



## **Blow Out**

*Catherine Coulter*

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A long weekend in the Poconos is cut short when Sherlock and Savich are helicoptered back to Washington to lead the investigation into the brutal murder of a Supreme Court Justice.

Savich allows Callie Markham, an investigative reporter for The Washington Post, to partner with local Metro Police liaison Ben Raven, since she's got the inside track—she's the stepdaughter of the murdered justice. Despite Detective Raven's unwillingness to have a civilian along, Callie Markham ends up riding shotgun to help look for her stepfather's murderer.

Within the next twenty-four hours, a Supreme Court law clerk is found murdered, the M.O. the same.

Savich learns he must also solve a thirty-year-old crime after a psychic encounter with the murder victim, Samantha Barrister, who suddenly appears in front of his car and hysterically pleads for his help. Savich and Sherlock discover that at the time of her death Samantha had a six-year-old son, who disappeared as a teenager. Savich is convinced the missing boy is the key.

In *Blowout*, Sherlock and Savich are faced with two of the most baffling and shocking cases of their careers.

## **Blow Out Details**

Date : Published (first published June 10th 2004)

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Author : Catherine Coulter

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## From Reader Review Blow Out for online ebook

### Merredith says

Book number 9 in the FBI Thriller series and Savich and Sherlock are back yet again! A supreme court justice is murdered and Savich is in charge of the FBI investigation to find out who did it. Before he can solve this mystery, more people start dying. He's aided by, of course, his wife Agent Sherlock, a new guy from the DC police, and the justice's stepdaughter. I was guessing the whole time. The DC police guy did seem a little naive, especially when it came to 'old justice's', very young-centric. But then again, that's one of the reasons I like the main characters in these books - they always mention often how they eat well and they all LOVE going to the gym LOL. They're smart and hot! There is also a side story about a ghost. I really enjoy the supernatural things she's been throwing in for Savich, he definitely has some sort of affinity.. Good addition to the series, can't wait for the next, as always!

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### Lin says

Lame, lame, lame.

The main characters were idiots, even though they worked for the FBI, D.C. police force, and the Washington Post. They did ridiculously dumb things, then somehow managed to connect the dots and identify the killer without ever having other suspects. They just "knew" it was this assassin who'd been off the radar for 20+ years. Whom they'd never heard of before.

AND the husband/wife FBI team (really) broke down in tears when one of the people who they'd just met is killed...but barely batted an eye when their infant son was almost shot by the aforementioned assassin.

The love story was drippy, sappy, and eye-rollingly awful (almost painful) to read. Cop and reporter hate each other with a passion, which of course means that at the end of the week they are madly in love and ready to be married and have babies.

I only read to the end, because there were two separate storylines: one about a ghost that is guiding the FBI to solve an old murder, and this assassin taking out a supreme court justice. I wanted to see how the two would eventually connect, since there seemed nothing that would draw them together.

And. Surprise! They DON'T. Because really, it had NOTHING to do with the main plot. So why on earth was it part of this book?! Maybe the author had to add another 50 pages.

UGH. That was hours of my life I'll never get back.

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### Dwayne Wojtowicz says

Catherine Coulter has hit a home run with her suspense thriller, "Blow Out."

Savich and Sherlock are at it again, this time looking into the past to stop the murders.

This book is perfectly executed; the plot thickens and twists with every turn of the page. The characters are

my friends already; Coulter makes me feel that I'm solving the crime with them.

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### **Debbie says**

The murder of a Supreme Court Justice brings Savich and Sherlock home quick from a vacation that had turned strange with the appearance of a 'ghost' that asked Savich for help. The Justices' stepdaughter, Callie Markham, an Investigative reporter from 'The Washington Post' asks to be involved with the investigation. Being the stepdaughter, she is paired with Metro Police Detective Ben Raven. Within 24 hours, another murder and then a few days later, another murder all with the same MO. They think they know who, but the why is the biggest mystery.

The ghost side story is very different, but it is an interesting addition. The typical way of Savich and Sherlock let others do a lot and they come to help, not true in this one, they are front and center more so than Callie and Ben. I felt a little cheated not getting to know them as well as most of the past characters. I was also sad to see Sherlock be so wrong about someone, she was duped and that is not her normal.

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### **Laddie Tabor says**

Another excellent book by the prolific writer. I really enjoy reading her FBI thriller series. As usual there are 2 excellent stores running parallel with each other, and as always, ultimately, the good guys win.

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### **Karen Jones says**

This review is verbatim from previous notes when I read this book back in 2004.

