



# High Noon

*Nora Roberts*

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## **High Noon** Nora Roberts

Police Lieutenant Phoebe MacNamara found her calling at an early age when an unstable man broke into her family's home, trapping and terrorizing them for hours. Now she's Savannah's top hostage negotiator, defusing powderkeg situations with a talent for knowing when to give in-and when to jump in and take action. It's satisfying work-and sometimes those skills come in handy at home dealing with her agoraphobic mother, still traumatized by the break-in after all these years, and her precocious seven-year-old, Carly. It's exactly that heady combination of steely courage and sensitivity that first attracts Duncan Swift to Phoebe. After observing her coax one of his employees down from a roof ledge, he is committed to keeping this intriguing, take-charge woman in his life. She's used to working solo, but Phoebe's discovering that no amount of negotiation can keep Duncan at arm's length.

And when she's grabbed by a man who throws a hood over her head and brutally assaults her-in her own precinct house-Phoebe can't help but be deeply shaken. Then threatening messages show up on her doorstep, and she's not just alarmed but frustrated. How do you go face-to-face with an opponent who refuses to look you in the eye?

Now, with Duncan backing her up every step of the way, she must establish contact with the faceless tormentor who is determined to make her a hostage to fear . . . before she becomes the final showdown.

## **High Noon Details**

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Author : Nora Roberts

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# From Reader Review High Noon for online ebook

## Thenia says

A friend in their review described this as "Roarke and Eve Lite", and I found that to be a very apt description.

Phoebe is a Police Lieutenant and experienced negotiator and Duncan is a charming Irishman who is not exactly hurting for money. They meet when one of Duncan's employees whom he recently fired is threatening to commit suicide and Phoebe is called in as a negotiator. Duncan is immediately captivated by her aura of competence and authority, and after the suicide is averted, starts pursuing her.

Phoebe's home life is complicated, since she's a single mother and (view spoiler), among other things, and she doesn't think dating is a good idea, but Duncan manages to charm her into agreeing to one date, that then turns into another. Before either of them knows it, they are part of each other's lives and when (view spoiler).

Engaging story that kept my interest, despite, or perhaps because of the similarities between beloved characters.

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## Karla says

**5 Stars! Exciting, gripping and brilliantly narrated by Susan Erikson!** Another fantastic read/ listen from the talented Nora Roberts. The plot had me on the edge of my seat nearly the entire time.

Phoebe McNamara is a hostage negotiator for the Savannah police department. At the scene of an attempted suicide she meets Duncan Swift, former employer of the distraught man who is a jump away from committing suicide. Duncan is drawn to this strong confident woman, and she is taken by his charming personality. I loved them as individuals and adored them as a couple. Phoebe is viciously attacked and seeks aid and comfort from Duncan. Shaken by what's happened to her, he vows to seek revenge, but Phoebe won't have it, even though Duncan has the financial resources to launch his own investigation. This is what I loved about him. He hovered in the background, but never overstepped his bounds and let Phoebe take the lead. He was there to support her, but never doubted in her or her ability to do her job. It was a pleasant change from the way these issues play out in this type of read. Phoebe was the star of this show!

The plot intensifies as Phoebe and her family becomes the target of a madman hell bent on seeking revenge...but who, what and why is the mystery...and at times it was vicious and brutal! Thrilling! There is a whole host of lovely secondary characters, from Phoebe's delightful daughter Carly, who added a layer of reality and softened the read, to her colleagues at the police department. Chocked full of action, with a dramatic ending, a sweet, spicy romance, the book was almost perfect...ALMOST, but not quite. I've only read a few Nora Roberts books, but the trend with her seems to be that she very rarely offers an epilogue and when she does it's bare bones. Again I'm left wondering about the fate of some of the characters and I don't like that. It's more a personal issue for me, so I detracted nothing from my rating, because in all due respect it ended well.

Susan Erikson I want to bring you home with me, sit you in a comfy chair and let you read all my books to me!!! You are AWESOME!! Your lovely voice characterized each individual perfectly. I knew whose

dialogue was being presented at any given time, because of “voice” you gave them. The inflection was never overdone, soft, harsh, excited, sexy, sweet, scared, tense...just flawless!

She is the narrator for the Nora Roberts/J D Robb In Death series and I’m excited to continue this series in audio format so that Susan can wow me again!!

