



Imperial Stout

Layla Reyne

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Layla Reyne spins off from her pulse-pounding Agents Irish and Whiskey books with *Imperial Stout*, the first installment in the Trouble Brewing series

It's a good thing assistant US attorney Dominic Price co-owns a brewery. He could use a cold one. Nic's star witness has just been kidnapped, his joint operation with the FBI is in jeopardy, his father's shady past is catching up with him and the hot new special agent in San Francisco is the kind of distraction best handled with a stiff drink.

Kidnap and rescue expert Cameron Byrne has his own ideas about how to handle Nic, but his skills are currently needed elsewhere. The by-the-book FBI agent goes deep undercover as a member of an infamous heist crew in order to save Nic's witness, break up the crew and close the case before anyone else gets hurt. Nic in particular.

Things heat up when Cam falls for Nic, and the witness falls for Cam. As the crew's suspicions grow, Cam must decide how far he's willing to go—and how far into his own dark past he's willing to dive—to get everyone out alive.

Imperial Stout Details

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Author : Layla Reyne

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From Reader Review Imperial Stout for online ebook

Judith says

NR, DNF @around 20%.

This is a spin off from the *Agents Irish and Whiskey series*. I hadn't read that series but how hard could a spin off be to get into?

Turns out....very hard

This is full on action from the first page(my head was spinning),there's no introduction here and I had absolutely no idea what was going on and even after reading the beginning a few times I still didn't get it any better.Too much of a convoluted plot thrown at you,characters I didn't connect to or care about.

Review copy provided by the Publisher,via NetGalley

CrabbyPatty says

We met Nic and Cam briefly in Layla Reyne's excellent *Agents Irish and Whiskey* series and the two men shared a brief passionate kiss in "Blended Whiskey" (#4.5 in the series) at Aidan and Jaime's wedding. So I thought I was up-to-speed and ready to hit the ground running with the new *Trouble Brewing* series.

Except yeah, not so much. "Imperial Stout" drops us cold right in the middle of a convoluted operation involving Cam, Nic, Lauren, Bowers and Aidan, and their confidential informant Abby undercover in a criminal crew about to steal a priceless art collection. I spent the first 15-20% of the book trying to remember who was who (Cam was Jamie's partner and best friend, Bowers is the annoying jerkish boss), who had slept with who (for those keeping track at home, Nic slept with Aidan) and trying to decipher exactly what the heck was going on. I desperately needed a brief reintroduction to characters!

The book focuses primarily on the case Nic and Cam are working, with only hints of sexual tension and unresolved feelings. Since we don't know much more about Nic and Cam other than they are very attracted to one another, it's hard to get a sense of where their heads are regarding any sort of relationship. They share a (second) kiss about halfway through, and we finally get some honest-to-god sexual contact around 70%. Don't get me wrong, it's definitely worth the wait, but again, it was like being dropped in cold trying to figure out the relationship since there is only minimal character development for Nic and Cam.

At times, the pace of the story felt slow, perhaps because the art heist plot wasn't very interesting to me, and Nic and Cam's relationship was such a slow, slow burn. Also, we get loads of foreshadowing about their respective difficult pasts throughout the book (mostly the library card Cam always carries, and Nic's tattoo), but little in the way of more concrete details. And although the art heist is resolved by book end, the ending

left me unsatisfied as there is just so little revealed about the two MCs and so many loose ends left to develop.

3.5 stars for the book, hoping that the next book(s) in the series will give us more in-depth characterization and start unraveling the mysteries involving both men's past.

I received an ARC from Carina Press, via NetGalley, in exchange for an honest review.

Review also posted at Gay Book Reviews - check it out!

J *deep in the heart of Texas* says

4.5 Stars!

Great start to a new series, which is a spin-off from the Irish and Whiskey series. And I really loved that series.

Ever since meeting Nic and Cam I've been wanting their book. And it looks like this one will be a series much like Irish and Whiskey, as this one had more of a HFN ending.

This was a great mix of the suspense and romance. I thought Cam and Nic had great chemistry. They kind of danced around each other for awhile, let things build up.

