



Trapline

Mark Stevens

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Intrigue and murder in the Rocky Mountains

A badly chewed-up corpse high in the Flat Tops Wilderness Area leaves Colorado hunting guide Allison Coil mystified and wary. Obvious signs suggest the dead man is the victim of a mountain lion attack, but Allison's wilderness-savvy bones scream otherwise. A few miles away and a few thousand feet lower in downtown Glenwood Springs, a controversial candidate for U.S. Senate is shot during a campaign stop as newspaper reporter Duncan Bloom watches from a few feet away, dodging the long-range gunfire. Trapline follows Coil and Bloom as their investigations into the corpse and the shooting expose greed, hatred, and the dark depths of human indifference.

Praise:

"Allison's third adventure . . . combines a loving portrait of a beautiful area with an ugly, all-too-believable conspiracy that could have been ripped from today's headlines."--KIRKUS REVIEWS

"Thrilling, complex and well-crafted with more twists and turns than a high road through the Rocky Mountains. Trapline delivers as both a first-rate mystery and a contemporary western that shines the light on the greed, injustice and evil hidden in a landscape that takes your breath away. No doubt about it, Mark Stevens is an author to watch!" --MARGARET COEL, NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE WIND RIVER MYSTERY SERIES

"Stevens' tightly-written story mirrors two major ongoing social tensions that resonate in the mountain west: immigration and the conflict between preservation and development. Trapline rings as true as the beautiful mountains and valleys that frame this exciting, tense drama of today's Colorado." --MANUEL RAMOS, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF DESPERADO: A MILE HIGH NOIR

"Stevens' Trapline, the third Coil mystery, is a work of enviable achievement, the embodiment of an immensely skilled author in full stride. If you relish a mystery that's rarefied and granite hewn, like the high country stage upon which this one takes its turns, you can do no better." --DAVID FREED, AUTHOR OF FLAT SPIN, FANGS OUT, AND VODOO RIDGE

"With its relentlessly escalating tension, and prose as crisp and luminous as a fall day in the Flat Tops Wilderness, Trapline grabs a reader and doesn't let go until the last page." --GWEN FLORIO, AUTHOR OF MONTANA AND DAKOTA

"Stevens harnesses the shadowy undercurrents of our time and spurs them to a gallop. Leading the charge is Allison Coil, a uniquely brilliant investigator who operates on instinct and has the uncanny ability to see the world on an elemental level." --WARREN HAMMOND, AUTHOR OF THE KOP SERIES

Trapline Details

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From Reader Review Trapline for online ebook

Mary Brown says

Trapline by Mark Stevens is a good mystery suspense. It appears as though this book is the third book in the series. Allison Coil is a Colorado hunting guide who has seen a lot of tragedy and devastation in her work, but none of that prepares her for the mutilated body that is found. Although it is decided that the death was caused by a mountain lion, Allison does not believe this and she is determined to prove it.

Duncan Bloom is a reporter who is at the wrong place at the wrong time. He is a witness to a United States Senate candidate's assassination attempt. Being a reporter, his investigative instincts kick in and he must figure out why the candidate was targeted and by who. Duncan and Allison must also figure out if the two incidents are related.

The story takes place in the Colorado wilderness and with the descriptive writing style, I felt like I was right there watching all the action. Whether I was reading about the rugged terrain or the grisly murder site, I was pulled right in and taken along on a wild ride.

The plot is well written and the suspense builds from the beginning of the book. There are many twists and turns that keep you turning pages well into the night. The characters are well developed and well rounded and I found myself cheering for them.

I would recommend this book to anyone who enjoys a well crafted suspense. This is the first book I have read by this author but I plan on reading his other two.

I received a free copy of this book from NetGalley in exchange for a honest review. I would like to thank NetGalley and Midnight Ink for the opportunity to read and review this book.

Joan says

Hunting guide Allison Coil and reporter Duncan Bloom find themselves thrown into the depths of a mystery as the story opens with the discovery of a badly-mauled body and an assassination attempt on a Senate candidate. While the investigation focuses on the possibility of a mountain lion attack to account for the dead man, an all-out hunt is launched to find the would-be assassin. But the investigation soon reveals something far more insidious than anyone could have imagined. And those responsible will do whatever it takes to keep their secrets, putting Allison, Duncan, and their friends in jeopardy as they become the hunted.

