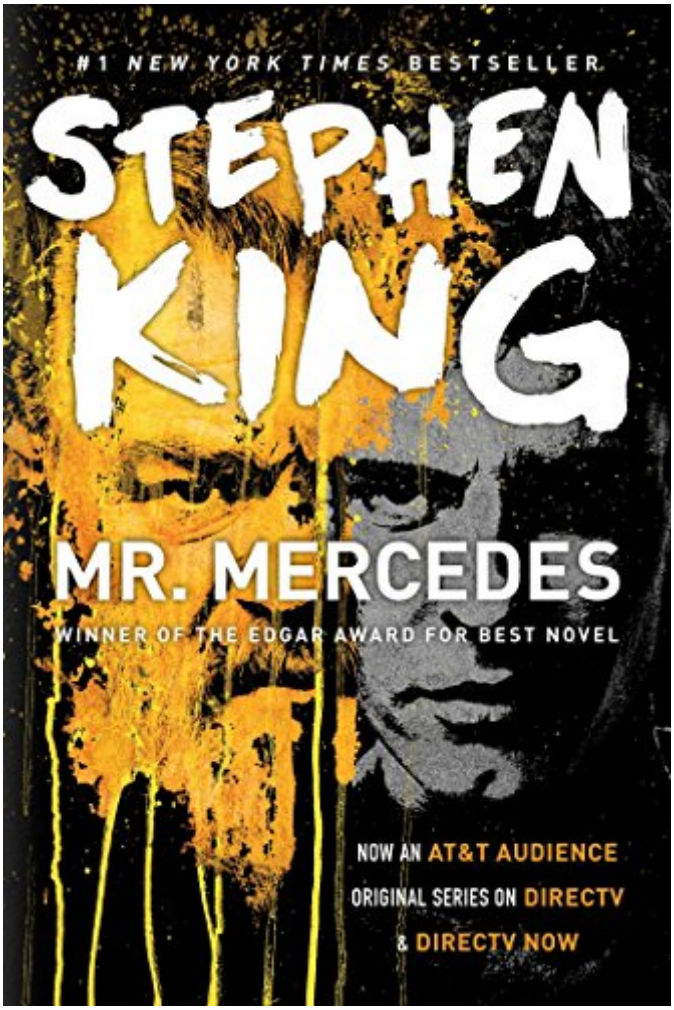
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Mr. Mercedes: A Novel (The Bill Hodges Trilogy Book 1)



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Synopsis

Now an AT&T Audience Original Series WINNER OF THE EDGAR AWARD FOR BEST NOVEL #1 New York Times bestseller! In a high-suspense race against time, three of the most unlikely heroes Stephen King has ever created try to stop a lone killer from blowing up thousands. Ã¢â ¬Å“Mr. Mercedes is a rich, resonant, exceptionally readable accomplishment by a man who can write in whatever genre he chooseså¢â ¬Â• (The Washington Post).The stolen Mercedes emerges from the pre-dawn fog and plows through a crowd of men and women on line for a job fair in a distressed American city. Then the lone driver backs up, charges again, and speeds off, leaving eight dead and more wounded. The case goes unsolved and ex-cop Bill Hodges is out of hope when he gets a letter from a man who loved the feel of death under the Mercedesã¢â ¬â„¢s wheelsã¢â ¬Â¦ Brady Hartsfield wants that rush again, but this time heã¢â ¬â„¢s going big, with an attack that would take down thousandsã¢â ¬â •unless Hodges and two new unusual allies he picks up along the way can throw a wrench in Hartsfieldã¢â ¬â„¢s diabolical plans. Stephen King takes off on a ã¢â ¬Å“nerve-shredding, pulse-pounding race against timeã¢â ¬Â• (Fort Worth Star-Telegram) with this acclaimed #1 bestselling thriller.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I have been an on-again, off-again reader of Stephen KingÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s over the last decade or so (I was more loyal prior to that time) as sometimes I like his stuff and sometimes I donÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t. The last one I read was the awful "Under the Dome," which was long, pointless and ultimately just silly, and I wasnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t thinking of reading anything else by him until I read a couple of reviews by Charles de Lint in a recent Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction. I trust Mr. de LintÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s tastes, so when he praised "Mr. Mercedes" and its follow-up, I figured IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢d give them a try. Mr. Mercedes is the nickname given to a man who stole a car (guess what make) and plowed into a group of job seekers standing outside a building waiting for a job fair, killing 8 and wounding many others. Recently retired cop Bill Hodges has been drifting since his retirement, regretting that he didnÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t catch certain bad guys, including Mr. Mercedes, but when he receives a letter purporting to be from the villain, instead of succumbing to depression as the writer intended, he begins to investigate. And, of course, the investigation just becomes more and more dangerous as he continues to delve into the mysteryÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦. The reader knows who the culprit is from early on in the book, so the appeal is following the cat-and-mouse hunt as the suspense builds. King is as good as he ever was with respect to his characters and plotting, and heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s always great with the gross-out scenes (which here are not too many, thankfully). This turns out to be the first book in a trilogy, and IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve already picked up the second, "FinderÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s Keepers," with the third due out in mid-2016. Fast-paced popcorn reading, "Mr. Mercedes" just hits the spot; recommended!

