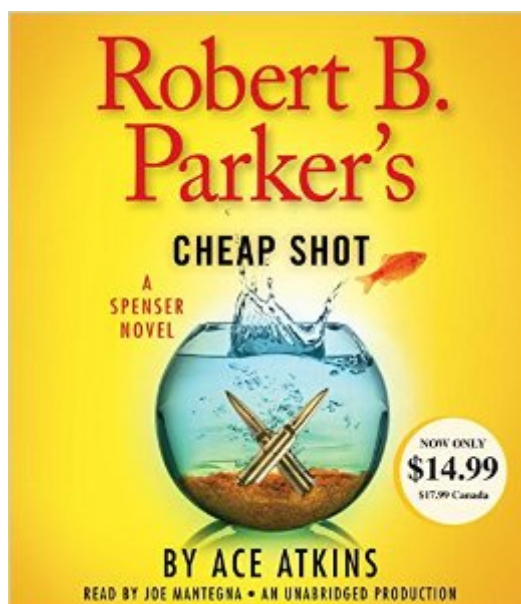


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Robert B. Parker's Cheap Shot (Spenser)



Synopsis

True to his practice of exceeding his own standards with each new novel, Atkins gives Robert B. Parker's long-running series one of its best installments to date • (Bookreporter.com) with the Spencer novel, Cheap Shot...Kinjo Heywood is one of the New England Patriots' marquee players "a hard-nosed linebacker who's earned his standing as one of the toughest guys in the league. He may be worth millions but his connection to a nightclub shooting two years before is still putting a dangerous spin on his life, and his career. When Heywood's nine-year-old son, Akira, is kidnapped, and a winding trail through Boston's underworld begins, Spenser puts together his own all-star team of toughs. It will take both Hawk and Spenser's protégé, Zebulon Sixkill, to watch Spenser's back. Because Heywood's next unpredictable move puts everyone in jeopardy as the clock winds down on Akira's future.

Book Information

Series: Spenser

Audio CD

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Average Customer Review: 4.1 out of 5 stars See all reviews (536 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #283,832 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in Books > Books on CD >

Authors, A-Z > (P) > Parker, Robert B. #399 in Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers

#535 in Books > Books on CD > Literature & Fiction > Unabridged

Customer Reviews

After assuming the reins of the iconic Spenser canon, Ace Atkins didn't just breathe new life into the already healthy franchise; he has performed the seemingly impossible task of growing it. True to his practice of exceeding his own standards with each new novel, Atkins gives Robert B. Parker's long-running series one of its best installments to date with the newly published CHEAP SHOT. One of the many points of Boston's pride is its professional sports teams, and CHEAP SHOT focuses on football. Atkins knows of which he speaks, giving the book a definite air of knowledgeable authenticity. Spenser is initially retained by the sports agent of Kinjo Heywood, a star linebacker of

the New England Patriots. Kinjo reportedly has been stalked and harassed by some unknown subjects, and Spenser is tasked with finding out the who and the why behind it. He isn't entirely sure if Kinjo is overreacting to the adoration of some overreaching fans, or if some blowback from a shooting incident in New York in which Kinjo was allegedly involved may be coming back to haunt him. Then there is Kinjo's ex, who isn't happy at all about his current wife. For someone as popular and wealthy as he is, Kinjo should be a lot happier. In fact, it appears that his only true joy is Akira, his nine-year-old son. So when Akira is suddenly kidnapped, Kinjo's entire world slips loose of its moorings. Nobody, from Kinjo's agent to the NFL to the FBI, wants Spenser within a hundred miles of the case --- nobody, that is, except Kinjo, who respects Spenser's no-nonsense approach to getting things done and his willingness to tell things as they are.

The strength of the third Spenser effort by Atkins is that the author continues to demonstrate a strong feel for Parker's characters, Boston locales and story pacing. Cheap Shot features both Hawk and Zebulon Sixkill as part of the Spenser team as well as visits to Chestnut Hill, Charlestown and the Patriots facility at Foxboro. The action in this book is fairly straightforward as the Berkley Street Irregulars try to solve the kidnapping of a player's child before any harm can come to him. This impending peril creates more tension than in many of the other books in the series while also providing cover for the sometimes aggressive attention given by Spenser and company to suspects. The only problem with Atkins' writing is embedded in this very strength. As he understandably tries to demonstrate to fans of the series that he can produce books similar to those of Robert Parker, the new author does not take chances with a formula that is starting to get a bit stale after almost 30 volumes. Even Parker varied his approach on occasion as in Spenser's pursuit of Susan Silverman in Catskill Eagle, alternating chapters from the serial killer's point of view in Crimson Joy and through the battles with the Grey Man. Now that Atkins has proved his command of this material, he can enrich the series with further character development. Even Ian Fleming began to show the effect of physical aging on his own legendary hero 10 books into the Bond series. Overall, however, Atkins provides a great service to readers by bringing us new Spenser editions that could pass for books written by the series originator. He even extends in Cheap Shot the metaphor of private detective as Urban Knight, in this case comparing Spenser's crew to Ronin.

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