Set in Colorado, this gripping thriller, laced with political intrigue, keeps the reader guessing to the very last page.

Judie Dooley says

I won this book on good reads. Thank you for picking my name. Great story line and characters. I was a little

lost in the first 2 chapters, but quickly caught on. The prose describing the area of Colorado was spectacular. The story starts with Allison a hunting guide finding the corpse of half a man. It seems to be chewed up by a mountain lion or other big animal. At the same time a controversial senatorial candidate is shot on a bridge while giving a speech. The storyline follows about what really happened to both of these men. Nothing is as it6 seems and the story has many twists and turns. The characters come to life along with the story and surprises are many along the way. If you like to read a good mystery I recommend this one.

Saytchyn says

I love Mark Stevens' mysteries, and I love Allison Coil, the hunting guide heroine of this series. She's the outdoorsy woman I want to be, living at the edge of the wilderness, quietly, by her own rules. She's sharp, questions everything, and her courage runs deeper than she knows.

In this third book of the series, Allison shares the spotlight with reporter Duncan Bloom, who is as well-drawn as she is. Like her, he has formidable instincts and knows when something's off. The separate mysteries he and Allison unravel turn out to be knotted together in this finely-written page-turner, both thoughtful and thrilling--a difficult combination to pull off.

The fourth book in the series will be released September 8th, 2015.

Jenny says

Received an ARC in exchange for an honest review. Mr. Stevens plans to visit our book club in December and our club intends to read in November for his arrival. While Trapline would not be on my "must read list", Stevens did provide a thought-provoking book about immigration and lengths some go to protect and/or disregard the law. Slow at times through the book. Wish I had read earlier "Allison Coil" series as there is a story hidden within earlier series that would have been helpful to know reading this book. Two 1/2 Stars

Jeff says

This suspenseful mystery is relevant to today's current events. It's obviously somewhat contrived, but believable enough. As with the previous books in this series, the Colorado Flat Tops is a great setting and the main characters are compelling.

Amy Johnson's performance is consistent. She has adopted these characters as hers. I did hear a couple of mispronunciations, but they were minor.

NOTE: I was given this free review copy audiobook at my request and have voluntarily left this review.

Bree Ervin says

Mark Stevens has done it again.

Trapline hooks the reader from the very first page. There is action, intrigue and suspense enough to carry this wonderful backwoods mystery through to the final pages, but what sets Mark Stevens apart is his ability to interweave pressing social, political and environmental issues into his books without coming off as preachy or "holier than thou."

I love a book that pulls me along effortlessly while also making me think about my world in a new way and see an issue from a fresh angle. It is so easy in this polarized culture to dig ourselves into our trenches and try to out-shout anyone with a different point of view, Mark Stevens refuses to let us off that easily, introducing us to all the sides of an issue and asking us instead to make up our own minds about what is right and wrong, all within the framework of a tightly paced who-done-it mystery.

Allison Coil is a perfect guide through this complex world, a big city girl turned mountain madam, she helps us to see that the world is not as black and white as we'd like it to be, but there are still lines that should never be crossed.

In this latest Allison Coil mystery, we get murder mixed with political intrigue within the immigration debate and the private prison industrial complex.

Half a corpse is found in the flattops, while down in town a candidate for the U.S. Senate is shot in an assassination attempt. How are these deaths related, and will the killers be brought to justice before anyone else is killed?

Two investigations collide, "exposing the dark depths of human indifference."

Here's a link to the full review - <https://thinkbannedthoughts.wordpress...>

Patricia Stoltey says

I read Trapline as an advance review e-copy through Net Galley. The issues are big and the solutions complicated, so this is not a novel you'd want for a superficial fast read. We need to think the issues as we read about them.

The presence of newspaper reporter Duncan Bloom, Allison's friend Trudy and love interest Colin, round out a cast of good guys trying to figure out the answers to a whole slew of problems. You can't help but like all of these characters and identify with their concerns.

