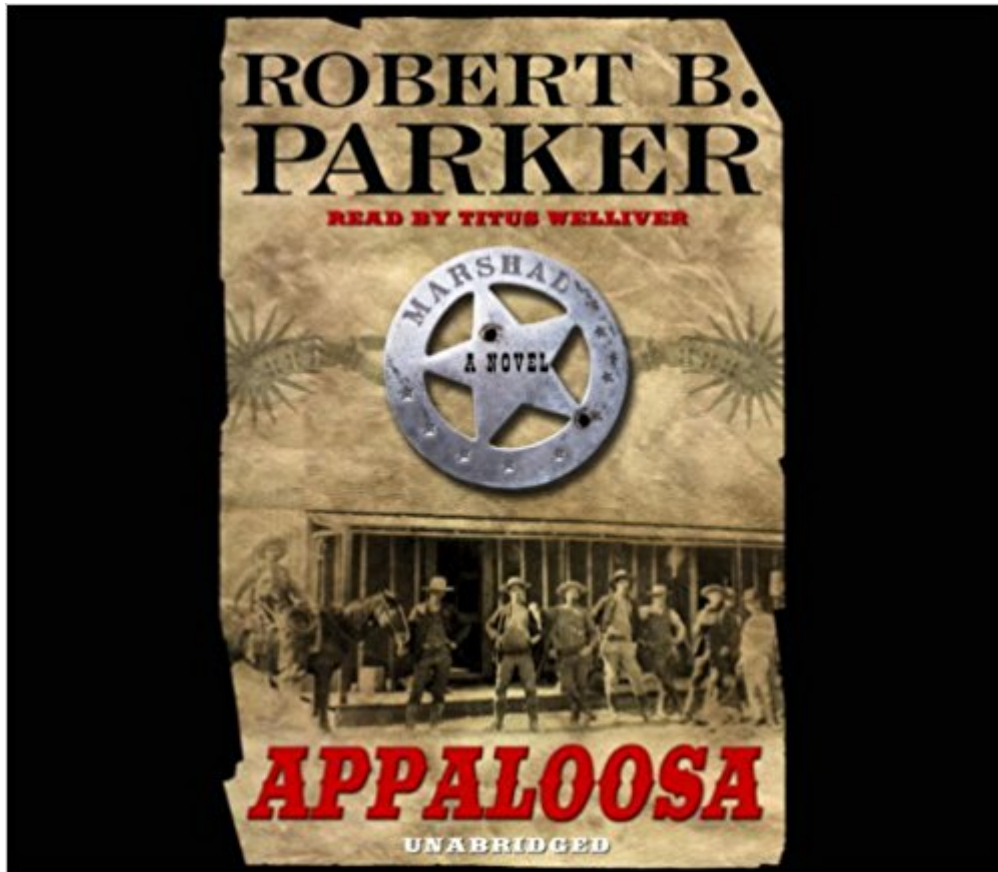




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Appaloosa



Synopsis

A richly imagined novel of the Old West, as spare and vivid as a high plains sunset, from one of the world's most talented performers. It was a long time ago, now, and there were many gunfights to follow, but I remember as well as I remember anything the first time I saw Virgil Cole shoot. Time slowed down for him. Always steady, and never fast . . . When it comes to writing, Robert B. Parker knows no boundaries. From the iconic Spenser detective series and the novels featuring Sunny Randall and Jesse Stone, to the groundbreaking historical novel *Double Play*, Parker's imagination has taken readers from Boston to Brooklyn and back again. In *Appaloosa*, fans are taken on another trip, to the untamed territories of the West during the 1800s. When Virgil Cole and Everett Hitch arrive in Appaloosa, they find a small, dusty town suffering at the hands of renegade rancher Randall Bragg, a man who has so little regard for the law that he has taken supplies, horses, and women for his own and left the city marshal and one of his deputies for dead. Cole and Hitch, itinerant lawmen, are used to cleaning up after opportunistic thieves, but in Bragg they find an unusually wily adversary-one who raises the stakes by playing not with the rules, but with emotions. This is Robert B. Parker at his storytelling best.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review. It's been years since Parker has won a major literary award for a novel (he did collect a Grand Master trophy from MWA in 2002), but that may change with this stunning western, a serious contender for a Spur. This is only Parker's second western, after the Wyatt Earp story *Gunman's Rhapsody* (or third if you count the Spenser PI quasi-western *Potshot*), but he takes

