



Judas Horse

April Smith

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FBI Agent Ana Grey returns to infiltrate the volatile core of an eco-terrorist cell in the Pacific Northwest.

Only months after a traumatic shooting incident, Ana is still emotionally unstable when she returns to work and learns that a fellow agent—and former lover—was killed by a group of terrorists operating under the name of FAN (Free Animals Now). To find the murderer and prevent any further killing, Ana goes undercover as an animal activist. In the course of her investigation, Ana encounters Julius Emerson Phelps, the charismatic leader of a "family" of anarchists in rural Oregon, whose secret past could blow the Bureau to pieces. To matters worse, Ana learns that Phelps is preparing a cataclysmic act of terrorism. With time ticking away and her undercover identity in jeopardy, Ana must find a way to solve her case and foil Phelps's bloody plot.

Judas Horse Details

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Author : April Smith

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From Reader Review Judas Horse for online ebook

Ross says

The plot of Judas Horse is intricate and suspenseful. I quickly got drawn into the story and found myself just where an undercover agent presumably ends up: unsure of anything and everything but compelled to move on. So there is much to like about this mystery.

But the plot turned in a few ways that strained my fairly low expectations for credulity. And the brief account of the FBI undercover school was too cursory to work well. Still, this was a quick and fun read. And it could make for a great movie, a powerful psychological thriller.

Marsha says

This is third in a series, first that I've read. Ana Grey learns her former fiance has been killed in an undercover assignment. She becomes an undercover agent herself and thrown in with the same group of Eco-terrorists that killed him. As she penetrates their secrets she learns more than she would have liked to about her agency, past mistakes and current corruption. An enjoyable read obviously meant to be continued.

Claudia says

April Smith read her own book, Judas Horse, and did a super job of both writing and reading it. This is the 3rd Ana Grey novel with the FBI special agent being sent undercover out west to infiltrate a group of anti government eco-terrorists trying to keep the federal government from messing with wild horses, among other things. The man responsible for the group of terrorists is an ex FBI agent gone bad. Ana's safety is made precarious when her cover is discovered.

Judas Horse finishes with all things neatly tied up but giving a hint of the next one made for a provocative ending.

Maryjo Oconnor says

The author used to many adjectives and adverbs. I feel this slowed down the story. I will not read any other books by Ms. Smith.

Matt Howard says

People who don't know guns shouldn't write about guns. I assume the author spoke to an expert consultant before writing about snipers in her novel, but her lack of knowledge means there are awkward incongruities that destroy our belief in the story. Besides that the plot is awkward, and the characters wooden. I gave her two stars because it's not Mickey Spillane.

Linda says

This tale of an undercover agent who infiltrates an environmental terrorist ring in the Pacific Northwest was a great read. I liked the character of Ana Grey/Darcy Guzman a lot, and also enjoyed the other characters. Only the other FBI agents seemed a bit flat. I really liked the details of undercover school and the look into undercover work. I haven't read anything like that before.

The main downside of the book was being told first-person, present-tense. There were some things that she simply could not have known at the time about what other people were doing, and there was also some foreshadowing of her own story that were equally impossible. However, the plot and characters were good enough to keep pulling me back into the story.

Nette says

I enjoyed the first part of the book where the FBI agent goes to "undercover school" at Quantico, but then she goes undercover for real at a ranch populated by ecoterrorists, and I got bored. But maybe that's just me -- I'm always more absorbed in the technical details of detective work than in the big chase scene at the end. The first book in this series, "North of Montana," is still the best by far.

David says

So, it's a bit of an absurd premise with the emotionally damaged and (as we see in the story) unrecovered agent being assigned to a case where her former lover was killed.

But, Smith can spin a yarn. The ending had one or two too many twists/climaxes but the prose was great and it was certainly a ripping tale. Hard to tell if there will be another in the series as the agent was pretty much toast at the end.

Vanessa Wright says

"...By afternoon, when the temperature has dropped to thirty five degrees and the sporadic sun has given way to sleet, three small armies - the wranglers, the radicals, and the law - have mobilized in the struggle for the destiny of the wild horses, because genuine wonder - full-blooded and pure - is a rare and valuable commodity."

How far would you go to save a band of wild horses? When the extremist group Free Animals Now (FAN) detonates a bomb in a national forest, FBI Special Agent Ana Grey must go undercover, infiltrate the group, and crack the mystery behind FAN's wild horse protest and leader Julius Emerson Phelps' dire promise of "the Big One," a catastrophic act of terrorism yet to come. But Ana may not be the only one keeping a desperate secret. The FAN bomb killed Ana's fellow undercover FBI agent. Could one of FAN's members know that Ana is not who she claims to be?

