



The Stolen Blue

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For the fifty-year-old, recently divorced Claire Reynier, it's time to start over. But her new direction in life -- at a New Mexico university -- becomes a detour to murder when an old friend and mentor is found dead.

The Stolen Blue Details

Date : Published April 1st 2000 by Signet (first published February 1st 2000)

ISBN : 9780451200013

Author : Judith Van Gieson

Format : Paperback 256 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Cozy Mystery

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From Reader Review The Stolen Blue for online ebook

Annie says

A most excellent 5 star read! loved the book and Claire

Sharon Mensing says

Western setting, librarian protag, generally had good bones. However, the writing was rather pedestrian and I didn't find the characters very sympathetic. Somewhat bland, but a good diversion.

Donna says

This was not complicated. The plot was simple, character development a little bland, but surprisingly I enjoyed the Sunday aft. diversion and read it cover to cover

Pam says

4/B -- 1st in Claire Reynier series. Claire works at the University in the Southwest Studies Dept. her mentor Burke Lowell leaves her his collection historical books on the SW & makes her executor of his estate. he had 3 children & then there is Mariah who has recently been recognized as his daughter. He wills the 3 children \$ & leaves the house to Mariah to make into a conservancy. The children want to fight this & deny Mariah is his daughter. Claire points out that the will states to Mariah, not to his daughter Mariah. Claire's box of valuable books are stolen from her truck. One book the History of the Blue was not valuable -- a self-published history is missing from all the libraries -- print run was only 30. The setting was the best part of the book.

Sarah Adamson says

I did enjoy this book, a cozy mystery set in America's SouthWest. Some nice twists and great exploration of books and libraries.

Unfortunately I cannot give it 4 stars as there is a major editorial error - a lost box is described as being put in a different place than where it is stolen from. I kept waiting for her to realize it hadn't been stolen but nope it was a mistake. Just irritating!

I would read more in this series.

Shirley says

Didn't finish this book--though plot started well for me, got bogged down in a lot of extra descriptions about the Southwest, and even though I live in this area, for me the plot kept getting lost in all the background

information.

Sue Star says

I especially loved the great sense of place. It made me want to go back to New Mexico! An interesting plot and subplots, dealing with rare book collectors.

Jeff Dickison says

Claire Reynier # 1 is the second Claire Reynier mystery I have read and it is much better than # 3. This tale has an excellent plot and believable characters. An old scalawag dies and makes Claire the executor of his estate and donates his rare books to her library. The books are stolen and the kids are not happy with the will. Recommended.

Judy says

Interesting book -- Claire Reynier works as a librarian at the Center for Southwest Research at University of New Mexico. She is given books from a friend's very extensive and valuable library and given the task as executor of his will. The most valuable books are stolen from Claire's car and she is trying to get them back. Using contacts and internet to buy back the stolen books. Who knew books could be such big business. The deceased family is involved as, of course, they don't like who Dad left the ranch to. Having never been to New Mexico the descriptions of the town(s) would make anyone want to make reservations and go visit. I'm looking forward to the next book in the series.

Stuart says

I quite enjoyed this, the first Claire Reynier mystery. It was certainly an easy read, and interestingly, was really a mystery, not a murder story, as one might expect. I did find it a little dated; it's from 2000 (I'm reading it in 2014), and the author was, I think, trying to be very up-to-date in her sleuth, who spent time on AOL, explained how emails could be sent anonymously, and bemoaned the coming day when book texts would be available via the Internet.

Claire is the curator of rare books / librarian for the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, feeling a little under siege at the University, feeling that she is not held in the esteem that her predecessor was, and having to prove her worth to the administrator, who seems to be interested only in cutting costs and acquiring prestige. An opportunity to prove her worth arises when an old mentor, in ill health, calls to ask her to visit, as he is planning to donate his large collection of rare South-Western-related books to the University. He lives in a old ranch in a secluded area called "the Blue", where attitudes are firmly Western. Claire goes out to visit - it's a 200-mile drive - to collect the books, and is asked to be the executor of his will, which is then witnessed and signed in front of her. Well, it's a mystery story, so of course he winds up dead in the snow the next morning.

