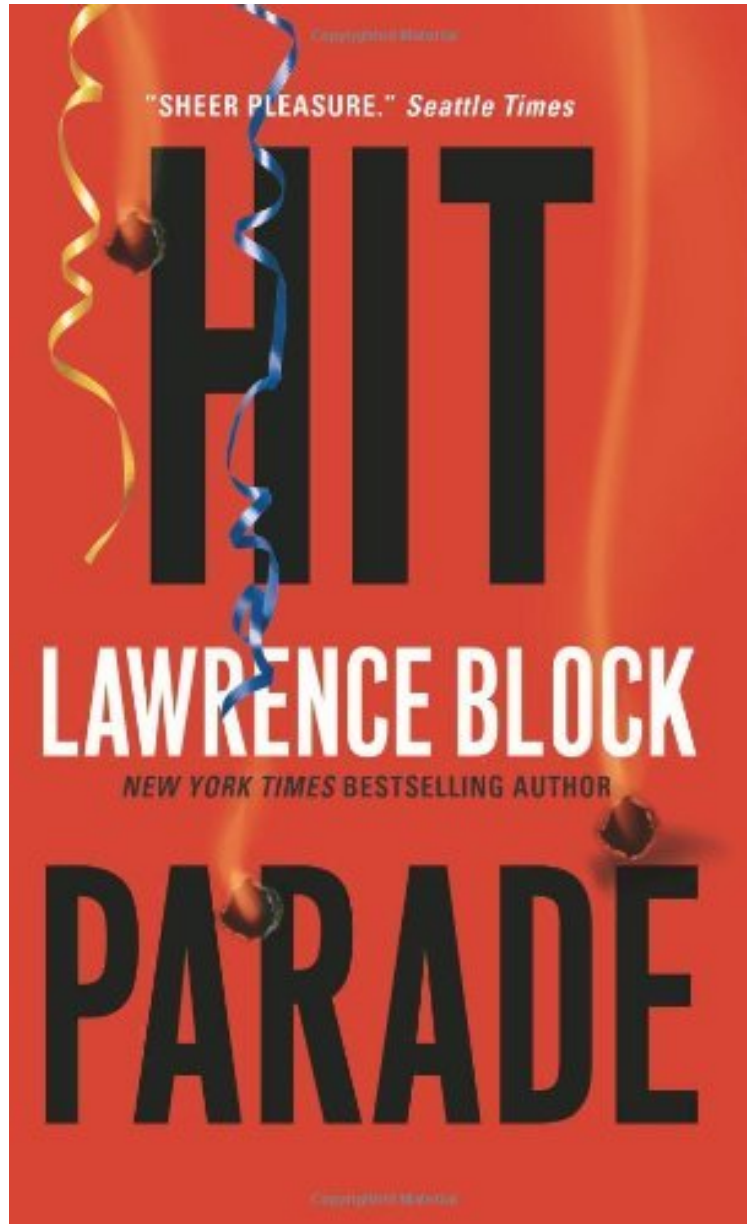


[Read now] Hit Parade (Keller series)

Hit Parade (Keller series)

Von Lawrence Block

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Von Lawrence Block : Hit Parade (Keller series) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hit Parade (Keller series):

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Murderer's Parade of Sequential Short StoriesVon Donald MitchellWe all know that there are people who earn their

