



The Shout

Stephen Leather

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He hunts. He kills. He burns

Vicky Lewis is a force to be reckoned with: not yet thirty and already crew manager in the London Fire Brigade, she's destined for great things.

But when she enters a burning building to save a man's life and leaves it with catastrophic injuries, all that changes. She's shunted over to the Fire Investigation Unit, where she's forced to team up with cantankerous veteran Des Farmer, aka the Grouch.

When Vicky stumbles across the Grouch's off-the-books investigation into the fiery deaths of a series of young, blonde women, she decides to join him in his search for the truth.

The answer is close - perhaps too close. Vicky's already been burnt once, and now she's playing with fire . . .

'The sheer impetus of his storytelling is damned hard to resist' *Sunday Express*

The Shout Details

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Author : Stephen Leather

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From Reader Review The Shout for online ebook

Michael says

Love Stephen's books. Unfortunately I found this pretty bad. Yes the info about fire fighting was interesting..BUT I could help thinking that the conversation was like something out of "Fireman Sam". It was just soo mundane and boring. I tried to finish it but after about half way through I couldn't go on. I will though look out for his next Jack Nightingale or Dan Shepherd book. Feel like a traitor writing this but have to be honest.

Nick Brett says

Perhaps the wrong choice of book to enjoy in front of the fire over Christmas given how well researched and realistic this was!

A female Firefighter is side-lined due to injuries received fighting a fire. She is re-assigned to an investigation team led by a cantankerous manager who wants her there as about as much as she wants to be. Despite Vicky Lewis being desperate to getting back to proper fire-fighting, she warms (see what I did there?) to the new role and discovers that her boss is convinced that a serial killer is setting fires to cover the evidence. Vicky agrees and together they start to investigate while being worried that the skills shown by the killer might only be known to members of the Fire Service.

It's Stephen Leather, so you know the research will be good and the story excellent. And in this both are true, the details in terms of fire-fighting techniques and equipment provides total depth and realism to the story. Those who would have preferred a Spider Shepherd or Jack Nightingale story, should remember that the author started out with many top notch thrillers and this is another in an astonishing list of great British thrillers.

Check your smoke alarm, settle back and enjoy.

Sarah says

If you love programmes like London's Burning, you are going to LOVE this book.

Vicky is a brilliant character. Her dad was a fire fighter and she has followed on in his footsteps. She loves being a fire fighter and it's what she lives for. I really felt for her when she gets injured in action as her injuries are horrific and leave her badly scarred. I love how she doesn't let that stop her though and she does her best to get on with her life.

Des is another great character. One of those really miserable loners who just wants to be left alone to do his job. Having Vicky thrust upon him is something he definitely isn't happy with and he certainly lives up to his nickname The Grouch.

You can't help but enjoy the working relationship that starts to build up between both characters. There is a lot of mutual respect between both and I really enjoyed seeing that respect grow.

It was really fascinating to find out more about fires and how they are investigated. I certainly learned a thing or two and it will have you rushing to check that your smoke alarms are in good working order!

The Shout is an intense and gripping read that I couldn't put down. It is an edge of your seat, nail biting type of read. My only gripe is that this is supposed to be a stand alone novel of which this could easily become a gripping crime thriller series. With such great characters it would be a shame not to see more of them. To quote Oliver Twist, "Please sir, I want some more?"

My thanks to Bookbridgr and Hodder & Stoughton for an advanced readers copy of this book. All opinions are my own and not biased in anyway.

David says

To start with this reminded me of James Patterson's "Invisible". It took me a while to get into this novel and I think there was possibly a bit too much early on about different ranks and insignia within the LFB. They weren't really necessary. I think I'd have preferred it if we got past the accident a bit faster. But, once that was done, it moved quite quickly and I enjoyed it more. I did guess the identity of the serial killer from the moment they were introduced, though.

So, something a bit different, but probably didn't appeal to me as much as previous Stephen Leather novels.

Dave says

Fantastic!

Just what you would expect from Steven Leather, a gripping fantastically written page Turner that had me hooked from the first chapter!

I totally disagree with earlier reviews of this book saying it read like a LFB manual that is utterly rubbish! I would recommend this book to all its as good as any of Stephens books. I do hope there will be a part 2? 10 out of 10 again.

