



Death by Misfortune

A.M. Riley

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After a glamorous studio party, "Psychic to the Stars" Sylvie Black is found murdered in her fortune telling booth, a blood soaked tarot reading spread out before her. Shortly afterwards, the high-profile director who was about to produce Ms. Black's 'tell-all' Hollywood screenplay, is found murdered as well. Closeted Homicide detective, Bill Turner, and his partner, Kate Crandall, find themselves sorting through a cast of likely suspects, who all seem to have secrets worth killing for. They soon run up against the studio rumor mill, and Jeremy Reilly, a young studio AD determined to protect their prime suspect.

* The characters in this book also appear in Am Riley's *Amor en Retrogrado*.

Death by Misfortune Details

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From Reader Review Death by Misfortune for online ebook

~~*Hyperion & Interabang*~*~* says

I can't find this for purchase ANYWHERE :-/ ... can anyone point me in the right direction?!? I can't find this author on Facebook and her website seems to have gone offline [i.e. it no longer loads], so contacting her isn't possible either. I DO own the first book [I bought it before the books were pulled from Amazon] and would like to own the second :-/! If you have any info, do let me know. Thanks!!

Elisa Rolle says

The only complain I have on this novel is that this is a good mystery / thriller. Well, that is not a complaint at all you would say, and indeed it was hard to find something that was not good and to me, romance lover and all, that was the only point: I remember Bill and Christopher from Amor en Retrogrado and I was really glad to have the chance to read about them again, especially since in the previous novel their story was left hanging. And so, when I started this second book, I was eager to meet again Bill and above all Christopher; the author was nice enough to reintroduce me to Bill on chapter 3, but Christopher only made an appearance by phone, and I had to wait more or less 1/3 of the book to have him by person.

Actually this was not a novelty, but more a common occurrence; I remember that many of Bill and Christopher's scene are by phone, with Bill calling Christopher to postpone an appointment, or Christopher calling Bill to be sure he was able to make one of their appointments. The phone is at the same time their main connection but also their main element of misunderstanding, on the phone they are cold and detached and it's easier to break the connection. Truth be told, Christopher is very patient and even if most of the time Bill relapses in his closet, Christopher is always ready to welcome him with a smile and a kiss when Bill tentatively opens the doors of that closet and glances outside.

Amor en Retrogrado was the story of Robert and JD and Bill and Christopher played a nice but supporting role in the background; now in Death by Misfortune they have their center stage and the author introduce Becket and Jeremy. Like for Bill and Christopher, and for Robert and JD, also between Becket and Jeremy there is the stronger partner, Becket (stronger not in body but in personality), and the more subdue one Jeremy; but like in the past, Robert, Bill, Becket all have their issue to overcome and all of them have a sympathetic partner (JD, Christopher, Jeremy) waiting for them. It's not always assured the partner will have the necessary patience, like Penelope with Ulysses, to wait their lover find the right path towards the life in common that is waiting for them, but that is the good of these novels, these characters will give you plenty of surprises and also a little bit of heartache.

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/1608200728/?...>

Ami says

4.5 stars

Sylvie Black is "psychic of the stars". She also writes "*Secrets and Lies*", an ultimate Hollywood tell-all, which will be soon made into a movie. Then she is found murdered. Not long after that, James Griffen, a

famous Hollywood director who is going to direct the movie is also found brutally murdered. Soon, scandals and secrets are coming to the surface, which include James's affairs with the psychic and numerous women and men, including the long-time colleague, his assistant director, Becket Russell, and current sexy young star, Robert DePaul. LAPD Homicide Detective, Bill Turner, and his partner, Kate Randall, must sort through casts of likely suspects, lies, rumors while dodging a persistent Hollywood Reporter, Derek Stuart, who is hungry for news about the murder. Their prime suspect is Becket Russell, unfortunately, his second assistant, Jeremy Reilly, seems to provide a solid alibi for the man ...

I haven't found a story by A.M. Riley that I don't like, and this one is no exception. While this is said to be another case in "Bill Turner's case-files" (this detective first appeared in Amor En Retrogrado, published by Loose ID), but I find that Bill and Kate are just part of a big cast of characters, which include the murder victims, and the suspects. The murders happen in a middle of a movie shoot -- thus a big number of crew is involved. The other "main" characters include Becket, his assistant Jeremy, Jeremy's best friend Leslie, the reporter Derek, movie stars Robert and Nancy, and the Hollywood Lawyer Tom. It builds an appalling Hollywood murder mystery, worthy of two-hour TV movie. The murderer's identity is wrapped nicely among the secrets and scandals until almost the very end. ALTHOUGH, I manage to guess who the murderer is just few pages before Bill (yay!).

