



Run

Douglas E. Winter

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One of the year's most acclaimed thriller debuts, Douglas E. Winter's Run is a no-holds barred breakout blockbuster of suspense -- the story of a legitimate arms dealer making an illegal gun run. When he incurs the wrath of cops, coworkers, and criminals, he's left with no options but to run.

Run Details

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Author : Douglas E. Winter

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From Reader Review Run for online ebook

Misha84 says

Wow! Best hard-boiled crime I've read in ages!

Will Klein says

This book kicked me in the chest and knocked me down. Winter (a long-time editor of various horror anthologies and, I think, a DC area lawyer or some such) writes the sordid, blood and cordite-streaked 1st person narrative of a weapons merchant caught between a rock and some hardcases with a fluid intensity that keeps the action moving virtually nonstop.

Burden Lane is probably not your average antihero, but he's familiar enough. He isn't a bad-bad man, he doesn't shoot nuns or rape dogs, but he does sell guns to people that the law says shouldn't have guns. Lots of guns. Machine guns, grenade launchers, sniper rifles and handguns: oh, so many handguns. Burden Lane works for a pretty tight operation of ex-military and other shadowy black ops types, and they make sure that the people who are willing to pay for guns get them.

Then, on a sale, things go wrong and loyalty is called into question and the bullets start flying and yeah, the finale feels a little warped in it's small/huge scale and yeah, the lack of quotation marks can be a little irritating at first and yeah, maybe it is just gun porn with a social conscience but it kicks ass. And personally, I like a little social science and humanism injected into my kickass action.

I keep waiting for Winter to write another novel. And waiting.

Nicole says

This is one of the best books I've read in a long time. Lots of guns and great characters. I want to cast the movie.

Zakary McGaha says

One of the most well-written thrillers of all time. Truly deserves to be called a classic.

Kemper says

This is the book so nice I bought it twice.

Well, actually it's a pretty violent and dark story so it's not all that nice. And the reason I ended up with two

copies is that I'd bought it when it first came out in those bygone days before the world moved on when I'd browse the tables and shelves of the nearest Border's and might just take home something with a snazzy cover that looked fun. Years later after I had moved a couple of times and sold or donated a lot of my old books another copy caught my eye in a used book store which gave me an urge to reread it. Thinking that I had gotten rid of the first one I bought it. Later I found my first copy packed away so I now had two, and yet still didn't manage to read it again as more time passed. Dan coming to town gave me an opportunity to unload the extra one and finally check it out again with a buddy read as motivation.

Burdon Lane is gun dealer who usually doesn't leave the house without at least a couple of pistols on him. Officially his business is legal, but unofficially he does all kinds of off-the-books and under-the-table sales on behalf of the arms broker he works for. The boss sends him along on a large deal to a street gang, and Burdon reluctantly goes even though the whole thing seems fishy. Things go sideways in a spectacle of violence and murder that leaves Burdon on the run with a gangbanger he just met.

This is a pretty well written thriller with a lot of action, but it's far from flawless. It was published in 2000, and it really has that post-*Pulp Fiction* late-'90s crime fiction style of trying to make the criminals cool even if they're doing and saying things that make that genuinely awful people. At the start of the book Burdon is a thug, a killer, and a guy who will unironically bitch about how much the government is infringing on the gun rights of Americans even as he's selling assault weapons to anyone who can pull a trigger. He's also the kind of person who is comfortable using casual racist slurs. Fortunately, there's an arc to the character that has him coming to some self-awareness and realizations at the end so this isn't a case of just having an unlikable anti-hero throughout the book.

I think it might have been more interesting if the plot had actually been more centered around the gun dealing rather than dropping Burdon in the middle of a fairly standard conspiracy thriller. It takes a bit too long to really get going for a book of this type, but the pace is pretty decent once things start happening. It also drew the ending out for far too long while having a contradictory tone in which violence isn't the answer at one moment, but in the next minute Burdon is being a cool bad-ass who is shooting up countless bad guys.

Overall, it's a pretty good action thriller, but it wasn't worth buying two copies.

Karen says

Violent, improbable... but completely enjoyable from start to finish.

Mike says

This was a real sleeper and surprise. Constant action and quick read. Dialogue is fun and he knows his guns. Didn't figure it from his background blurb. Buy it and read it.

P. H. says

This is one of the best cheap (40 cent) paperbacks I ever read. Action packed, takes you on a road. I don't know why it was so unpopular. Maybe it was the N word or something.

Todd says

I have read this book multiple tymes. I used to read it about once a year. I have to say that it is meant to be a nonstop action book based on the way it was written and I feel like it is. There are small character developments, but for the most part you just get the main guy and his outlook. I would love to see this made into a movie. Small disclaimer this book lacks alot of proper punctuation. It was the fast paced style the author was going for. I have read to many reviews that were turned off by it. This is a nonstop action book so who needs a ton of commas and periods? I loved the way he just goes with it and never stops running...

