



## **Book Review: Four to Score**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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Stephanie Plum was laid off from her job and ended up becoming a bounty hunter in desperation. In each of the fictional stories written about her, she sets out to capture someone who has sought help with bail money from her cousin Vinnie and then not appeared in Court when required to do so. Vinnie doesn't want to lose the money that he lent and therefore gives Stephanie a deadline as to when she is to turn the offender into the police.

In this book, Stephanie is looking for "skippers" such as Maxine Nowicki, a waitress, who apparently stole the vehicle of her boyfriend and then seemed to disappear. Stephanie therefore has to gather as much information as possible about her life and habits so that she can find Maxine and turn her in. That involves meeting her boyfriend and mother as well as visiting the place where she is employed. Most of her job is just plain hard work but Stephanie is a real character who has an interesting group of individuals around her and that lives up the plot.

Her parents and her 73 year old grandmother Mazur live together in Trenton New Jersey. Stephanie's mom and dad live a rather tradition and routine existence. Although Stephanie doesn't want to live with them, she never seems to hesitate to show up a mealtimes or to stay in the bedroom of her youth when she needs safety. Her Grandma Mazur, on the other hand, is always looking for adventure and wants to accompany Stephanie when she is looking for a "Failure to Appear" individual.

Sometimes Stephanie invites Lulu who is an ex-hooker now working as a filing clerk in Vinnie's office to join in a search. Lulu, however, easily becomes over-excited and Stephanie is always trying to calm her down so that she doesn't use the gun that she carries.

Since high school, Stephanie has had an enemy named Joyce who now is also working for Vinnie so there is fierce competition between the two women.

Sally Sweet is a transvestite musician who can read messages that are written in code, so, in this Plum novel, he is frequently being called upon by Stephanie to help her look for the missing Maxine.

Two other key individuals in Stephanie's life and work are men. Ranger was her first mentor as a bond enforcement officer. Everyone admires his work and the fact that he is like the wind, showing up and disappearing without notice. Joe Morelli is a police officer who has been a sexual interest of Stephanie's since she was young.

"Four to Score" is written in a very interesting manner. Although it has murder, firebombs and mystery, there are times I laughed right out loud because of the humour. Each of the characters contribute to the plot through their sometimes "whacky" behaviours and comments. Stephanie's ongoing first-person narrative throughout the book offers the reader a clear perspective of her "humanness".

I love the Stephanie Plum series and am looking forward to reading each in the stack that I have purchased in bulk.