



Strategic Moves

Stuart Woods

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Stone Barrington's been set up to take a big fall...

Stone's undercover dealings with M16 have brought in a big new client. That means a huge bonus and a partnership-until Stone gets wind of an impending scandal that might torpedo his big promotion...and his life.

Strategic Moves Details

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Author : Stuart Woods

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From Reader Review Strategic Moves for online ebook

Jay Connor says

I tend to be judicious about my guilty pleasures. I'll read a Stuart Woods mind-candy thriller, featuring Stone Barrington, but I won't give it more than 3 stars. Kinda like having a slice of cinnamon raisin toast before you kick off a diet. But who knew. This 18th Stone Barrington in the series could very well be the best. That's why ya gotta keep reading even the pulp. Who knew that cinnamon would have such positive health benefits, I just thought it tasted great.

Mandy says

I received this book for free through Goodreads First Reads Giveaway.

After pushing myself to finish this book I can honestly say I did not enjoy it one bit. The book had no real story. Problems ranging from small to impossible were thrown at the main character Stone and some how he always had an answer. And since he is portrayed as an insufferable know it all, then it must make sense he can always find a solution. This may be a book of the imagination but to go from helping a man that is wanted for not paying taxes to having information of Bin Laden to being hunted by the Mossad, it sounds like the ramblings of a terrible dream world. The caption on the back of the book read, "Stone Barrington has been set up to take a big fall....." Now having read through the book I still don't know what he was set up to take blame for. Since he solved everything! Everything except who killed his first "lover" in the book. Um did we forget about that? Or was it solved when Stone suggested who he thought may have done it? Well then, it must be solved. All in all, terrible story and I will not find myself rushing to get any more of these books.

Steve says

April 2017 ditto

3-15 re read like it . Woods books getting shorter and larger print and less words per page.
sad, really. Its like getting 1/2 a book.

7-20-2013 re-read (got an actual book). The money sure does flow in this book of investments and BS.

6-1-2011 book on tape

couldn't find a synopsis by publisher but one reader wrote:

Stone Barrington is hired by a big security service as consular and ends up on a CIA mission to extract an Arms dealer from Spain. Things go ok till they are over the US heading for a landing in upper NY. The Dealer escapes and later contacts Stone, requesting his acting as his lawyer in dealing with the CIA. Mean while Stone is having to deal with is client Herbie Fisher who has gotten married to the daughter of a financier who is under investigation for misappropriation of clients money

Me: lots of people are getting lots of money and lots of legal representation. Good pace in the book. More great escape reading.

Raina says

Too much ice yesterday so I picked up the latest from Stuart Woods. "Strategic Moves" was the best strategic move I've made in a while. I knew I was grabbed from the first chapter. It has the perfect amount of intrigue and gripping plot development and I didn't see many of the bomb shells coming until they hit. I started reading just after breakfast and finished just in time for dinner. My only complaint is that I have a hard time with Stone Barrington; what with a new woman for every adventure; Knob Creek at the cocktail hour and Elaine's for dinner most every night of the week, this was an enjoyable and fun read, but to make matters worse Stone starts this adventure with a new jet airplane and a million bucks bonus from his "Of Counsel" law firm!! It's a bit far-fetched, but he's a likeable enough character that it's hard to hold it all against him. The action picks up after a slow start when Stone takes a trip to Iraq with a new client to pick up a bad guy for Lance Cabot, of CIA renown. Mr. Woods is lucky I can suspend reality and go with the flow because the bad guy escapes a flying C-17 Cargo jet in a 550 Mercedes and then parachutes to safety while the Mercedes goes on to land in a swimming pool in Newburgh, NY. However, the bad guy is really the good guy (sort of) and Lance Cabot a Benedict Arnold (big surprise) who Stone easily thwarts with every sneaky gambit the CIA agent tries to pull off. I won't give away the rest of the story other than to say the action is akin to Mr. Woods earlier works despite the fact that Dino is still window dressing who is too busy with a double homicide to get involved except for dinner at Elaine's late.

Megan Hillard says

This was so. freaking. STUPID.

