



Unleashed

Laurien Berenson

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Summer means two things to Melanie Travis: a break from her teaching duties at Connecticut's elite Howard Academy and a chance to plan the perfect wedding to her fiancé, Sam. She certainly doesn't need the unwelcome arrival of a dinner invitation "peace offering" from Sam's ex-wife, Sheila Vaughn. And dinner proves to be only the beginning of her problems. Sheila's new man turns out to be Brian Endicott, an old buddy-turned-enemy of Sam's. To make matters worse, Sheila announces her temporary stay in town is now permanent: she's accepted a job as co-publisher of *Woof!*, a new gossip rag for the dog show world. But before the first issue is even out, a hotter story breaks when Sheila is found dead, strangled with a leather dog leash.

As far as Melanie's concerned, the woman should have been on a leash long ago. And it seems she isn't alone in her dislike of Sheila. Some of *Woof's* salacious stories threatened to expose the dirty paws of quite a few important exhibitors, and someone on Sheila's staff may have found her high-handed attitude worth silencing. Then there's the question of the life insurance policy Brian took out only days before Sheila's death.

Even more troubling to Melanie is her faltering relationship with Sam, who's hiding secrets&3151;secrets that put him more deeply under Sheila's spell in death than in life. Now, it will take the instincts of a bloodhound to sniff out a killer who's bent on putting an end to Melanie's amateur sleuthing. . .

With *Unleashed*, Laurien Berenson has delivered her most engaging, suspenseful novel yet, full of her signature, razor-sharp wit, and fast-paced plotting that's guaranteed to have mystery lovers sitting up and begging for more of Melanie Travis.

Unleashed Details

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Sandy says

I liked this book enough to look for more in the series. The amateur detective is Melanie Travis, a teacher, dog lover and niece to a very well known and liked poodle breeder. There is a lot in the book about dog shows and the dog show world; plus, Melanie's standard poodle is pregnant through-out the book so there is a lot of whelping talk. But, I love dogs, we had small standard poodles when I was growing up and I've even gone to some dog shows. So that part was familiar and interesting. The mystery is well done also.

KyBunnies says

Review to come

Kristy McRae says

This was my first time reading this author--a pretty good mystery, overall. I liked the main character, and I love the backdrop of the dog world. I'd like to go back & read the first book in the series, to get a better feel for Melanie's beginnings as an amateur sleuth. An enjoyable read!

Emily Cullen says

It looks like Sam's ex-wife is staying in town permanently and Melanie is not too happy about it. Sheila is starting a new magazine in the dog world in which she will make plenty of enemies, and when she is found strangled by a dog leash, Sam asked Melanie to start asking questions. I really enjoy this "Melanie Travis" cozy mystery series, the mysteries are always good and so is the evolving relationship between Melanie and Sam. The series has a lot about dog shows so if you're not a dog lover you may want to consider skipping it.

Rose Blum says

What's not to love??? Dogs having cute little puppies, kids playing soccer, a fun Aunt who always shows up when you need her, a main character who drives a Volvo & has a cushy job @ a private school & actually has a full summer vacation... maybe my life looks really easy to some folks, too!

Stephanie says

I really love this series! They are quick and easy reads plus there are dogs :) what's not to love about that?!? This time the author caught me off guard to who the killer turned out to be and then there was a total shock at

the end of the book! Can't wait to read the next book!

Jen says

It's summertime, and Melanie Travis can finally start planning a perfect wedding to her fiancé Sam driver. But everything changes when Sam's ex-wife Sheila announces that she will be residing in town permanently as copublisher of the dog show rag Woof. When Sheila is murdered, Sam is devastated and asks Melanie to investigate well he goes to be with Sheilas family. As Melanie struggles to uncover the truth behind Sheila's death, she feels her once solid relationship with Sam crumbling beneath her feet. He is hiding secrets from his past, and his unresolved feelings for Sheila make him reevaluate his life. This book was awesome; I always enjoy learning about the dog show world. I enjoyed all the plot twists in this book as well, I had no clue who the killer was until the very end. The scene where Faith has her puppies was very heartwarming and sweet. And my heart broke for Melanie. I can understand Sam's situation, but I know how devastating it was for her when he walked away from their relationship. He will be back in future books though.

Flossie says

As usual a good book that I recommend. I loved this series from book 1. I read them and immediately get the next book. These books take my mind away from what's going on in my life and they make me happy and there's always a good mystery along with all the wonderful dogs.

Cynthia Sacks says

Excellent

I've read several of the Melanie Travis books, out of order, but that has not been a major problem., although I recommend reading on order if you can. These books go way beyond the cozy mystery genre. Not only is each mystery compelling and satisfyingly solved, the characters, esp Melanie, are complicated and well developed. I looked forward to this book when I realized it expounded upon Mel's relationship with Sam. Well done! What brought me to the series in th e first place was hearing that standard poodles were involved. They certainly are, and you'll learn much about my favorite bred, as well as dog shows and more.

Kathryn says

Pop quiz time, everyone: what is more stressful than the prospect of having dinner with your fiance's ex-wife? Ask Melanie Travis, and she'll tell you the answer would be solving the woman's murder.

In this latest installment of the Melanie Travis mysteries, Laurien Berenson unleashes another engrossing story; this time the victim is the co-publisher of a new dog show gossip rag (the kind everybody in the community reads but won't admit to doing so). Melanie's involvement in solving the crime is requested by an unusual source, too -- her fiance Sam, whose opposition to this hobby has been more than vocal in past novels. That his ex-wife's death drives a wedge between the couple is an understatement, but Melanie can

only hope the killer does not separate them permanently.

Depending on how attached you are to these characters, you may or may not like the ending of this one, however. I won't give it away, but I will say I was bummed at the outcome (not the mystery, but the personal subplot, you'll know when you get there). Since it will be a while until the next installment in this series, we'll have to wait and see if Melanie will be changing her last name.

Loren says

I like all the dog-themed mysteries that Laurien Berenson writes. I sometimes learn about different breeds and the world of show dogs and their kooky owners and trainers.

Michael crage says

It wasn't bad; although the ending was too compressed and abrupt. My biggest problem about the book is that unless you were somehow involved in dog breeding, a lot of the book was uninteresting and goes over your head

Nathalie S says

It has been a while since I followed Melanie's sleuthing adventures but this is a very solid and fun mystery. Even though I am not a dog lover, I am intrigued by the dog show world and am amazed at the amount of work it takes to get a dog ready for a competition and how patient the dogs are! There's a bit of a bombshell at the end too!

wendy says

Love it

Love it

good plot, great characters. realistic emotions. Love the doggies. Love the fact that real people deal with real issues, that everything isn't sunshine and roses

Lena Harper says

This book was a bit harder-hitting than previous books in the series. I liked it, despite wanting to slap Sam silly the entire time.