Even though I love the Savich/Sherlock series--this one was terrible. The romance/flirting between the 2 sub-characters was so lame. The dialogue was cheesy. And the plot left you wishing there had been one. The sub plot was hardly mentioned throughout the horribly long interviewing of suspects and then when it did come up again in the end, it was wrapped up quickly and with no substance. The main plot was a huge let down.

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### **Dotti Elrick says**

FBI agents Savitch and Sherlock are enjoying some down time in the Pocono mountains, when Savitch has a blow out on his car. When he has finished with the tire, a woman suddenly appears from the woods. She is terrified and saying someone is trying to kill her. When Savitch takes her home, he searches the house and finds no one. The woman also is no longer there. He seeks out the local sheriff to start a search for the woman, only to be told the woman he helped, died some 30 years ago.

He wants to do more searching and some research into this story. But before he has the chance, he and Sherlock are summoned back to D.C. A justice of the Supreme Court has been murdered in the court library. Callie Markham is an investigative reporter for the Washington Post. She has just discovered that her step father Justice Califano has been murdered. The detective assigned to the case, Ben Raven, is working with the FBI to solve this murder. Callie wants to help with the investigation, she knows the people involved, and they will be more willing to talk to her, a member of the family, than a cop. She promises not to be a

reporter, and even takes a leave of absence from the paper.

The last thing Ben wants is a civilian reporter tagging along. But he takes her along. And she proves to be useful.

Two of The Justice's law clerks are also murdered in the same way, and the agents go to great lengths to protect the third. As it turns out, the murderer has an unknowing insiders feeding him information. And the killer is closer than anyone expected.

I was a bit unsure about this book after the first chapter, the whole "ghost" thing in a thriller. But it is not the focus of the story, and its well written, believable. I liked the book. Loved Ben and Callie.

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## Scott Rhee says

"Blow Out" blows.

That isn't the most clever of wordplay, I know, but it's the truth. Don't be fooled, either: the one star rating I gave this book is actually very generous. I don't typically give books negative reviews. It goes against my grain. I am typically someone who tries to find the best in every book. I am generally a very positive person, but this book was infuriating. It frustrated me to no end because I find that reading a bad book is right at the top of my list of annoying things, and I am unfortunately one of those slightly-OCD readers that has to finish a book once it's started. I may set it aside for months, even years, but it is always lurking somewhere ominously on a bookshelf, the bookmark still in its place, an unfinished project. A failure, of sorts. Mostly on my part---the reader---for not being able to connect at all with what the author is trying to do.

This is the first Catherine Coulter novel I have read. It probably won't be my last. I always give an author several chances because the first time may have been a fluke---I may not have liked it because I was in a pissy mood when I was reading it, or maybe the author was suffering from writer's block at the time he or she wrote it and it clearly wasn't the best of their abilities. In any case, I try to be fair that way. Of course, it may be a long while before I attempt reading another Coulter novel again, as I am still trying to clear the sour taste of this book from my literary palate.

Coulter apparently writes a series of "FBI thrillers" with recurring characters, FBI agents Sherlock and Savitch, who also happen to be married with a young son. Savitch is the tough, strong husband, and Sherlock is the petite wife. Savitch is the braun. Sherlock is the brains. They are very cute together, always flirtatious, even after, I assume, many years of blissful marriage together. Everyone around them loves them because they are so cute. Minor characters joke about how perfect and cute they are together.

Ugh.

I'm sure that somewhere in Coulter's past (and present) is a career as a romance novelist. I have only read two romance novels in my life, and I found both of them laughably ridiculous, but, to be fair, one of them was "written" by Fabio, so there's that. Obviously, I don't know enough about the genre to make an adequate judgment of what makes "good" and "bad" romance.

I do know, however, that when you put the words "thriller" on the cover of your book, it is both expected and required to actually have some thrilling things happen in the book.

Very little excitement happens in this book. There are a few murders sprinkled throughout, but all of them, with the exception of one, happen "off-stage". There is an attempt at police procedural, but it never actually goes anywhere. These are the worst investigators in the world, and if they were actual agents working for the FBI, I would hope that someone higher up would have the sense to fire them. They spend more time flirting

and joking around then actually investigating. When the killer is finally "revealed" at the end, there is no suspense whatsoever because the investigators (based on absolutely no credible evidence whatsoever that I could detect) had already determined who the killer was. The motive for the crime is the most ridiculous and antic-climactic motive I have ever heard given in a mystery novel.

There is also, completely inexplicably, another subplot involving a ghost and a 30-year-old unsolved murder thrown in for no apparent reason. It has nothing to do whatsoever to the main story.

I may be unjustifiably harsh in my assessment of Coulter, but I don't think so. This book was absolutely horrible.

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## **Gina says**

My opinion - not her best work.

