



Hell to Pay (Emily 3): A What Doesn't Kill You Romantic Mystery

Pamela Fagan Hutchins

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USA Best Book Award-Winning Series, Cross Genre Fiction.

Third book in the Emily series, a spin-off from Katie & Annalise.

Big-haired paralegal and former rodeo queen Emily thinks she's got her life back on track. Her adoption of Betsy seems like a done deal, her parents have reunited, and she's engaged to her sexy boss Jack. Then client Phil Escalante's childhood buddy Dennis drops dead, face first into a penis cake at the adult novelty store Phil owns with his fiancée Nadine, one of Emily's best friends. The cops charge Phil with murder right on the heels of his acquittal in a trail for burglarizing the Mighty is His Word church offices. Emily's nemesis ADA Melinda Stafford claims her witness overheard Phil fighting with Dennis over a woman, right about the time Phil falls into a diabetic coma, leaving Nadine shaken and terrified. Meanwhile Betsy's ultra-religious foster parents apply to adopt her and Jack starts acting weird and evasive. Emily feels like a calf out of a chute, pulled between the ropes of the header and the heeler, as she fights to help Phil and Nadine without losing Betsy and Jack.

Hell to Pay (Emily 3): A What Doesn't Kill You Romantic Mystery Details

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From Reader Review Hell to Pay (Emily 3): A What Doesn't Kill You Romantic Mystery for online ebook

Nikita Jhanglani says

Emily's is a character that is nuanced and dealt with beautifully. She is strong, weak, charming, and irritating all rolled into one. She can catch rattlesnakes and wears braces-a character detail that left the writer in me completely in awe of Pamela (there is a small story behind why Emily wears braces at 30; read Pamela's interview [here](#) to know about it). Jack is your totally-makes-me-go-weak-in-the-knees kind of guy! The story deals with a lot of characters and lots of twists and turns, some that completely change the track of the story. With all these characters and twists, it is amazing to see how the story does not confuse you one bit; rather it is so difficult to put down this book. The best part is how the story comes full circle in the end.

Laced with humor that will keep you laughing till pages after you've finished reading, mystery that will make you want to read that just one more page more than ever, and romance that will reinstate your belief in happily-ever-afters, this is one is an extremely enjoyable read. It certainly certainly deserves to be up there on your TBR!

Kavipriya Moorthy says

First Impression: Interesting title, simple cover design and a blurb that took me three reads to get the glitch. I kick started reading to quench my diction thirst, and yes, it paid off.

Overall Impression: A romantic mystery is indeed one of the hardest, because there are times where I read a few of those sorts where I skipped romance parts and read only the mystery. I always felt that romance in a mystery is speed breakers, but Pamela proved me wrong aligning the scenes on par with excellence.

What did I love about this book?

Expect the unexpected type of a story that intrigued me instantly

As I said, the diction peppered

Strong plot, pace so right and characters so believable

Humor trials did work out really well

There are no frown factors as such; I just loved the novel's pace. It worked out so wonderfully, though initially it is tough to get the glitch, Pamela has done a great job with this novel so that it makes sense even as a standalone. Any who reads this book would want to read the previous set of the series, just like me.

Am just holding enough from spilling the beans about the mystery, it is indeed a must read and I would give 4/5 ratings for this nail-biting novel.

Julie says

Hell to Pay- An Emily Romantic Mystery -by Pamela Fagan Hutchins is a 2016 SkipJack publishing release. I was provided a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

Pamela has a unique writing voice which never fails to entertain and capture my undivided attention. This story grabbed me right away and before I knew it, I was deeply engrossed in Emily's life, all her ups and downs, laughing and crying, and cheering her on as she works double time on a murder case, while her personal life begins to quickly unravel.

This third installment in the 'Emily' series charges from the gate with the shocking death of Phil's friend, Dennis. Phil is arrested for murder making him Jack's client again and pitting Emily against her arch rival, Melinda.... Again! But, the action is only getting started, as Phil's health takes a serious turn for the worse, there is bad news for Emily in regards to Betsy's adoption, and Jack has closed up on Emily, shutting her out, keeping secrets from her and telling lies.

