



Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1)

By C.E. Murphy

Download now

Read Online ➔

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy

Okay, so jogging through Central Park after midnight wasn't a bright idea. But Margrit Knight never thought she'd encounter a dark new world filled with magical beings—not to mention a dying woman and a mysterious stranger with blood on his hands. Her logical, lawyer instincts told her it couldn't all be real—but she could hardly deny what she'd seen...and touched.

The mystery man, Alban, was a gargoyle. One of the fabled Old Races who had hidden their existence for centuries. Now he was a murder suspect, and he needed Margrit's help to take the heat off him and find the real killer. And as the dead pile up, it's a race against the sunrise to clear Alban's name and keep them both alive....

↓ [Download Heart of Stone \(Negotiator Book 1\) ...pdf](#)

📖 [Read Online Heart of Stone \(Negotiator Book 1\) ...pdf](#)

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1)

By C.E. Murphy

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy

Okay, so jogging through Central Park after midnight wasn't a bright idea. But Margrit Knight never thought she'd encounter a dark new world filled with magical beings—not to mention a dying woman and a mysterious stranger with blood on his hands. Her logical, lawyer instincts told her it couldn't all be real—but she could hardly deny what she'd seen...and touched.

The mystery man, Alban, was a gargoyle. One of the fabled Old Races who had hidden their existence for centuries. Now he was a murder suspect, and he needed Margrit's help to take the heat off him and find the real killer. And as the dead pile up, it's a race against the sunrise to clear Alban's name and keep them both alive....

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #229705 in eBooks
- Published on: 2010-03-24
- Released on: 2010-04-01
- Format: Kindle eBook

 [Download Heart of Stone \(Negotiator Book 1\) ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Heart of Stone \(Negotiator Book 1\) ...pdf](#)

Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In Murphy's exciting series opener, Alban Korund, a winged, shape-shifting gargoyle, is framed as a murderer. He begs legal help from Margrit Knight, a human lawyer who at first thinks he's your average Central Park stalker. Margrit soon becomes attracted to her stony client and fascinated by the shadowy world of the Old Races, who live secretly among humans. As she struggles to prove Alban's innocence, Margrit herself battles a dangerous dragonlord, other gargoyles and a powerful vampire, as well as taking on the case of a selkie mother and baby living in a building destined for demolition. Margrit must also decide what to do about her jealous on-again/off-again boyfriend, Tony, a homicide detective who dislikes Alban and thinks he's guilty. Realist, feminist Margrit makes for a deeply compelling heroine as she struggles to sort out the sudden upheaval in her professional and romantic lives. Murphy (*Coyote Dreams*) has created a refreshing addition to the urban fantasy landscape. (Nov.)

Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

About the Author

C.E. Murphy is the author of more than twenty books—along with a number of novellas and comics. Born in Alaska, currently living in Ireland, she does miss central heating, insulation and—sometimes--snow but through the wonders of the internet, her imagination and her close knit family, she's never bored or lonely. While she does travel through time (sadly only forward, one second at a time) she can also be found online at www.cemurphy.net or @ce_murphy on Twitter

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

She ran, long strides that ate the pavement despite her diminutive height. Her hair, full of corkscrew curls, was pulled back from her face, bunches jouncing as her feet impacted the asphalt surface. The words feminine and female, less interchangeable than they might seem, both described her well. Feminine, as he understood it, suggested a sort of delicacy, though not without strength. Female encompassed power as blunt and raw as sex. Watching her, neither descriptor would suffice without the other.

Lithe and athletic, she ran nearly every night, usually not long after sundown. Tonight she was late; midnight was barely an hour off, closer by far than the late-January sunset. He watched from his arboreal refuge, hunched high above the concrete paths, protective and possessive of the slender woman taking her exercise in a dangerous city.

There were safer places to run, safer times; he thought she must know that. The park was notorious for nighttime crime, but she threw away caution for something greater. For defiance against an ordered world, and perhaps for the thrill of knowing the danger she put herself in. There was confidence in her action, too; her size very likely precluded fighting off attackers, but the muscles that powered her run would help her outpace any enemy that might approach. It was a gambit, and he liked her for it. It reminded him of other women he'd known, sometimes braver than wise, always willing to risk themselves for others. Such demonstrations made him remember there was life outside the confines he'd created for himself.

