



The London Stories

Helen Smith

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Three Emily Castles mysteries now available in one bundle of fun.

THREE SISTERS. Join twenty-six year old amateur sleuth Emily Castles at a bonfire night party hosted by a mysterious troupe of performers as she conducts her first murder investigation.

In **SHOWSTOPPERS**, Emily investigates blackmail and murder at a London stage school.

In **REAL ELVES**, Emily has fifteen minutes to solve a puzzle in a London department store that will stop Christmas being ruined for a young child.

The London Stories Details

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Author : Helen Smith

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From Reader Review The London Stories for online ebook

Joanna Grankin says

Three short stories make up the London Stories, and we are introduced to Emily Castles and her new home in Brixton.

Three Sisters:

Emily Castles seems to have a back story, and part of the beauty of this well written short story, is that we are given little tidbits about her, and we have to try to piece together who she is and where she has come from.

She has been invited to a neighbour's bonfire party, and we are introduced to a colourful collection of characters who are as fascinating to uncover as Emily herself. However, the party takes a more sinister turn, and it is up to Emily, together with another neighbour, Dr Muriel, to prove that something nasty has happened in the garden.

A very traditional mystery, with a slightly old fashioned feel, which I really enjoyed!

Showstoppers:

Emily Castles is back, and as her temporary work contract has run out, her rather flamboyant neighbour Victoria offer her work at the stage school that she runs, Showstoppers. However, Emily seems to attract mystery wherever she goes, and with Victoria the recipient of some poison pen letters, it seems that someone is determined that the end of year show does not go to plan. Once again it is left to Emily and Dr Muriel to ensure that all's well that ends well.

I loved the portrayal of Victoria, who came across as an ageing performer, still desperate to cling onto some of her talents and her rather stoical husband Piers, and like in Three Sisters, there are many other quirky characters who inhabit this world. Another really enjoyable short story, easy enough to digest in one sitting.

Real Elves:

Shorter than the first two Emily Castles mysteries, Real Elves is more light-hearted, perhaps due to the Christmas theme. Emily is helping out in the Christmas Grotto at a London department store, and when a child is invited to test out Santa's Magical Forest, there is a great deal of shock when her grandfather declares her missing ... despite the fact she is standing next to him. A very short and sweet story, fun to read, and with a satisfying conclusion

Overall I really enjoyed these books; I think Helen Smith creates wonderful characters who are a joy to read, and I look forward to Emily's character and backstory developing in subsequent stories.

Nicole says

expected more - the stories seemed to be silly and not really clearly delineated.

Melody says

I received a copy of this book from the author in exchange for an honest review.

This set contains three stories from the Emily Castle series. These are shorter stories, but I wasn't left with that "wanting more" feeling that I so often get when reading short stories.

In **THREE SISTERS**, Emily is invited to a neighborhood party, where there is a murder. Or was there? With the help of some quirky neighbors and partygoers, she saves the day!

In **SHOWSTOPPERS**, Emily's neighbor hires her to come work at her theatre school, and to help solve a blackmail mystery. Blackmail quickly turns to murder, and once again, Emily must find out who done it!

REAL ELVES is a short Christmas story. Emily and her co-workers have a mystery to solve.

I like Emily, she's clever and determined. Her neighbors are a little kooky, and provide some comedy along the way. I notice there are a few more Emily Castle stories available, and I'm looking forward to reading those as well.

Suzanne Homeier-poe says

I really enjoyed this book.

This is a cute story . I enjoyed Emily and her puzzle solving. She is really smart that way. She really seems to stumble on the answers.

Gretchen says

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for an honest review. This is actually a collection of three stories with the same heroine. Easy to relate to, Emily Castle is a bit of an introvert and clearly working towards transitioning from dogie to human friends. The first story seemed a bit disjointed and hard to follow, although it was partially due to the inconsistent formatting of the e text I was sent. All were clever mysteries, each short enough read for a single evening. I found the two shorter ones more entertaining but it may have just taken me a while to warm to the main character.

Jackie Stitt says

Not the book for me

I gave this a 4star it just wasn't the authors fault that I didn't enjoy reading it. It just wasn't the book for me

Ann Cooper says

Not worth the effort

Three mild mystery stories, these lacked tension. The characters never developed. The writing was mediocre. The plots were silly. A waste of time.

Erth says

Bravo! A good fast read! now i am hooked. This was such a great, easy and creative book. i was hooked after the first page.

The characters were easy to fall in love with and follow, along with the story. the author made the mental visions so easy and vivid of the surroundings and the characters actions felt so real.

i would highly recommend this author and this book.

Iris Windmeijer says

I received this book with the Goodreads First Read giveaways.

The short stories were such a fun read. The outcome was predictable but the stories made me smile and were entertaining. Certainly a nice fun read.

