



Book Review: Sizzling Sixteen

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

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Stephanie Plum works as a bounty hunter for her cousin Vinnie. She doesn't always like the work is definitely not very good at it but it does pay the bills. Stephanie had to blackmail her cousin into giving her the job because she was desperate after losing her employment as a lingerie purchaser.

In this book, Stephanie finds out that she has inherited a "lucky" bottle from her Uncle Pip but she doesn't have any guarantee that it will help her with her life or work.

Vinnie has run the bond agency for years but, without anyone knowing, he has run up a gambling debt of \$786,000.00. Bobby Sunflower is a mobster who has kidnapped Vinnie and claims that he will not be released until the debt is paid. The longer he is held, the more interest accumulates and so the debt keeps increasing. Stephanie and his staff members Connie and Lulu do not have a lot of respect for Vinnie but they know that they need to save him or they will lose their jobs.

The three women decide that perhaps they could raise enough money to save their boss. They have a lot of things that were given to Vinnie as security when he posted bail for them and they are stored in the back of the office. Because the items aren't used or needed, they think that a yard sale is appropriate, even if it isn't legal to sell some of things that they are selling.

Stephanie has been friends with a man who has used too many drugs over the years. He has a very positive attitude but isn't a very fast thinker. Mooner offers to help but isn't very good at helping and the drug-laced brownies that he cooks tend to slow everyone down. His relationships with members of the Hobbit organization seems so bizarre - but so are the Hobbits.

Even though Stephanie is trying to save Vinnie, she is also needing to earn a living so there are bail "skippers" to chase and apprehend. She is also trying to figure out what to do about her two love interests. Joe Morelli is a Trenton police officer that she has known since she was a child. Their relationship has been "on-again off-again". Ranger, a security expert is much more mysterious but extremely attractive to Stephanie. Stephanie is never sure which, if either, of these men will become a long-term partner for her. Perhaps the "lucky" bottle will help her to figure it out.

Stephanie's parents and her Grandma Mazur all live in the home where Stephanie grew up. She knows that she can always turn to them for a home-cooked meal or when she needs safety and security.

Each of the Stephanie Plum novels in the series that continues to be written offers the reader both mystery and humour. Even when the plots seem rather ridiculous, there is stability in knowing that Stephanie and her family members are down-to-earth individuals with whom we can easily relate.