So he watched from high in the treetops, protecting her whether she knew it or not. Choosing to make her safe despite the independent streak that sent her running after dark, without taking away her illusion of bold solitude. She would never see him, he reasoned. Her people were predators, and they'd come from the trees. In the primitive part of the mind that spoke of caution, they were the danger that came from above.

Humans never looked up.

He shook himself as she took a corner, careening out of sight. Then he leaped gracefully over the treetops, following.

Air burned in her lungs, every breath of cold searing deep and threatening to make her cough with its dryness. Each footfall on the asphalt was the jolt of a syllable through her body: Ir. Ir. Ir. Ra. Shun. Al. There were slick patches on the trail, thin sheets of black ice that didn't reflect until she was on them. She slid ten inches, keeping her center as if she wore ice skates, stomach tightening to make her core solid. Keeping control in an out-of-control moment. The action stung her body as vividly as a man's touch might, heat sweeping through her without regard for sense or sensibility. Then the ice was gone and she was running again.

Eyes up, watching the trail and the woods. The air was brisk and as clear as it ever got in New York. Pathways were lit by lamps that buzzed and flickered at whim. Patches of dark were to be wary of, making her heart beat faster with excitement. No headset. Taking risks was one thing. Outright stupidity was another, and even she knew she ran a thin line between the two already. Her own labored breathing and the pounding of her footsteps were enough to drown out more nearby noise than was safe. That was part of it, too, part of the irresistible draw of the park. She was not safe. Nothing she did would ever make her wholly safe.

It was almost like being able to fly. "Irrational," Margrit whispered under her breath. The word seemed to give her feet wings like Hermes, sending her down the path with a new surge of speed. Feet jolting against the ground made echoes in her hips and breasts, every impact stinging her feet and reminding her of sex and laughter and the things that made life worth living.

Risking everything made it worth living. Friends, only half joking, wondered if she was suicidal, never quite understanding the adventure that drew Margrit to the park at night.

The Central Park rapist had confessed when she was in her first year of law school and still wondering if she should have chosen to follow in her parents' footsteps—either her mother's MBA or her father's medical degree—but the headlines that morning had solidified her belief in her own decision. Even now, seven years later, she knew her parents wished she'd chosen one of their professions, or at least a more profitable arm of law than the one she pursued, but thinking back to that day always rebuilt her confidence. Buoyed by the memory, she stretched her legs further and reached again for the feeling of freedom running in the park gave her.

Minutes later, she skidded to a halt under a light and leaned a hip against a battered bench, putting her hands on her knees. Her ponytail flipped upside down, nearly brushing the ground as she heaved in air. Thirty seconds and she would start running again. Twenty-nine. Twenty-eight.

"Good evening."

Margrit spasmed upward, whipping around to face the speaker. A man with pale hair and lifted eyebrows stood in the puddle of lamplight, several feet away. He was wearing a suit, and had his hands tucked in the pockets of the slacks.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I didn't mean to frighten you."

"Jesus Christ." She backed away a step or two, putting even more distance between herself and the man. Caution knotted her stomach, sending chills of adrenaline through her. "Get the hell away from me." Every muscle in her body was bunched, ready to sprint, but her heart pounded harder with the thrill of the

encounter than with the impulse to run. She wore running shoes, as opposed to his smooth-soled leather slippers, and had a head start. Caution hadn't flared into panic or even true fear yet; her confidence in her own abilities was greater than the evident danger.

That degree of cockiness was going to get her killed someday.

Not today, Margrit whispered to herself, and aloud warned, "I have a gun."

His eyebrows rose higher. "I don't." He took his hands out of his pockets and lifted them slowly, so she could see more of his torso. His shirt was lilac in the lamplight, almost glowing against the jacket lining. There was no gun in evidence. "I was just out for a walk." He made a small, careful gesture to one side. "I didn't mean to startle you."

"Yeah, well, you freaking well did." Margrit edged back another step or two, balancing her weight on her toes. "This is Central Park, asshole. You don't start up conversations with people here. Especially in the middle of the night."

He spread his fingers. "Do you normally carry on conversations with people in Central Park in the middle of the night?"

"No." The excitement of the moment was passing, and so was the high from running. The sense of fun, if that was the right word for the encounter, faded with it. Margrit took one more step back. "I'm going now. Don't follow me." He had at least ten inches of height on her, but she had faith in her own speed. Faith warred with confidence, and both lost out to an unspoken admission of arrogance that almost brought an undermining smile to Margrit's lips.