command of the genre, telling an indelible story of two Old West lawmen. The chief one is Virgil Cole, new marshal of the mining/ranching town of Appaloosa (probably in Colorado); his deputy is Everett Hitch, and it's Hitch who tells the tale, playing Watson to Cole's Holmes. The novel's outline is classic western: Cole and Hitch take on the corrupt rancher, Randall Bragg, who ordered the killing of the previous marshal and his deputy. Bragg is arrested, tried and sentenced to be hung, but hired guns bust him out, leading to a long chase through Indian territory, a traditional high noon (albeit at 2:41 p.m.) shootout between Cole's men and Bragg's, a further escape and, at book's end, a final showdown. Along the way, Cole falls for a piano-playing beauty with a malevolent heart, whose manipulations lead to that final, fatal confrontation. With such familiar elements, Parker breaks no new ground. What he does, and to a magnificent degree, is to invest classic tropes with vigor, through depth of character revealed by a glance, a gesture or even silence. A consummate pro, Parker never tells, always shows, through writing that's bone clean and through a superb transference of the moral issues of his acclaimed mysteries (e.g., the importance of honor) to the western. This is one of Parker's finest. Agent, Helen Brann. (June) --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Taking a break from his long-running series of Spenser novels, Parker moseys back to the Old West. He's eyed this back-acre before in *Gunman's Rhapsody*, a fictionalization of the Wyatt Earp story, but critics feel Appaloosa's original plot allows him more room to develop his trademark themes of personal honor and masculine camaraderie. With sharp dialogue and a plot that "gallops to a perfect, almost mythical ending," it's clear that Parker can swap genres and not lose a step (St. Petersburg Times). In fact, a few critics even note that he seems refreshed by the change of scenery. Copyright © 2004 Phillips & Nelson Media, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

this and the following 3 in the quartet written by parker are like the proverbial bag of chips:you cannot stop after just one.everyone i've given these to (and i make sure to lend all 4 at once) has read them in one sitting:one after the other.and then wanted more.alas, there are no more written by parker.(the 5th posthumously completed by someone else is no-where near as good as these 4.)do yourself a favor and read these (even if you do not like westerns and even if you do not like parkers other work.)

I had finished all the Spenser books, by Robert Parker, and was sad about that. i had seen the

Appaloosa movie first, and the movie followed the book story very closely. I have since read all the Virgil Cole books and enjoyed the series very much. This first book gets you into the characters but they are more developed in the following books. I could not get the image of Renee Zellweger out of my head as I read this series. (Renee played Allison French in the movie Appaloosa.). This was not a good thing... I recommend the book and the entire series.

Robert B. Parker and the writers who have taken over for him have some of the best stories and series that I have ever read! Keep it up!

This book's awesome. These old West peacekeepers walk the same metaphorical mean streets as Parker's other tough guys, like Spenser, Hawk, and Jesse Stone, dusty as the streets in the town of Appaloosa may be. The familiar Parker themes are all here, the honor and friendship between men, the unflagging devotion to a woman loved (even when it's probably not deserved), the violent life lived according to a code...and all that stuff works perfectly in this milieu. Additionally, as Parker himself has aged, his treatment of these themes has deepened; there is more of a sense of human fallibility in his characters these days, and the codes they live by don't always serve them well.

I've read Parker's mysteries but didn't know about his westerns until I saw the movie that was made with this while on a plane. The movie is good and the book is better. Top notch writing, very realistic, well-researched. I've read the whole series and this is the best.

A fine series of adventures and investigations that I enjoyed and hope continues.

Again, like my review of the movie, it is really 3 and one-half stars. . . This was the first Robert B. Parker book I've ever read cover to cover. Yes, despite all the Spenser books out there, I never read one, though I was a fan of the TV Show, Spenser for Hire. I obtained a used Hardback version. The book gives you some background into the two main characters the movie doesn't offer, the inner working of Everett's vision of the events. Without distraction, the book is what I would call a "fast read," that is you move along at a good pace, so it doesn't really take long to read it. Most of the chapters are short, two or three pages in the hardcover book I have. Being the first RBP book I've ever read (I will consider getting Gunman's Rhapsody from my local library sometime) I don't want to linger on the book, and his writing style too much. I'm actually still forming an opinion.

Enjoyed the characters and their relationships, the pacing and the dialogue. Wanted to read it in one sitting. Recently completed Gunman's Walk and was compelled to move on to Appaloosa after also re-viewing the movie. I don't recall ever reading any of Parker's other books but he is my new favorite author of the western genre.

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