Other thing that I love about Ms. Riley's stories is her characters. Her characters often have this sense of sadness with them; whom I just can't help falling in love with:

Jeremy is one character with big portion here. He is smart, competent and caring. I adore his loyalty to his boss, Becket, though their relationship seems to be co-dependent. Becket is one tragic character, he might be someone who is genius but he needs a dominant person in his life, which of course leads him to his toxic relationship with the murder victim. Jeremy and Becket's relationship pulls me through and keeps me on my toes waiting to see what will happen.

Meanwhile, Bill Turner has intrigued me when he first appeared to investigate Roberto/JD in Amor En Retrogrado. He is a closeted detective, he has a relationship with a patient, loveable teacher, Christopher Pell -- whom Bill always keep "on the side" as secret from anyone else. He keeps his personal life private, even from his partner, Kate. In this book, I'm just so happy to read Bill making progress in his relationship with Christopher; even if Bill struggles in doing so. I'd love to read more about Bill and Christopher (or story on how they really met) ...

This is a very well-written and satisfying murder mystery; I read it in one sitting, practically ignore other books waiting when I know that this one is being published ^_^.

Feliz says

AM Riley writes vampires even if she doesn't. Becket sure is one except he doesn't drink blood, but it was Jeremy's life force, freely given, that kept Becket sane and brought him back to life in the end. The other subplot, Bill and Christopher, was even more intriguing; in a way, it was Bill's awakening, too. And the secondary cast - and the intrigue and scandal behind the stage of filmmaking - this author really draws the reader into her worlds every time. A book you can lose yourself in, a complicated yet clearly drawn plot and great writing. Heartily recommended.

Emanuela ~plastic duck~ says

First of all, the setting of the story is really fascinating. The story takes place in Hollywood during the making of a movie. The murdered victim is a psychic, whose clients are the rich and famous working in the movie industry. All the suspects are working in the same movie as actors, directors, PAs, etc. All the phases of the production of a movie are described in detail, but it's not pedantic, and the reader gets a sort of insider's view.

All the characters in the book have flaws. The main suspect is the assistant director, Becket Russell. He is a very handsome and fascinating, but he is crashed by the personality of James Griffen, the director of the movie. He is fragile and irritating at the same time. It seems that he is never really aware of what's going on around him. It's very difficult to read his feelings and emotions and he is hurt by what happens and hurts the people around him and you don't know if he does it on purpose, or because he's trying to cause a reaction, or because he doesn't care, or because he doesn't know he's doing it.

Becket Russell's personal assistant is Jeremy Reilly. He is addicted to Becket, I don't think there's another definition for what Jeremy feels for Becket. As a drug addict does everything in order to fuel his addiction, Jeremy does the possible and impossible to protect Becket - from lying to the police to destroying evidence - and he does it even if no one asks him to. It's frustrating to read about this devotion as it's frustrating to follow Jeremy's reasoning, because he truly enters situations with his eyes wide shut. And some of the things he does are stupid.

And then there's Bill Turner, the closeted detective who ties up the two books in this series. I don't think an author should be allowed to break a reader's heart like that. Everything was going right and then... BILL!!! I read the last pages before the epilogue crying, because I'm really sensitive to Bill's problem. His lover Christopher is a wonderful character and I loved seeing them together, I loved seeing Bill slowly trying to change thanks to Christopher. They are not the focus of the story, but their pages are warm and precious, even if sometimes it feels like salt on wounds.

There are so many interesting secondary characters: Bill's colleague Kate, with her impending marriage; the sleazy reporter Derek Stuart; the aging actress Nancy Franzen; the sexy but mentally fragile young actor Robert DePaul; Leslie, Jeremy's flamboyant friend. Each one of them contributes to the story, to its dark mood and uncertainty.

It's the kind of story I like, where the characters are flawed and they do not follow a logical behavior because they're too immersed in the story, where the morals are unclear, where the loyalties are shady, where you can't choose whom you can or want to believe in. Amazing.

Deeze says

This was another 3 in one reads for me. Two romances and a murder mystery.

The mystery was compelling and had me guessing and second guessing. I loved the movie business setting, and even managed to keep most of the cast straight in my head lol.