Trapline opens with the discovery of a body in the woods. Part of the corpse is missing, but what remains appears to be chewed up. Was the man killed by a mountain lion? Hunting guide Allison is not sure that conclusion is supported by the evidence. When an outspoken political candidate is killed by a sniper at a campaign stop near by, the investigation becomes much more complicated. Trapline explores for-profit prisons, small companies that hire immigrant workers, and the evil bunch that hunts humans for sport.

I'm not about to spoil the rest of the story for you, so that's all you get here. I highly recommend Trapline as well as the whole Allison Coil series.

Charlie Quimby says

As a mystery, *Trapline* falls outside my normal reading fare, so I can't compare it to others in the genre. As a writer who's been generously treated by Mark Stevens and now considers him a friend, I can't be totally objective. And as someone who grew up in Glenwood Springs, CO, where the novel is set, I must confess to a pleasure at seeing my hometown well-portrayed.

With those rating caveats in place, let's just say *Trapline* succeeds on its own as a propulsive and captivating read.

The story moves back and forth between two points of view—Allison Coil, a hunting guide who is fiercely protective of the Flat Tops wilderness area above Glenwood Springs, and Duncan Bloom, a semi-burned-out reporter who has gravitated to the local newspaper, the lowest paying rung in the profession.

They respectively follow two co-incidents that seem unrelated but of course must be, because they're in a novel, not the daily newspaper. A mangled body is found in the wilderness area; a liberal senatorial candidate is shot by a sniper at the gateway to downtown. Undocumented Mexican workers, bad guys in the mountains and shady business guys in the valley seem to be wrapped up in the events, and how everything's connected unfolds as Coil and Bloom work their sides of the mystery.

The keys to keeping a skeptical, literary reader like me suspending my disbelief through plot complications are pacing, good characterization and a grounding in reality—all of which the novel delivers.

Stevens has been a reporter and has a good sense of how inside sources, grinding through databases and knocking on doors are all necessary in putting together stories. He also shows a love for the outdoors and the Flat Tops, so the reader with a taste for procedure and adventure will be satisfied on both scores.

As the story developed, the hand-offs in perspective worked well, with deft pacing that kept me reading past my bedtime more than once.

The novel is part of an Allison Coil series, but I wouldn't be surprised to see Bloom show up again, too.

Beth says

I received this book as a giveaway through goodreads. I had not heard of this series before, and I was hesitant to read this book as it was identified as the third in the series, and I had not read the first two. There was a reference made at one point in this book to something that I can only assume was in one of the two books, but I was able to not be totally lost by what was referenced. It just didn't make sense unless you had read the 1st two books. The book had an immigration theme in it which interested me as I work with immigration related issues. I did find it difficult to get through the book until about half way through it when I couldn't put the book down. It had several things going on and weren't all tied together until the very last chapters. I would give it 2 1/2 stars.

Cats of Ulthar says

What an engrossing novel! I intend to catch up on the earlier books in this series. Not only are multiple puzzling conundrums to be solved; a large cast of characters appear on stage, engagingly defined. Perhaps the best is the lyrically expressed descriptions. Author Mark Stevens truly has a heart for these Colorado mountains, yet empathy for the human populace who choose to wreak civilization in such an extraordinary locale.

John says

Another good book in the series!

Mark Stevens has done it again for the third time! Allison Coil is a great character to read about and follow! Mark Stevens reminds me a lot of C.J. Box books. Will be looking for the next in the series!

Maggie says

read for the cb book discussion ... the allison coil character is indeed a strong woman ... the story itself kept me reading even though there were minor glitches (too many characters are confusing and casual speech WITHIN THE NARRATION is off-putting for this reader, for example) ... the underlying social issue of immigration was very well done, realistic really. overall a good summer read. sorry to have missed the author's visit to the old rock library in crested butte.

Sherry says

I liked reading this book as I have lived in the area of Glenwood Springs, so recognized all the locations in the book. That was fun.

An ok mystery, though easy to figure out. But the story was quite relevant to happenings in the news today, i.e. immigration, wilderness, conservation, etc.

See book blurb for synopsis.

Douglas says

I thought the book was poorly written. Too convoluted and the characters were built up to be intelligent skilled, however took very dumb risks which seemed fake as by magic they got out of the problem or situation.

It took me way too long to finish and I found myself skipping parts. I don't think I will read the any more of this series.

