



Steeled for Murder

K.M. Rockwood

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On parole for a murder conviction, Jesse is the first suspect when Mitch, a forklift driver at work, is killed. Will Jesse be able to figure out what happened, or be sent back to prison?

After nearly twenty years in prison on a murder conviction, Jesse Damon has been released, a home detention monitor strapped to his ankle. Determined to make it and mindful of his parole restrictions, he struggles with life outside prison. He finds a basement apartment, a job on the overnight shift at a steel fabrication plant and a few people who treat him like anybody else. Especially Kelly, a woman who works in the shipping department. He seems to be making it. Until Mitch, forklift driver on the shift, is found murdered in the warehouse. Investigating detective doesn't want to look any further than Jesse to close the case He's not fussy about the methods he uses to gather evidence. If Jesse isn't going down for this, he will have to be the one to figure out who killed Mitch and why.

Steeled for Murder Details

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Author : K.M. Rockwood

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From Reader Review Steeled for Murder for online ebook

Imogen Knight says

Jesse Damon is a convicted murderer on parole and the police can't wait to return him to prison.

When a dead body is discovered at Jesse's workplace, he seems the ideal suspect. Fortunately for Jesse, his girlfriend believes in him and his parole officer is not so cynical that he turns a blind eye to lack of evidence.

Setting about investigating the crime, since no one else seems to be interested in looking any further than him, Jesse finds himself in some interesting and comical situations. I particularly enjoyed the contrast between the instinctive trust of children and the opposing judgement of the adults around him. The friendly Librarian's assumption that he's obviously a gun for hire is particularly telling.

Jesse is a sympathetic character in an unfortunate position. The sense of powerlessness and being carried along by events, rather than being able to make his life his own made for frustrating reading at times - Kelly, the girlfriend clearly feels the same - but the way the author draws the reader into almost experiencing the sense of helplessness that Jesse clearly feels at times is most skillful.

Carefully crafted, well researched, this story feels very satisfying. It belongs on any murder mystery fan's summer reading list.

(originally published as amazon.co.uk review)

Liz says

I found "Steeled for Murder" a good fast paced mystery which doesn't have the usual crime novel elements. Told from the point of view of a parolee who is essentially helpless -- he is not a former cop, has no inside contacts or computer whiz friends to help him -- "Steeled for Murder" is more of a character study in the life of down and out ex-con. Wrongly accused and finally released from prison, Jesse Damon is friendless and an immediate suspect for a murder at his new job. We follow him as he struggles to keep up with little money, and no help but a lot of determination.

I didn't expect to get caught up in Jesse's story, or read it so fast, but after the first few chapters, I found it hard to put down. Unlike 'cozy mysteries', Jesse is not someone who knows everyone in a small town and has the support of family and friends feeding him information. He is at risk at every step and makes some bad decisions while trying to get his life back.

My one criticism is the conflict which sets up the whole book, a 'bad cop' who takes an immediate dislike to Jesse and wants to arrest him for the murder. I felt that this character and situation was a bit contrived. If we knew a little bit more about the detective at first or had been introduced to some of the low life elements at Jesse's work (who may have had a motive to set him up) it would have seemed more convincing and realistic. It felt a bit cliched. However once you get into the 'meat' of the story, the plot moves you along and keeps you engaged.

As a last comment, I would like to point out that "Steeled for Murder" is a complete mystery with an ending and most loose ends tied up. I have read other e-books where the first in a series leaves so many unanswered questions, you are almost forced to buy the next novel. This is not like that, I want to read the next

installment to see what happens next to Jesse. Maybe he will even catch a break!

Gina Smith says

Jesse Damon has spent over half his life for a murder he did not do, but was caught up in circumstances under which he be charged with it. Now just released from prison and still under monitoring he is trying to start somewhat of a normal life. Unfortunately while working at Quality Steel Fabrications a fellow worker is killed and Jesse becomes a suspect. Worried police will not try to investigate other leads to hard because of his past, Jesse does some investigating on his own. This leads to several times of his being in the wrong place at the wrong time and he keeps getting dragged in for more questioning. Detective Belkins has it out for Jesse and if he gets his way the crime will be pinned on him. Can he find some answers before he ends up locked up for good? This is a solid mystery with developed characters.

Shalini Ayre says

Released on parole from a twenty year stay in prison, Jesse Damon is determined not to go back - ever. With an electronic tag encased around his ankle, his movements are monitored closely so his daily routine is work, the library, seeing his parole officer and then back to his tiny basement apartment. What a life considering he wasn't actually guilty.