I want to saw my skull in half and scrub my brain clean of this horrid book.

I have never seen so! much! splooging! over a character as I did our protagonist, Igneous Stone Barrington. Igneous is the speshalist snowflake of all the men in NYC. He's constantly getting multi-million dollar "upgrades" for the minimal amount of work. He has tons of houses given to him, and his main residence is a place with a chef and a dumb! freaking! waiter that leads to his room. He's notoriously good in bed, and is never without a woman by his side (usually in her mid-thirties; I assume he's much older).

No, really.

Ole Igneous is seeing someone at the start of the book, a beautiful (that's a trend; women were not allowed to be plain in Woods' world lol) woman in her mid-thirties. He takes her to a nice getaway in Connecticut, and - surprise - they sleep together. That woman? Yeah, she's murdered. Does Igneous care? Nah. Does Igneous mourn for this woman? Nope! In fact, Igneous takes a different woman (this one's "drop dead gorgeous") to the same getaway not even a few weeks later, and they get it on.

That's so, so skeevy. My stomach's roiling.

Literally, I've never rolled my eyes so hard while reading a book. Y'all remember the, I dunno, MURDERED WOMAN mentioned above? The one that Igneous slept with but was too Stronk and Masculine to grieve for when she died?? Yeah, that was totally set up to be the mystery. That, or maybe the hostage situation, or the multi-million dollar theft from a big company. All of these elements are introduced in the first couple chapters (-ish, the murder was a little further in) and at that point, I was willing to ignore

Igneous' Gary Stu-ness in order to enjoy a good whodunit.

Suddenly, we were on a plane to Iraq to pick up an arms dealer?? Suddenly the arms dealer became the focus of the plot?? Suddenly it was all about Pablo Epicasso and his tentative relationship with the FBI and CIA and American government and Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden and protecting Pablo Epicasso?

To which I offer: what the frick?

I DON'T CARE about Pablo Epicasso. If I had wanted a political thriller about arms dealers and the Middle East, I would have, I don't know, looked for one? I wanted what the blurb promised: a juicy story about a scandal and maybe a murder.

It was stupid. It was so, so stupid. The theft of the money was revealed (not found out - revealed) on the last page, after 100 pages of chase scenes and negotiations over Pablo stupid Epicasso. As far as the murderer of the aforementioned woman? I don't know who killed her. Igneous doesn't know who killed her. I mean, who cares, right, Igneous? You've got someone else in your bed now, right? I DO. I care. I also care that there was NO RESOLUTION TO THE FRIKKIN PLOT.

Also, Igneous wasn't even a good protagonist. He was perfect at everything, and did nothing proactive. He just made a looooooot of phone calls and had powerful friends who would keep him in the loop. Remember "drop-dead gorgeous" up there? Yeah, her only! purpose! in this story was to fulfill some sort of fantasy or something. There was this one chapter where he was getting phone calls and the poor wittle baby was getting stressed so she slept with him between calls to keep him distracted. This is while actual things are happening, and stupid Igneous is hearing about them second-hand because he can't pull himself out of bed!!

Sooo it did hold my interest? I guess that's a compliment? At the beginning it was genuine interest, by the end it was more how-bad-can-this-get. Yeah, that's it. That's all I got.

The reason why books like STRATEGIC MOVES are popular is a much better mystery than anything in this misogynistic piece of garbage.

Robin Thomsen says

His Stone Barrington novels are always a Fast, fun read

Min says

About halfway into this book, Stone Barrington (an attorney) signs a new client who is hired by the CIA (who is also a client of Stone's) to extract (read: kidnap) a person from Europe so the CIA can "interrogate" him for information. (What happens until this point in the book? Honest to God, I have no idea what the point of the first half of the book was. Except that Stone slept with a woman who died, and then he didn't really seem to care. And the new client gets suspected on "losing" millions of dollars. But then it gets found. Whew.")

The person the client extracts pulls a D.B. Cooper out of the airplane (except he uses a Mercedes). Then

Stone has more sex with another woman.

The extracted person then hires Stone because he has sensitive information that he knows the CIA will want. It's information the U.S. has wanted since September 11th.

