



In Velvet

Burt Weissbourd

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The northwest corner of Yellowstone Park is closed for bear management, and Rachel, a bear biologist, is discovering some very startling animal behavior—grizzlies denning in June, swans at their wintering grounds in summer, what appear to be Irish Elk, an extinct species, with huge palmated antlers. There are also horrific mutations in the young—elk calves with no front legs, earless bear cubs, and eaglets without wings. What has gone wrong? Why is this area closed? Who's covering up these animal abnormalities in the Park?

A non-stop thriller set in some of North America's wildest country, *In Velvet* takes you deep into the hearts of a hard case local detective and a Chicago cop as they take on a corrupt sheriff, a pathological poacher, and a lethal black ops manager to solve this ghastly mystery and restore the natural order in Yellowstone National Park.

In Velvet Details

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Author : Burt Weissbourd

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From Reader Review In Velvet for online ebook

Mimi says

A "thriller" set in Yellowstone Park with lots of details about the park (animal behavior, physical features, management), dynamic characters and a challenging problem. Interesting view of characters' lives on the edges of the National Park. Enjoyable read and made me want to go to Yellowstone.

Ashley says

A non-stop thriller set in some of North America's wildest country, In Velvet takes you deep into the hearts of a hard case local detective and a Chicago cop as they take on a corrupt sheriff, a pathological poacher, and a lethal black ops manager to solve this ghastly mystery and restore the natural order in Yellowstone National Park.

In Velvet is a creepy thriller and so unique! Rachel, a bear biologist, is discovering some very unusual behavior out of the grizzly bear population in Yellowstone Park as well as what appears to be sightings of extinct species and horrific animal mutations. Just exactly what is going on in Yellowstone? This is entirely unlike anything I would normally read but animal mutations, Yellowstone Park and potential government corruption intrigued me so I picked it up for a read and was not disappointed in the slightest. This book starts off with high intensity and it doesn't let up until the very last page. The situations are eerie, the characters are creepy and the plot is thrilling. It's everything the synopsis promises and such a good reads!

There are a lot of characters in In Velvet – a Chicago cop, Bear Researcher, Fly Fisherman (who is also an ex-investigator), then add in a corrupt cop, various other Yellowstone employees, researchers and investigators the cast can be complex however they are relatively easy to keep organized. A few of the characters have similar personalities and speak using similar dialogue/dialect and may become muddled but these instances are rare.

The plot itself was thrilling, intriguing and a bit terrifying but only because it is so frighteningly possible. To read about animal cloning in Europe and animal testing in laboratories all throughout the US is it really that impossible to consider corrupt behaviors that result in mutations in what should be protected species?

In Velvet is a thrill from start to finish! While I expected a good read it easily surpassed my expectations.

Review by Ashley LaMar
Closed the Cover

Julie says

Check out my other reviews at Little Miss Bookmark!

In Velvet starts off at a break-neck pace. It really had my heart pounding from the first couple of pages. I practically devoured this one and it was in less than 24 hours! It's not very often that I find a book that starts off so well and actually keeps up the pace (and holds my attention) for the entire book. I'd say in 99% of the novels that start off like this have a dropping off point where I really start to question why I enjoy reading so much but this one didn't. I just had to get that out there.

Before I jump into anything, I just wanted to make it known that I don't really know anything about Yellowstone National Park. I know, I know ... I should at least know something about it, but unfortunately, I didn't. And in all honesty, I had to Google it just to see where exactly it was because I had absolutely no clue ... I knew it was up north but that was it. Anyhow, the author was so thorough with his descriptions, I really felt like I was actually experiencing the park and not just reading about it. It was almost as if I was reliving memories ... that is how descriptive Burt Weissbourd was. Now, there comes a point with descriptive authors where you really start to lose interest but that never happened to me. Even with the scientific stuff, my interest was totally unwavering.

The characters ... I fell in love with Rachel instantly. Her love of grizzlies was really endearing and she was actually pretty self aware and honest with herself, which made for an interesting read. She was by far, my favorite character and there were a lot to choose from. A-lot-a-lot. I did find myself a little confused a couple of times, not really remembering who was who with some of the lesser characters but that could have been due to my lack of sleep when pounding through this novel.