But, unusually for a mystery story, there is no real doubt about the cause of death. The old mentor (Burke) was dying and had decided to go out his own way, and crawled off into the snow to die of exposure overnight. He was assisted by his recently discovered daughter Mariah, who turns out to be the main beneficiary of Burke's will.

And this is where the story really starts. Two of the other three children sue to have the will overturned, as the ranch is worth \$2M, and they are getting a "paltry" @200K each. The case will turn on whether Mariah really is Burke's daughter, or an imposter and whether Burke was in his right mind when the will was made. Claire, as the executor and a witness to the signing, is landed right in the middle of this case.

At the same time, when Claire transports the books back to the University, she leaves them in her truck, and naturally the carton containing the most valuable ones (marked "valuable") is stolen. Now we have two mysteries to solve - are they related? Well, of course they are, but to tell you how would be to spoil the story!

The book was quite good, and was easy to read. I enjoyed the whole book collector vibe, and the location in New Mexico. Claire did a lot of driving about the state, describing it to us, the audience. But I did find the dated technology distracting, rather than charming period detail.

Amy says

What I liked:

- 1) Claire was a martial arts practicing university librarian--I could identify with her.
- 2) There was no love interest in sight. Claire was comfortable with being single--she even embraced it.
- 3) This was set in the southwest. Lovely, lovely country.

What I didn't like:

- 1) This was clearly written in the 1990s, so it was a little dated, especially where computer jargon was concerned.
- 2) A little slow moving at times.
- 3) A character who is a cutter. Why is that particular affliction so popular in books now?

Overall, I enjoyed the book. I especially enjoyed that Claire was not a stereotypical librarian, which made her much more three-dimensional and real to me. The book was a decent time-killer. It's not particularly memorable, but it wasn't bad, either. A nice middle-of-the road mystery.

Spuddie says

#1 Claire Reynier mystery. Claire is the collections librarian for a university in New Mexico, fairly recently divorced and loving her newfound freedom. She heads into the Blue, an isolated area a couple of hundred miles from Santa Fe to see an old mentor of hers who is in ill health and is donating his private collection to her university's library. While she is there to collect the books, Burke tells her he's made her the executor of his will, which he's just changed and has witnessed in front of her, talks about what he wants done--and the

next morning he ends up dead.

His newly discovered daughter Mariah says she followed his wishes and helped him commit suicide the way he wanted. No one thinks much of it, Claire included, because it sounds exactly as though it's how he would have wanted to go. But then his other children raise a stink because his isolated ranch is worth a lot of money. When a single carton of the rarest of Burke's donated books is stolen from Claire's truck before it can even be catalogued into the library, she seeks to find out who stole them and why--and then more questions are raised about Burke's death when the heirs are set to contest the will. Did he die of his own hand, or did someone else help him along in a way he did NOT want?

This was an okay book, but I wasn't enthralled. While I thought some of Claire's antics were interesting, the author wrote about her almost dispassionately and I found it hard to feel much of anything about her, her situations, etc. It was just sort of blah. I did finish it, but I'm really not eager to get on with the series, at least not at this time. I just didn't much care one way or another who did what to whom.

Cindy says

I really enjoyed this book. Claire Reynier is a librarian - who loves books, especially rare ones - what could be better? There is a lot of "who done its" in this book - it will keep you guessing and it's a quick read.

Published in 2000 it was a little dated, but still very interesting.

The last book published was in 2004, so I'm not sure if I will continue this series.

Marcia says

A nice quote from the book...

Claire got into bed, and Nemesis curled up at her feet. It was time to read, but there was nothing on her bedside at the moment. She considered the books on her shelves. They resembled the old friends with whom she had late-night phone conversations and shared her deepest thoughts. Her joy in reading came from discovering there was someone out there who had the same feelings and ideas she did, but could express them better than she ever could. Books never turned cold and indifferent, didn't grow up and move away, didn't get married to someone you didn't like, or trade you in for a newer model. Books were there when you needed them.

Jan says

Might be an interesting series
