



Body Movers

Stephanie Bond

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Carlotta Wren's life hasn't turned out as she'd planned. She didn't plan for her parents to skip bail for a white-collar crime, leaving her to raise her brother. She didn't plan on having the silver spoon ripped from her mouth and forgoing college to work retail. She didn't plan on her blue-blood fiancé dumping her. And she didn't plan on still being single ten years later, working at Neiman Marcus, with no idea where her fugitive parents are.

She's coping. Until...

...her lovable brother is arrested, and the hunky cop decides to reopen her parents' case.

...her brother becomes a body mover for the morgue and his sexy boss gets Carlotta involved.

...her former fiancé's wife is murdered, fingering Carlotta.

With three men in her life, Carlotta has added motivation to help bag a murderer to keep her own well-dressed body from being next on the list!

Body Movers Details

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Thenia says

I'd been suffering from a book hangover and browsing through my selves, when I noticed a note on this book that I left unfinished. While I have been trying to save myself some time and frustration by removing books and series I no longer enjoy from my TBR, my OCD side is still less than happy with me for not finishing books.

Guess which side won this battle... I knew I'd find fault with any book I started at this point, and since I'd already started this one and had found enough faults to actually put it aside for quite some time, I figured it might be the right one to compliment my current mood, and it didn't exactly disappoint.

I was drawn to the description of the book initially, but the story veers off from it pretty early on and doesn't return to the path I was expecting it would take. The heroine is not one I could particularly identify with and her tenacity, among other things, annoyed me at times, but she does remain consistent throughout so there's that.

The resolution of the mystery is not something I saw coming, which is another thing in the positives column, and so is the relationship between the siblings. They both love one another and try their best, despite their flaws and bad judgement that sometimes causes problems between them.

I was also intrigued by a couple of the men that could turn into romantic interests, but am less than impressed with the one the heroine gave her attention to. (view spoiler).

The story ends with a number of unresolved issues, to which (view spoiler) are added, but I'm not sure if I'll ever get to the next one in the series, 2 Bodies for the Price of 1. Then again my OCD side might win again at some point in the future. Who knows...

Apr 06, 2015:

A lot less light than the description would have you think. More than halfway through and I don't particularly care to see what happens next.

On hold for now.

Cyndi says

Our heroine is in the dangerous job of retail. I say that as someone who worked in retail for years and dealt with insane customers.

So when one of her customers shows up dead things really heat up. Especially since she was the wife of our heroine's ex-fiancé. Now our heroine has to deal with a hot detective who wants to find her fugitive parents, the ex who is now free, and her brothers hot boss who is the body-mover.

But the guy giving her the most trouble is her little brother who keeps stacking up gambling debts with bad

guys.

BTW for those of you who don't like the cheating spouses, might want to skip these. Our heroine's best friend usually dates married men and our heroine gets a bit close to her ex before his wife is disposed of.

Brittany (The Book Addict's Guide/Novelly Yours) says

Initial Impressions 4/29/12: Hmm, I'd actually say 3.5 stars for this one. I really did enjoy most of it, but I just kept feeling slightly let down at the end of the book. I wasn't quite sure I liked the way the mystery was resolved, but there were some really enjoyable characters in the book and I'm very interested to see how Carlotta's relationships develop in the next couple books! Also, I want to see them get more involved in the body-moving business. I had the impression that this was already the family business so I was caught off guard that it wasn't, so maybe that will take off in the next book.

Full review originally posted on The Book Addict's Guide: Well, this was enjoyable, but I do have to say that I was hoping for better. Maybe since there were three possible romances, I really wanted one of them to start panning out. Coop's lust for Carlotta is just a crush, she's hopping back on the Peter-train against her better judgment, and I personally was also rooting for the detective (as well as Coop) just because she seemed to hate him so much that she liked him. As for the murder mystery, well played out, but still not quite the ending I wanted it to have. Carlotta does some good sleuthing and like any good mystery heroine, hunts down her own clues instead of leaving it to the professionals! Very good with that side of the novel, but I was even still just mildly disappointed with who ended up being the murderer here. Somehow just not satisfying. Maybe I was also led on by the fact that it was called Body Movers and I just expected all of the characters to be involved in the title business and not just her brothers happening upon it. Oh well. I did still like the characters that were introduced and I'd like to continue on in the series!

Kelly says

What an hilarious, light, beach read. It is similar to the Stephanie Plum series by Janet Evanovich. The main character works at Neiman's at Lenox Mall in Atlanta and I enjoyed all the references to areas I know well. The mystery and fast action make it a page turner and Carlotta always seems to be in the middle of something. This is just a fun read to take a break from all the serious reading. AS one book ends it jumps right into the next book. I ended up reading the 6 books so far in the series in 2 weeks time. Needless to say not much got done around the house. The sexual tension gets more explicit in the later books, which wasn't really necessary. The tension alone was more fun.