Overall In Velvet was intriguing. And terribly frightening. To think that something like this could happen is sad and I truly hope that it never does. After reading this and enjoying it so much, I'll probably pick up another novel by this author and give it a go, if it's half as enjoyable as this one, it won't be a waste of time.

Cindy says

Start with a cop from Chicago dealing with her ex, a Yellowstone bear researcher, an ex-investigator fly fisherman, a crazy corrupt cop, then add in various other Yellowstone researchers and investigators, plus the politics of the Park Service, and stir vigorously with hot springs thermoclines. You end up with several murder mysteries, diabolical government plots and wonky park animals. Since Yellowstone is in my back yard, I really enjoyed it and can testify to the eccentric personalities who end up here. Very plausibly put together and the characters are very believable. The next time you go to Yellowstone, get out of the car. Received free copy for review.

Julie says

In Velvet by Burt Weissbourd is a 2014 publication. I was provided a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.

If the first passage of this book doesn't grab your attention and keep you turning pages, I don't know what will. The pace is set literally in the opening moments and never slows down.

There is something truly off kilter in Yellowstone Park. Rachel is a bear biologist, single mom, and a likeable character. She first notices some subtle things here and there, but when a grizzly she has an interest

in starts trying to make a den in early summer, she gets really worried. But, that's not all. Extinct animals have been sighted in the park among other really odd happenings. When a cop from Chicago shows up and immediately catches the eye of a former detective, they begin to unearth a plot that will send shivers down your spine.

Greed, corruption, genetic experiments are just the beginning.

I enjoyed this thriller much more than I thought I would. I thought I was getting the sequel to *Inside Passage* and when I sat down to start this one I realized this book was not a part of that series. I had no idea what to expect.

The plot was quite plausible and I wouldn't put it past someone to try something like this. That of course makes the story that much more tense. The strong female characters are well drawn and I liked the equality they enjoyed while working on the complex case.

There were some moments in the story where I had to slow down and read carefully. There were perhaps a few too many people involved and if you aren't careful you might lose the thread or catch yourself going back and re-reading parts just be sure you have it straight and that took me out of the story a time or two.

Despite that one complaint I thought this was really unique story, and a tense thriller. The main characters each bring something unique to the story and their interactions and relationships develop nicely as the story progresses. It took me a little time to get through this one but it was worth the extra effort in the end. 4 stars

Sarah Aisling says

In Velvet is a fast-paced thriller set in the mountains of Yellowstone.

From the blurb:

The northwest corner of Yellowstone Park is closed for bear management, and Rachel, a bear biologist, is discovering some very startling animal behavior—grizzlies denning in June, swans at their wintering grounds in summer, what appear to be Irish Elk, an extinct species, with huge palmated antlers. There are also horrific mutations in the young—elk calves with no front legs, earless bear cubs, and eaglets without wings. What has gone wrong? Why is this area closed? Who's covering up these animal abnormalities in the Park?

A non-stop thriller set in some of North America's wildest country, In Velvet takes you deep into the hearts of a hard case local detective and a Chicago cop as they take on a corrupt sheriff, a pathological poacher, and a lethal black ops manager to solve this ghastly mystery and restore the natural order in Yellowstone National Park.

The complex plot is also host to a complex and quirky set of characters—from a bear biologist who discovers strange happenings and odd animal mutations, an ex-detective fly fisherman, an ex-Chicago policewoman, and disturbed sheriff to a certifiably crazy poacher, and let's not forget top secret government agency involvement.

There's a lot going on in this novel. One thing that disturbed me throughout the story was the rapid point of view changes, many in short, choppy bits. This is just my opinion, but I found many of the head-hops unnecessary and would have enjoyed the story a bit more if the chapters were more cohesive. Despite that, I really liked this book.