Vera mallard says

STORY-LINE THE LONDON STORIES BY HELEN SMITH:

The London Stories, An Emily Castles Mystery Collection, by author Helen Smith has 3 novella's filled with mystery and intrigue. In book one, Three Sisters, we find Emily at a community bonfire. Filled with strange characters and events, Emily must find a murderer. Book two, Showstopper, finds Emily working at Showstopper where she must find a blackmailer and solve a murder. In Book 3, Emily has a puzzle on her hands which she must solve within 15 minutes, save the stores Christmas display, and bring a child happiness. My review of The London Stories follows.

CHARACTERS, PLOTTING, DEVELOPMENT:

I found each story complete unto itself, yet, each flowed into the next story with characters we knew. Emily, something of an amateur detective, uses her powers of observation to solve the three mysteries we find in The London Stories. The plots were intriguing and held my attention. I must say my least favorite story, Three Sisters, still held my attention and interest.

With a range of locations, Smith takes the reader from a bonfire party in residential London, to a children's dance studio, and finally a department store at Christmas. I found the writing clear and easy to follow with smooth and steady pacing. Due to the shorter length of novellas, the author could not expand on development or plotting as could be done with a longer novel. However, Smith skillfully, included everything need in each novella to produce a solid intriguing story-line.

The antagonists were not revealed until the last possible moment and will surprise the reader when revealed. Story three has a twist the reader will love. In concluding my review of The London Stories, I found three solid mysteries with well-developed characters and intriguing story-lines.

THE LONDON STORIES RECOMMENDATION: STARS 4

In addition, The London Stories is a clean read suitable for anyone who loves a good mystery. This is a clean book.

FINALLY, PLEASE NOTE:

In addition I borrowed this book from kindle unlimited as well as, receiving this book from the author and chose to voluntarily review the book/novel with honest reviews for mystery novel, The London Stories. Furthermore, book reviews of any novel are dependent on the book/novel review author's opinion. Consequently, all book/novel reviews on-line and on my blog, are my opinions. No one influenced my voluntary reviews for mystery novel, The London Stories.

CG says

I received a free copy of this book in exchange for my honest review. I have mixed feelings about this series. Because they are such quick reads, I never felt like I got to really know Emily, except on a basic level. I was expecting more depth of character that, in my opinion, wasn't there. That being said, the books were fun, quirky reads. The transition between some of the scenes and events seemed rather choppy however. I suspect that a much younger audience (teen or YA) would enjoy them much more. But I will read more to see how Emily's life unfolds.

Claudia says

I have deeply enjoyed this collection of short stories. Showstoppers is my favourite, mostly because theatre is something that I love, but in the three stories you'll find characters who are interesting and the plots intriguing. A really good read

Lis Carey says

This collection includes the stories "Three Sisters," "Showstoppers," and "Real Elves." Each of them presents Emily Castles with a puzzle to solve.

Each is centered around her neighbors and coworkers.

Two of them involve murders.

They all feature Emily Castles, a young woman living in London

These stories all seem intended to be funny. Unfortunately, most of Emily's neighbors and coworkers are portrayed as shallow idiots. Emily herself comes off slightly better in both character and intelligence, but mainly in comparison to the friends and neighbors. Dr. Muriel, a professor of, I believe, ethics, who lives across the street from Emily, seems to be the only one with both sense and intelligence, but she is, alas, not the viewpoint character. These are about Emily, not Dr. Muriel.

The third story, "Real Elves," is the only one that doesn't include a death, and where the tone is, to me, not jarringly inconsistent with the subject matter. This one involves a store setting up a "Santa's village" type event for Christmas, and wanting to test it out on a real child to be sure they haven't overlooked some problem that will only present itself when real children start going through it. "Real Elves" shows some real promise, and is the main reason I'd look at more stories in this series.

Not recommended.

I received a free electronic galley of this book, and I am reviewing it voluntarily.

Lucy Hay says

In a flooded genre, Helen Smith provides a great twist on contemporary crime fiction with this delightful box set. Smith has an acerbic wit and eye for detail that is quite extraordinary: even though I am a plotting junkie, I found myself drawn into the mystery to such an extent I enjoyed the story for what it was, rather than attempting to second guess whodunnit like I normally do. There's a surreal element to the prose that is so enticing, plus the comedy elements are genuinely funny. I even read various sections out to my bemused husband (he's not a reader, but even he was forced to admit those bits were funny). Really, really enjoyable - my favourite was "Real Elves". Like Scooby Doo, but for grown ups and in a GOOD way! Will definitely be reading more Emily Castles mysteries.

Carrie says

I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Three sisters- I loved it, I mean who doesn't love a party with a little murder on the side? I love mystery books but most of the books I have read the person is always found after the murder takes place. I love how the author describes everything and paints a picture for the reader to be able to picture what's happening in your mind's eye that's why I love books it's like a movie playing in your head, but that's only if the author can spark your interest and keep it through the whole book, and she has sparked my interest.

Showstoppers- who doesn't like the theater? Some not very nice letters and a "killer" video shot a while back that should of never been, everyone has skeletons in their closet that they don't want anyone to know about but a little death too?

Real Elves- it's Christmas and the setup to see Santa sounds so magical and fanatic. Let us take a trip through the enchanted forest.

I really liked this book can't wait to read more of Emily's mysteries!