Thomas says

Douglas Winter writes with great style. This book has a hard boiled noir feel, but it's a new, faster breed. Some of the most propulsive fiction I've read. I remember a paragraph where the criminal protagonist looks lovingly over his collection of guns that read like free form poetry. Very cool. It ain't deep, but it is tough as hell. Since it all takes place in New York and DC and on the Amtrak train that runs between the cities, I knew the settings intimately, which added to the excitement as considerable mayhem ensued. Worth reading for the effective style, and the tight plotting.

Artdalinkwent says

this book grabs you and doesn't let go, Fast paced as it gets. I WISH I CAN FIND MORE BY HIM.

Dan Schwent says

Burdon Lane works for a legal gun dealer who also dabbles in some illicit side deals. When a gun deal goes south and a political figure winds up assassinated, Burdon's friends turn on him and he goes on the run. But who can he trust?

During our third booze-soaked meeting, Kemper gave me two books: Seveneves and this one.

The book started slow. The first 35% was setup, introducing all the players and getting them into position. The remaining 65% was an orgy of violence and betrayal.

Run could have easily been a no-brain thriller but raises a lot of questions on race, identity, and gun violence. Burdon Lane struggles with who he is over the course of the novel. His feelings over the deaths and betrayals set him apart from other anti-heroes, making him more than the Parker ripoff I thought he might wind up being.

While Douglas E. Winter writes great action, the relationship between Burdon and Jinx was my favorite part of the book. Jinx could have easily been a stereotype gang member but wound up being one of the better written characters in the tale.

The never-ending betrayals and brutal violence wore on me after a while. Still, I loved the showdown at the end. The aftermath was a little soft, though.

That's about all I have to say. Run is better experienced than read about anyway. 3.5 out of 5 stars.

Andrew says

Story:

Burdon Lane seems to be your average ordinary guy. The type of guy that goes about his life and no one takes notice of him, but Burdon Lane wants it that way. See Burdon is a gun runner and a good one at that. A potential big score goes south though and Burdon finds himself running for his life and everyone is after him.

Thoughts:

I had a lot of time to kill waiting on flights and such, so picked this book up on a whim from a stack of books sitting in a MWR room. I was not disappointed. The first third of the book is kind of slow, but it's interesting. Once everything gets moving though it moves and the last third of the book is full of action. Kind of surprised this hasn't been rewritten for a movie, though it would probably be a bit too violent.

Should you read it?

Sure, it's a fun violent romp around the underworld, full of crosses and double crosses. Just be ready for a lot of harsh language.

Matt says

Have you ever watched French Connection LOUD and on a BIG TV, and you seen the part where the car narrowly escapes hitting the lady with the baby carriage and you literally leaned to one side as if your efforts would allow the drive that extra little nudge as to avoid IMPENDING DOOM?

That's what it is like to read this novel.

That plus a lot of people shooting each other and REALLY VIVID descriptions of guns.

Robert Beveridge says

Douglas E. Winter, Run (Onyx, 2000)

Douglas Winter, whose sole excursion into publishing previously was editing a number of excellent anthologies, heads to the front of the camera, as it were, with his first novel, Run. One wonders, idly, what took him so long-especially after reading this.

Burdon Lane is an arms dealer-mostly legal, with some grey-area stuff around the edges to supplement the income. All of it is well-known and well-sanctioned by his employer, UniArms, who do the same thing, just on a much bigger level. One day, the president of UniArms calls Burdon and his sidekick, Renny Two-Hand, into the office and asks them to accompany a shipment to Manhattan. It should be an easy job, but if it were,

there wouldn't be a novel, would there?

Most reviews, and all the blurbs, focus on the book's fast pace and nonstop action. Which is true, for the last two hundred or so pages of this four-hundred-page novel. Once the deal goes sour, you'll finish this in one marathon session. Winter provides no place to take smoke breaks in here; the shooting starts, and it does not end. It's not every action-novel writer who can keep up that kind of a pace for two hundred pages.

What impressed me more about the novel, though, were the first two hundred pages, which involve a lot of waiting, a lot of background, and some nicely unobtrusive setup for the events to come. I can't count the number of action, mystery, horror, et al. novels where the setup portions drag like a three-toed sloth with a gimp leg. But even when Winter is setting up Burdon's character, introducing us to the minor players, and other such mundane tasks, the book is still brisk enough that the reader is reluctant to let go. This comes half from Burdon Lane's narrative style, which has the look and feel of an illiterate construction worker reciting the famous soliloquy from Hamlet, and half from an ability to flesh out minor characters with little details most writers would overlook. (The comparison here to one of Winter's longtime clients, Stephen King, is obvious. The man learned from the master of the quirky detail and the two-line character sketch. He learned very well. This is not to say that this sounds in any way like a Stephen King novel; Winter has a voice all his own, and it's a doozy.) Someone needs to make a movie of this book, if only to give Steve Buscemi the chance to play CK, one of the other guys accompanying the shipment.

I hate to use phrases like "adrenaline-fueled," but this book deserves them all. All-natural guarana-enhanced sport drinks have nothing on Doug Winter's writing style. ****