The descriptions, especially of Yellowstone, were rich and breathtaking. I thoroughly enjoyed Burt Weissbourd's writing style. Although the scientific explanations behind what the bad guys were up to were a bit complex, they were explained in an understandable enough way to enjoy the story without my eyes glazing over. The characters were realistic, unique, and quirky. I enjoyed them all, even the ones I despised. There's a danger when blending multiple plots and subplots, but it was done seamlessly here.

This heart-pounding thriller will string you along and bring you right to the edge before reaching a most satisfactory conclusion. If this were a movie, it's the type that would have me walking out of the theater only able to initially say, "Wow!" I look forward to reading more from Mr. Weissbourd.

4.25 Stars

More review on my website: www.sarahaisling.com

Samantha says

Set in the 1990's, *In Velvet* is a thriller involving the mystery of odd happenings with wild animals, and that is just the tip of the iceberg. The Yellowstone Park has been closed for bear management. It all begins with Rachel's favorite bear, #146 – Woolly Bugger, being suspected of killing Dr. Moody who studies microbial life. As time passes, Rachel begins finding odd things happening such as bears making dens in June, cubs that do not have any ears, and finding Elk that is suppose to be extinct. Who or what is responsible for these odd occurrences and why is the park still closed?

Rachel and her ex-boyfriend, Rainey, must try to figure out what is going on while dealing with murders, a dishonest sheriff, among a host of other issues that crop up. Moreover, Rainey meets a former Chicago cop, Jen, that joins in on the fun as well.

Wrote in multiple perspectives involving complex characters and subplots, *In Velvet* reminds me of Stephen King's writing because of the gory details and complexity within the characters. I think that the author did a fantastic job at giving each character their own voice. I also think that the descriptions, character development, and plot had a good balance. Most of the time books are either character driven or plot driven, yet *In Velvet* is character and plot driven. Furthermore, I love that the female characters are able to stand on their own. Although the perspectives change quite frequently, I think that it adds to the suspenseful feel to the story, and the busyness keeps you on your toes.

"Moody's stomach had been opened. His intestines, innards, buttocks, and thighs had been eaten. And now

the bear was on Moody's carcass, feeding again."

I'd recommend *In Velvet* if you enjoy suspenseful stories that keep you turning the pages. The story does involve science; however, I think that it is explained well. So, I think whether or not you enjoy science, you will enjoy the book.

Susan says

This book had a lot of interesting characters and I was never bored with it. I also enjoyed the setting – watching these folks traipse around in small towns, rural areas, and out and out wilderness. Some were equipped for it, others were not. Rachel's character was probably the most interesting for me as she is a biologist (same as me) and I instantly related to her.

The pace is very fast, with the narrative quickly flipping from one to another. In some instances, we just get to know a character before they are killed off. So if you are concerned you would get stuck on the biology passes, don't worry. You won't as they are brief. I especially liked the descriptions of the animals behaviors (both normal and aberrant) and of the mutated animals and what the consequences could be.

While Rainey could be thought of as the main character, I felt he took a back seat as the story progressed. Jesse as the master mind villain took center stage with Rachel flying a close second with her bear knowledge. While some of the characters find Rainey to be a very interesting character, I did not. But that's OK.

My few criticisms for the book reside with characters making choices that either don't fit their characterization or those choices not being believably explained. early on, there is a car explosion, with someone in it, and I didn't feel that the reason behind this was fully explained. Also, Jen the cop comes onto the scene via a snake-infested suitcase. This seemed like a very odd thing and I never really bought into it, especially since Jen doesn't show much outdoors or animal knowledge later. Also, Jen has been trying to get her son back from her divorced husband. But then she leaves him in the hands of strangers while she goes camping on this adventure, with her new beau. Either she is a questionable parent and that was intended or the character had a great need to leave her traumatized child and the greatness of that need didn't come across.

Still, in the big picture, these small things did not deter me from simply shaking my head a little and continuing to enjoy the mystery and the thrill. Oh, and there are Irish Elk. This was a new one for me and I enjoyed learning just enough about them to have me go digging for more info.