In the meantime, Emily has to prove Phil's innocence, which has her calling in favors, meeting up with some interesting and colorful characters and putting her life in danger in the process.

Not to sound clichéd, but seriously, fasten your safety belts, because this fast paced mystery is relentless on all fronts. Who murdered Dennis? What 'old case' is Jack is working on and why isn't he sharing with Emily? Will Emily and Jack make it as a couple? Will Betsy be taken from them forever?

Emily's first person accounting of events is often hilarious, but is also poignant, as she struggles so very hard to do the right thing, help people, and find true love in her life, have a family of her own, but it often seems as though those things stay just out of her reach. But, Emily is a strong person, who refuses to say die, even if she really wants to curl up in a fetal position and suck her thumb, which makes her an inspirational, but realistic character I can't help but like. (Even though she has a few, er, interesting, um, talents, that gives me the heebie jeebies, but do certainly come in handy, as you will see.)

It seems like Emily is on her own a lot in this one, at least when it comes to solving a murder and taking care of Phil's defense, which is also the one thing she can focus on at the moment that keeps her moving on, because everything else seems to have turned to crap. Jack is one of those crappy things, and I honestly I wanted to pinch him on the butt, scream at him, and slam a few doors on Emily's behalf. MEN! Otherwise, he was still the same sexy guy that melts your heart and might curl your toes.

As for our murder mystery, there is much more going on here than I originally thought, a lot more in fact. As Emily begins to peel back the layers of the onion, she's in for a huge shock, and readers will be too!!

If you have been following along with the series, you will absolutely love the way things are all wrapped up. All the loose ends are tied up, the questions are answered, but not before you find yourself holding your breath, biting your nails, sitting on the edge of your seat, as the suspense builds to a crescendo. In the end everything is done with style and panache, while staying true to the characters and giving us all we could ever hope for in this series, but with Emily being Emily, none of it was predictable or conventional, which is why it was so wonderful.

Obviously, I really enjoyed this book, and I would definitely recommend this series to romantic suspense

fans, but also to those who enjoy humorous contemporary fiction and romance. 5 stars

Shalini says

This is the first book I am reading by Pamela Fagan Hutchins. When I started reading, I was glassy-eyed, as if the characters were thrown off balance. Of course, all this was because it is the seventh book in the series and so much has already happened. That said, once you read over ten to fifteen pages, you easily get into a groove and begin to get a clearer picture.

Emily and Phil are lovers who plans to get married soon. However, Emily is unsure. As she toils over the proposal, Phil's best friend Dennis gets murdered and who but Phil becomes the prime suspect. Things become worse as Phil goes into a coma and Emily prepares for an adoption.

The story is highly gripping and the author has succeeded in keeping the reader on pins and needles through this murder mystery. I was in no time hooked onto Emily and her life and who killed Dennis. There is mystery and romance, panic and courage, fear and faith as you flip through the pages and get captivated by the emotional ordeal and...

Read more here: <https://taleoftwotomatoes.wordpress.c...>

Marcy McKay says

I've enjoyed all of Pamela Fagan Hutchin's novels, but Hell to Pay is my favorite. Everything about it shines: the plot, the characters and the writing. Readers are in for a real treat with this story.

Shilpa Garg says

Hell to Pay is the What Doesn't Kill You #7: An Emily Romantic Mystery. This is the first book in the series that I read from the author. I had some inhibitions initially about picking a book which is seventh in the series. I thought that it would be difficult to comprehend what's going on, but it just takes a couple of chapters and I was sucked in the world of Emily and Jack. Hell to Pay reads like a breeze as a standalone book, but I am keen to read the earlier books in this series now.

Hell to Pay has it all, right from a murder and adoption, to rattlesnakes and fanatic religious group, to a bit of romance and lots of drama. It has a healthy dose of suspense, exciting characters, intriguing plot and a lot of action and adventure too. And all these essential elements in a murder mystery like this one, kept me intrigued and interested.