I of course loved getting more Aiden (and a bit of Jaime). And I definitely can't wait for more of Nic and Cam.

ARC kindly provided by NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

?? Cocky™ Michaëlle ♡?? says

~~OMG I want this so much I could cry...~~

Wheeee:

ARC provided via Netgalley and Carina Press in exchange for honest review.

Karen says

4.5 stars rounded up to 5 because still no 1/2 stars here on GR and this one was too good to round down on...full review to follow...soonish...I hope!

Giedre says

Binge read the original three, added a fourth because why not.

Mirjana **DTR - Down to Read**** says**

I will not freak out that this is on my kindle. I will not freak out that this is on my kindle. I will not freak out that this is on my kindle. I will not...

****ARC courtesy of publisher, via Netgalley, in exchange for a review****

YAASSSSS!! Cam and Nic's book!!! I'm soooo ready for this!! GIMME! GIMME! GIMME!!!

Rach says

We first met Nic and Cam in Agents Irish and Whiskey and then got to see them in Novella about Mel and Danny. Nic has come across as aloof and keeps himself distance from everyone but it seems he has found a family with the gang. Cam is strict by the agent on the job and has a big family in Boston.

They are now working together and tried not to cross the line but it seems they can't resist each other. The case was all action and glad Abbey got out ok in the end.

It seems Nic and Cam both have a past. Nic's past is slowly catching up with him but now he has people to share the burden with and Cam will not let him go through this alone. Nic's dad sounds a horrible person (view spoiler).

Cam also has a past (view spoiler). I can't wait to meet his family.

Roll on the next book in the series.

Christelle says

Not a standalone at all. The series "Agents Irish and Whiskey", including the novella, has to be read first (not a hardship imo) : it introduces most of the characters and gives the first interactions between the MCs. Then this book is the first part of the story of Cam and Nic (I assume it's a trilogy with "Craft Brew" and "Noble Ops" to be released in a few months).

Cam, (35) an FBI agent, works closely with Nic, (45) US attorney, to bring down a theft team. However, they face a lot of troubles : the investigation is a real minefield, a loan shark is after Nic's father and somebody is trying to kill Nic. As if Cam and Nic didn't have enough in their plates, the attraction brewing between them is only boiling up and getting harder to ignore.

Hold the press for a second : Jamie was THE star of the previous series for a lot of readers, myself included. Here, Nic is a solid competitor : the more I learned about Nic and the more I enjoyed this character.

Just as the previous series, it's entertaining : suspense, twists and action add a nice edge to the development of the relationship between the MCs. And it's hot : plenty of sexual tension and the beginning of sweaty sex promises for more goodness in the next instalments. The wait is going to be long ****sigh****

BR with my partners in crime : Simone and Karen. Thanks for sharing this entertaining time with me. For sure, another BR date to set up when the rest of the series is released, yeah !!!

~Mindy Lynn~ says

3.5 Stars!

It really does pain me to not give this story a higher rating. I was extremely excited to get approved for this book because Dominic and Cameron's story is one I had been really looking forward to. Unfortunately the story wasn't as smoothly done as the authors previous series, AIW.

I've read all the books that were in the other series including the shorty. Still I found myself confused through the beginning of this book. Right off we are thrown into an OP that is going down and both MC's are worried about the other, but why? Are they seeing each other? Have they started a relationship? Have they hooked up and shared more than just a kiss? I have no idea cause the author just drops you into some action and left out the delicious build up I was wanting the MC's to have so I could get to know them better. It continues this way for awhile. I wanted more character development. I wanted to feel a better connection between the 2 MC's. The book was very much heavy handed with the case they were working and not so much on the romance side. I wouldn't have minded that if I felt like I could connect with the characters better and felt the characters were more connected as well. Don't get me wrong, I really loved Cam and Nic together when they were actually alone together. But they didn't get much alone page time. Most of their time was spent working their case. So I guess I'm just disappointed that I didn't get more from the characters as I had wanted. We get some details of their past but not enough to satisfy me. I hope the next book is more character detailed and that it balances out with the action and the stuff going on around Nic.