"I won't, but—may I ask you one question?"

"You just did." Margrit curled her lip in irritation. She hated that particular piece of tomfoolery and resented it coming out of her own mouth. "What?"

"Where are you hiding your gun?" The man looked her up and down, more critically than lasciviously. Margrit glanced down at herself.

Tennies. Socks. Running tights with hot pink stripes that picked up the blue in the streetlamp and radiated neon purple. A snug white-and-green sweatshirt that covered her midriff only if she didn't move; otherwise, her belly flashed between hems.

There wasn't really anywhere for a gun.

Margrit looked up again. "None of your goddamn business." Her breath puffed in the cool air, reminding her that she was dressed for the late January weather only if she was running to keep herself warm. She bounced on her toes, muscle tightening in her calves. "Don't follow me," she warned again.

"I wouldn't dream of it," he murmured.

Margrit raced down the path, putting a dozen yards between herself and the man in a few seconds. When she looked back a moment later, he was gone.

"You're going to get yourself killed, Margrit." Margrit leaned against the open door, doubled over to pull at her laces. Her breath still came in little puffs, and she counted out syllables with each one. Ir. Ra. Shun. Al. The encounter in the park had her repeating the word more often than usual. Irrationally safe. Irrationally

foolish. Irrationally defensive.

"Hello, nice to see you, too, my day was fine, thanks, how about yours? What are you doing up this late, anyway? Where's Cam?" Margrit closed the door and locked it, leaning against the knob with both hands behind her. Her roommate stood down the hall, filling the kitchen door frame. "Cole, I'm fine, really." She straightened and came down the corridor, brushing past him. His sweater, thick cable knit, touched her arm as she did so, and she added, "Nice sweater," in hopes of distracting him, before she breathed, "I'm fine," a final time.

"She went to bed already. Five a.m. client. Thank you," he added automatically. "Irish wool. Cam gave it to me for Christmas."

Margrit shuddered. "Five a.m. Better her than me. Oh yeah, I remember. I said I was going to borrow it and she threatened to tie my legs in a knot. It's a nice sweater. She has good taste."

"Of course she does. She's dating me." Cole offered a brief smile that fell away again as he visibly realized Margrit had succeeded in distracting him. "You're fine this time, Grit. I'm afraid you're going to get hurt." He scowled across the kitchen, more in concern than anger. "You shouldn't run after dark."

"I know, but I didn't get out of work until late."

"You never do."

"Cole, what are you, my housemate or my big brother?"

"I'm your friend, and I worry about you when you go out running in Central Park in the middle of the night. You're going to get yourself killed."

"Maybe, but not tonight." The words lifted hairs on her arms, a reminder that she'd thought something similar facing the pale-haired man in the park. She sh...

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Allen Brown:

Have you spare time for just a day? What do you do when you have much more or little spare time? That's why, you can choose the suitable activity for spend your time. Any person spent their spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open or read a book allowed Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1)? Maybe it is to be best activity for you. You know beside you can spend your time with your favorite's book, you can smarter than before. Do you agree with their opinion or you have some other opinion?

James Rouse:

The book Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) can give more knowledge and information about everything you want. Exactly why must we leave a good thing like a book Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1)? A number of you have a different opinion about book. But one aim that will book can give many details for us. It is absolutely right. Right now, try to closer with the book. Knowledge or info that you take for that, you

could give for each other; you are able to share all of these. Book Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) has simple shape however you know: it has great and massive function for you. You can appear the enormous world by wide open and read a publication. So it is very wonderful.

Rick Fairchild:

This book untitled Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) to be one of several books which best seller in this year, here is because when you read this reserve you can get a lot of benefit into it. You will easily to buy this specific book in the book retailer or you can order it via online. The publisher on this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, as you can read this book in your Smart phone. So there is no reason for your requirements to past this guide from your list.

Jami Hannah:

Spent a free time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their sparetime with their family, or their friends. Usually they doing activity like watching television, planning to beach, or picnic inside the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book might be option to fill your free time/ holiday. The first thing that you'll ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to test look for book, may be the reserve untitled Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) can be great book to read. May be it might be best activity to you.

Download and Read Online Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy #IPMTO4LH5KS

Read Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy for online ebook

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy books to read online.

Online Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy ebook PDF download

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy Doc

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy Mobipocket

Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy EPub

IPMTO4LH5KS: Heart of Stone (Negotiator Book 1) By C.E. Murphy