living as murderers. But we probably haven't ever met any of them . . . and hope not to. Lawrence Block raises the veil to show us what it might be like. The result is a sort of Sopranos about the business and hobbies of criminal professionals. John Keller prefers to be called Keller. He usually receives his jobs through Dot, who is contacted by a variety of aggrieved parties and booking agents who want a "hit" made. Murder itself doesn't make much of an impression on Keller. He's usually over the effects pretty quickly, but he doesn't see himself as a sociopath. He's more like a narcissist who looks out for number one pretty well before considering anyone else. Like many people who reject conventional values, Keller has his own ethics. A contract must be promptly fulfilled . . . except under certain circumstances. You'll learn more about those circumstances as you cruise through these loosely connected stories. Lawrence Block does a good job of maintaining suspense by developing each "hit" in unexpected ways. You'll sweat along with Keller as he deals with these challenges . . . oddly finding yourself rooting for a killer. How perverse is that? Ultimately, I found it a little offensive that Keller was made to be so sympathetic. Although obviously this book is all about dark humor, the deadpan doesn't always steer you away from Keller as much as it should. Keller is going through a mid-life crisis in this book. He's asking himself if killing people is all there is. But he's also anxious to stay agile so he won't be killed in pursuing his profession: That means more killing to stay in practice. The hobby of stamp collecting turns out to be an oddly perverse distraction. Buying the stamps is the biggest part of the fun, but the stamps are really worth what you pay for them, and there's nothing to do once you've filled an album. The best part of the book for me was Keller's reaction to 9/11. If you don't like the first two stories (Keller's Designated Hitter and Keller by a Nose), be sure to stick with the book until you read Keller's Adjustment. I think your opinion of the book will rise at that point. How many of us adjusted our lives in fundamental ways after 9/11? This story will bring you back in touch with those thoughts and emotions. The story that was richest in irony was Keller the Dogkiller. I commend that one to those who are fascinated by twisted senses of right and wrong. Keller's Double Dribble was the funniest story in the lot. You'll like this one! Quotidian Keller is another fine story full of good character development. It's my second favorite after Keller's Adjustment. But read them all. You'll be rewarded by rich plot twists, if nothing else. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A Murderer's Parade of Sequential Short Stories Von Donald Mitchell We all know that there are people who earn their living as murderers. 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Kurzbeschreibung Keller is friendly. Industrious. A bit lonely, sometimes. If it wasn't for the fact that he kills people for a living, he'd be just your average Joe. The inconvenient wife, the troublesome sports star, the greedy business partner, the vicious dog, he'll take care of them all, quietly and efficiently. If the price is right. Like the rest of us, Keller's starting to worry about his retirement. After all, he's not getting any younger. (His victims, on the other hand, aren't getting any older.) So he contacts his "booking agent," Dot, up in White Plains, and tells her to keep the hits coming. He'll take any job, anywhere. His nest egg needs fattening up. Of course, being less choosy means taking greater risks and that could buy Keller some big trouble. Then again, in this game, there are plenty of opportunities for some inventive improvisation . . . and a determined self-motivator can make a killing. From Publishers Weekly Block's assassin, John Keller (Hit Man; Hit List), returns in these loosely linked, well-crafted vignettes of the protagonist on assignment, blithely but expertly eliminating a grab bag of targets: a philandering pro baseball player, a jockey in a fixed horse race, two women who hire him to put down a neighbor's dog, a Cuban exile and more. Manhattan-based Keller works through his agent, Dot, who assigns murders from her home just north in White Plains. Keller, a loner by temperament and trade, has an easy camaraderie with Dot. The two entrepreneurial colleagues strike a casual tone in conversation but they're discussing death (sometimes in gory detail). With dry wit, Block tracks the pursuits of the morally ambiguous Keller, who hunts rare, pricey stamps for his extensive collection when he's not "taking care of business." Four-time Shamus- and Edgar-winner Block has the reader queasily rooting for the killer as well as the victims, unsettling the usual point of identification and assumptions about right and wrong. (July) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Keller is a hit man. Like all careers, it has its challenges, some imposed by circumstance, others generated by introspection. For example, Keller accepts a contract on an aging baseball star. The job will be easy, but Keller complicates it with reasons that can only be categorized as "inside baseball." There's another job in which he's assigned to kill a jockey, but only if the man wins a fixed race. Since Keller is all about the money, he figures a way to turn the situation into a win-win for himself. He also ponders a retirement in which he will abandon his Manhattan lifestyle for a trailer in the southwestern desert. Block, the best-selling author of the Matt Scudder and Bernie Rhodenbarr series, indulges himself when he dusts off Keller. The humor is even more deadpan than usual, and the vignettes (Keller working as a food-service volunteer after 9/11) are quirky diversions. Oddly, Keller the hit man is also a kind of everyman, pondering such universal questions as, Does this assignment compromise my ethics? Will I ever get another job? Block's legion of fans will savor his subtle wit, his consummate narrative skills, and his idiosyncratic method of celebrating the lives of working folks in America. Wes Lukowsky Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved