts that I knew ahead of time would contain tragedy were extremely entertaining to read because Roberts is simply an excellent writer. I enjoyed the book immensely, in part due to the big family, the friendships, and sense of community she imbues this novel with.

I'm pleased that Nora Roberts continues to write different types of novels without paying too much attention to the criticism she receives. She can't please everyone, but her popularity shows that she does please the majority of people the majority of the time.

If you do not like her J.D. Robb books, give this one a pass, but for those who enjoy reading Roberts for her excellent writing, you will enjoy "Blue Smoke".

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### **Sandra says**

I enjoyed this to a certain point, especially young Reena but I found it much too long with lots of unnecessary filler before we get to the main story and I found the bad guy too clever (given he is setting fires and killing people for a 10 yr period and he eludes capture wreaking a ridiculous amount of havoc even after they know who he is but there is no mention of a particularly high IQ at any point) and the amount of damage he was able to inflict before they caught him ridiculously high. I think that at one point he murders 2 (or possibly 3) people, sets two fires and booby traps a fire extinguisher ON THE SAME NIGHT. For me that dropped it from a solid 3 down to a 2.

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## **Celia says**

I loved all the intrinsic events taking place and the family bond the Hale family has. I loved the mystery and drama in this book. I literally stayed up all night reading this one.

In 1985 Baltimore Catarina "Renna" Hale was attacked by her neighbor twelve year old Joey Pastorelli and would have been raped if the neighbors didn't intervene. Reena's father fought with Joey's abusive dad and that night, the Hale's family pizzeria, Sirico's burns to the ground. Police find enough evidence to arrest Joey's father and Joey is taken away from his mother after he burns his dog and leaves it on Reena's doorstep.

Reena decides that she will because an arson investigator, studying hard in school to make her dream a reality. When Rena buys a house in her old neighborhood, her next door neighbor is Bo Goodnight who saw Reena at a college party years ago and fell in lust. Over the years he sighted his Dream Girl but they never met but when the pair finally get together, lust turns into something more for Bo and the commitment phobic Reena who is afraid that he might be her one and only true love. They conduct their courtship during an arson investigation in which someone is targeting Reena and the people closest to her. Reena is in a race against time to catch the killer before the body count mounts.

Once again Nora Roberts has written a wonderful romantic thriller that is sure to hit the New York Times bestseller list. Her characterization are fantastic, the firefighting scenes are full of action and suspense and the plot moves along at a fast pace. Bo's Dream Girl is better than his fantasy of her and he is determined to woo her no matter how many obstacles she put in his path. Their love scenes are sweet, poignant sometimes downright funny. *BLUE SMOKE* is an example of why Ms. Roberts is one of the most popular authors writing today.

by

Harriet Klausner

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## **BJ Rose says**

This was a reread for me, and I think I liked it even more the second time. Obviously the suspense was muted, but I was surprised at how many details I had forgotten about the fires and deaths. This time I was able to concentrate more on the emotions and interactions of the characters, and this was simply wonderful! I know some readers were disappointed with the slow development - Reena and Bo didn't even meet until nearly 200 pages into the story! - but to me the strength of this story is in the gradual buildup of events through the years, which actually puts more tension into the current-day events. Above all, I loved the strength of family love and support that Ms. Roberts shows us throughout this story, and the way the Hale family extended that love so completely and naturally to Bo.

Here's a couple of my favorite 'mom-isms' from Mrs. Hale:

"We're still your parents, and we'll be your parents a hundred years after you're dead."

"Your father has realized what was obvious - that I was right."

I come from a large family, so this line just seemed so natural to me: "The floor was littered with kids of

varying ages, with adults stepping over or around them." *Yup, that's how it's done!*

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### **Cata says**

Já pensou no que aconteceria se provocasse um sociopata com uma afeição particular pelo fogo? Se ele voltasse anos depois para se vingar discretamente, deixando atrás de si um rastro de crimes horrorosos sem que você conseguisse fazer a ligação? E se de repente ele mudasse o seu modo de agir e começasse a lhe dar pistas? O que aconteceria quando conseguisse "unir os pontos"? O que aconteceria quando percebesse que ele está perto, a observá-a? A seguir todos os seus passos? E como sentir-se-ia quando apercebesse que ele tenciona ir atrás de si e da sua família? Sentir-se-ia aterrorizada? Tem razões para se sentir...

Tudo começou quando Catarina Hale tinha 11 anos e tudo terminará quando ela tiver 31... de uma maneira ou de outra.

Nora Roberts surpreendeu-me com este livro. Não tinha grandes expectativas mas fiquei colada desde o inicio. É definitivamente dos melhores livros que li da autora. Tem romance, tem crime, tem suspense e tem comédia.

Adorei Bo e Catarina, o casal protagonista, e ri-me muito com estas personagens. Também gostei bastante da família da Catarina.

Vibrei com as partes relatadas pelo criminoso. Adoro este tipo de cenas, em que vemos tudo pela outra perspectiva. A loucura, a genialidade, o planeamento, os motivos, a emoção. É algo que me atrai por mais mórbido que possa parecer, e este livro contém muitas cenas assim.

Para quem ainda o leu só tenho uma pergunta: De que é que está à espera?

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### **Jacob Proffitt says**

So disappointing in so many ways. The story is spread out over twenty years and takes way, way too long getting to the "present" (2005). Roberts spends lots of time in key time periods that, sure, are integral to the story, but there is just so very much piled in. I feel like what should have been vignettes were artificially inflated to make them not just chapters, but entire *sections* of the book. Which mean that the book doesn't really *start* until it's practically over.

