



Severe Clear

Stuart Woods

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Stone Barrington is called to Bel-Air to oversee an exclusive event that will gather the top echelons of the beau monde: Hollywood starlets, socialites, politicians, billionaires from overseas. It's a task in which Stone has a personal stake, and one that is made all the more pleasurable—though somewhat more complicated—with the arrivals of two beautiful women with whom he's intimately acquainted.

But the grand occasion has also attracted a dangerous criminal group with sinister plans. The hunt to find them leads Stone into a complex web of deceit and misdirection, in a world where the intrigues of government intelligence collide with the clandestine machinations of the upper crust. As he draws nearer to his quarry, he realizes that the stakes are higher than anybody could ever imagine . . . and that the enemies he's seeking might just be hiding in plain sight.

Severe Clear Details

Date : Published September 18th 2012 by Putnam Adult (first published September 1st 2012)

ISBN :

Author : Stuart Woods

Format : Kindle Edition 321 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction

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Norm Lionberger says

His Stone Barrington books have always been pretty fluffy, but they've gotten to be unreadable. Such dribble. And nobody uses speech patterns like the characters. "Get in touch with me without delay." Seriously?

Patricia L. says

I am so tired of reading this old man's misogynist writing. If women in powerful positions are in his book(s), he has to casually bed the salivating line of them (though with little skill & romance). Respect and honor is usually reserved for the Stone Barringtons of his world, or political/professional men. I won't slip up and borrow any more of his third rate stories from my library. I've worked for too many like him, and won't give my time to them any more.

Diane says

Excellent read! fast-paced, fun, interesting and an enjoyable series as always (paperback!)

Linda Rawlins says

Severe Clear is the 24th book in the Stone Barrington Series about two presidents meeting at a fancy new hotel built in honor of Stone's late wife Arlington. The Secret Service becomes aware of bombs placed on the grounds by terrorists and the race is on before a million lives are lost. Page turner and nice to see Stuart Woods merging all his characters although characters at times are a bit flat.

Suzanne says

This really is reading candy: just a fast-acting rush that I finished in a couple of hours and now 6 hours later, I'm stretching to remember the plot. If you are stuck waiting anywhere, this is the book you'll want to read. Whether for the plot, the thrills or the fantasy humor of terrorism and democracy-defenders that never fail to win, there's something for everyone here. It's definitely an alt-world where the President's wife is head of the CIA -- because she's career CIA and confirmed by the entire Senate. Take your fantasy wherever you can find it.

Nathan Flamank says

I gave this 2 stars as its better than his last 7 or 8 titles. This is for die hard fans of Woods only, its an easy read but is lazy and contrived and full of inaccuracies and implausible plot lines but it passed the six hours it took me to read it without me shouting at it too often.

If Woods doesn't pull his finger out soon though he will lose me as a reader as the stupidity of the Stone novels just keeps getting more and more ridiculous, I hope his immense fees are worth the sell out.

Its okay but not a book I'd recommend to non-Woods fans.

Kathy LeJeune says

Love Stuart Woods and Stone Barrington!

Amy Lignor says

This is the twenty-third book that calls out to the millions of Stone Barrington fans across the globe, and is yet another in the long line of cases for the 'super-sleuth' lawyer who never seems the least bit stumped when it comes to solving the mystery.

Still alive and well in New York City, Stone Barrington is living, loving, and lawyer-ing each and every day. Recently however, Stone has taken on the added extra job of working with his detective friend, Dino to look for a new restaurant that can take the place of the famous Elaine's.

Readying themselves to fly off to Bel Air, Stone and his friends are going to be a part of the grand opening of "The Arrington." This is a new '5-star' hotel that will offer patrons the absolute best in luxury, and has been built on the grounds of the former home of Stone's late wife. Let's face it, this is going to be the ultimate 'party of the century.' Invitations were sent out to everyone who is 'anyone' in the area; a long list that includes socialites, stars of stage and screen, true royalty, and billionaires from every continent.

Being that this is the age of 'watching' and 'spying' in the technological world, various telephone conversations have come to the attention of the NSA. These 'talks' have proven to the government that international terrorists are keeping a very close eye on the Bel Air party—especially since the President of the United States, as well as the President of Mexico are among the attendees.

Stone Barrington, as fans all know by now, has friends in the CIA, and calls in some favors from his buddies to have them keep watch over the event as it erupts in mystery!

The usual suspects are all here, and the tale is as fast-paced as all of Woods' books are, making it a perfect one-day read. Familiar characters, a good storyline, and humorous dialogue still abound and Woods, most likely, is already working on number twenty-four.

Until Next Time, Everybody,
Amy

Colin Craib says

Well, I'll preface this by saying that you pretty much have to know what to expect going into the Stone Barrington books. He'll get laid repeatedly, he'll make some money or inherit something, he'll be drafted by some intelligence agency, he may or may not save his love interest in time (if he does she'll probably die in a later book, so not to worry), and now he'll see a little bit of his son... but not nearly as much as you would think he'd want to. Oh, and he'll probably do someone in a high up position in the US government a favor that will allow him to be included on all kinds of cool things in the future.