With a probationary position at a steel fabrication plant, Jesse wants to show he's useful and knows to keep his head down. Which is working out just fine until the midnight shift forklift driver, Mitch, decides to pick on the quiet felon. Keeping his mouth shut, he listens as Mitch accuses him of staring at his wife, that he's some sort of sex pervert. Thankfully Hank, the shift supervisor steps in and whisks Jesse off to his new task. . At 'lunch' he meets Kelly a woman he'd like to get to know but isn't sure what she thinks of his record. Regretting not standing up for himself a little more, Jesse works his shift until production stops - Mitch has been found dead.

Suspicion naturally falls on Jesse. And then the police turn up. Blinded by an injustice that happened against his daughter detective Belkins hones in on Jesse as the only suspect in Mitch's murder - despite the young man having a strong alibi. As he is forced to consider spending the rest of his life in prison, the young ex-prisoner resolves to find out who actually killed Mitch. However, he's in dangerous territory - one mistake and he'll violate his probation and will be back inside. Yet, the need to prove his innocence is much stronger and his subtle investigations lead to another world - abuse, money, fake identities and drugs. Will Jesse be able to clear his name?

With the main character almost as an antihero, Rockwood's gritty crime novel gets it hooks in right from the start. Told in first person, the story moves along at a steady pace giving just enough details. Jesse is a victim of circumstance yet being found guilty makes him a target and guilty of any misdemeanor. The author has managed to give explicit/vivid descriptions of the environment and surroundings without losing that first person narrative. Belkins is a nasty piece of work and although you know why he acts in a belligerent manner, there is still little sympathy. An absorbing crime story that shows you how life is for an ex-con.

A superb piece of writing, I could have read it in a day but forced myself to sit back and enjoy the easy style and characters this author has created. I felt quite sorry for Jesse, he fights to make his life better but when

the law sees you permanently as doing wrong how can you improve? Thoroughly enjoyed every moment of this excellent story. Overall, a well written, moving and emotive tale. A must for all crime fans - a highly recommended read.

I received a complimentary copy of this book from the author to review. The opinions expressed are my own and I am not required to give a positive critique.

Jessyca Garcia says

Steeled for Murder by KM Rockwood is the first book in the Jesse Damon series. It also happens to be the second book I read. I read the second book in the series, Fostering Death, first.

Steeled for Murder is the beginning of Jesse Damon's story. Jesse is a parolee fresh out of prison. On his first day of work a murder occurs at his place of employment. Naturally he is a suspect. The story then follows Jesse as he tries to live his life in spite of being a suspect.

I did not enjoy this book as much as I enjoyed the second book in the series. The story was unbelievable to me. It was obvious that Jesse could not have done the murder on his first day of work. The second thing that bothered me was that I noticed that a few lines were repeated in the second book. There was no change to them and they were very minor to the story. I had to double-check that I was not rereading Fostering Death by accident. Despite all of this I wanted to see how Jesse Damon was born, and I wanted to see if he grows more with each book. Whether he grows or not is up to the reader to decide. I think he does.

* I received a copy of this book for free in return for an honest review

Vonnie Hughes says

This is one of the best books I've read in a while. Love the background flavor of the steel manufacturing plant. When I looked at Rockwood's background I saw where that authenticity came from. Jesse Damon, after twenty years in prison, comes out determined to make it. There are so many obstacles put in his way (including the standard cop on the edge) that it's a wonder the poor guy doesn't hang himself. The tension ratchets up and up. The ending resolves rather quickly but that doesn't detract from the quality of the book. I notice it's called 'a Jesse Damon book' so maybe we will be getting more from this guy.

Carrie says

Author requested an honest review.?

What could be worse than going to prison for murder? Being recently released on to have been seen in a confrontation with one of his new co-workers only hours before he turned up murdered. Toss in a cop who is adamant he is guilty, several ill-timed illegal propositions, and a whole lot of miscommunication, and you get one emotional ride.

I'll admit it, I wasn't sure I was going to like it. I didn't think I was going to hate it or anything like that, but anyone who knows me will tell you I live in a paranormal world. Shifters, yes please. Vampires, absolutely. Demons, Angels, Faeries, well, the list really goes on and on doesn't it? If I branch off, it tends to be a historical romance novel I end up with. A contemporary novel? Ehh.....not so sure.

But I am trying to be a big girl and venture out of my comfort zone every once in a while. So when the author contacted me about reviewing this book, I gladly accepted.

