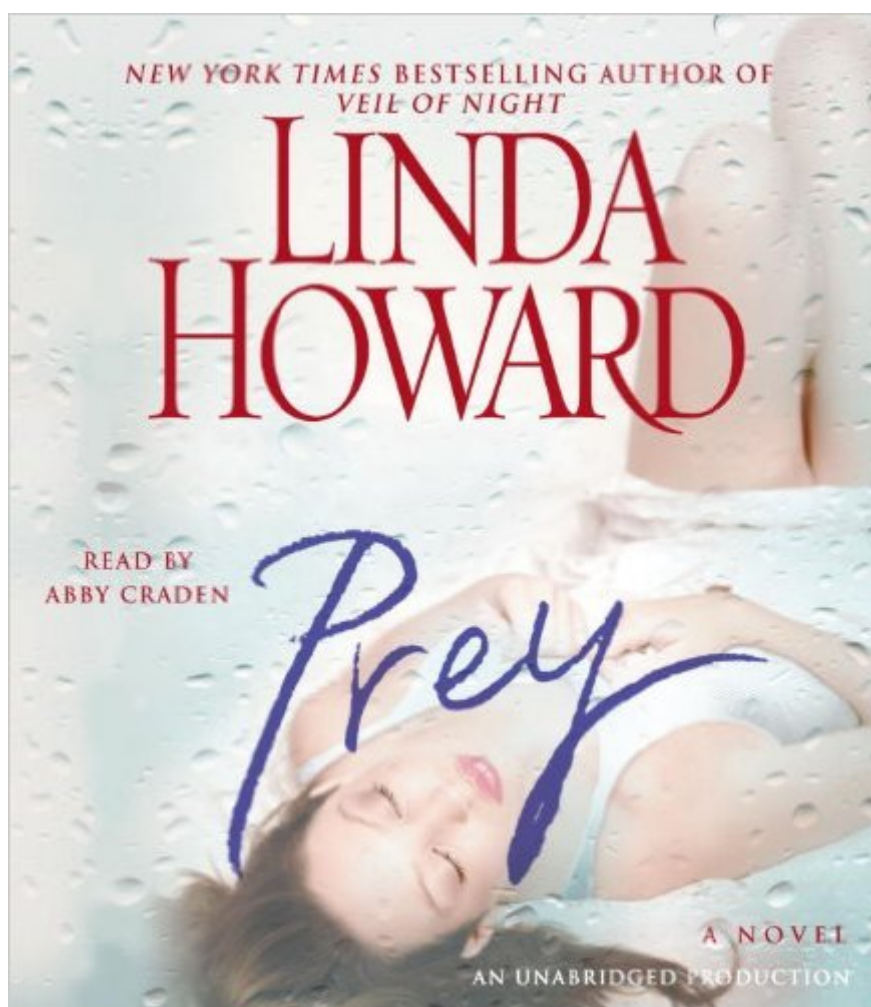


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Prey: A Novel



Synopsis

In this captivating novel of romantic suspense, New York Times bestselling author Linda Howard brings us deep into the wild, where a smart and sexy outdoor guide and her ruggedly handsome competitor must join forces to survive—and avoid becoming what they never expected to be: **PREY**. Thirty-two-year-old Angie Powell has always spoken her mind, but in the presence of Dare Callahan she nurses a simmering rage. After all, why give Dare the satisfaction of knowing he can push her buttons and push her to the edge? Three years ago, Dare returned home to rural western Montana and opened a hunting business to rival Angie's. Complicating matters is the fact that Dare has asked Angie out (not once but twice) and has given her a gift of butterflies in the process. Angie has no patience for butterflies. They only lead to foolish decisions. And now the infuriatingly handsome Iraq war vet has siphoned away Angie's livelihood, forcing her to close up shop. Before Angie is to leave town, she organizes one last trip into the wilderness with a client and his guest, who wants to bag a black bear. But the adrenaline-fueled adventure turns deadly when Angie witnesses a cold-blooded murder and finds herself on the wrong side of a loaded gun. Before the killer can tie up this attractive loose end, a bear comes crashing through the woods—changing the dark game completely. Luckily, Dare is camping nearby and hears the shots. Forced together for their very survival, Angie and Dare must confront hard feelings, a blinding storm, and a growing attraction—while being stalked by a desperate killer and a ferocious five-hundred-pound beast. And neither will stop until they reach their prey. From the Hardcover edition.