Thank you.

Phil Altimas says

what a great book, when a firefighter is hurt in a building fire she is posted to the fire investigation team and meets a grumpy old guy thats looking into a series of fires, as they hunt the fire starter down the action begins

a fantastic read

Colin Murtagh says

Stephen Leather used to write for Londons Burning, and it shows in here. This is the story of Vicky Lewis, a

firefighter who ends up seriously injured during a fire. Due to internal politics, she's pushed off to the fire investigation unit, in the hope she will resign.

Along with her boss, Des Farmer, also known as the grouch they investigate the causes of fires. Unknown to Vicky Des is also investigating a set of fatal fires, all of which are down as accidents but he's convinced there's a serial killer on the loose.

The characters are well drawn, Vicky is wonderful and I wouldn't mind seeing more of her. Des is a bit of a grouch with his heart in the right place, and comes across a little too two dimensional. The story though is immaculately researched, the technical detail is wonderful, and to be honest is the main positive. Strangely the mystery really isn't. It's fairly obvious who the killer is, and the side plot about the fire that injured her just feels bolted on.

It's not Leathers best book, but it's certainly not his worse, and if he can now come up with some good story lines for her, Vicky could quite easily come back.

Duncan Jones says

Another Scorcher from Stephen Leather !

This is a book about Vicky's transition from being a firefighter to a fire investigator. Stephen Leather always tells a great tale and yet again he hits the mark. The characters and set pieces are real and believable. The Shout is very detailed and its a credit to the author who has obviously done thorough research.

Stephen Leather is my favourite thriller author and cannot wait for Tall Order in July 2018.

Zak Ferguson says

The Shout by Stephen Leather is part crime novel, though mostly an investigative FIRE PROCEDURAL serial killer thriller!

Its a great read. Its able to visually conjure great visions of destruction, relatable characters and leads, allowing us a real in depth look into, for me, an area I ignorantly didn't know existed nor have ever sadly given a thought for. The grand scale of the LFB.

Behind the interesting dissections and analysis's and like all investigative reads the sharp, witty, defined dialogue spewed by characters as our entry into the mechanics of their ways/methods, its the duality of these two very unlikely companions and co-workers forces together and inevitably drawn together. It features real engaging characters and set to a back drop to a profession and service that isn't given much thought or respect, its an intriguing background and concept.

The story follows Vicky, who after a selfless act of heroism is left in a terrible state, burned and scared and finding herself pushed out of her job by the higher-ups, due to a grand combination of reasons. Though, even with a bank credited up to 3 million as compensation from the near fatal "accident" Vicky wants nothing than to don her garbs and work her way through two pumps/pumps and to battle an almost immovable nemesis- fire. But coupled with prospects of having her reconstructive surgery paid for, by the company/ owners of the derelict hotel she found herself trapped in/suffering said injuries- and living life with feet kicked back, she remains living with her Mum, she wants to remain as a firefighter.

Hypocrisy abode, the encroachment of media coverage and potential to kick up a stir with the politicians her case is ONE AND DONE, pushed under the carpet and she is veered as far away as they can, she is sent off to work with the LFB Inspection Team, headed by "The Grouch" Des, who firstly doesn't take much of a liking to Vicky's being there, rather than it being her- Des is assertive, intelligent, stuck in his own ways- yet a great companion for Vicky to learn from.

And this is what makes the book that much more engaging than the rest. The relationship is real, relatable and truly one you as a reader are behind.

The book is touching, revelatory, thrilling, sharp characterisation, a few moments and segments read as repetitive and same, the same descript' used for one instance compared to another/ yet you find this with all Crime/Investigative thrillers and it doesn't detract the pace which is rapid fire.

Many have criticised this book, scores it low. Why? No clue because this book clarifies Leather as one of the best thriller writers out there. You're invested in the characters, the world isn't aestheticised nor far-fetched and stretched to its limits.