This novel lost steam for me as it went along (especially once I realized that a promising new character was just Stephen King’s version of Lisbeth Salander), but for the most part King has delivered an exciting crime thriller about a retired cop exchanging taunting messages with the serial killer he never caught. The plot mechanics that keep Bill Hodges from telling his former police colleagues what he’s doing are a bit hard to believe, and I would have personally preferred more of a detective story where the readers get to put together the clues alongside Hodges, but these are ultimately minor quibbles. Mr. Mercedes is that rare Stephen King novel without even a hint of the supernatural, and it’s generally just a well-told thriller from a master of his craft.

This was the first Stephen King book I've read, as I'm not a fan of horror, but my brother had recommended it, so gave it a try. I loved it! Well written,with interesting, layered characters. It was like a cat and mouse game between the anti-hero main character plus his crew of colorful cohorts, and the antagonist. A battle of wits with many twists and surprises. Definitely kept me on the edge of my seat at times. Nice balance of character and plot focus, and the pace kept me engaged throughout. I just started the second book in the trilogy (although this book can be a stand-alone and is resolved in a very satisfying way by the end).

Reading this one, in which the bad guy is a dysfunctional basement dweller specializing in internet harassment, stalking, and potty-mouthed whining butthurt, I found myself wondering if King had been hearing some anecdotes through the olÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ horror writer grapevine. But then, a few key signature spelling errors aside, Brady Hartfield can string together coherent sentences and actually has his moments of being an effective, credible threat.The book opens with a bit of socioeconomic commentary, in which people are lining up and camping out in the foggy pre-dawn hours not for a movie or Black Friday doorbusters but to get into a job fair. ItÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s desperate times and hopeless measures; they already know the odds are overwhelming. But, theyÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve got to try. After all, things canÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t get much worse ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œExcept, of course, things can get much worse. A murderous maniac in a clown mask and stolen car could ram right into the crowd, killing and maiming, then escape and leave a bloody swathe of ruin in his wake.For retired detective Bill Hodges, thatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s one of the unsolved cases, the main One that Got Away. Like too many cops whoÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve hung up the badge, heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s sunk into depression and is on the verge of suicide. An email from someone claiming to be the driver of that deadly Mercedes may be meant to encourage him along ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ instead, it gives him a renewed sense of purpose.What follows is pure thriller, with none of the supernatural overtones usually associated with King. Hodges, teaming up with some unlikely allies, puts himself hot on the trail of the killer, breaking the rules in the best action-movie go-it-your-own tradition After all, heÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s already retired; itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s not like the police force can fire him, right?Some bits of Mr. Mercedes are amusingly self-referential ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â œ the Pennywise mention, for instance. Others struck me as a tad rehashed or recycled ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦ without too many spoilers, let me just say I was getting serious Insomnia and Rose Madder flashbacks.Overall, it was, I dunno, okay but not great. A solid example of what it is, as a catch-the-killer-thriller, but not a book that wowed me or changed my life. IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll read it again, and IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ll read the announced sequels, but

all things considered I far and away preferred Doctor Sleep.

King knows how to rivet the reader from page one. I've enjoyed his books for decades and this was no exception. I'm now on the second book of this trilogy, while the first one makes the rounds of friends and family who want to borrow it.

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