The two main characters were good enough, and the sole reason the book maintained its three stars. Bo is simply dreamy with his manly competence and even temper. Reena is less attractive with her hint of broken and career obsession. Her family helps make up for that, though, so it evens out on the plus column.

The central conflict, though, the main antagonist, just doesn't work. And that's far more serious. His identity isn't really a mystery (though Roberts avoids naming him for far too long) and his obsession is pretty clear as well. But he's way too competent for what he turns out to be and that makes him way, *way* too successful for the eventual plot. This affected the ending where I was left with a sense that the cost was too much and

artificially inflated at that. This made the ending feel unearned in a way that makes you reevaluate the whole story. Which is where you find that it *really* doesn't work because not only was the bad guy too competent in the end, but he was more competent than he should have been all the way up front, too.

So yeah, I felt fundamentally cheated and manipulated with the main plot and ended up wishing that this had been a straight-forward romance rather than one of Roberts' thrillers.

**A note about Steamy:** Another area I felt robbed as the main characters get essentially one decent intimate scene with two half-hearted sketches later that feel peremptory, at best. This is made worse by dragging us through another scene with Reena and somebody else and I actually kind of hate that.

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### Ana Fernandes says

Já foi lido em 2014, mas agora é k percebi k n tinha nos "lidos" no Goodreads

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### Maja (The Nocturnal Library) says

Nora's books are one of my most reliable cures at times when my brain begs for a much needed rest. All of us readers have this amazing capacity to shut down and unplug, and for me, the best way to achieve this state of complete detachment from my everyday troubles is through one of Nora's books. While I don't much care for her paranormal work (PNR is just not my genre), no one writes romantic suspense better than she.

Blue Smoke is an old one, released more than ten years ago, but aside from the years on each chapter, nothing about it seems outdated. It begins as Nora's story so often do, with our heroine's childhood and the traumatic event that will determine the course of her life. From the very beginning, Catarina Hale stands out among her brothers and sisters. She is intelligent, inquisitive and systematic, a child that is never really a child. When a fire takes away her family's livelihood, Reena knows exactly what she wants to be when she grows up. Everything from that point on is just another step toward her desired career as a fire investigator.

We follow Reena through various stages of her life, from one traumatic event to the next. While her career is on an accelerated path, her love life is miserable from the start. Somehow Reena's love interests, no matter how superficial, always end up dead, and their death always involves fire. It takes a while for Reena to connect the dots, but not so long to make us doubt her intelligence.

As usual, Nora gives us a strong, independent heroine. She doesn't need a man to save her, and even when the right one comes along, she doesn't just hand over the reins. If anything, Reena is reluctant to share her life, but Bo Goodnight is just a bit too hard to resist. As we follow Reena through her education and the beginnings of her career, Bo is always in the background, dreaming about the mysterious girl he's never had a chance to meet. Even though he's just a touch too perfect, as Nora's heroes tend to be, he is precisely what our Reena needs. I adored these two together and I appreciated how much time Nora took to develop a true relationship between them.

Even when her books are not perfect, I never hesitate to recommend Nora – not that she needs my recommendation. The woman is simply magical. Sinking into her story is one of my favorite feelings in the world.

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## Jennifer Wardrip says

When Catarina "Reena" Hale was eleven years old, she watched with her family--father Gib, mother Bianca, sister Francesca, sister Isabella, and brother Xander--as their family business, Sirico's, burned to the ground. The case came to a swift conclusion, when the father of a boy who had attempted to assault Reena is picked up for arson. The family rebuilds their business, their family ties stay strong, and their love and respect in the neighborhood grows.

We fast-forward to Reena in college, where she's finally decided to lose her virginity to Josh, a fellow student who yearns to be a writer. After her sister Bella's dream wedding, Reena has sex with her boyfriend, returns home, and later discovers that Josh has died during a horrific apartment fire--after supposedly falling asleep in bed with a lit cigarette.

Again, fast-forward. Reena is still in training to become an arson investigator, her life-long dream. She's a member of the police force, has worked actual fires with her fellow firefighters, and now needs to finish her training. A firefighter she was thinking of dating dies in an apparent robbery, shot and left in his burning truck.

Still farther into the future, Reena is a full-fledged arson investigator, and tragedy finds her once again. Only days after earning her gold shield, Luke, a boyfriend whose marriage proposal she turned down, has his Mercedes burned sky-high, and of course Reena is the main suspect. After she's cleared, she's only more determined than ever to make fire her job--to find out who sets it, and why, and to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Then she meets Bowen "Bo" Goodnight, her new next-door-neighbor, and feelings and emotions get jumbled up with the fires that seem to dog her every step. Because someone has made her their vendetta, and will stop at nothing to make sure that his own brand of justice is served.

I loved *BLUE SMOKE*! Although it took me four days to read, weighing in at 437 pages and spanning twenty years, the book is a wonderful mix of engaging family saga, taut police/arson procedural, and down and out thriller. I don't agree with the other reviewers who said this book was "horror" or that Ms. Roberts delved too deeply into the mind of the killer--most romantic suspense (and this is definitely one of those books) these days go more into the who, how, and why and less on the fluff. I commend Ms. Roberts for another winning story, one which I was sad to see end. I loved reading about the Hale family and their extended relations, and I'm sure you'll be as enthralled by them as I was.

\*\*I have to also say that *BLUE SMOKE* reads a lot like Nora Roberts' alter-ego, J.D. Robb, in a lot of instances. Some of the short sentences, rapid-pace dialogue, and out-loud ruminating are reminiscent of Eve Dallas, but that only adds to the allure of *BLUE SMOKE*, instead of taking away from it. Kudos on another winner!

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