Happy reading dolls! xx

ARC given by Netgalley and publisher

Jennifer?Pher? says

Well, I really liked this! I had a pretty good idea that I would but you never know right? There really was only one thing unfortunately that kept this from being a 5★ perfect read for me and made it a 4 ★ almost

perfect read instead, but 4★'s is pretty good, yeah? Yeah.

But before we get to that, I have to say this and get it off my chest; disclaimer of sorts. First and foremost, if you have not read the Agents Irish and Whiskey Series stop and go do that. Do not read further. Turn around and start there. I know this is technically a brand new series but it is truly more than just a spin-off so I do not think you should start here. To me a spin-off tells the story of a secondary character maybe in the same town living his/her life. This is not that. This is so intertwined with the original series they just can't be read separately in my opinion. So much of this will not make sense to you if you have not read the AIW series. Yeah, I know, I have a thing for reading orders but this isn't about that. I've seen some reviews from people who started with this and they just didn't get it. I believe it! There is so much crossover and history it would be a hard read without the backstory. Not to mention, that is where we see the initial kiss with Cam and Nic. So, yeah, don't start here guys! It is just not fair to Cam and Nic.

With that out of the way, let's get down to it and start with the setup. A kiss. The first and only kiss and that did not even happen in this book. That is pretty much it and it is important that you experienced it because this book starts with us thrown right into the action of an ongoing case Cam and Nic are working on. Boom!! Right into the thick of things. This is exciting, don't get me wrong, the story starts with a bang but it also starts with a familiarity and care between Cam and Nic that I feel like I totally missed out on even though I have read everything before this book. I love the get to know each other period. I love the insane chemistry and looks and all that fun stuff that happens when two people are getting together, I feel we were just kind of expected to believe it happened. More than that, I wanted to see the arguing. Sounds like it was fantastic foreplay. But, we didn't get that really. Just the idea of it and that kind of sucked.

So that's it. My only real issue with the book actually, but guys, this didn't ruin the experience for me, not at all. I kind of loved the book anyway. I loved the case and the excitement and the danger. I loved that the gang was all here and accounted for. I even loved Mel, kind of. I know with this being a series there will be more time for us to get into it with Cam and Nic. I expect to learn a lot and see a lot and feel a lot with the upcoming books since this is going to be a series. I get that there will be a build to the HEA we all crave and I can dig that. I just wish this book had built a better foundation for Cam and Nic but I'll be ok with the one it did build and I'm very anxious for the next book.

So yeah, overall this was a fantastic read to me I just feel a tad bit cheated on the get to know you phase of their relationship and I really missed it. Everything else was perfection.

ARC provided by A Novel Take Promotions in exchange for an honest review.

Simone says

*****4.5 Stars*****

Sometimes the past just catches up with you, whether you want it to or not, and some skeletons simply refuse to stay in the closet.

US Attorney Nic Price can tell you a thing or two about it...

As if dealing with a complicated case to bring down a cunning and ruthless heist crew and save his key

witness in the process while fighting a dangerous attraction to a certain Assistant FBI Special Agent in Charge and being up against a devious boss who puts obstacles in his way left, right and center weren't already enough, someone apparently painted a target on his back and a loan shark his estranged father is up to his ears indebted to, sends out his goons in an attempt at intimidation. But all of them reckoned without their host...

... and also without the former kidnap and rescue expert, turned into the newest addition to the FBI field team in San Francisco, Cameron Byrne...

... who has also set his eyes on the hot attorney and who definitely wants a follow-up to the one kiss they shared, determined to protect Nic no matter what. But going undercover to infiltrate said heist crew revives his own ghosts of the past and coming out of this alive, preferably with Nic's witness doing the same, while maintaining his carefully built up new life is suddenly crucial to have a chance at a relationship with Nic and to lay some of the ghosts to rest for good.

