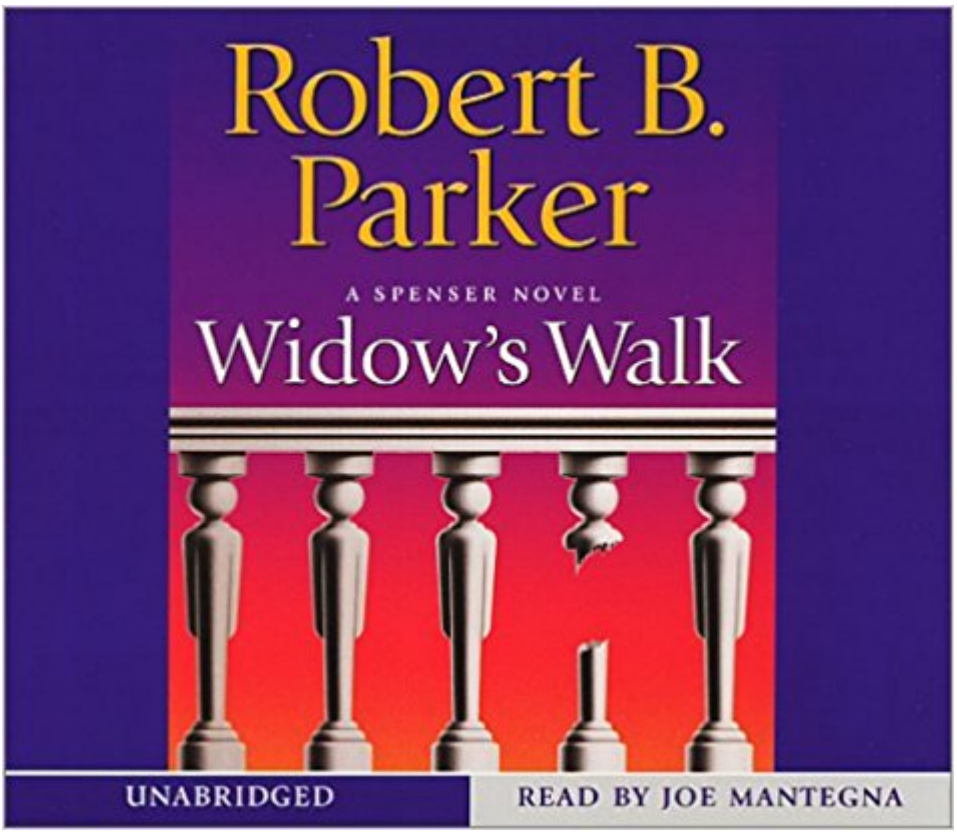
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Widow's Walk (Spenser Novels)



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Synopsis

Four Cassettes, 6 hrs. unabridgedRead by Boston's premier P.I investigates the murder of a prominent local banker, with family ties to the Mayflower - and perhaps the mob.When fifty-one year old Nathan Smith, a confirmed bachelor, is found dead in his bed with a hole in his head made by a .38 caliber slug, it's hard not to imagine Nathan's young bride as the one with her finger on the trigger. Even her lawyer thinks she's guilty. But given that Mary Smith is entitled to the best defense she can afford - and thanks to Nathan's millions, she can afford plenty - Spenser hires on to investigate Mary's bona fides.Mary's alibi is a bit on the flimsy side: she claims she was watching television in another room when the murder occurred. But the couple was seen fighting at a high-profile cocktail party earlier that evening and the prosecution has a witness who says Mary once tried to hire him to kill Nathan. What's more, she's too pretty, too made-up, too blonde, and sleeps around - just the kind of person a jury loves to hate.Spenser's up against the wall; leads go nowhere, no one knows a thing. Then a young woman, recently fired from her position at Smith's bank, turns up dead. Mary's vacant past suddenly starts looking meaner and darker - and Spenser's suddenly got to watch his back. With lean, crackling dialogue, crisp action and razor-sharp characters, WIDOW'S WALK is another triumph.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It's good to see private eye Spenser back in Boston, after his ludicrous imitation of a frontier lawman in Robert B. Parker's Potshot. But he's getting nowhere investigating the gunshot murder of banker