Cinematic and utterly gripping - LA Times reviewer Donna Rifkind described it perfectly as "vertiginous" - *Judas Horse* will keep you in its own state of "genuine wonder - full-blooded and pure." Get ready for your fingers to be knotted as tightly in the pages as they'd be if you were clinging bareback to a bolting, bridleless mustang: the book is the third thriller in author April Smith's Ana Grey mystery series, and it's as wild, tireless, and sure as the best of its horses. You can start galloping after *Judas Horse* today: watch the stunning, horse-filled book trailer on Amazon and read the first chapter on Smith's website.

jo says

i love genre fiction that is so sophisticatedly literary. the language here is super. some passages are extremely cool.

"The tension in the kitchen is like waiting for a hurricane. We are losing the sun and the palm trees are blowing inside out; traffic lights swing wildly on their cables. The storm shutters are up and the house is sealed, but within the hour we will be beset by knocking winds like a thousand screaming inmates."

the plot, though, leaves a lot to be desired. one small thing that bothered me quite a bit is that smith throws a little omniscient narration here and there without separating it from the rest of the narrative, which is in the first person. what is an omniscient narrator doing in a first person narrative?!? there's more. in spite of the gorgeous writing, the characters don't convince. what is ana grey's story? what is she after? what are her longings, her frustrations? what does she want? what is she afraid of? Dick Stone is supposed to be charismatic in a troubled sort of way, but i didn't get any of his charisma. was ana seduced by it? not clear. the plot is supposed to delve into the complexities of power and corruption, but that, too, remains vague. the best parts of this book, which i am still happy to have read, are the small moments. ana in undercover school. ana on the scrambled phone in the stable at dawn, before anyone gets up. ana chatting up the wrangler, not knowing who he is, vaguely repelled by a brown hole in his gum. ana in meetings, trying to hold her own while the guys piss on each other.

why did this book remind me of michael ondaatje's *Divisadero*? the disjointedness, the never-quite-coming-togetherness, coupled with the fabulous language and an ill-defined psycho-existential longing. do you really want to stick with mysteries, april smith?

grundoon says

4 books in 22 years and counting makes for a tough series to follow, especially when the first two were nothing outstanding, but she's managed to keep me interested. And I'll happily accept these terms if it means more installments like this, the third, a pretty riveting and seemingly well researched undercover operation tale. When your reader's biggest gripe is that they would have loved more this, more that, you know you're doing it right. Would another hundred pages have worked as well? – dunno, I'm happy left wanting more.

Sharon says

I just didn't like this book. I didn't like the writing style. I thought the book was tedious; it took me a very long time to read this. FBI special agent Ana goes undercover, infiltrating an animal rights radical group that

is led by a former, rogue FBI agent. I didn't find the characters especially compelling, and Ana, who CHOSE to go to undercover school and take this assignment to prove something to her self, was annoying whiny about it.

Paul Pessolano says

I have heard of a "Judas Goat" but not a "Judas Horse". If you don't know a Judas Goat is a goat that leads sheep from their holding pens to the slaughter house. Just before the Judas Goat is to enter the house he takes a ramp off to the side, the entrance to the ramp is closed and the sheep are funneled into the slaughter house.

The same seems to be true of the "Judas Norse" who leads horses to their slaughter house. One should keep this in mind when reading this book.

Ana Grey is an FBI Special Agent and has volunteered to go "underground" to infiltrate FAN (Free Animals Now). FAN has been targeted by the FBI for subversion and Ana is to identify its leaders and future plans. Ana finds herself on a farm that is dedicated to sheltering hurt and abandoned animals. However, she also finds that the people on the farm are controlled by an ex-FBI agent who feels has been wronged by the Bureau and his Government. In retaliation, he is planning to topple the head of the Bureau and mastermind an explosion that will cause major havoc called, "The Big One".

This is a good read, especially for those who do not like sexual content and a blood and guts type mystery. It is very interesting and although it does tend to get a bit tedious through the middle, the ending is more than satisfying.

Alissa says

Ana is sent deep undercover to infiltrate a radical environmental-terrorism cell outside of Portland, Oregon.

April Smith is a fantastic writer. Ana is a wonderfully flawed character and the stress of being deep undercover and the pull between her fake life as Darcy and the Bureau is palpable.

Quite the satisfying thriller.

Anita says

Ana Grey turns herself into Darcy to become part of FAN. Through the eyes of an ex-FBI, she sees things about the FBI and her old FBI love, Steve, that she did not see before. It makes her question what is real and what is not, who to trust and who not to trust. In the end she escapes with the help of those she does trust, but if she survives and how I guess is for another book.