The suspense in Hell to Pay gave the story dimensions and layers and made it so very exciting. When the protagonists are in a crazy situation and are locked in the church retreat of the Mighty is His Word, it was one thrilling ride. I worried for Emily and Jack and kept wondering what would happen next and how they would get out alive. And when a reader is as connected with the characters and story like this, I think this is what makes for a good mystery and speaks a lot about the writing skills of the author.

A dash of humour is added by Emily in the story. Her observations of things around her and her curses made for some fun and hilarious read. This gave a welcome relief to the suspense, dramatic conflict and puzzling

murder mystery in the story. The romance in the story was a bit lacklustre and was one sided. Since, it's a Romantic Mystery, a bit of action packed sizzling romance would have added to the zing of the story.

Pamela has created a gripping story by weaving vivid descriptions with thrilling threads of secrets, greed, deceit and intrigue. The pacing is fast and that engulfed me in the world of drama and intrigue and in the lives of Emily and Jack.

Exciting and Entertaining from start to finish, that sums up Hell to Pay. Definitely an edge of your seat read. Pick it up as soon as possible. You will enjoy the ride.

<http://shilpaagarg.com/2016/06/hell-t...>

Nancy says

Hell to pay is right! What happens when you let your imagination run away from you, and you act on those thoughts, but don't question whether they are true or not...you have Hell to Pay. Emily is once again up to her sky high bangs in trouble. If you haven't already read the other 2 Emily books...what are you waiting for?!? Emily is a character you love and feel for, even when those feelings are fear, embarrassment, and sadness. The rollercoaster ride that is Emily's life is enjoyably told with skill and panache by Pamela. I cannot recommend this book highly enough, but with a caveat...go read the other 6 first!

Rubina says

?It all started with a party. A party where everyone was celebrating freedom and a new life. At that moment, a life is brutally taken away and the host of the party, Phil Escalante is blamed. The story starts when Emily and Jack land in the middle of the murder mystery.

Professional Life vs Personal life. ..

Being engaged to her sexy boss, Jack, has its perks but when her fiancé introduces Emily as 'Emily is not my wife'. it indicates that all is not well in the relationship. From the beginning, we are shown different shades in the relationship between Emily and Jack.

This novel has two threads running parallel to each other in the storyline. The romance and the mystery - both intermingled and touching the lives of those involved.

Strangely it even affected the lives of those who are solving the mystery. Dennis is dead but has left behind a series of questions and broken relationships. One of them being Emily herself. While her love for Jack cannot be questioned yet she starts questioning the lack of communications that starts tearing the relationship apart. Many secrets that Jack has kept from Emily make her very suspicious of him.

And then they meet in the church...

This was one of the best moments of the mystery of Hell to Pay. Even when I had almost expected such a thing to happen, yet when it does, it made me flip back a few pages to see if I had missed a clue or not. The shocking trigger points in this mystery is very well placed in the storyline.

The unpredictability and threads present...

?Many threads were woven to bring out the richness of the characters. While Emily came out as a strong woman struggling to keep the love of her life, get the child of her dreams into her family and also solve the mystery - yet somewhere her vulnerability will touch your heart. Her relationship with her own father is

touching.

The Mystery unravels...

While throughout the story the thread of mystery has been kept alive yet one could not have guessed that Jack, the child Emily wanted to adopt and the death of Dennis Welch all are connected to each other. While it might seem a bit far fetched or rather a package that is neatly formed to make the character follow a certain path yet it did not sound false. In fact, it was very interesting to decipher who played what role. Any road a reader thinks of will make you trudge on the mysterious path.

Months had passed since I'd applied to adopt Betsy. We'd overcome her kidnapping and the death of her parents.

The Bollywood Connection....

"Mmm." I said, trying to smile while wobbling my head side to side like I was in a Bollywood movie."

Ah well! :)

?

But besides the obviously stated line the thread where religion is used to dupe the innocent is not something which is subjective to any particular part of the world. With so many things going on in this story, to keep yourself totally grounded to the main plot of the murder is kinda difficult. But as all roads have a well-placed clue that is needed to reach the destination, one cannot but admire the craftsmanship of the writer.

?Reason for the Rating...