At this point, the book got so ludicrous, I would have thrown it across the room had it not been a library book.

Christopher Bunn says

I picked up this book last week when I visited the library. The blurb looked interesting enough for some light popcorn reading. Plus, I was lulled by the fact that Woods has written so many books in the series. New York Times bestseller, award-winning, blah blah blah. Boy oh boy was I ever wrong.

This is a terribly written book. The dialogue is so wooden that it feels like the author wrote this thing by taking a 2x4 and beating his computer to death with it. I'm not exaggerating. He probably took a sheet of 1/2 plywood, set it on top of his Macbook Pro, and then jumped up and down on it until the computer surrendered.

I just lost two hours of my life. I could've spent that two hours taking a nap or baking a cake or even just staring at the wall. Any of those choices would've been more productive.

The characters in this book are as one-dimensional and flatter than a pancake made without any rising agent (such as baking powder or baking soda, though, if you're going to use baking soda, you probably need to add a touch of lemon juice too--I don't know why, but it usually works). At least you can eat the pancake, flat or not. You can't eat this book, unless you have some weird paper deficiency going on.

In fact, you know that Flat Earth Society? The characters in this book are too flat for them. That kid in 7th grade band class who played the clarinet and was always flat? You got it; these characters would make him seem like Yo Yo Ma. Yeah, yeah. I know Yo Yo Ma doesn't play the clarinet. He plays the cello, but the metaphor still kind of works. So sue me if you don't think it works.

Seriously, the characters randomly drift through the plot like automatons. Need to have some sex? Let's introduce the hot young widowed aunt. Need to inject some mystery? Let's randomly kill off the aunt, but don't have the hero react in any way to the fact that his new bedmate is now dead. Let's fly to Spain now and pick up a mysterious arms-dealer. Oh, the arms-dealer has just jumped out of the plane by backing up his Mercedez through the cargo door? Oh, yawn. Nobody reacts.

I mean, Jar-Jar Binks suddenly appearing in this book would've been a drastic improvement, and I hated Jar-Jar Binks. 60 seconds of him onscreen in that stupid movie Lucas inflicted on the world and I wanted to drive a tank over that rubbery nitwit and then run it back and forth until the treads ground him into organic compost. What was Lucas thinking? Was he thinking? Is Lucas even alive, or is that just some kind of Lucas-looking robot built by the geeks at Lucas Arts?

I can't even articulate what the plot really is, despite reading the book. I think my brain refused to process it. Stuff happens. Stone Barrington has meals at restaurants, gets handed big checks, flies his plane, drinks expensive wines, has random dialogue with CIA agents, sleeps with the hot widowed young aunt, beats

himself over the head with a 2x4 (oh, wait, that doesn't happen, but I wish it would have)...

Diane says

Good series! enjoyable but predictable storyline with a few old/past supporting characters involve in this series (paperback!)

Larry says

Started yesterday - finished today. A perfect dose of Stone Barrington - light, airy, mostly preposterous but we all know the characters so well as they intertwine. The story moves, with great familiarity, along on the rapid fire dialog. I do wonder if it would work as well without assuming the vast background on the part of the reader. Now, if I did an analysis of number of letters "within quotes" as spoken by characters versus anything else would that ratio possibly be any lower than 2/3's if not even higher?

But, this is the kind of read that "Half Price Books" (Austin, TX founded I do believe) is totally made for. Less than the cost of a movie, with all the enjoyment in slightly more time - satisfying in the way a trifle is - tasty, a bit rum soaked (or in this case Knobb Creek), and a nice finish; leaving you not overly full and perhaps wanting a bit more but with a serene smile on your face.

Either you appreciate these characters or not - if you do life is predictable, lucky and "Elaine's late" perfect.