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### **Carla Johnson-Hicks says**

This Nora Roberts standalone novel starts off with a bang. Phoebe McNamara is the top hostage negotiator for the Savannah Police Department and she is called in to talk down a man threatening suicide. She heads out on the ledge with him and is able to get him to put down the gun and come inside. This is just part of the job for Phoebe as she has worked suicides, kidnappings, hostage situations and robberies gone wrong with very few fatalities. The man who is talking to "suicide Joe" when she arrives is Duncan Swift who recently won several millions in a lottery. He falls for Phoebe and will not give up until she agrees to go out with him. Phoebe is not looking for a relationship as she is a single mother to a 7 year old daughter and she is the breadwinner and caretaker for her agorophobic mother. Unfortunately for Phoebe, something is happening and she does not know what. Someone is stalking and tormenting her. Dead animals are tossed on her porch steps, a man she has spent hours negotiating with is shot down as he walks out with his arms in the air, and Phoebe doesn't have a clue who is taunting & terrorizing her. She is also dealing with a suspended police officer who hates her and when she is attacked in the stairwell of her own police building he is fired and only given community service. As the violence escalates, she fears for her family and the man she is falling in love with, Duncan Swift.

Nora Roberts never fails to deliver action, suspense, intrigue, chemistry, and romance. The plot development and action were well written. The suspense kept building and building as the stalker grew more violent and brash. I was never sure who the stalker was and neither was Phoebe until just before the final showdown (hence the title, High Noon). The family dynamics and history added another interesting storyline which added another dimension to the characters. The chemistry between Phoebe and Duncan was believable even if it did happen very fast. He was a great character, honest, loyal, loving and putting Phoebe's family right up there with her. He was the prince on the white steed, but not mushy or unbelievable. My only complaint was the abrupt ending. I would have loved an epilogue of what happened after that final scene where the showdown takes place. I assume they got married, but would love to have had something end the story a little less abruptly. A great romantic suspense novel for anyone who likes reading this genre.

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### **Vinaya says**

So, this book marks a big moment for me...

Yes, that's right, I have now finished ONE HUNDRED books this year. \*cue applause\*

A couple of months ago, Flannery and I discovered that we shared a mutual love for Nora Roberts. We then

decided that we would devote an entire week to Nothing But Nora, revisiting all of our favourite Nora novels. High Noon is the first in my NBN book list.

High Noon is not my absolute favourite Nora novel, but it is amongst the ones I like best. Actually, the reason I started off with this one was because I watched *The Negotiator* (Kevin Spacey, Samuel L. Jackson) about a week ago, and it reminded me of High Noon. The book's been stuck in my head ever since. Phoebe MacNamara is a negotiator for the Atlanta PD, cool, composed and tough. Duncan Swift first meets her when she arrives on St. Patrick's Day to talk one of his suicidal ex-employees off a ledge. He's impressed by her abilities and struck by her sex appeal. But Phoebe's not an easy woman to have a relationship with; she's got a seven year old daughter, an agoraphobic mother and very many professional and personal responsibilities. And worse, it appears that she is being stalked by a psychopathic co-worker.

One of the things I like best about Roberts's novels, both romance and romantic suspense, is how her MCs always have such cool jobs. She really puts time and effort into detailing the vocation of each of her heroines, be it a baker, or a sculptor, or a cat burglar. It's like a fun career guide, drawing you into the lives of people with these careers, giving you a taste of what it's like to be a wedding planner or a hostage negotiator.

Nora Roberts is also one of the best romantic suspense authors out there. Despite starting her career in mainstream romance, she manages to skilfully juggle the romantic and suspense elements in her book, without giving undue precedence to either. (Julie Garwood, I'm looking at you!)

High Noon builds both suspense and romance very well. Phoebe is beautifully drawn character, tough, independent and smart. She has a quick temper and an inability to lean on other people for support, but she's never stupid, and doesn't give independent women a bad name. Too often, being independent in romance novels means being blindly stubborn and bitter about men, but Phoebe skilfully avoids this cliché, and her interaction with Duncan made me feel all gooey and warm.

Another thing that Nora Roberts portrays amazingly well is the bonds of family. From the MacGregors to the Stanislaskis, many of her books have the kind of family ties we all dream of. Her families are loving, boisterous and tied together by strong bonds. In a genre where secondary characters are two-dimensional, at best, Roberts' draws a moving picture of Phoebe's relationships with her mother, surrogate sister and brother.

Duncan, too has a family, of the heart, if not by blood. His best friend is black, but you don't see Roberts making a big hoo-haa about it. She mentions the info, and then drops it; even though Duncan is an integral member of Phin's all-black family, you still think of it as natural-- no trumpets about race, and racial integrity are blown to show off the author's all-inclusiveness. I heart Nora.