Phewwwwwwwwwww *deep sigh of relief*

I have to admit, I was a wee bit worried that this spin-off wouldn't live up to my expectations. I'm a huge fan of the *Agents Irish & Whiskey series* and coming remotely close to Jamie and Aidan would be a tough act to follow as it is. Don't get me wrong, I already loved Cam in this series and saying his somewhat sad and mysterious aura made me curious about his story would be a big understatement. Nic always remained a bit detached and aloof for me, though, so kudos to Ms. Reyne for making me getting more and more attached to him. So much so that I loved him and Cam alike in the end and I didn't even mind the -admittedly small-age-gap of ten years between these two. Lots of UST here, their chemistry is simply scorchin' and the few times they got down and dirty were equally hot.

What the hell is it with me and books that make me sigh so much lately??? LOL. Next sigh of relief goes to the story itself which was quite action-packed and thrilling... Not much technobabble this time and although there are quite a few subplots, not a second did I have problems to follow the storyline. I have to say, though, that I might have been lost if I haven't read the other series first. I would call *Trouble Brewing* not so much a spin-off, but rather a bit of a continuance of the *Agents Irish & Whiskey series*, only with Cam and Nic being the focus, so I would recommend to read this series first to get more background on the whole team. Oh, and just like the other series, this one has a continuing plot, and even if I wouldn't call the ending a cliffhanger in the classical sense, it's still an open end, just in case you wanna know. ;-)

****Thanks to my lovely ladies Karen and Christelle for reading this book with me and for doubling the fun I had with it. October can't come soon enough, girls. Oh, and oops, I might have stolen your pic, Karen, I hope you don't mind. ;-)*

Ky says

"Imperial Stout" is the first book in Layla Reyne's new series, which is a spin off of her well-known *Agents Irish and Whiskey series*. The MCs, Cam and Nic, were first introduced to us there, but this time we get their story and it can be read as a starting point.

This book is clearly the beginning of more to come and you can't miss that after reading it. The ending is leaving a lot of things hanging and throughout the story we are getting teases about the characters' pasts, but never the whole truth about what happened. It became a little frustrating because of all the half thoughts and implications, the darkness that surrounded their pasts was never addressed full on and we're left wanting the facts of what affected them so much and shaped them to be who they are.

It's a story that invites you to suspend your disbelief in order to enjoy it, or at least I had to do so because otherwise I would have ended up constantly researching the things that seemed weird to me and unlikely to happen. For one thing, you couldn't figure out who was the boss, who called the shots and who everyone had to answer to. They were all tangled together and butting heads.

Also, Nic is a prosecutor but he had an active role in the investigation and did field work. In my mind the prosecutor goes in after the investigation, gathers all the facts and evidence and builds a case. His time is in the courtroom, not on the streets chasing suspects and running operations.

You want another example? How about the fact that Cam hadn't picked a lock in twenty years, but he was still able to bust into a top of the art vault? I would have thought that technology would have progressed somewhat in two decades. So, as I said, be prepared to let some things slide and you're in for an exciting ride!

The case they were working was one with constant curve balls thrown in the way and they had to constantly adjust to the new variables. Aidan and Jamie were present here and it was nice to see them once more, but again there was the issue of who was in what position and who was the boss of whom. Danny and Mel also found themselves mixed in the happenings, but I haven't read their book so to me they were just two secondary characters that I'd met in the original series.

The side plot that isn't resolved revolves around Nic's father and his financial status. It seems like there is danger all over the place for Nic so we'll see how that will turn out.

About the romance here, I would have preferred for them to have been more subtle with it especially since there are more books coming so there is time for them to be open once they've been together for a while and not right from the start. My issue here for wanting them to hide is that they work together and, from what I understood, their involvement is against the rules. So, it would have been more sensible to keep their relationship under wraps until they are sure of a future together and then see how they can keep their jobs and be together at the same time.

"Imperial Stout" was a nice start for this new series, with interesting characters, nice action and deep secrets to be revealed.

4 stars

**An ARC of this book was kindly provided to me by the publisher via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. **

haletostilinski says

Cam and Nic's books, the couple I have been waiting for, are here! And the start of their story does NOT disappoint!

I saw that these two had chemistry in the third book, and wondered if we'd get a book for them - luckily we're getting a whole damn series :D

This series starts two weeks after where Blended Whiskey left off. Cam and Nic kiss, but stop there, and haven't kissed since.

But now they're working on a case together, and becomes more complicated than either was bargaining for.

