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Sizzling Sixteen (Stephanie Plum)



Synopsis

Trenton, New Jersey, bounty hunter Stephanie Plum has inherited a "lucky" bottle from her Uncle Pip. Problem is, Uncle Pip didn't specify if the bottle brought good luck or bad luck. . . .

BAD LUCK:Vinnie, of Vincent Plum Bail Bonds, has run up a gambling debt of \$786,000 with mobster Bobby Sunflower and is being held until the cash can be produced. Nobody else will pay to get Vinnie back, leaving it up to Stephanie, office manager Connie, and file clerk Lula to raise the money if they want to save their jobs.

GOOD LUCK:Being in the business of tracking down people, Stephanie, Lula, and Connie have an advantage in finding Vinnie. If they can rescue him, it will buy them some time to raise the cash.

BAD LUCK:Finding a safe place to hide Vinnie turns out to be harder than raising \$786,000. Vinnie's messing up Mooner's vibe, running up pay-per-view porn charges in Ranger's apartment, and making Stephanie question genetics.

GOOD LUCK:Between a bonds office yard sale that has the entire Burg turning out, Mooner's Hobbit-Con charity event, and Uncle Pip's lucky bottle, they just might raise enough money to save the business, and Vinnie, from ruin.

BAD LUCK:Saving Vincent Plum Bail Bonds means Stephanie can keep being a bounty hunter. In Trenton, this involves hunting down a man wanted for polygamy, a turnpike toilet paper bandit, and a drug dealer with a pet alligator named Mr. Jingles.

GOOD LUCK:The job of bounty hunter comes with perks in the guise of Trenton's hottest cop, Joe Morelli, and the dark and dangerous security expert, Ranger. With any luck at all, Uncle Pip's lucky bottle will have Stephanie getting lucky---the only question is . . . with whom?

Sizzling Sixteen . . . so hot, the pages might spontaneously combust!

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Customer Reviews

In this tepid Stephanie Plum adventure from Evanovich (Finger Lickin' Fifteen, etc.), a personal case distracts the Trenton, N.J., bondswoman from tracking the usual group of eccentric skips--the kidnapping of her cousin, Vinnie, who's being held for ransom in the high six figures. As Stephanie, sidekick Lula, and office manager Connie soon realize, Vincent Plum Bail Bonds is seriously in the red due to Vinnie's gambling. Vinnie's also gotten caught up with local mobster Bobby Sunflower in a complicated scheme. Even though her sleazy cousin isn't her favorite person and chasing oddball felons isn't her ideal career, Stephanie knows family loyalty counts for something, plus she owes him for giving her a job all those years ago. So with Lula and Connie in tow--and romantic interests Morelli and Ranger lurking in the background-- Stephanie must save the day once again. Evanovich is at her best spinning the bizarre subplots involving Stephanie's bail jumpers, but the larger story simply recycles elements from previous installments. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Stephanie Plum, half-Italian, half-Hungarian, a shrewd mixture of smarts and dumb luck, works for her cousin Vinny as a bail bondswoman in Trenton, New Jersey. Vinny, however, is in deep fecal matter, owing too much money to the very scary guys who have kidnapped him. Stephanie, office manager Connie, and Lula, plus-sized and focused (if not on the job at hand), manage to spring Vinny (more than once) and find a lot of money to pay what he owes. Along the way, they facilitate a cow stampede and an alligator escape; are assisted by a bunch of Hobbit con-goers; and find their office going up quite thoroughly in flames. Stephanie wrecks the usual car and ping-pongs between the hot and dangerous Ranger and the hot and domestic Morelli. Ranger says the *celove* word to Stephanie, but it is Morelli at the end, offering her a pink, lacy thong. In the first few pages, Evanovich both catches readers up on the hilarious and cockeyed history of the preceding 15 books and gives fans a little more of everything they want, including the return of beloved stoner Mooner. Funny, scary, silly, and sweet. --GraceAnne A. DeCandido --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Stephanie Plum is a bond enforcement agent, working for her cousin Vinnie. She is not the best bounty hunter but because of her tenacity and just plain stubbornness, she always seems to track

her skips down and eventually apprehends them. Which is pretty good considering she typically does not have her gun with her, and even if she did it most likely wouldn't have bullets in it. She is constantly losing her cuffs, forgets to charge her stun gun every night and carries around extra hold hair spray in lieu of pepper spray. With this book, her skips included a man wanted for polygamy, a toilet paper bandit, and a drug dealer with a pet alligator name Mr. Jingles. Her biggest challenge is to rescue her cousin Vinnie from the mob with the help of Lula (who was at one time a prostitute) and Connie (office manager). If you like stories with 6 ft alligators, a stampede of cattle running through the streets of Trenton and the thought of hobbits crusading to the rescue, then I recommend this book it is very entertaining and has some hilarious moments with laughter. Based on the previous series with the Stephanie Plum character, the plot included Lula too much and not enough of Ranger the ex-military mentor and the homicide cop boyfriend Joe Morelli. It also could have included more of the crazy character grandma Muzar.