And I have to say, I am glad I gave this book a chance, because I really loved it. Not only was this a well written, great novel, it made me feel. I'm not a criminal, I've never been accused of a crime -wrongfully or not- I shouldn't have anything in common with Jesse. Yet, there is more to this man than just having served time in jail, and I think the author does a nice job making us see the real side of the man that no one around him seems to be capable of discovering. Everyone has issues with family, or been a victim of badmouthing, Jesse just gets a larger dose with more serious consequences.

But does he fight back? Lash out? No. Even with all his flaws, Jesse is a strong character. When you combine that strength with the fact that he is not the type of person to just steamroll over a person just because it's the easiest route to take, you find that Jesse is an admirable character. By that point I already loved him, so all the s**t that kept getting tossed his way only made me feel for him even more. By the end, I was ready to climb into the book and knock a few people senseless on his behalf.

The story itself was more than just a murder mystery. Yes, Jesse ends up deciding to find out who the real killer is, a one way trip back to jail is nothing if not a grand motivator. But that's only a part of what this book is about. I cannot say much detail-wise because I think the way the author adds drama and risks really works to raise the stakes, and me listing them would only be a disservice to all that work. So, I'll just say this. The experiences Jesse lives with and all the trouble that runs his way really gives you an interesting look at mankind. We see prejudices, biased judgments, loyalty, human fallacies, and that is only just the beginning.

If you're a fan of contemporary novels, mysteries or not, I highly recommend this book. This is book one of a series, and I personally am really looking forward to the next book.

Julie Ramsey says

JESSE DAMON'S LIFE HAS NOT BEEN EASY. AT THE AGE OF 3 HE LOST HIS MOTHER, HE WAS IN THE FOSTER CARE SYSTEM TILL HE TURNED 14 AND HIS FATHER WAS RELEASED FROM PRISON. HIS FATHER WAS A DRUG ADDICTED AND COULD NOT BE THE FATHER HE SHOULD HAVE. AT THE AGE OF 16 JESSE'S BROTHERS FORCED HIM TO DO SOMETHING HE DID NOT WANT TO DO THEY INFORMED HIM THAT HE WAS A KID AND WHAT ARE THEY ARE GOING TO DO TO YOU ???? THEY WERE RUINING JESSE'S LIFE BEFORE HE HAD A CHANCE TO DO ANYTHING. THEY LEFT HIM HOLDING THE "BAG" AND TAKING THE RAP FOR A MURDER. HE SPENT 19 YEARS IN PRISON WITH NO FAMILY TO VISIT AND GROWING UP BEHIND BARS.

AFTER 20 YEARS JESSE WAS PAROLED AND PUT UNDER HOUSE ARREST. JESSE WAS LUCKY ENOUGH TO LAND A JOB AS A MACHINE OPERATOR AT QUALITY STEEL FABRICATIONS. AT LEAST HE THOUGHT HE WAS LUCKY! THIS IS WHERE HE MEETS MITCH THE FORK TRUCK DRIVER. MITCH TRIES TO START TROUBLE WITH JESSE RIGHT AWAY. MITCH IS THE KIND

OF PERSON THAT NO ONE WANTS TO MESS WITH AND JESSE JUST WANTS TO KEEP HIS NOSE CLEAN SO HE GOES ABOUT HIS JOB AND FORGETS THE INCIDENT. LATER IN THE EVENING MITCH WAS FOUND DEAD AND JESSE IS BEING QUESTIONED. NOT A START JESSE WAS HOPING FOR. FROM HERE JESSE'S LUCK JUST DWINDLES, HE FINDS HIMSELF IN SEVERAL SITUATIONS AT THE WRONG TIME. HE HAS ONE DETECTIVE THAT IS OUT TO PUT JESSE BACK BEHIND BARS, HIS NAME IS BELKINS AND WILL STOP AT NOTHING TILL THIS TASK IS DONE.

JESSE MAKES MANY FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY. CHOICES GOOD OR BAD IS JUST IN JESSE'S FAVOR. DO THEY FIND MITCH'S KILLER ? WAS JESSE INVOLVED ?? WILL JESSE AND HIS FRIENDS FIND THE OUT THE TRUTH ??

I REALLY ENJOYED THIS BOOK! I WAS CAUGHT UP INTO JESSE'S LIFE AND REALLY FELT SORRY FOR THE POOR GUY ! IF IT WAS NOT FOR LUCK JESSE WOULD HAVE NO LUCK AT ALL ! THIS ONE WILL KEEP YOU GUESSING AND GLUED TO YOU READ THE LAST SENTENCE. I AM VERY INTERESTED IN READING MORE JESSE DAMON BOOKS! IT WAS WELL WRITTEN AND WITH JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF CHARACTERS. I FOUND MYSELF TEAR UP A FEW TIMES AND SMILE AT OTHERS ! VERY GOOD READ!

