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The Big Bounce



Book Information

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 3.4 out of 5 stars 46 customer reviews

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Customer Reviews

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 the start with.

The Big Bounce was an early (1969) crime novel for which Elmore Leonard had trouble finding a publisher. It isn't Leonard's best novel, but it is still an entertaining book that would make a great read for the beach or a lazy Sunday afternoon. The plot concerns an ex-baseball player named Jack Ryan who ends up working at a resort in Michigan's "thumb" region. Ryan meets a femme fatale named Nancy who is an excitement addict - she gets a "bounce" each time she breaks a rule. Of course, Nancy is a beauty - readers learn that she was once voted "Miss Perky Pickle" - haha. When Jack meets her, Nancy is the kept woman of a wealthy man from whom she plans to steal \$50,000 cash - with Jack's help. Though the novel is an early effort from Leonard, it has his typical strengths. There are several vivid characters to keep the reader interested. Also, Leonard makes the setting come alive. Finally, there is enough action to keep the book from bogging down - I found that the 300+ pages turned easily. While I like the Big Bounce, there are some negatives. Readers may feel disappointed in the way that Leonard ends the novel. He seems to have everything set up for a great conclusion, but the ending is mediocre - at best. Also, Nancy is extremely unlikeable. In later novels, Leonard greatly improved the depth and realism of his female characters. I am

surprised by the negative reviews on .com. The Big Bounce is not perfect, but it is a solid, readable crime novel. Leonard's fan should read it.

Elmore Leonard's writing sets the Gold Standard for noir fiction. He treats words like fine-cut jewels and never wastes a single one on unnecessary ornamentation. He is so disciplined in following his own rules ("Kill All Modifiers") and his ear for dialogue is so true that opening one of his stories is like moving into a new neighborhood for a few hours. Like a great actor who can deliver a whole speech with an eyebrow lift, Leonard can package a character in less material than it would take to stop the bleeding from a razor nick. I've rediscovered him, only to realize that I had no idea how large his oeuvre is, or how deep and rich. Every one is different, and every one is captivating. If you want to learn how to write anything well, read Leonard, and take notes. You'll be at the knee of the master.

Solid enough quick read about a couple of bums who get involved in small-time lawbreaking. Leonard doesn't screw around as usual, sketching everyone quickly and efficiently. The Virginia Murray subplot was a bit of a headscratcher. While she was a breath of fresh air opposite the crooks the reader follows otherwise, it wasn't really a burden to check in with her, but I didn't quite get what she ultimately added to the story.

never gets boring

First about that. Any lover of books will tell you it means something to know you're coming to the end. You read it differently. You know the author is wrapping it up and you set your mind to how things are going to end. I am new to e-books and it took a while to get used to not having a real book in my hand. But I have given in because it is nice to be able to carry my entire library with me where ever I go. But, I keep an eye on the percentage left so I have an idea of where the story is going to end. So when I got to 75% I was taken by surprise by the ending. Then the entire last 25% was filled with hoopeddoodle (look at Elmore Leonard's ten rules of writing). So I wish these e-book publishers would stop ruining the flow of the author's hard work - and from taking away from the reading pleasure of their customers - us. Stop the hoopeddoodle, please. As far as my opinion of this work, what can I say, except that it was written by the king of dialog and prose. Read it. Just make sure you check where this fun read ends and the hoopeddoodle begins.

Elmore Leonard's characters are so real you can smell their breath. His novels are timeless, and The Big Bounce is no exception. Halfway through the book I wanted to sit Jack Ryan down and talk some sense into him, but of course there would be no story if I did. Sit back and enjoy the ride.

I turned the page and it was over...so sorry. Great characters, plot, and subplots and the denouement was left to me.

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