Samantha says

As I told a friend, I think that Stuart Woods had three or four manuscripts laying around, all going absolutely nowhere, and someone turned on a ceiling fan. The resulting stack of mixed up plot lines is Strategic Moves. There is too much going on and none of it is going anywhere. Herbie Fisher, one of Stone's less than stellar and constantly bumbling clients, marries into millions. Not long after the "I do's" the wife's father is accused of embezzlement, one of the company employees takes a hostage and accidentally shoots him, the son is "on vacation" but not really, and so on. Stone is on the cusp of being offered a partnership in Woodman & Welds, at least until a car falls into a client's swimming pool from an airplane that Stone happens to be aboard. Top this off with CIA director Lance Cabot's entwinement in Stone's activities...apparently Lance has taken to stalking Stone this time since he always knows where he is. Oh, and don't forget the gentleman the government kidnaps who calls Stone to represent him, promising that he knows the location of Osama bin Laden. See? Makes no sense right? If you want to be even more confused, you can read the book!

Grey853 says

I don't know why I keep reading these books because I really don't like Stone Barrington much. I'm sure he's a great lawyer, but he's a lousy person. He's always been a slut, but in the past when his lady friends get murdered he usually shows a little bit of emotion. In this one he's dating a woman, takes her off for a romantic weekend, then she's murdered, and he acts like it's nothing. At the crime scene he and his pals

decide it's time for a meal. Seriously? His name should be Stone-hearted.

Then midway through the book, it switches from a high finance swindle story to a tale of espionage, which I didn't like, either, because anything to do with that kind of crap usually bores me, which it did.

While it did have a lot of action and Stuart Woods can write very good dialogue, the book really turned me off because of Stone's lack of emotion and character. When I read a book, that's my main focus, who's in the book and what's happening to that person or the people. In this one, Stone could've easily been a cut out doll, flat and two-dimensional, devoid of feeling and/or interest. He's more a cartoon action figure.

It's a shame, too, because Woods can write, but I really dislike the direction of the books. I think part of the problem for me is I keep expecting Stone to show some feeling other than being horny and I don't get that.

Amy says

This is my first Stuart Woods book and I thought it was just okay. I'm not even sure what genre it is supposed to be--there was no real mystery in it (there was a murder but it was never solved) and it didn't have enough action or intrigue to be a thriller or suspense novel. I actually liked Stone Barrington but felt that the whole book was just him reacting to and controlling situations (which generally meant directing those around him on what to do). But none of the situations really affected him. I kept waiting for him Stone to get in trouble but he didn't really. His reputation was good enough that his clients and friends, as well as the CIA and other law-enforcement people, automatically vouched for and believed Stone's word on anything. He was never stranded, injured, or otherwise inconvenienced. He slept with a girl on their 2nd date, she was shortly thereafter murdered, but the murder was never solved and that didn't seem to matter. (Granted, he had only known her for a week or two when she was killed.) So, overall, the events with Pablo and the CIA were interesting but not gripping. I felt like Woods could have made that plot line and/or the financial fiasco with Gunn into something more intriguing than they were. I think Woods is a good writer but his plot was lacking and my TBR pile is too big to add more of these.

Jim Wessely says

This is the first Woods book which I have listened to via Audible and will probably not read, but listen to all of his books from now on-MOST ENTERTAINING.

Teri says

Unfortunately, 2 stars

I have read several of the Stone Barrington novels, the books at the beginning of the series are significantly more enjoyable in my opinion. I have skipped quite a few in the middle there, but decided to pick the series back up because even though I have always found the dialogue to be a bit odd, I have also always enjoyed the plots.

There was too much going on in this one. And not only too much going on, but there also wasn't any real

depth to the characters or the situations and that made the fact that so much was going on just...not enjoyable. It would have been better to focus on one aspect, I believe and have some *genuine* dialogue and character interactions.

Stone has gotten...vapid or something. I wasn't pleased with his handling of these *women*. I had no affection for any of the characters really. I did enjoy those moments when Stone would cleverly outplay someone but it wasn't enough to carry the story. If he's going to be involved with a woman who isn't just a one-dimensional prop then we need **something** from her or something substantial from him otherwise, why bother?

The situation with Herbie, if better played would have been worth reading as he was probably the most likable character.

The stuff with Mossad at the end? Bizarre.

I doubt I will continue on with the series, but I would recommend for readers to try the novels at the beginning of the series.