Check it out:

<http://www.tbcblogtours.com/tbc-blog/...>

Sundari Venkatraman says

Disclaimer: I downloaded a free Kindle version of this book from the link sent by the author via The Book Club, in return for my honest review.

Hell to Pay is #7 in a romantic thriller series by Pamela Fagan Hutchins. I grabbed the opportunity to read and review this one since we are getting a book by a western author after a long interval.

When I read the first few pages, I was kind of confused. There were a slew of characters and way too many things happening, all together. It was difficult to navigate. This is probably because most of them have travelled through the first six books. A regular follower of the series would have been able to jump into the book immediately. But then, the book is also recommended as a standalone. I gritted my teeth and plodded on.

After the first 2-3 chapters, things became clearer and I could follow the story. Emily is a paralegal who works with her lover Jack. Jack has already proposed marriage and there's a vague plan for them to be married in a month's time. Emily is unsure. How could she wed a guy who hasn't told her he loves her? But the sex is great. When they are in bed, it seems the future can only be amazing. But out of it, Emily remains unconvinced. Then there's the backlog. Jack had been married to the beautiful Lena and two kids too, until all three were murdered in a bomb blast.

Dennis is murdered, in a gruesome fashion. Of all people, his best friend and partner, Phil, is the prime suspect. Phil's fiancée Nadine is shattered. The District Attorney office seems to have a watertight case. Things get from bad to worse when Phil goes into a diabetes induced coma.

In the meanwhile, Emily, who had lost a baby (she had been married to a guy who's bisexual, and prefers his

boyfriend), is keen to adopt Betsy, a little Mexican girl who's lost her parents. But Betsy is in a foster home belonging to Mary Alice and Trevon, who are part of an extremist church group.

The author takes the reader through some nail-biting moments in this racy thriller with a dash of romance. I liked the way Emily, Wallace, Emily's father, Betsy, Michele and many others were characterised. I wish there had been more on the dashing Jack. But then, the story is tightly written and well presented.

The background, the scenes, and the relationships, have been well handled. I enjoyed the dialogues, especially between Wallace and Emily. Then there was the endearing Clyde. And many others, though blink and miss, were absolutely necessary to make the story complete.

One tiny peeve though: The story was running superbly well till the last major scene. After that, though things were tied up perfectly, the last bit was all rush rush. I wish there was a bit more there.

I found the final court scene adorable.

VERDICT: Readers of both romance and thrillers will love this one.

Marsha says

I gave this one more star than the other two in the series, but really I should've only been able to give it 3 1/2 stars, because there was still far too much going down on my knees and praying nonsense! But the story was involved in religion, so I can't exactly faulted for being "too religious", although it was. I guess it was trying to emphasize that religion itself, by definition, is not the evil; it's the people who call themselves religious in some cases. The story was annoying. I think I need to go back and change the rating to three stars. But it had a happy ending, which I guess is supposed to be the goal of cozy mysteries...

Actually, the more I think about it, the less I really like it. It's tempting to say I like it because of the characters have been painted as likable people like Emily; I like Laura; I like Nadine, and I like others. But really, the story itself is frustrating and annoying. Sigh. I guess part of my quandary is they really there are two distinct parts. The romance part is awful: the individuals and reactions are poor at best. The mystery part is engaging and enjoyable. The whole thing makes for a book that teeters on a wall. I am not a romance fan, but I am a mystery fan. And the over-the-top religion aspect: pray for answers and help, pulls it down into the negative side.

Nimi says

Hell to Pay starts with a party to celebrate the engagement of Phil and Nadine. The two are friends of Emily and her boss/fiancé Jack.

This is the second book of this series that I read. The first one was Heaven to Betsy. Heaven to Betsy is when Jack and Emily meet. The chemistry between the two was great, and there was hope of a relationship. I miss a couple of books and the two are engaged to be married.

The party of Hell to Pay has Emily happy, relaxed and 'at home', or so it seems when the book begins.

Jack is a criminal attorney, Emily works in his office, and Hell to Pay is a Romantic Thriller. So, the thrill begins when Phil's friend, Denis is murdered and Phil is the prime suspect.

Betsy, the girl that Emily had rescued in Heaven to Betsy, is staying with a foster family while Emily and Jack are waiting for their adoption request of Betsy to be approved.