Bill and Christopher were again the perfect side story. I loved seeing Bill slowly opening up, but OMG I can't believe he succumbed

Jeremy and Becket were wonderful at keeping me hooked. I adored Jeremy and loved Becket most of the time, the rest I wanted to pound him into mince meat, the big jerk

Leslie was adorable and Derek, well he was certainly more than I was expecting.

I wish there was another book to read, I'd love to see Bill and Christopher again. I would also love a prequel and get a look at Bill and Christopher meeting for the first time.

Why is it always the really great stories/series that end

Jenre says

4.5 stars

I've had this on the TBR pile for far too long and kept saving it for a special occasion which never happened! I plucked it out the pile on a whim and was soon engrossed. This author writes such great mysteries and this one was no exception. Every single character came with a bucketload of red herrings, and I was kept guessing right up until the end. The story is set in and around a film set, with the focus being on the behind scenes people. This seemed to be very accurately described with a breakneck pace connected with the scenes were everyone is on set. There's lots of great insight into the film industry, the highs and lows of film-making and the roles and responsibilities of the admin side of production.

There were two romances intertwined with the mystery. One is that of Bill and Christopher. Bill is the detective in charge of the murder case who we first meet in *Amor en Retrogrado*, whose closeted relationship with teacher was a highlight of that book. Here the relationship is deepened and was most satisfying. The second romance is between Assistant Director Becket and his assistant, James. This didn't work as well for me because Becket is so unstable and fragile, that James' devotion to him made me feel uncomfortable at times, especially during the times when James became more of a minder/caregiver than lover. There was a great deal of progress made in the romance between them as the book developed, but I still wasn't wholly happy by the end.

Having said that, this was still a very complex and interesting book with many layers to it. Nothing was as it seemed and I found it to be a refreshingly intelligent and involving read.

Chris says

Excellent m/m romantic suspense/mystery about the murder of a "psychic to the stars" and a prominent Hollywood producer, filled with lots of complex twists and turns. The story is told from two alternating points-of-view: Jeremy, a production assistant, and Bill, the closeted cop first introduced in *Amor En Retrogrado*.

Alyosha says

Wow. Just when I think I couldn't love Riley's writing more this happens. I'm awestruck. And I really hope the possible sequels won't be too far in the future. I have a real addiction for Bill Turner now.

A.M. Riley says

The second in the 'Bill Turner case book' series. I have two more coming sometime in the, probably, distant future.

Kassa says

4.5 stars rounded up

Death by Misfortune is a whirlwind story from start to finish. I feel almost as if I sped read the novel with its frantic pace and engaging manner. I couldn't get enough and this is easily a book I'll read again and again. It's not perfect once you stop and try to put the various pieces together but the excellent writing and complicated, flawed characters will suck you in from the start and never let go. The ending is very good even with no exuberant happy endings, there are beginnings and the complex characterizations leave you rooting and hoping things may work out. For fans and those new to this author, this is an excellent book you simply won't want to miss.

The plot is extremely complicated and details layer on as the story deepens. The cast is large and the pace near frantic with activity. In fact the pace is so quick and engaging you fly through the pages. The story does a commendable job at keeping the various characters distinct while staying memorable and interesting. The mystery initially centers on the murder of a psychic but soon expands to include other murders as motives are muddled and increasingly sexual. The murder intimately involves big name Hollywood players so the labyrinth like maze of connections and behind the scenes drama makes for a very full story.

The writing is superb and fans of the author should recognize her style easily. The story is active and shown to the reader at a pace that never stops. Information and details are constantly being offered but never overwhelming. The frantic pace could have benefited from something to take the edge off between the parties, movie making, and mad dashing about. I think the story tries to do this with the scenes between Beckett and Jeremy but their increasingly destructive relationship only adds to the urgent feel and tension. This aspect, like the entire story itself, is so compelling and fascinating you can't help devouring it and wanting more. These scenes become just another mounting sense of foreboding.

Occasionally the point of view switches during scenes but these, like the few typos and missing words, are absently noted and easily forgotten in the absorbing narrative. The punchy dialogue conveys a massive amount of information and is never at a loss between characters. Thankfully the skillful handling of such a large cast keeps each character feeling unique from their behavior to dialogue. The banter and exchange of information never blends and lets you forget who is speaking what. This is quite a feat considering the sheer number of characters and the details provided.