Wende

complimentary book given for a free review. juliesbookreview.blogspot.com

Star says

Jesse Damon is out on parole after serving 19 years for a murder he didn't commit. He's fitted with a parole officer and a monitoring bracelet, with the allowance to go to work and home, aside from his P.O.'s office. He's working the third shift at a steel plant and he's made a few friends there. When a forklift operator, Mitch, is murdered after he and Jesse have words when he comes on shift, Jesse's the prime suspect. Now he's got the cops on his every move and since they won't look at anyone else, Jesse's got to figure out who really killed Mitch before he goes down for another crime he didn't commit.

STEELED FOR MURDER is an intriguing mystery. I found Jesse's character to be fascinating. He's an ex-con who just wants to get by and make no trouble for anyone, keeping his head down. Yet trouble always seems to find him. I could palpably feel Jesse's fear and frustration as the story progressed. Jesse's got a good heart and it was easy to see that. I was quickly drawn into the story and impressed by how much I came to care about what happened to the characters. STEELED FOR MURDER is a stand-out mystery which I greatly enjoyed.

Naomi Avendano says

Jesse Damon, recently paroled after serving close to twenty years in prison for a murder conviction, is on his own on the outside. On home detention monitoring, he is fortunate to have found a job at a steel fabrication plant. Unfortunately for Jesse, a fork lift operator at the plant is killed right after Jesse started his job. He now has to rely on his wits to keep his freedom as there is a policeman who is determined to take Jesse down as the murderer.

I learned a lot about the life of paroled convicts from this book, as well as learning about steel fabrication plants. The writing is very good and the book is a page turner. The plot is perhaps a little contrived at places, but the character development of Jesse makes up for that. Jesse is a man in his mid thirties, whose life basically ended when he was imprisoned at the age of sixteen and is only now starting up again. He is naive, yet world weary. Jesse isn't a hardened criminal; nor did he ever murder anyone. Instead, he is an intelligent, kind person who has been knocked every which way by the unfairness of life and is now struggling mightily to find his way outside of prison. He doesn't have a family or friends to help him and he is constantly being picked up by the police who suspect him of murder, yet he doesn't fall into the trap of self pity.

This was the first book in the series and I'm most definitely going to read the remaining books. I suspect that Jesse is going to continue to develop as an honest, good man even though life is still going to throw him a lot of curve balls. I recommend this series.

Bex 'n' Books says

Jesse Damon is a man who has been incarcerated longer than he was free. At 16, his brothers involve him in a crime that went bottoms up and he is left holding the bag, innocent of everything except being a trusting kid. Expecting that he will always be persecuted, he lives his life one minute at a time and doesn't dare hope for any more.

And then Mitch gets murdered and the police train their eyes on Jesse. Since he is on parole and an ex-con, the police figure they have it all figured out. But Jesse is innocent and must find a way to prove it, or he will be going back to prison.

You feel for Jesse and want him to succeed. He is introverted and completely unsure of himself and his place in the world. After so many years in prison, he is overwhelmed by outward shows of affection and respect. By the middle of the book, the reader wants to stand up for Jesse since he can't stand up for himself.

This is another one of those books where I wanted there to be more pages because I just wasn't finished with Jesse Damon yet. I know that this author has other titles with Jesse as the main character and I can't wait to read them all. All I have to say is "Agatha Christie, eat your heart out, KM Rockwood is an author to be reckoned with".

If I could give 6 fairies, I would, but I will have to settle for 5. This is a must read for any crime and mystery reader.

Reviewer: Ann

Disclosure: This ebook was provided by the author in exchange for an HONEST and not necessarily positive review.

Lynn Farris says

"Steeled for Murder" is the first book in the Jesse Damon Crime series from K. M. Rockwood. There are currently five books in this series that have been re-released by Wildside Press.

K. M. Rockwood has a diverse background. She worked in a Steel Fabrication plant and has supervised an

inmate work crew in a large medium security state manufacturing facility. She has worked as a special education teacher in an alternative high school and a GED teacher in county detention facilities. Rockwood brings this background to her stories. She dedicated "Steeled for Murder" to Bracey, Charles, Darrell, Derrik, Fred, Hosea, Ralph, Reggie, Scooter, Spig, Steve, Tom, Willie and everyone else locked up or back on the street who got caught up in the system.