All in all, High Noon is a fast-paced, satisfying read for anyone who's looking for an action-packed family drama with a suspense element. This book was a great start to Nora Week, and I'm looking forward to rediscovering other old favourites...

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## **Jane Stewart says**

Audiobook narrator was terrible. Story, characters, and chemistry were weak.

NARRATOR SUSAN ERICKSEN:

Imagine someone with a hair trigger temper, quick to yell and always ANGRY. That is how the narrator

interpreted most characters. I don't like to be around angry people, and that was how I felt during most of the book. The second most common interpretation was SMUG. Others: sarcastic, slick, arrogant. There was no warmth, vulnerability, sensitivity. My favorite narrator Frank Muller reads with a sense of wonder. This narrator does not.

A different narrator could have made Phoebe likeable. But this narrator made Phoebe unlikeable - because she was SMUG or ANGRY in every conversation. Another character: Someone gives a mother flowers. The mother was pleased, but she used an impatient and ordering voice telling her daughter to go get a vase.

There were a couple conversations where I did not know who was speaking. The author did not use he said, she said, which is ok, but the narrator should have used different voices.

#### THE STORY:

There is a romance but it didn't feel like romance. The story is mostly mystery suspense.

I was bored. The plot had bad guys attacking Phoebe and her loved ones. She had to survive, react, deal with it, investigate, and other things you'd expect. Nothing stood out as special for me.

Things were started about Essie and Ava, but not developed or finished. I would have liked more about them.

I suppose readers who want to read about hostage negotiating might find this more interesting. There are a few scenes with Phoebe doing that. Although I was bored during one long scene where Phoebe repeats everything the hostage taker says.

There is one scene with a beating and partial rape.

#### OTHER BOOKS:

Nora Roberts is hit and miss with me. My favorites are: Carnal Innocence, Born in Fire, Angels Fall, The Witness, Northern Lights, and Sea Swept.

#### DATA:

Narrative mode: 3rd person. Unabridged audiobook length: 16 hrs and 34 mins. Swearing language: strong including religious swear words. Sexual language: none other than the f-word used negatively. Number of sex scenes: 5 scenes briefly referred to no details, plus a few references to sex acts, plus 1 partial rape scene. Setting: current day Savannah, Georgia. Book copyright: 2007. Genre: mystery suspense with romance.

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#### **Sierra says**

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#### **karen says**

just so you know, i really tried. anyone who knows me knows my - let's call it *lack of enthusiasm* - towards the romance genre. but i went into this with an open mind, thinking, "i didn't want to read the children's books when i took the children's class either, and look at me now!" but so i went in thinking it would make

me a better person or a better, more rounded book-knower.

so i tried.

but shit - this is a pretty bad one. and it is more than just a matter of preference/taste for the genre, it is just...turdy.

backtrack - i had a choice of authors to read for this part of the assignment, and i figured i would go with this nora roberts one over the other choices, which seemed to be more hearts-and-flowers with, like, swans, on the cover and lavender cover-text. this one was about a hostage negotiator in the south (how many hostage situations are there in savannah?? a lot.), living in some estrogen temple (stately southern gothic mansion with mother, daughter and female "helper") getting sexually assaulted in her own precinct etc etc... it sounded like it would at least be page-turning.

but, man, there is such a conflict in tone between this high-stakes hostage negotiator who is super-feminist in her priorities and career, but who says some corny-assed shit. voici:

"There were long legs in those jeans, she noted".

"Oh Duncan, you're awfully cute, and you're rich, and you've got a very sexy car. I'm just not in a position to start a relationship"

"If she'd been wearing socks, Phoebe thought as she aimed for her bedroom, they'd have been blown clear across Jones Street during that good-night kiss".

"I thought I forgot how to need somebody to stay... lucky for me I remembered when the somebody can be counted on"

and it's not just her with the lame-ass talking:

"You were in the FBI? Like Clarice Starling? Like *Silence of the Lambs*?