Its focused on characters and the craft of how we are introduced to the main foil is interesting to not say the least, never over staying, letting the audience be on this riveting read and pace and never miring it in hyperbole. Its real interest and overall theme for me, playing as the biggest villain here isn't the serial killer of whom we're introduced to, one that Des has had his eye on and gets Vicky invested into, its corruption. Corruption of government, companies and corruption of people.

A great book. By a great writer. I adore his Jack Nightingale books, as I'm a fan of genre melding, and one done so thrillingly in Leathers astute, jarring, detailed stylistic fashion. I have yet to read his Spider Shepherd series, but after reading this, I want more Leather, rather than just what I've secluded myself into reading, specifically his Nightingale series. I really want to get into his other works, Independently released or his ones spotted in all great book shops. More so I cannot wait to see the return of both Vicky and The Grouch.

Ti.Me says

A shout is a station's call to go fight a fire. The book begins with a shout that throws the world of tough-girl firefighter Vicky Lewis into darkness and later results in her becoming a reluctant fire investigator.

Through her fast-tracked training, the reader is treated to a clinic on the causes and behaviors of structure fires. Just as we're wondering about the point of this mini course, the new knowledge leads Vicky to second-guess the investigation of the blaze that had forever changed her own life.

Under the tutelage of a gruff, seasoned boss, Vicky enters the world of two types of fire starter -- both deadly, but with starkly different motives.

As the puzzle pieces begin to fit together, Vicky has to draw on two kinds of toughness in order to find the truth -- and stay alive.

Excellent work by Stephen Leather.

Mrs D A Donelan says

Very Good

Well worth the read - could not put it down - great plot and very easy to read - storyline is the authors usual mastermind

Breakaway Reviewers says

A great thriller and a good insight into the London Fire Brigade's operations

The book opens with Emma Fox, a thirty-something blonde, being raped and killed and the crime covered up by the perpetrator setting what later would appear to be an accidental fire. In other words, perhaps the perfect murder!

Vicky Lewis is a crew manager of the London Fire Brigade, and when she answers 'a shout' to a fire she is unaware of the risks and danger that will face her. In doing her job, she is badly injured and has to endure months on the sidelines. When she returns to work, she finds that she is not able to go back to her normal job but is shunted into Fire Investigation. No longer at the front line, Vicky has to adjust to her new role and surroundings.

Upon arrival at the Fire Investigation office, Vicky is confronted by Watch Manager Desmond Farmer, who is nicknamed 'The Grouch'. In his own time, Farmer has been looking into a series of 'accidental' deaths, and eventually, Vicky finds herself assisting him in his search.

Stephen Leather has written a very good thriller which I devoured in less than 24 hours. Not only has he set out a clever plot, but he has written a social commentary on the London Fire Brigade and perhaps the difficulties of women in the service. He has clearly done a great deal of research and it shows. The story flows seamlessly and the main strands are cleverly interwoven. At the same time, he provides day-by-day accounts of the Brigade's operations and the risks undertaken on behalf of the public.

I have no hesitation in recommending this book and look forward to Stephen Leather's next.

Sméagol

Breakaway reviewers received a copy of the book to review.

Dan says

3.5 stars

Whilst this wasn't a bad book, Stephen has done so much better. I actually breezed through this excellently narrated 10-hour audio book but was left feeling a little underwhelmed. I felt the first 3/4 was a bit too 'informational' demonstrating just how well Stephen had done his research although I must admit I think I actually learned a lot as a result!

The last part, however, which had a climax of sorts, proved to be a bit too predictable and the second time the actual perp's character was mentioned I'd already put my money on them.

Worth a read for the insights and tidbits of the fire service but not his greatest piece.
Also, the MI6 selection anecdote was a hoot! Nice work.

The Tattooed Book Geek (Drew). says

This review can also be found on my blog The Tattooed Book Geek:
<https://thetattooedbookgeek.wordpress...>

I received a free copy of this book courtesy of the publisher through bookbridgr in exchange for an honest review.

After her crew are called out to a fire at an abandoned hotel Vicky Lewis, a crew manager in the London Fire Department suffers horrific injuries. The hotel, it turns out isn't abandoned and squatters are residing on the top floor. In the line of duty during the attempt to put out the fire and rescue the trapped squatters, the floor of the room that Vicky is in collapses leaving her trapped and seriously injured.