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Customer Reviews

Except as it turns out, bears really don't have that much to say other than "Food!" Which might be accurate enough, I couldn't say as I've never met a bear, but it really doesn't make for that great of page time in a novel. Angie. Wilderness Guide. Now don't get me wrong, I think females in tough occupations rock. The problem here is that Angie is about as ill suited for the job of "Wilderness Hunting Guide" as she could possibly get. She's terrified that a bear is going to eat her, terrified one of her clients is going to assault her, and really just plain fretful. So what the reader ends up with is pages of internal agony over all the bad things that are happening to her business and all the bad things that could happen to her out on those mountains. "Why couldn't they want to hunt elk?" Angie asks. Which really confuses me. Do bears on the mountain have a tacit agreement not to try and eat you if you've declared yourself an elk hunter? Anyway, other than finding a partner to help her out a little with some of the more dangerous side of her business, about the best thing that could happen to Angie is that she get to sell her business and then she could set up a nice craft shop or run an inn or something. She's a Linda Howard heroine so her cooking is da bomb. Dare. Good guy. He thinks Angie is hot but unfortunately he has inadvertently ruined her business by moving into the area and being better at it. Oopsie. Still, he ... well only hesitates a little ... when a mutual friend asks him to run up the mountain and keep an eye on Angie because there is a bad feeling all around about this last job she's on. Yeah, Dare cusses way too much but he'll be good to Angie if he ever gets the chance. That's about what we take from him.

This is definitely one of Linda Howard's best efforts in a long time and better, in my opinion, than *Veil of Night*. The plot is solid and I really enjoyed the premise and humor of it, even with the synopsis including a murderer AND a killer bear in the picture, but the way the story is told, the drawn out pacing and unfortunately, the sensuality, were lacking for me. Angie Powell, 32, is a hunting and nature guide in rural Montana. Since the death of her father, she's been managing the family business, however, for the past two years, business has been slowly declining due to stiff competition and she finds that she's not going to be able to handle the mortgage. After signing the papers to sell her family home, she immediately runs into Dare Callahan, the bane of her existence, and the reason she's forced to move. Dare, 37, is a recently returned war veteran who set up his own shop for hunting and nature guides, and naturally being a strong rugged man, is seen as more capable in the hunting genre than she. Even though Angie hates everything about Dare, she can't help but remember the initial spark between them upon first meeting. For Dare, no one spikes his blood pressure like Angie does. He's asked her out twice and turned down both times, but for some

reason, he hasn't given up that there might be something between them. When Angie prepares for her last customer hunting adventure of the season, and possibly the last ever in her hometown, her father's best friend, Harlan, asks Dare to watch over her. Dare can't believe he's actually considering it, but as a military veteran, he can't denounce Harlan's instincts so he agrees to go to the mountains under the guise of fishing.

Before I start this review, let me just say this: Most of the time, I only rate books when they are a 1 star or 5 star. I only take the time to write reviews when I feel either strongly positive or negative about a book. With this one, it was strongly negative. The main reason is because I'm a romance reader. I LOVE romance. There are some people who just want a good story or a good suspense, but for me for a book to be good and enjoyable, I need some romance & chemistry.....Anyway, up until now, Linda Howard has been my favorite author. I knew when I picked up a Linda Howard book, I'd be getting a story full of romance, chemistry, HOT attraction, AND a really good story; probably a suspense. So, I was coming into this book with great expectations. The date of Sept 6 has been circled on my calendar for months waiting for this once-a-year treasure, and then THIS book is what I got. I almost started wondering if someone else wrote this book and put Linda Howard's name on it. What happened to the all-night page turner romance, sizzle, and suspense???

This book is filled mostly with the most mundane and tedious things. Eighty percent of this book could have been left out. So much time was spent describing mud, horses, mountains and very little on character building or development of the two main characters attraction. For the first 30-40% of the book, the characters had only one small interaction together outside of the realtor's office. I was reading on a kindle, and I had to skip past so much mundane "page fillers." Almost wonder if she simply had to fulfill a certain amount of words for this book and just about bored us to death with too many descriptions of rain, mud, horses, etc. There was absolutely NO suspense on who the bad guys are.

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