Or Dana Scully - another hot redhead, by the way. Special Agent McNamara?" he let out a long, exaggerated breath. "You really are hot".

fucking yokel.

if you don't believe any of these quotes, read it yourself.

ms. robb/roberts has her strengths - she really knows her audience and she cannily addresses them in a thousand different ways:

"Tonight you represent every dateless women in this city, every woman who's about to sit down to a lonely meal of Weight Watchers pasta primavera she's just nuked in the microwave. Every woman who'll get into bed tonight with a book or reruns of *Sex and the City* as her only companion". "You", she said, pointing her finger at Phoebe, "are our shining hope".

as nora roberts is the shining hope to all the single mothers juggling the demands of career and family, waiting for their knight in shining-Porsche who knows about flowers and is the perfect man, lover,father all in one. and when Phoebe proposes to Duncan (yeah, spoiler alert, i don't even care) it's all i could do to keep from gagging. (remember - i really tried)

but it's such a farce that indulges all the secret fantasies of the women drawn to this kind of escapist fiction:

watching your deadbeat ex-husband blown to bits from a bomb strapped to his chest as he cries and begs you to save him? check

lottery-winning (read: wealthy without having to spend potential sex-hours at that pesky office) dreamy man who loves your daughter and your mother as much as he loves you? check

a man who will stop you mid-lovemaking to give you a brief lecture about gun control, proving to you he cares more for family than your vagina. oh,swoon.

check.

the dialogue is not restricted to the cheesily-romantic, it also nods to the cartoonishly villainous:

"i want you to shove some of this C-4 up your twat, you useless cunt"

(you can tell he is the bad guy because he used two different female-taboo words in one sentence!)

and i don't care if you aren't a 14-year-old boy - there is no way you let this sentence into your final draft, not from your scary villain:

"you read, or i blow him. Going to take a few other people out and bring serious hurt to the others. But what the hell, I'll blow the big one,too, and that takes it all"

erm.

i really, really tried.

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## **Cheri says**

Started out quite slow in the 1st half but got much better. The 2nd half has all the action in it. I give it 3.5 stars due to the previous fact. I did like the H & h.

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## **Duchess Nicole says**

This is not my favorite Nora, but still good. I tend to rate her against herself anyways. I think the tough woman cop thing is a little overplayed. I really enjoy when she writes a heroine who is a bit softer, and Phoebe is definitely not that. I thought that Duncan, Phoebe's love interest, was sort of blah. I just never fell in love with him.



As always, there is a secondary love story going on between Ava and Phoebe's stand in Daddy and boss. But I was very frustrated to realize at the end of the book that there was no resolution. She didn't even allude to a happy ending for these two. Seriously, it's like she just forgot that these characters had their own little story going on. Urg!

I suppose that sounds all bad, but the book was still enjoyable. I like that Phoebe was a mother and that her daughter was priority #1 in her life. She's had a tough life and overcome a lot to be a strong willed woman, taking on the world and all of it's evil people.

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## **Jilly says**

Think of this one as Roarke and Eve Lite. You can definitely catch some of the same feelings because he is rich and she is a cop, but it is set in the now instead of future, and let's face it: there's only one Roarke with his Poet Face and Sapphire Eyes.

And, Lord knows there is only one Eve Dallas.

Obviously, no couple could ever be as perfect. But, this couple was pretty damn good too. Nora Roberts knows how to write good characters. And, I like a mystery and maybe a bit of bloodshed with my romance, so this worked for me.

The story is about a female cop, Phoebe, a hostage negotiator, who meets a male rich dude, Duncan, when she talks a guy off a ledge. Phoebe is a single mom, a woman in a boys' club trying to deal with all of that, and dealing with a very complicated family situation. Duncan is Mr. Happy-Go-Lucky and cracked me up several times. Here is his remark after he decides he needs to protect her when a bad guy is making threats against her:

Her: *"I don't know why men think women can't defend themselves or their home."*

*He only smiled. "Do I need to explain the power of the penis to you - so soon after you've experienced its wonder?"*

That one made me think of all of my friends here on goodreads. If there is one thing we have learned through books: Penises are magic.

I never said "smart". Just magic.

We've all seen the magic peen do fantastic things, but we don't mind at all because for every magic peen there is a magic vagina that turns incorrigible, dangerous fuckboi's into monogamous lovesick puppy dogs. So, it evens out.

Okay, I'm not sure if that was magic or just a really unfortunate event. Also, the look on her face tells us a helluva story.

Still, happy that things seem pretty even....

Any Eve Dallas fan will probably enjoy this book. It was a lot of fun.

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### **Eviltwinjen says**

I'm a total sucker for Nora Roberts, and as long as she's not recycling characters too obviously I have few complaints. Say what you will about Roberts and her incredibly prolific career, she's an *effective* writer. I laughed, I cried, I was concerned about whether some characters would make it out alive. So the hero is just a bit too good to be true--an emotionally open, handsome, loyal *lottery* winner, fer chrissakes--the heroine is a hostage negotiator who's truly ballbusting. The opening, which plunks you and her right into a negotiation with a potential suicide, is corking good. The relationship progresses realistically, and the suspense plot conveniently provides enough distraction to prevent our lovers from fully committing to one another long enough to have a book and not so long that we lose respect for them (thank God, no "big misunderstanding").