This book doesn't fail to disappoint, though that term may be used in an ironic sense here at best. The book does have a much more modern plot to it, but I can't really say that I approve of it. Woods seems to forget that Stone is not actually a CIA agent. He's not trained to be one, and he really has no skills that would make those in the CIA want to trust him with their top secret information. For some reason though, this never seems to stop them, and it winds up with Stone once again getting tangled up in the middle of a big mess. Now, this ties back to the more modern plot because it was somewhat understandable back when the cases being brought to him were to track someone down. While he's not a PI, he did have the cop background and a good list of contacts he could call for help. With this... well, he just shouldn't be involved.

What was possibly one of the more amusing plot angles was Felicity and Holly meeting each other for the first time. After all, what could be more interesting than a cat fight between two highly trained operatives? Woods seemed to build up to that, and then lose interest in it though. Which while I would ordinarily say is a good thing for the realism, I can't do so here. Honestly I think that the Stone Barrington books are so far out of realism to begin with that he should have just thrown us a bone.

Now, the first portions of the book didn't really bother me much. After all, I know what to expect, and I continue to read it. However, the ending was just so incredibly stupid that it left me in disbelief about it. An impressive feat considering I expect just about anything from these books. That being said, I did get the next book, and I did read it quickly. As such, I have to give it a

2.5/5. It's a decent time waster, and nothing better.

Jackie says

I enjoyed seeing characters from early books grow and get promoted which makes me look forward to future books in the series. I am getting a bit tired of the perfunctory delivery of the women jumping into Stone's bed, and things like his son achieving so much. He wants to write and direct another movie and, bam, he's got a deal. He wants his father's office for his team and, bam, it's his. With all the talk this past year of the 99% it is clear the Woods writes from the perspective of the 1%.

Robert James says

Perfect book for a beautiful weekend spent outside. Quick, easy to read, not memorable, easy plot to follow and easy to move on to the next book.

Kristine Kucera says

Having read every single Stuart Woods book and thoroughly enjoying this series, I hate to say that I think this book "jumped the shark." There were ridiculous plot twists and forced ways to tie up loose endings. Plus, NO ONE has this much luck and opportunity. Also, everything to do with Peter, his son, it just too much over the top. NO ONE, especially a teenager, is this together, fabulous, talented, mature, and fortunate ALL THE TIME. I will continue to read these books in the hope that this story got a lot of odd plot points and loose ends out of the way - and that the next will be the usual entertaining reading I've come to expect.

Quillracer says

The grand opening of the ultra-luxurious hotel named after Stone Barrington's late wife draws the attention of the wrong kind of people who hope to make the opening something the world never forgets.

I don't quite know what to make of the Stone Barrington series. They are still 'twinkies for the mind' – light, fast reads that were a change of pace from heavier works. The earlier novels were good but of late they seem trite, almost as if Woods has a template he fills out and ships off to his publisher. And he still writes the most stilted overly-formal dialog this side of a nineteenth century English novel of manners.

This is another 'conglomeration' novel featuring Stone Barrington, Dino Bachetti, Holly Barker, Herbie Fisher, and most of Stuart Woods's recurring characters. Only Ed Eagle gets short shrift here. Again. The way his characters cross-populate all his series, maybe he should just lump them all under the 'Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here' banner.

Or he could call them the 'Conspicuous Consumption' series. After all, we are treated to another endless parade of private jets, exotic cars, and expensive clothes. All Woods's characters are disgustingly rich, mostly through inheritance, lottery wins, divorce settlements, or other means instead of their own labors.

While it is nice to read about people like that, it gets boring after a while – like a constant diet of ultra-sweet desserts. Sometimes you just want an Oreo.

And no Stuart Wood novel would be complete without numerous incidents of casual sex.

It would be nice if a Stone Barrington novel featured Stone solving a case on his own without help from every other Woods character.

I'll continue to read books in the series and hope that Woods will have future Stone Barrington novel showcase Stone.

Judy Moore says

An interesting plotline, but the characters and dialog were just not believable. I listened to half of this book,

couldn't take it anymore, but was interested in how it ended. So I flipped to the last disc. The ending was formulaic and uninspired. My first Stuart Wood book, and it will be my last.

Joey says

I used to love Stuart Woods. I really did.

Had I always read him back to back with the likes of James Patterson I probably would have never outgrown him. But one time I read an Agatha Christie novel and then turned around and read Stuart Woods. It was like going from reading Homer to See Spot Run, or going from reading Vanity Fair to the National Enquirer.

Even before this revelation I never saw the character of Stone Barrington as sexy in any way. I always seemed to equate him with the photo of Woods on the back cover, which is to say, an old man.

And the more SW's books I read the more I realized they were full of a lot of old men having a lot of sex, all of which I just had to skip over because imagining Stuart Woods having sex is about as romantic a notion as imagining Dick Cheney having sex.

Ew.

It would not surprise me at all if his books weren't secretly underwritten by Viagra.

Having said this, I love the characters of President and Mrs. Lee. They are the saving grace of the Stone Barrington series.

So, in short, if you found Matlock sexy, boy have I got a set of books for you!!!