Sally says

Miss Bond, you and I are going to have a long relationship - well at least as long as the Body Movers continues!

Carlotta Wren and her then nine-year old brother were abandoned by their parents after her father was accused of embezzling funds from his clients and jumped bail with their mother. Carlotta's fiance broke off their engagement and any hopes for college were destroyed since Carlotta was now her brothers keeper.

Ten years pass. One night at a party, Carlotta runs into her ex-fiance, Peter Ashford, and it seems like there is an ember or two still burning in the ash pile that was once their romance.

A few days later, Peter's wife is found dead in their pool, a victim of an accidental drowning, however the police soon learn she was murdered and Peter is their number one suspect.

Carlotta is upset to discover Peter is a suspect. The head detective on the case, Jack Terry, is giving Carlotta a hard time after learning she was once engaged to Peter and the detective isn't too sure Carlotta didn't have something to do with the murder!

Aud says

Really good if you like murder mysteries! Fast read and a good cliff hanger at the end, can't wait to read the next!

Maria V. Snyder says

This was a fun read. Fast paced and funny overall. I liked the characters and the plot - lots happening.

Only the ending didn't work for me. I like it when the main protag solves the puzzle and she was doing so good, but.... Also she didn't really change over the course of the story - she had a number of insecurities and weaknesses and I'd hoped by the end she'd grow. However, there is a second book (first one ends with a bit of a cliff hanger) so perhaps the author is waiting to show her character's growth in book 2.

Despite the ending, I will be reading the second book to see what happens with the characters :)

Cathleen says

What I thought would be a cute read (one I could suggest to Evanovich fans?) turned out not to be so. This is paced all wrong. Near the end of the first disc, this self-described "sexy mystery" has no spark of romance, no hint of mystery, and a main character that caused me to roll my eyes several times. Stronger elements may have been just out of reach, but readers shouldn't have to work so hard to get to the hook. I just don't care enough.

Cathy says

The weirdest thing happened when I got to the end of this book - I discovered "Questions for Discussion. As if this was some deep book that book clubs would be ordering by the dozen. Sometimes reading ebooks leads to unexpected surprises. But for some odd reason, none of the questions asked me to list the reasons why Carlotta and Wesley are TSTL (too stupid to live). But they are numerous. Too numerous to list here. I'll do

my best to summarize.

Everyone makes mistakes, but Carlotta and her brother Wesley don't do anything right. Maybe I'm just too old, at the advanced age if 39.5, to appreciate the stupidity of youth. It irritates me too much. Gambling to the point of being in debt to 2 thugs who break into your house and threaten your family, buying guns, running drugs, driving with a suspended license, meddling in a murder case, and wasting more money in a day than I spend in a month is just a short list.

The weirdest thing is that I thought the author did a great job writing the characters. Every one, no matter how small, was vividly described and felt completely real to me. Maybe that's part of why the stupidity of the lead characters annoyed me so much, because I just couldn't enjoy watching them do so many potentially tragic things. As for Carlotta, our heroine, yes, every character in every mystery, especially cozy mysteries, is a horrible meddler. But her reasons were so weak. She had many really serious reasons to walk away, over and over, but she stuck it out to make sure a woman who treated her like dirt got justice. As though the police were unmotivated idiots.

I almost gave it 3 stars, because the characterization were so good. But then this whole rant poured out of me and I just couldn't. I do think a lot of people would like it more than I did, especially people under age 30.

Angela says

First off, these are NOT like the Janet Evanovich Stephanie Plum novels. Plum is more hardcore than this woman, whom I don't even think took a swing at a guy. Plum is also a bounty hunter, and Carlotta sells clothing. Plum has a reason to investigate things, whereas this woman? Hardly. If you want a series with more meat on its bone, go with Plum. Want something fluffy and light that you can read while multitasking? Here ya go.

Not that this series is boring; it's just...there. You can read it and feel like the consequences aren't going to be serious. Wesley won't be dismembered, his sister raped, nobody dies but the bad guys. It's a stress-free series, so far. Well, nobody dies if you ignore the bodies that Wesley and Coop pick up.

Lively characters, and Carlotta's plight is very well described. I'm still not sure why she wasted \$300, or why she actually trusted her brother not to waste his paycheck, but hey, without that kind of stupid, the book would be shorter. Hannah is annoying - her constant flirting got old, really quick. I want to see more of this...uh, forgot her name, the other friend that's happy with the dude overseas. And more of Moody - she seemed like someone Carlotta should hang out, someone who has her head on straight.

I haven't been reading chick lit mysteries very long, but they share common elements. A woman starts investigating something she likely shouldn't be investigating, ends up in trouble, and usually has one or two potential love interests, one of which will save her. It happened in this series, the Wollie Shelley series by Harley Jane Kozak, and in pretty much every Mary Higgins Clark book ever. (For those who care, that's why I stopped reading MHC. The plots were tired and worn-out.)