And part of the case forces Cam to face parts of his past, the not so pleasant parts, and hints at a tragedy he might have gone through, while Nic's past literally comes back to haunt him - or well, it's more his estranged father's mess, but it starts to open parts of Nic's past he wants to stay buried.

But this starts their love story, and of course I LOVED it. Their chemistry...UGH their chemistry was off the charts. The UST was ached sooo good, that there were so many moments I wanted them to just go at it, but then also the wait was sooo damn good!

This starts with them working pretty closely together because Aiden and Jamie are on their honeymoon at the start (ashfkasfh I wish we could get a short story of their honeymoon!) but then they come back around halfway through or thereabouts and while we didn't really get much of any couple-y moments with them, just the fact that they're married and happy and in love made me giddy. I have a feeling these two will help Nic and Cam get their butts in gear at some point down the line, because they had to fight through shit for their happy ending too.

But anyway! The story was just so good. The case takes up a big portion of the story, but it was interesting and exciting and you were wondering who they could trust and who they couldn't and who was behind it all and why.

And when Cam has to go undercover, it's like - I knew he would never turn, like at all, but I still ended up worrying anyway, or more, worrying over what Cam would have to do going undercover. But there was some fun things that come out of Cam being undercover for Cam and Nic, so that was fun to read.

Danny and Mel make an appearance as well in this, and its always fun to see them.

Nic's boss, though...that dude is so shady, and a complete asshole. I wonder if he's hiding something and if he's gonna be a big factor in future stories...hmmm. Just know that this guy will piss you off a lot. He even ruins an operation they have by freaking out their informant and it all goes to shit because of him and then he has the GALL to blame Cam and Nic. UGH. He'll be fun to hate, that's for sure.

Also, since this is the start of their love story, it ends on a very tentative, barely there HFN. But so much shit happens that by the time the case is over they've barely started their relationship, so that's why it's so tentative. Also, these two are still hiding things from each other (obviously, as drawn as they are to each

other, they don't quite trust each other enough for all the deep shit yet) and it ends on a "yay they're happy and together and starting something!" but also a "oh shit angst will happen for sureee, better be prepared."

But I'm not too worried because off of Reyne's stories have ended on a happy note, but I actually can't wait to go even further into Cam and Nic's relationship. They're just so interesting and hot and passionate together.

And they're definitely in the little family unit now of Aiden, Jamie, Mel and Danny. They've all become so close and trust each other so implicitly and it's wonderful. Having people like that in your life is a lucky thing to have, and I just love the close relationships they've all come to develop.

Also, the sex...it takes a bit for us to get it but when we do...whoo boy ;) was it hotttt. Needed a fan after.

I just love these two, I love this book and I'm hooked, ready for more of their story. HIGHLY recommend, especially if you loved the Irish and Whiskey series, because this story follows along the lines of that, and it has another couple to love and root for and go "hot damn!" when they get into bed together ;).

Loved this!! So much! Two enthusiastic thumbs up from me :D

ARC generously provided by Netgalley in exchange for an honest review.

Diana says

Imperial Stout (Trouble Brewing #1) is a spinoff of the Irish & Whiskey series by Layla Reyne, where we first meet Nic and Cam. You could tell there was an attraction between the two and I couldn't wait to get their story.

Assistant US Attorney Dominic "Nic" Price and FBI Special Agent Cameron Bryne are working a case together and trying to keep their CI alive. When things don't go as planned, Cam has to put his life on the line. Nic is struggling, not only with his new budding relationship with Cam, but someone is threatening Nic. He know his father is involved, but he needs to find out the details to finally put an end to it.

I loved both Nic and Cam and their very slow burn romance. Their chemistry is off the charts and there are a few pretty hot sex scenes. Plus, you get to see the whole gang again, even Danny. Although I did have one little niggle. Right from the beginning, there is a lot going on, maybe too much. I struggled to figure out who was who and I even thought I skipped a book. It does all work out, and by 15% I settled in and I started to understand more.

Since this does end with a HFN, I am anxious to get my hands on book 2. I think there is so much to learn about both Nic and Cam.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher/NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