On her return to the Fire Department some months later, Vicky, against her own will is moved over to the Fire Investigation Unit where she is partnered up with the Fire Investigator Des Farmer.

Whilst working with Farmer, Lewis inadvertently uncovers his off-the-record and after hours investigation into what he believes to be a series of deaths. House fires that have been deemed to have been accidental are the cause of death but each case has the same type of victim, a young blonde female. Finding Farmer's investigation to be plausible Lewis agrees to help him in his search to uncover the killer.

As a character, Vicky Lewis is likeable, driven, determined and she doesn't let her injuries define her.

Des Farmer aka the Grouch is a dinosaur and old school in his views and way of thinking. Farmer is curmudgeonly with a gruff demeanour who is also rather a misogynist with some of his views. However, he does have respect for Lewis and her accomplishments and quite surprisingly, I found him to be likeable in his own grouchy sort of way.

It takes a long time and you find yourself approximately half-way through the book before the Grouch's off-the-record investigation into the series of deaths comes to light and is revealed. Then, it's very much in the background until the last 100 pages before finally coming to the fore in the last few chapters. For me, personally, I'd have liked to have seen the investigation play a more prominent role in the overall book.

Another slight issue, I felt that the conclusion came about quite abruptly and I would have preferred a slightly longer build-up to the finale and the subsequent reveal of the killer. Though that's not to say that it isn't well done by Leather, it is and you'll find yourself turning the pages to find out who the killer is.....and then letting out a 'hell yeah' because you guessed correctly and that doesn't happen very often!?

Those two slight issues aside, I was thoroughly engaged during the whole of my time spent reading The Shout.

Throughout the book, there are interspersed chapters that switch from the main focus of Lewis and Farmer and instead, give us a glimpse into the mind of the killer. From these chapters, we derive that the killer knows a lot about fire. This little insight works well as there are a few characters during the course of the story who due to that knowledge of fire are possible suspects and could all be the killer.

Out of the suspects, I did have an inclining who the actual killer might be and surprisingly, as I mentioned earlier in the review, I was right. There are perhaps a few clues for the more nuanced thriller reader but as it's only a genre that I dabble in I didn't pick up on them and it was more a gut feeling of 'yeah, it's probably you' that I had whilst reading about a certain character.

There are lots of descriptions of fires, how they start, the causes, prevention, fire-fighting techniques, etc and the main focus in *The Shout* is on fire investigation as you follow Lewis and Farmer to a variety of scenes that all involved fires. On the surface and admittedly, to some, that may well sound dull, fire safety training kids! Remember, fire is hot!?? To me, it didn't and simply put, it's not. Investigating the fires alongside Lewis and Farmer is really interesting and it also gives you the chance to get to know the duo better.

Leather mentions both the Grenfell Tower tragedy and the King's Cross fire. Two absolutely devastating real-life events. The story in *The Shout* is well crafted, entirely realistic and believable but, it's only a work of fiction with fictitious characters. The mention of those two tragic real-life events makes the book feel real. As such, it really brings home the horrors of fire and will make you think about the dangers that firefighters face.

Whether intentional or not on Leather's behalf, reading *The Shout* deepens your appreciation of the fire services and the heroes/heroines that are the firefighters who risk their own lives to put out fires and save other people's lives.

The Shout is a standalone book and when you come to the end, everything gets tied up neatly. However, saying that, I enjoyed the duo of Lewis and Farmer and while admittedly, I don't know how it would work I'd be quite happy to read future releases with them both as characters.

The Shout ignites from the first page and I found it to be compulsive reading that kept me riveted throughout the whole of its 400 page length.

David Savage says

I think it is one of the best books written by Stephen Leather. It is very fast flowing and hits the ground running from the first page. It is exciting, thrilling with humour in the right places and an excellent story told by a superb storyteller.

It seems to be extremely well researched with how fires start and spread along with how they are put out and then investigated and makes it great reading.

The characters are excellent and very believable, with The Grouch being my favourite – he is grumpy, rude, cantankerous, sexist but very likeable.

The Shout keeps you on the edge of your seat and the 400-odd pages just fly by. It is a scorching-hot read that I can highly recommend.