Nathan Smith in Widow’s Walk. The cops figure Smith’s ingenuous but unfaithful young wife, Mary, pulled the trigger. She denies it. Spenser, hired by former prosecutor Rita Fiore to help build Mary Smith the best defense her money can buy, isn’t sure either way, and the more time he spends on this case (dense with business and sexual deceptions), the more perplexed he becomes. Of course, our poetry-spouting hero finally catches a break by linking Smith’s demise to a convoluted real-estate scam. The rest of the novel offers plenty of Parker’s characteristically witty dialogue, the slayings of several informants that you know from the get-go are toast, and ample opportunities for Spenser and his robustly menacing sidekick, Hawk, to intimidate lesser thugs. Unfortunately, the author isn’t as attentive to the needs of other series regulars, including Spenser inamorata Susan Silverman, whose restrained jealousy toward lawyer Fiore ("Rita is sexually rapacious and perfectly amoral about it. I’m merely acknowledging that") and self-flagellation over a gay client’s suicide somehow add no new depth to her character. Parker has a propulsive prose style and can still concoct engrossing stories; his 2001 standalone Western, Gunman’s Rhapsody, is a fine example. Widow’s Walk doesn’t quite meet that standard. Though entertaining, it’s an unsatisfying chapter in a series that’s become too predictable. --J. Kingston Pierce --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Last year Parker published three strong novels including the excellent Spenser mystery Potshot. So he’s entitled to a miss and a pass and gets one with this forgettable Spenser entry. Attorney Rita Fiore, who’s worked with the Boston PI before, hires Spenser to find out if her new client, Mary Smith, whom Spenser’s cop pal Quirk describes as "dumber than my dick," indeed shot to death her husband, banker and Mayflower descendant Nathan Smith, as the evidence indicates. Spenser’s search for the truth takes him into one of the most confusing (for the PI and the reader) cases of his long career; unusual for Parker, pages are needed at book’s end to explain who did what and why. Sidekick Hawk pitches in to protect Spenser, and gunsel Vinnie Morris lends a hand, too, as several folks Spenser talks to wind up dead, and as the PI is trailed, then attacked, by thugs headquartered at a crooked land development company with ties to the dead man’s bank. Susan, Spenser’s beloved, offers some advice as well, but the ritual appearances by Spenser’s crew, human and animal (Pearl the Wonder Dog, ancient and slow, waddles in here and there), while earning a nod of gratitude from series fans, do little to advance or deepen the proceedings. The novel stirs to life only fitfully, most notably in the confrontational exchanges between a female lawyer implicated in the crimes and her powerful attorney father; here, Parker taps into truth about familial loyalties. The writing is as clean as fresh ice, and from the opening sentence (" `I think she’s probably guilty,’ Rita

Fiore said to me"), it’s clear that readers are in the hands of a vet who knows what he’s doing; but what Parker is doing here is, alas, not very interesting. (Mar. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Worth reading.

I so enjoy "SPENSER", that even in a less than exciting plot, I am still charmed by it all. The character is so fully written; I think I would recognize him on the street! But, alas, there are no SPENSER’S out there-----just wishful thinking on my part.

Robert Parker is the best. He knew how to tell the story, with the magical mix of suspense, romance, professionalism, and never revealing more than necessary until the end. RIP Robert. And to all that are following in his legacy, keep up the good work

Another great Robert Paeker Book! As a Boston Native , I have been in these neighborhoods & recognize some of the " Characters" mentioned in his books. Spencer is always a riot.

The book list provided by the publisher shows that this his forty-second work, twenty-ninth in the Spencer series. That is an astonishing creative space over which to maintain literary momentum. Naturally, quality varies, but Robert Parker has proven that he can consistently produce enjoyable mysteries, some of which are actually exceptional. I haven’t been as pleased with the last few stories, which have sometimes felt like caricatures of themselves, but "Widow’s Walk" seems signal a return to the style of old.When Spenser is hired to try to prove that Mary Smith did not kill Nathan, her husband, his first reaction was that this was a hopeless case. Even Mary’s lawyer is convinced her client is guilty. The death occurred in a locked house and the gun is missing. Mary and Nathan have been seen fighting and it seems that she tried to hire someone to kill him. Worse, Mary has made a career of being one or two steps removed from reality, and she hasn’t been particularly helpful.Nevertheless Spencer undertakes the case and finds the simple surface conceals an unending stream of complications and misrepresentations. There is trouble at Nathan’s bank, his sex life is ambiguous, and people start to die. In fact, Spencer himself comes under attack. All this keeps the detective and his good friend Hawk busy, but it doesn’t really seem to lead anywhere. Nothing makes Mary look any less guilty and the death toll keeps mounting.Parker’s story telling relies on sharp, sarcastic dialogue. Most often Spencer resolves a case by poking at everything until

it begins to unravel, and "Widow's Walk" is no exception. In this case, though, the dialogue has turned down a notch from the peak it reached in "Potshot" and "Hugger Mugger." The result is more realistic exchanges and a smoother feel to the story. The plot, however, moves a bit too mechanically for me. At times things just seem to happen rather than develop one after the other. But that is often the nature of a Spenser tale.Despite these slight flaws I found the book very entertaining. Pearl the wonder dog still lives and Spenser still finds Susan the sexiest woman he knows. And the old characters are still there in all their usual eccentric feistiness. There are times when we need to get away from books with great quantities of character development and just relax in a comfort zone. Save this book for one of those moments.

This is quite a compelling story. It is replete with human interest. It has very many surprising twists. It has page turning qualities.

Not the best Spencer out there but Parker never fails to entertain with good dialogue (for the most part); interesting players, and often thoughtful story lines.

I enjoy the depth of Parker's characters. They seem like acquaintances from younger years in NYC

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