Why keep reading? Eh, I'm bored and why not. As long as the book doesn't actively piss me off, I'll give it a shot. I just wish some of these women made smarter decisions.

Nan says

When I was working at the bookstore, I kept seeing these books. They were in the Body Movers series, and they had clever titles. The cover copy--as well as funny blurbs from the author's family members--drew my eye. However, we never had book one in stock, and I wasn't interested enough to actually order the book.

This weekend, I found books one and two at my local library. I happily checked them out, eager to discover the wonders within the covers. I shouldn't have bothered.

I've rarely read such a slow moving book with so little to recommend it. The death mentioned on the back cover doesn't occur until about 150 pages into the book. Normally, that wouldn't be a problem, but the pacing of the book was just plain odd. Bond spent far too much time setting up Carlotta's story and too little actually advancing the story itself.

Carlotta is an interesting character, as is her brother Wesley. However, I've realized over the years that life is too short to waste on books that I don't enjoy (unless they're necessary for my diss), so I quit this one. Maybe someone else will love it. Sadly, I'm just not into it.

Barbara ★ says

Carlotta Wren, amateur detective, is embroiled in a murder investigation. Angela Ashford, married to Carlotta's ex-boyfriend, Peter, (from 10 years ago) has been murdered. Carlotta feels that Peter is innocent and begins an investigation since she believes that the police aren't investigating properly.

Carlotta's brother, Wesley is having troubles with the law (computer hacking) and he's in deep with loan sharks (gambling). So Carlotta's got a lot on her plate not to mention the fact that her parents skipped town 10 years ago on an embezzlement charge and left her and her much younger brother to fend for themselves. Wesley gets a job working for a funeral home collecting dead bodies (hence the title) and his boss Cooper has the hots for Carlotta but unfortunately, Carlotta is hung up and Peter and ignores Coop.

Very exciting and action packed adventure -- the first in a series. I really enjoyed the characters in this book. The detective Jack Terry is funny with a dry sense of humor and interested in Carlotta regardless of the trouble she is in. Cooper is interesting in a macabre kind of way and interested in Carlotta. Her best friend Hannah is something else - piercings, 80s hair and loud and proud...too funny at times. Peter is an ass and hopefully this is the end of him in the series.

Denise Whelan says

Body Movers was a fantastic read. Carlotta and her brother Wesley Wren are abandoned by their parents 10 years earlier, because her father did not want to go to jail for embezzlement! Carlotta is now in her early 30's and working at Neiman Marcus as a personal shopper for the rich and spoiled! Wesley is 19 years old and always getting into some kind of trouble. This time he gets arrested for hacking in the City Hall computers, presumably to fix some traffic tickets for his friend. He is placed on probation and he must make restitution of \$5,000 and do community service. Wesley thinks he is this great card player, but he borrows more than he can pay back, which brings some shady characters to his and his sister's house. When Carlotta tells Wesley

that he must get a regular job, that gives a regular paycheck and health benefits, Wesley answers an ad as a Body Mover. The fun begins once you open the book! Two of the rich and spoiled wind up dead, one looks like an accident and the other is classified as murder! You will not be able to put this book down, for fear you might miss something that just could be juicy!!!

Rachel says

An okay mystery. Not nearly as engaging as the Stephanie Plum series, but entertaining none the less. I have read the whole series (up to book 6 -- which is the last one she has out as of June 2009). I enjoyed the mysteries and the "romance" between Carlotta and the guys. Wes makes me crazy since he can't seem to make a decent decision to save his life. But other than a few minor irritating points (will she walk away from Peter already ... he's as dull as dirt!), I will continue the series to see what happens next.

I would recommend this series to anyone who is looking for a quick escape. It's not nearly as clever or funny as Evanovich, but it will do in a pinch. Just don't expect too much and you won't be disappointed.

BTW -- most of the series includes some bad language and definitely adult situations (sex, etc.) Not necessarily a "gentle" read.

Gail says

Carlotta is barely keeping it together. Ten years ago her parents were under indictment for embezzlement when they skipped town, leaving 18 year old Carlotta to raise her nine year old geeky brother Wesley. Her fiance dumped her and married someone else in her former social class.

Now she works on commission at Neiman Marcus, serving her former fiance's rich bitch of a wife, and trying to keep her brother safe from loan sharks. Wesley is arrested for hacking and her tenuous finances become more strained as she deals with collectors, murder, her former fiance, a cop with a professional interest in her parents' disappearance and other interests in her own pretty self. When the wife is murdered, life becomes more complicated as Carlotta tries to find sense in life, to find the murder, and to just survive. Oh yeah, and Wesley's on parole with a real job picking up bodies for the morgue, working with another hunky man with a past.

Charming, engaging, absurd, and believable. Everyone has secrets they keep badly and try as hard as they can to survive and thrive in this chick lit, comedy, mystery.