Overall 4 ½ stars
Plot/Storyline 4
I always think of this sort of book as a bubblegum book - sweet, chewy, and lacking any substance. That doesn't make it bad in any way, instead, it's a wonderful diversion from an overly busy life. Sizzling Sixteen is one of the many in the Stephanie Plum series and, while I enjoy them, to me they all feel very similar. There is a new adventure in each one, but if you don't love visiting with the characters (and once you get to know them you will!) you may find too much of the same feeling in each book. Every book does forward the fairly weak series plot but you can grab any one of them and follow along with only mild confusion at worst as to character relations. Evanovich always does a good job explaining relationships and any details you need to know about the past as she goes. She tends to have several separate plot lines going at once in each book and often hops from one to the other, but it makes sense and keeps you interested with her fast paced silliness. There was never a moment of drag for me. One of the reasons I consider these books to be bubblegum is the fact that the plot often lacks reality - Stephanie gets shot at and has multiple cars destroyed in theatrical ways in every book (this one is no exception), most of the characters are completely crazy, and in this particular book she is even helped by hobbits at one point. All of this leaves you laughing but if you like a story that might actually happen, it isn't for you. Reality or not, though, I'm already reading the next one!
Character development 5
Probably the best part of any of the Stephanie Plum books is the characters - they are all absurd but endearing caricatures that will have you laughing out loud and this book has some especially wonderful ones. How can you not love Mooner the stoner that she thinks of as sort of a pet and who forwards the storyline in the oddest of ways? Or her grandma who is obsessed with seeing dead people? Even

Rex, her hamster, is given a rather hamster accurate personality. For all the fun Evanovich has with her characters though, she does a great job of developing them, giving them depth, and making you like them. Stephanie's relationships with the men in her life are believable and not all happiness - just like the real world. For me the characters are by far the main reason to read this book, or any other in the series. Writing style 5 Evanovich has a very playful, upbeat writing style. The dialogue is short and to the point (one character almost exclusively says "Babe") but it suits the characters' personalities. If you want beautiful imagery and flowing language you won't find it here, but at the same time it wouldn't be appropriate to a girl bounty hunter from Jersey. The whole book has that short, fast, pointed feeling you'd expect - no words are wasted.

Wow, that's a long summary! I understand that there are a lot of people who were disappointed with Sizzling Sixteen. You cannot approach the Stephanie Plum series expecting the rules of the "real world" to apply. That's why these books are the perfect summer reads: they are light-hearted, funny, sometimes silly, and totally implausible. Implausible, you say? Yes! In what dimension can you: Eat everything you want and not gain weight Blow up/wreck/irreversibly damage multiple cars Have an ongoing sexual-tension filled flirtation with two unbearably sexy men and never have either one of them give you an ultimatum Be saved from danger by grown adults dressed up as hobbits Never load your gun but manage to get away unharmed every time you're taken hostage (at least one time per book) Distract an alligator with fried chicken...can you see how I could keep going with this? If anyone knows a place where things like this actually happen, sign me up---I want to live there. Especially if Ranger will be there too...Just One Gripe: The plot is kind of weak, as usual. This is overshadowed by the fact that the series is so funny. The Best Thing About This Book: I read the Stephanie Plum series for the humor. They are laugh-out-loud hilarious! I bust out laughing at least five times per book and Sizzling Sixteen did not disappoint in that respect. Grandma Mazur, Lula, Mooner, the Hobbits, all of it was awesome!

What can I say? I always enjoy Stephanie Plum :) I realize that Evanovich must be tired of the formula and the character, but she keeps churning out originality in a slapstick sense; without being malicious. Usually I don't like reading/watching humor making fun of people but Evanovich carries it off without seeming mean/prejudiced/ or some such thing. Perhaps it's the fact that the characters are conscious of themselves and are willing to live with the eccentricities with something like "grace". I do enjoy good slapstick :)

Janet Evanovich is my favorite author. Her Stephanie Plum novels are the perfect escape. Most times I have to stop for a few minutes because they make me roll around laughing hysterically. The whole package; murder, mystery, mayhem and romance....and don't forget fierce loyalty. I have the entire collection and re-read them once a year. Have to replace some I lent out

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