



Fast Women: A Novel

By Jennifer Crusie

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When a down-on-her-luck divorcée meets a determined-to-dominate detective, they find out that falling in love can be murder. . . .

Nell Dysart's in trouble. Weighed down by an inexplicable divorce and a loss of appetite for everything, Nell is sleepwalking through life until her best friend finagles a job for her with a shabby little detective agency that has lots of potential and a boss who looks easy to manage.

Gabe McKenna isn't doing too well, either. His detective agency is wasting time on a blackmail case, his partner has decided he hates watching cheating spouses for money, and his ex-wife has just dumped him . . . again. The only thing that's going his way is that his new secretary looks efficient, boring, and biddable.

But looks can be deceiving, and soon Nell and Gabe are squaring off over embezzlement, business cards, vandalism, dognapping, blackmail, Chinese food, unprofessional sex, and really ugly office furniture, all of which turn out to be the least of their problems. Because soon, there are murders. And shortly after that, Nell and Gabe start falling in love. . . .

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Fast Women: A Novel By Jennifer Crusie Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #102195 in eBooks
- Published on: 2011-03-29
- Released on: 2011-03-29
- Format: Kindle eBook

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Emotionally numb from her divorce 18 months earlier, Nell Dysart is about to waken with a vengeance. When she takes a job as office manager for McKenna Investigations, she's determined to reorganize, redecorate, and revamp the stuck-in-the-'50s surroundings, but she runs smack-dab into senior partner Gabe McKenna, the immovable object to her irresistible force. Gabe likes the dated ambiance just fine and doesn't want a thing changed, but he soon learns that nothing in his life is going to stay the same now that Nell has arrived.

Rough and gruff, but with a heart of gold, Gabe is just what Nell needs to jump-start her hormones. Nell's formerly dull life is suddenly wildly active, for not only is she lusting after Gabe (and vice versa), but there's also a case of embezzlement to uncover, a dog to steal, and bribery to investigate. And, oh yes, there are those very cold, very dead bodies in the freezer.

Fast Women has well-rounded characters, an interesting mystery to resolve, and author Jennifer Crusie's trademark humor. In addition, Crusie gives readers a little something extra in her exploration of the emotional stages of divorce, the viability of marriage, and the value of self-honesty--all of which add up to an excellent fictional tale layered with a thought-provoking look at contemporary culture. --*Lois Faye Dyer*

From Publishers Weekly

A detective agency may be a sure setting for mystery and adventure, but in Crusie's latest (after *Welcome to Temptation*; *Crazy for You*; *Tell Me Lies*), a likable cast of characters also find sex, love and empowerment. At 42, recently divorced Nell Dysart starts a new life by becoming a secretary for Gabe McKenna, a gruff private investigator ... la Sam Spade; McKenna runs an old-fashioned family business in German Village, Ohio, with his cousin and partner, Riley. The new job provides distraction for Nell, and with the support of her china-collecting former sisters-in-law, Suze and Margie; her son, Jase; and a stolen dachshund named Marlene, she gets back on her feet. Gabe is less than thrilled with Nell's sassiness, and they clash over her attempts to clean and redecorate his office. But where there is friction, there are also sparks, and as bull-headed as Gabe and Nell are, they finally acknowledge their mutual attraction. To make things more complicated, Gabe's biggest client is the Dysart clan, Nell's former in-laws, and the history between them becomes confused with present investigations of embezzlement and bribery when Nell discovers the title to a Porsche and a bag of diamonds in her boss's office. After more than one character is found stuffed in a freezer, Gabe, Riley, Nell and Suze set out to solve a 20-year-old murder case. Crusie's snappy dialogue and skillful plotting more than make up for some uneven pacing and one-dimensional villains. The novel's provocative title says too little about this entertaining romantic caper, which will satisfy fans and new readers alike. Agent, Meg Ruley. Author tour.

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From Library Journal

Continuing a successful switch from series romance to contemporary hardcover fiction, this latest effort by the author of *Welcome to Temptation* is sheer reading enjoyment. At 42, Nell Dysart is divorced and job hunting. Landing a temporary position as the office manager for McKenna Investigations is the best she can do while she figures out how to put her life back together. The McKenna office is a shambles, and Nell's boss, Gabe McKenna, seems unpleasant, disorganized, and very rigid. Nell knows she has the organization

skills and business know-how to turn the place around, yet the major stumbling block is that Gabe likes things pretty much the way they are. Crusie's two main characters, as well as a host of secondary characters, convincingly guide the slightly complicated plot, which involves a long-ago murder and family cover-up, to a satisfying conclusion. The real plot, of course, is the growing attraction between Gabe and Nell. Crusie is hopelessly romantic and hilariously funny. Highly recommended for all public libraries with romance or fiction readers.

- *Margaret Hanes, Sterling Heights P.L., MI*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Tonya Hooper:

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Mark Nixon:

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Wilma Hogan:

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Karen Huff:

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