Savich, Sherlock and their son, Sean, are spending some family time at a cabin in the Poconos. On his way back from the market, Savich's SUV blows a tire. Just as he's done changing it, a woman comes running out of nowhere, not suitably dressed for the weather, screaming about a man in her house. His cell phone all of a sudden not working and unable to call for back-up, Savich goes with the woman back to her house. Making her wait in the living room, he searches the house, and other than a small incident, there's no one there. Exactly no one, for even the woman has disappeared. The house now seems abandoned, as if it had been that way for years. Had Savich actually been talking to a ghost?

And just when he tries to convince the local sheriff of what happened, Savich and Sherlock are called back to D.C. to head up the investigation of a murdered supreme court justice, Stewart Califano. He'd been murdered right in the Supreme Court Library, and all they have to go on is the guard who'd been knocked out.

Metro detective Ben Raven is helping Sherlock and Savich with the case, the appointed liaison between the FBI and Metro police. They met the now widow, Margaret Califano, as well as her daughter, Callie Markham, an investigative reporter for The Washington Post. Taking a leave of absence, she's determined to help the FBI find her stepfather's killer. And now Ben is stuck with her. And that's just the beginning of a spark.

Everyone is interviewed, from the other justices, the clerks, family and friends. Then one of Califano's clerks is murdered, the same M.O. With the help of MAX, the computer finds the M.O. matches the M.O. of a killer who hasn't killed in over 20 years. How can that be? Is no one safe and who could be next?

\*\*Could have been better. All those interviews and no clues from them. And the more the interviews, the more I started to get bored. They kept revisiting the same information. A few events in the book make you sit up and take notice, just for it to go back to more interviews. And then finally, you get face to face with the killer, and it made no sense - there was no connection between this person and his victims. And just when you're thinking "You've got to be kidding me," you read the barest of connections, a rather neat twist, and yet you still don't know much about the killer or who it really was he associated with. Callie finds out by mishap, but doesn't tell, not even Ben.

Savich and Sherlock were their usual selves, and I really like them as characters, as man and wife, as mom

and dad. We see them more with Sean in this one and I liked that aspect. Callie - I liked her personality; no nonsense, she pushes to get her way. Ben - I liked him as well. Even when he's not happy of being saddled with Callie, he makes the best of it. I liked the banter between them, but that spark you feel at the beginning, stayed just like that. A spark - one. That's it. After that, I felt a camaraderie between them and nothing more.

Then there's that twist, and you're thinking "Holy Cow!", but it stays there. You still don't know who the killer was associated with. While I have an idea, it's not confirmed, and that bothered me.

Meanwhile, there's a second, smaller investigation, for the ghost of Samantha Barrister won't leave Savich alone. They do find her son, in a most unusual way, and even solve her murder. I actually enjoyed that part more than the main investigation, and I believe that more could have been added to it and made its own book, I think.

While it was good, the book could have been better.

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### **Karen Szymusiak says**

I am not a typical mystery reader. My mother and sister got me started on this series of FBI thrillers. It was a well-written and suspenseful tale featuring two FBI agents who are married and work together to solve cases. A good story that kept me guessing until the conclusion.

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### **Patrick says**

Review to come...

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### **Rosemary says**

I love this series. I can't remember how i discovered it, but i thank God I did. Love cop books anyway, dammit. I want to go back to the beginning and read these - start to finish. But as i find them at thrift stores, i grab them. Thank God for Goodreads, I did at least quit getting books i already had for my "pending" read.

I love Savich and Sherlock - their brains are awesome. Plus following their relationship while they work together is cool. Could NEVER do that ugh.

I love how, so far, the author weaves a couple of stories together in all of the novels - my ADHD brain gets it.

This one is full of intrigue...politics...a little bit of spiciness too.

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### **Pattianne says**

Blow Out - FBI Thriller #9 - Savich and Sherlock - (Callie Markham and Ben Raven [not FBI]) - Supreme court judge is murdered, followed quickly by two more people. Ben (who is metro police) and S&S are hot

on the trail.

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### **katwiththehat says**

I really enjoyed this Catherine Coulter thriller. Agents Dylan Savich and Lacey Sherlock are on vacation when a supreme court justice is murdered. They're called back to Washington to investigate, and as more killings occur, realize they're working with a dangerous assassin. The mystery was great in this one, as well as the slow reveal of clues. One of her best!

Please excuse typos/name misspellings. Entered on screen reader.

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### **Scott says**

It began with this blowout and great ghost story. I really have wanted a good ghost story, but then it left that story alone for the most part to tell another unrelated story. I thought we would tie it all in and they would be related, but they were separate stories and sadly not related. I guess I'll have to keep looking for a good ghost story. The story probably would have related higher if the two plots would have intertwined, but they never did.