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The Big Bounce



Book Information

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 3.0 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (41 customer reviews)

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Authors, A-Z > (L) > Leonard, Elmore #20206 inÂ Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense >

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Customer Reviews

Leonard's "new" book was actually written in the mid-1960s, I suspect. Whether it's a novel long out of print or simply an unpublished work, "The Big Bounce" is more for Leonard completists than newcomers. Hard-luck protagonist Jack Ryan loses his job at a migrant camp in Michigan after assaulting his crew leader. Resort owner Walter Majestyk hires Jack, despite the fact that his old boss, Bob Jr., told him to leave town. Bob Jr. and migrant camp owner Ray Ritchie are seeing Nancy on the side, unbeknownst to each other. Once Nancy learns that Jack's past consists of a life of crime, she seduces him into a plot to steal \$50,000 from Ray. Those who found Leonard's last few books to be a bit tepid might also be disappointed in "The Big Bounce." Aside from being a dated piece of work, the novel falls more comfortably into a romance fantasy than traditional Leonard crime. Still, the impeccable characterisation and the way the plot pits characters against each other is indicative of Leonard's earlier works. Those looking for another "Ryan's Rules" or "Get Shorty" won't find as much bite here. If anything, "The Big Bounce" serves best as a means to chronicle Leonard's progression than fulfilling the need for an all-new Leonard novel (no more sequels, please).

This novel is not a mystery, rather an all-to-true to life expose of the kind of characters that we read about in newspapers (or know in real life) that live on the fringes. I couldn't help but see Hillary Swank as Nancy and George Clooney as Ryan (if I am not mistaken Jack Ryan reappears in Out Of Sight) the same role he did play in the movie. I love Leonard and think he is a must for any serious lover of crime fiction (not just "mystery novels") read him all the way through and you will have fully explored unknown territory though the American psyche....If Out Of Sight is a 5, then The Big

Bounce is a 4. I'd give Swag 4.5, Be Cool a 4.5, Get Shorty a 5, and Cuba Libre only a 3. If you like Leonard go to Jim Thompson next, or vice versa, or Andrew Vacchs, but also I would say Cormac McCarthy (the writer that most resembles Leonard in my opinion) or even Russell Banks, Raymond Chandler or Richard Russo.

The big bounce threw me until I realize it was in the tradition of the noir such as I married a Dead Man, The Postman always rings twice, The Killer inside of me and Pick-up. It wasn't going to follow the more modern concrete line but a more abstract plot. If classic noir isn't your strong point you might be totally lost if you expect a version of Mr. Paradise, Rum Punch or others of his work. The characters are strong, the plot is noir which might seem pointless or weak to those expecting a 'traditional' mystery. [Agatha Christie is over to the left thank you.] The play between the thrill seeker in life and those who just coast a long is strong. It is surprising who wins in the end or do they? If you are looking for a nice tight sewed up ending where the bad guys are carted off to jail and everything is sewn up neatly in a cute little package.. Aggie, the Cat who, and Sandford is off to the left thank you. If you want a bit of intellectual exercise or just plain miss the old noir of the 30s to the 50s come on down. It is a real rare bird these days.

Leonard's style is to create strong, engaging characters and "see what happens." This story has neither interesting characters, nor does very much happen. Leonard is also famous for looking into the lives of petty crooks - but these are among the pettiest. A couple of selfish and self-indulgent losers get their kicks throwing rocks through the windows of homes. The readers are invited to giggle with glee at the stupid fools who live within, and stumble into the night to see what has happened. I tossed this book after reading the first half - a first for me. I have read every Elmore Leonard I could get my hands on. But this one, I couldn't wait get rid of. Skip this book.

This was my first Elmore Leonard novel. I like Leonard's style and the way he writes dialogue. But the plot in this book felt kind of boring. I wouldn't call it a love story or a story about a heist. To me it's just a gathering of colorful and complex characters with no actual plot. Jack is a career crook and Nancy is a total cooc. There's not enough you get from Mr. Majestyk and the minor characters are interested to, but for the story just didn't really go anywhere. I guess this book is fun to have in your collection if you're a fan, but probably not the one to start with.

This book, the first of Leonard's Jack Ryan books, was a totally different style from those I had read

by him before. It focused on the character of Jack Ryan, an ex baseball player and petty thief, who gets a job working at a lakeside resort. He gets into a relationship with the mistress of a married businessman and joins her in pranks that include breaking windows and breaking into houses. Eventually the story builds to her shooting another man while Ryan seemingly helps her to cover up the event. The book ends abruptly as the police are closing in at the end. I enjoyed the storytelling style of this book. I was a bit surprised by where he chose to end the story. It seemed like a bit more of a resolution was called for.

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