Kat says

Part eco-thriller, part literary fiction, *In Velvet* was sadly a little bit hit-and-miss for me. The writing is beautiful, and the photographs of wildlife and scenery throughout the book are stunning, however the large cast of characters and their difficult-to-follow loyalties made my reading experience rather slow and, at times, slightly boring.

Rachel is a dedicated biologist, who obviously feels a closer affinity to animals than people. Her difficult relationship with Rainey, who becomes involved in the events occurring in Yellowstone through accident

rather than design is the relationship element in the story, and with the addition of Jen, who is in the midst of a personal crisis makes for a rather awkward and clunky love triangle. However Rachel is an excellent lead character in terms of her strength and determination, and it would be difficult not to want to cheer her on as the story progresses.

There are a lot of secondary characters, some more memorable than others, but I found their changing loyalties rather difficult to follow at times, and several of the more 'hardcore' characters simply backed off towards the end which felt a little inconsistent.

What Weissbourd excels in is setting a scene – I felt like I was actually in the national park during the scenes where Rachel is tracking her favourite bear, and the descriptions were mesmerising. The plot itself lurches from love story to thriller to scientific mystery which holds the double-edged sword of having interesting aspects but also making the pacing feel a little uneven and the book as a whole a little directionless.

Maybe this just wasn't the book for me – the synopsis was what drew me in, and the ecological/biological elements kept me reading, but *In Velvet* really ebbed and flowed for me – it was a unique read but just not my style.

Harry Allagree says

It may not win a Pulitzer Prize, but Burt Weissbourd's novel is a very exciting read. It's well researched, and informative about the wildlife of Yellowstone National Park, especially grizzly bears & elk. It's also not a half-bad love story.

Dorothy says

I was very lucky to receive an advance copy of *In Velvet*, Burt Weissbourd's second novel. (Not the long-awaited sequel to the Corey Logan trilogy which I believe will be published in fall 2014).

I did not think I could love another book by this author as much as I did his first novel, *Inside Passage*. But I was wrong! *In Velvet* is an exciting read, very hard to put down. Great characters and a riveting plot that does not disappoint, a real thriller! I highly recommend *In Velvet* to anyone who loves strong female characters, mysteries and thrillers and great writing!

John McCaffrey says

Like the grizzlies, elk, eagles, and other wildlife vividly depicted in Burt Weissbourd's new novel set in Yellowstone Park, *In Velvet* moves with strength, independence and surviving grace. Weissbourd has the imaginative chops, and the eye of a naturalist, to give readers both a tense thriller and a complete word-picture of this majestic park. But the novel's true strength is its characters, from devoted park rangers who will do anything to save the animals and the land, to demented lawmen, poachers and government defense workers who will do anything to harness evil from the same resources. Exploding geysers, proteins capable of mass destruction, and a compelling love triangle...*In Velvet*, like a trout stream in Yellowstone, is full of twists and turns that gets better and better the deeper you venture.

Melinda says

Burt Weissbourd strikes again with another riveting thriller - In Velvet.

From the prologue on the action is nonstop, your interest piqued. Weissbourd creates an inventive and complicated narrative with your share of heroes and villains.

Weissbourd has a penetrating style which captures the readers attention from the start. His talent is evident through his varying story lines, you don't feel as if he follows a formula except ensuring an exciting read every minute.

He also incorporates an incredibly strong and intelligent female protagonist, undoubtedly appreciated by this reader. Regarding In Velvet he manages to give his audience two strong females.

Rachael Stanley is front and center in In Velvet. A woman dedicated to wildlife, she speaks her mind and is resilient. Time after time her mettle is tested and she shines with ease.

All the characters in this book are incredible, you will find yourself cheering on the heroes and hoping for justice against foes. Numerous players in this story but all have a role and no one is merely an accessory.

Combining poaching, mutation and romance isn't easy to accomplish, proving Weissbourd's boundless talent to spin quite a yarn.

It is official Burt Weissbourd is my favorite freshman author. I look forward to forthcoming novels from this undeniable master of creative and consuming thrillers.