In romance, the setting is a big part of the hook. All romance plots and characters are essentially cast from the same set of molds, so the trappings are a big part of what makes a new romance interesting to fans. In this case, Roberts has lifted her setting and even some incidental characters right out of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. Which...huh. I love to hear about quirky Savannahians, and she makes it work--Roberts always writes characters who are just plain good people, but not boringly good, people you would be happy to know exist. There's even a fabulous drag queen, who seems to appear just so Roberts can remind us that GLBT folks are our friends. Hey, I'm all for that. I could have wished that the villain was introduced a bit earlier, and didn't spring up fully formed as a plot point halfway through the book, but then the mystery is never really the point of romantic suspense. All in all, it's Roberts doing what she's good at, and the kind of romance you can give to the disbelieving who think the genre is all heaving bosoms and "I hate you...but I love you!"

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### **Carina Carvalho says**

Nora Roberts nunca desilude

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### **Melisa Ramonda says**

What the...?

If this is the "great" Nora Roberts, I'm awfully disappointed. This story is a compendium of cliches, one after another after another after another...

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### **Cyndi says**

Romantic suspense!! So good!!

You might think it's a bit like an In Death book, but you'd be a bit wrong, even though she is a cop and he is handsome and rich. Duncan is not Roarke, but he is still a good character and not quite as alpha.

## **Cathy says**

I've must've seen the movie version of this before or at least parts of it. There were certain scenes where I knew exactly how it was going to play out, I could predict it down to the letter. Then again, the entire middle section of the book was unknown to me so I figure I must've caught it while channel surfing and not knowing it was a Nora Roberts adaptation.

### **Things I liked:**

1) the romance.

I wasn't head-over-heels with it, but Roberts does what she does best and I did like it. Or certain aspects of it, rather. Phoebe and Duncan's issues felt like real issues. Whenever they bumped heads, the conflict at the root of it made sense to me, and they talked about it like the adults they were and I love that. Grown-ups being sensible and cautious for all the right reasons and then proceeding to talk through whatever's going on is my kryptonite. Bonus points if these adult conversations and run-ins happen to lead to make-out sessions with pent-up frustrations being released. ALL THE BONUS POINTS.

2) the secondary characters.

On both sides of the couple, there's an excellent cast of characters surrounding them and they all warmed my heart.

3) the hostage negotiation.

I've always been somewhat fascinated by this branch of law enforcement and I liked this aspect of the book a lot.

### **Things I hated:**

1) the clichéd, bigoted and entitled cop.

Why is there always one of those running around?

2) the obligatory sections/paragraphs told from the villain's POV.

I cannot repeat this enough but I almost always dislike those intensely. There are exceptions, such as psychological thrillers that are centered around this type of narrator, because then it fits better into the framework of the story. I don't like Roberts' typical bad guys' voice, though, and there were essentially two of them in this.

3) the suspense.

There was too much of everything going on for my taste. How much bad luck can one person have in a lifetime? Let alone in the span of a couple of weeks/months? One bad guy, I can deal with. Two at the same time with a third one having wreaked havoc in the main character's past is too much. I understand why the past trauma was necessary, and the author builds up the suspense well, don't get me wrong, but even before the main part came up we'd already had too much drama and I grew tired.

4) the length.

The book could easily have been 100 pages shorter. I felt like the characters kept having the same

conversation over and over again at some point.

**Now for a bit of a rant:**

*"I'm thirty-three years old and I haven't had sex in fifteen months. What's wrong with me?"*

I object to these kinds of statements, to be honest. I object because it seems to be so damn present in romance novels. And tv shows and movies for that matter. Where the idea of not having sex for any amount of time is deemed as abnormal and oh, the disgrace! I don't get this. Maybe because the concept of dating itself is pretty foreign here (although what with the rise of internet dating, that's starting to change); you're either together or you're not. Which doesn't really leave too many opportunities for casual sex or hook-ups. That seems easier overseas, for example, where there does actually seem to be a dating scene. Or maybe there's not and it's all just a big lie. Either way, I object to this quote.

*"[...] it was time to break the fifteen-month deadlock. Not just with anyone, she reminded herself. She wasn't a slut [...]."*

I object to this quote even more. Don't do that. There is nothing wrong with a woman aiming for a casual hook-up or a fling if that's what she wants. If that kind of thing isn't for you, that's fine, but don't start the shaming process. Don't be that person, Nora.

/end rant. This review is too long, but all in all this is a decent read.

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