Jesse Damon has just been released on parole after twenty years in prison on a murder conviction from when he was sixteen. Jesse has a home detention monitor strapped to his ankle and a bare bones basement apartment. He has a job working nights at a steel fabrication plant. As the story opens, Mitch, a forklift operator, tries to start a fight with Jesse, accusing him of looking at his wife. Jesse avoids the fight. But later when Mitch ends up dead, the police consider Jesse the likely culprit given this encounter and his background. Jesse is forced to figure out who did it to keep himself from going back to prison.

For the rest of the review please visit: <http://www.examiner.com/article/read-...>

Teresa says

I give this book a 3.5, actually. I loved the characters in the book. They were all so realistically flawed. I'd like to say that people wouldn't be as prejudiced against a parolee as the writer has the characters be against Jesse. But when I think about it, I have to say that most would be expecting the worst from one. Jesse seems a little too good to be true, a little too perfect. I don't care though, I love the character! My biggest complaint about the book is that it ends suddenly. So it was a bit anti-climatic. Otherwise, I liked the book. Since it seems to be a series of books, I will probably give the second book a try. I'd love to see Jesse confront his brother in a future book. So I'll definitely look for book #2.

About my ratings:

5 star= exceptional book, well written and life-changing, teaches me a lot about something I didn't know, or changes my views, beliefs or thoughts. Sequel? I want it NOW!

4 star= great book, well written, great plot, great suspense or conflict. Sequel. Yes, absolutely!

3 star= good book, well written, good plot, good suspense. Sequel? Good chance I'd read another.

2 stars=it was okay, the writing may be okay, but I mostly wish I hadn't wasted my time since there are so many good books out there. Sequel? Most likely not.

1 star=in the trash it goes, probably won't finish the book. Sequel? You've got to be kidding me?!

Karla Brandenburg says

Jesse Damon was imprisoned when he was a minor because he took the rap for his brothers. They anticipated he'd get off because he was a minor, but when the charge became murder, Jesse was charged as an adult. Innocent and literally left holding the bag, he has paid 19 years of his life for a crime he didn't commit. On parole as part of a work release program, Jesse wants to get on with his life, the one he was trying to live before his brothers roped him into their criminal plans. But the police have other ideas.

Working third shift at the steel mill, Jesse is harassed by a forklift driver while clocking in. Fortunately for him, the foreman assigns him to a high-profile spot on the assembly line, one he can't leave unless someone else takes his place. During that shift, someone kills the forklift driver and Jesse, the convicted murderer, is the only person the police consider. Even though he has a sound alibi.

Jesse doesn't want to make any trouble. He just wants to get on with his life, so he does what he's learned in prison. Cooperate, but keep to yourself as much as possible. Because of his status, the bad guys aren't afraid to approach him to pull him into their scheme, and that is what ultimately helps Jesse unintentionally steer the police in the right direction.

I'll start by saying this isn't the sort of book I would normally pick up and read, but when KM Rockwood asked me if I'd review it, I agreed. I like a well-told tale, and this story fits the bill. This is a book about crime, about dealing with prejudice and preconceived notions, and about persevering. Jesse's characterization was riveting. I felt every frustration along with his carefully maintained "yes sir" attitude. He's intensely aware of his precarious position on the "outside," relishing every moment of monitored freedom, in spite of his lack of luxuries or amenities. Jesse lives a hard life, but he's determined to overcome his challenges, and that's what makes the story interesting. There was never a lag in the action, and Jesse's hardened naiveté (how's that for an oxymoron?) works beautifully.

Liz says

I found "Steeled for Murder" a good fast paced mystery which doesn't have the usual crime novel elements. Told from the point of view of a parolee who is essentially helpless -- he is not a former cop, has no inside contacts or computer whiz friends to help him -- "Steeled for Murder" is more of a character study in the life of down and out ex-con. Wrongly accused and finally released from prison, Jesse Damon is friendless and an immediate suspect for a murder at his new job. We follow him as he struggles to keep up with little money, and no help but a lot of determination.

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My one criticism is the conflict which sets up the whole book, a 'bad cop' who takes an immediate dislike to Jesse and wants to arrest him for the murder. I felt that this character and situation was a bit contrived. If we knew a little bit more about the detective at first or had been introduced to some of the low life elements at Jesse's work (who may have had a motive to set him up) it would have seemed more convincing and realistic. It felt a bit cliched. However once you get into the 'meat' of the story, the plot moves you along and keeps you engaged.

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