Fans of thrillers, wildlife preservation, and biology buffs or anyone seeking an excellent read will not want to miss adding In Velvet to your reading list. Innovative narrative with an eclectic and engaging cast of characters.

books are love says

this is a very complex book with several plots and mysteries going on at once. There is a little love triangle but this is a secondary very very secondary concept to all that this book has going on. This book is not a beach read by any means but it is one to read on a rainy day. I say it's not a beach read because beach reads are usually your I don't want to think fluffy funny reads and this is not that.

what makes this book more fascinating is that with all the plots competing and taking turns around each other, they intertwine and become one in the end. what is this book about? It's about people using a bacteria to get what they want without caring of the consequences, some using this to get richer, some to help make things safer for others but the ones that are the best are those that are fighting this whole thing for the livelihood of a Park and the animals that live within.

I am going to break this down differently than I normally do because it is more complex than past books.

Plot: several at once. 1. The sheriff is a plot and story in himself. His scheming and lawless ways do come back to bite him in the butt but he is freakishly scary. He takes the law and twists it for his pleasure. He is in it for many and uses people as Kleenex to dispose of when necessary. Get on his bad side and you are toast. How does he fit into the bigger picture? He is after elk antler for money. Sees this bacteria as the way to get bigger antler and more money. Also wants more control in his business. Doesn't care the consequences of this bacteria just sees dollar signs and along the way he can hurt a few people he doesn't like.

2. The bear: Started the whole issue. he was being studied and killed the professor or that is what is official. Something more sinister happened. Anyways they are all trying to kill him but he is elusive. Meantime people come in to finish up his research and those are the ones taking it a different way.

3. the bacteria: what starts it all. the thermophiles. They are creating mutations that the park workers are scared of. Also they are helping to get the sheriff feeling more greedy, gummer happy in the money zone until he realizes what the effects are, Rachel in a uproar and doing something, Rainey and Jen involved.

4. Cockeye: his whole thing with the sheriff and the bacteria is really not figured out. So we don't know his background but we do know this is a murder mystery or is it a murder? His death starts the chain reaction of Jenn and Rainey getting involved.

5. the love story: it's a triangle really. Rainey thought he moved on from Rachel and Jen comes into the picture and teaches Rainey things. Meanwhile Rachel finds she still loves Rainey and this is going on while they are evading the law and trying to find out the truth about the Sentry, mutated animals and the bacteria.

All the plots are well written and twist you up. It's incredible how they all end up intertwining in the end.

Characters: very interesting and well vetted to you. Each has a secret whether it is Danny who fools everyone, Rachel who is in love and doesn't realize it till it may be too late Rainey who finds himself., Jen who finds peace, Jesse the sheriff who is evil but not as evil as Bodine and Gummer the one in the middle. All play a role in what happens to each other like dominoes. Such an intricate web is weaved that one tug and it can fall apart.

Overall: a fascinating and articulately written book that will keep you on your toes as you navigate with the good guys and hope they win.

Michael says

This lovely novel is set in Yellowstone National Park. Above the surface, the park is filled with animals free to roam and nature at its best. Beneath the surface are a number of people using the park for their own purposes.

Rachel Stanley is a bear biologist. She comes across a scientist's body and believes that a bear has killed him and partially eaten him. She's also discovered bodies of deformed animals, from a bear with three toes, to a bird with no wing and an elk with three legs. She wonders what freak of nature could cause this.

Rainey is a former PI who meets Jen when he was fishing. Jen Donahue is a Chicago cop on leave. She's facing major problems with her husband.

There are multiple story lines in this complex plot, from a sheriff who wants to go into business selling illegal elk horns to a Chinese businessman, to a crazed poacher who thinks the devil is after him and to a black ops agent who is doing experiments in the park.

When Rachel confronts the black ops agent about his experiments and the effect on the animals, it's a memorable scene.

Rainey is a totally honest man who tries to help others no matter what the cost. Both Rachel and Jen are drawn to him as he is pitted against the major antagonists. The reader would think that the characters are great but more than that, they are extraordinary.

It is difficult to describe the novel further without revealing plot but I loved the story and was sorry to see it end.

I received a free book for my honest review.