The foster family is a member of a suspicious religious group 'Mighty is His Word'.

What I found common is the novelty of Pamela Fagan Hutchins' writing style.

When she describes an individual, she doesn't use the oft-used clichés.

Dennis' murder mystery, Betsy's adoption, Emily's uncertainty about Jack's feelings towards her, the surprising change in the relationship of her own parents, and as expected her daring, never-back-off attitude make for a very interesting, unputdownable read.

Hell to Pay is a very well-written, entertaining read.

Detailed review with quotes from the book on my blog - <http://goo.gl/QnV3UH>

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

MEF says

Mixed feelings

I was a little disappointed in this final book. There's more action but the misunderstanding/ non communication between Emily and Jack was overplayed for me and although Jack has never been talkative, he's almost silent in this book. It's still has fun moments and tackles serious subjects but I found it hard to believe in the finale drama and overall, the book missed opportunities and was too much of a mix.

Shree says

Note: This review is up in my blog Book and Ink

Being the 7th book in the series I wondered how this book could be read as a standalone when TBC mailed me about the book. However, the book spoke for itself and I managed to happily finish off the book.

The book starts off with Emily, our protagonist who is a paralegal hanging out in a bar, celebrating the victory of her latest case and client. Just when things seemed fine, a man is murdered and her client is again held responsible for it. Thus follows the tale of Emily's battle – both professional and personal in solving the case and setting her own life straight.

The first few pages were totally confusing for someone who hasn't read the previous books. However, that quickly changed as the story progressed. The writer beautifully introduced all characters one by one and also gave them various shades. The introduction was balanced enough not to bore the readers who have read the previous book and at the same time interesting enough for those aren't following the series. The writing was

good and humorous. The plot is paced perfectly with enough twists and turns. Given that the story contained multiple threads of plots, each contributed by various characters, I wondered how the writer was going to tie it all together and give that perfect closure. Undoubtedly, she has gone a good job of it save the final rush. Felt as though the writer was in one great hurry to finish off the book. As a result the climax turned out to be simply hilarious.

MY SAY: Right mix of a Mystery and Romance

Marie says

This book had me hooked from the first page, and I finished it in one sitting! I have read all the Katie books and LOVE them - they have just the right mix of adventure, suspense and romance. This is my first Emily book, and I am currently downloading all of the others. Pamela Fagan Hutchins just continues to deliver amazing, "unputdownable" stories. Keep them coming, please!

Floryie says

I received a free copy from the author via The Book Club.

Though this isn't the first book in the series, this is the first book I have read by the author. The only thing I understood ,in the beginning ,was that Emily and Jack were together and they come across a murder during a party and one of their friends is the suspect in it. After that, it was a bit of a confusion with the various number of characters introduced. I had a hard time keeping them straight. I felt that there were too many crammed in a tight space. I had trouble even till the end trying to remember all the characters and their places. As for the main characters, they were easy to follow and they were coherent in the scenes being played out.

The story is done in first person and the point of view is of Emily's. I learnt a lot about her from this book. It doesn't only touch on her professional life but also her personal. I saw her in a lot of roles - friend,daughter,mother,lover,detective. She had me stitches in some of the scenes, with her observations and her curses. It was a hilarious read inspite of being a serious book with a murder as a background. I felt that Jack wasn't much in the book. I think it would have been better to have known a bit about him and his previous family. That's the reason I was able to connect with Emily but not with Jack. Jack was too mysterious.

The setting was finely done and the author had done a great job of the plot interesting with the twists and turns. It was a slow buildup with a fast climax. The ending could have been a bit less rushed in my opinion. The dialogues and the interactions between the characters and the narration were harmonious with no disruptions.

The mystery was unraveled layer by layer keeping the reader intrigued till the end. The romance part was a bit unsatisfactory. It felt too one sided. In spite of it being a romantic suspense, it had a light tone of suspense with a sprinkling of romance. I would have expected a bit more action in a suspense read.

All in all, this was a delightful and a fast read with the rich characterisation and the subtle plot.

My rating : 4/5