The romance provided is secondary to the mystery. In some ways this really works since the mystery is so compelling. There is a host of possible suspects and not enough clues to really figure out the answer, though a logical guess will work. I didn't really mind since the various complicated relationships are so interesting and absorbing that I was quite happy to race along wherever the story wants to go. The dark foreboding overtones deepen as the story goes on and you can't help but feel you're watching a train wreck about to happen. This almost oppressive atmosphere won't be for everyone and while the fast plot helps alleviate any depressing tones, not every reader will appreciate the pseudo destructive nature of most of the personalities.

The full plot definitely causes a few things to suffer. The main victim is the romance between Bill and Christopher with the characterization in general to a lesser degree. The reader gets to know the cast and the various principles but they are all so complicated and flawed that I can't help feeling the story has simply scratched their surface at best. Bill especially is an enigma, offering few clues into his psyche even when his perspective is narrating the story. This clouds any understanding of his feelings for Christopher and how he views their relationship. We see actions almost too much as there are a lack of real appreciation for why Bill feels and does the things he does. I would have liked more context and understanding to connect with these two as the real involved and intense relationship is one depicted between Bennett and Jeremy given center stage.

These however are minor complaints as Death by Misfortune is a whirlwind story sure to please. This will easily appeal to those that like a darker romance and definitely those that like a meaty mystery. There is nothing very light or easy about the story, except of course reading it. The quick pace and entertaining antics will have pages turning quicker than expected and this is an easy story to devour. The best part is the authentic feel and complexity afforded right to the very end. The final resolution isn't exaggerated and happy but instead quiet and hopeful, fitting to these rather destructive characters. I really quite loved reading this one and highly recommend it to fans and newcomers to the author alike.

Sarah says

I thoroughly enjoyed this. A great, fast paced read with plenty of sexy, glam Hollywood stuff to keep you entertained.

I felt it head hopped a little at the beginning, but once I had a handle on the cast it smoothed out a little. I enjoyed the two stories and the development of Bill's romance was beautifully done. It was not rushed and seemed to unfold quite naturally. I loved the relationship between Jeremy and Beckett, even though Beckett is a bit of a douche at times and needs a boot in the ass. Jeremy did seem very young (age and experience), but it didn't bother me hugely.

I think what I enjoyed most is this felt like a complete story. It wasn't just a romance, it was a romance and a mystery with plenty of layers and stuff to get your teeth into. I much prefer reading something like this that is really engrossing. Perhaps more than just 'will they wont they' standard romantic fare. Cause seriously, it's pretty much a given that they will!!!

Awesome book, I can't wait to read the next one in the series.

Wyndslash says

Setting aside the very few typos in the book, I'm very, very impressed. The way the story was told was done so clearly, and it was a unique style, I must admit. There was no confusion on my part as to the point of view. I especially enjoyed Bill Turner's character. The way his character was written seemed detached to me, but there was still enough to make me care about him and Christopher.

And of course, there's the fact that this actually felt like a real mystery to me. :)

Christina says

Not as good as the first one, but still enjoyable. I loved everything Bill, however the other characters and the plot didn't grab me as much. Even though the movie talk got boring at times, Riley still managed to make the mystery fun.

Yvonne says

4.5 STARS

A nice complex murder mystery story involving a psychic to the stars murder & various Hollywood players & of course, Bill Turner formerly seen in *Amor en Retrogrado*. It's not necessary to read that story prior to this one, except that's the only way you can see that Bill has actually made some major progress in his relationship with Christopher. There's still a lot of mystery involved in their relationship & a few hints are dropped that makes you want to know more. But this is not the book that gives us this as the focus is primarily on assistant director Becket Russell & his assistant Jeremy Reilly, who is willing to do anything & I mean anything, for him.

In fact I was so expecting to learn more about Bill & Christopher that it took me quite a while into the book to realize that Jeremy & Becket were the romantic pairing in this book. It's a good thing the main focus is on the mystery, because a more unrootable pair of lovers I've yet to read about. Jeremy was so annoying in his sycophantic behavior that I was hoping for his arrest as an obstructionist throughout the novel and Becket was a total mess--I'll leave it at that.

So read it, because it's a good story & well written. They're other interesting characters including Jeremy's friend & assistant Leslie who is a much more likable character & a reporter name Derek. Don't go into it expecting a big romance as Jeremy & Becket are totally dysfunctional as a couple & we only get a peak into Bill & Christopher's lives. I think the next novel will focus more on those two so I'm looking forward to it.
