



Lake Country

Sean Doolittle

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“Sean Doolittle is a young writer with serious chops,” says George Pelecanos, and Laura Lippman calls him “hip, smart, and mordantly funny.” Now the acclaimed author of *Safer* returns with a mesmerizing story of tragedy, revenge, and redemption.

Five years ago, successful architect Wade Benson killed a young woman when he fell asleep at the wheel. His punishment: two days in jail for every year of his probation. But for one friend of the victim’s family—an ex-marine named Darryl Potter—this punishment isn’t enough. Potter sets out to even the score by kidnapping Benson’s twenty-year-old daughter. It’s a bad, bad plan, and only Mike Barlowe, Potter’s former combat buddy, knows how to stop it. With a beautiful news reporter, the cops, and a bounty hunter on Potter’s tail, Barlowe races to head off his troubled friend before innocent people get hurt. The hunters and the hunted plunge north into Minnesota’s Lake Country, each with their own ambitions and demons, each headed for a violent collision—and for one horrifying moment of life or death.

“As long as there are writers like Sean Doolittle out there, American crime fiction has got a sterling future ahead of it.”—Dennis Lehane

“With *Lake Country*, Sean Doolittle has out-*Fargo* ed *Fargo*. Already a master of Midwestern noir, he takes a huge, novelistic leap with his newest work, a complex, quirky, and tremendously satisfying story of revenge and redemption. If you haven’t yet read a Doolittle novel, you’ve missed the cutting edge of crime fiction today. Trust me, this guy is the future.”—William Kent Krueger, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Northwest Angle*

Lake Country Details

Date : Published July 31st 2012 by Bantam (first published January 1st 2012)

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Author : Sean Doolittle

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From Reader Review Lake Country for online ebook

Ben says

Great read. Doolittle gets better with every book. Clear concise writing that moves incredibly fast once you get through the first act.

Kelley says

Novel received courtesy of Goodreads.com giveaway

Sean Doolittle's new novel "Lake Country" was a great read. The premise of the novel was something new and that's an accomplishment! The story begins as a man heads to jail as he does every year on the anniversary of the death of the young woman he killed when he fell asleep at the wheel. The main character doesn't believe that this punishment is enough. Darryl and Mike are veterans with some deep mental and physical wounds. The reporter tasked with covering the entrance of the jail also becomes a part of the story rather than just reporting the story. "Lake Country" brings all of these people and more together to tell a unique story that readers will enjoy.

James Thane says

Combat veterans Mike Barlowe and Darryl Potter are living from day-to-day in northern Minnesota and no doubt spending too much time in the Elbow Room, their favorite bar. Then one night a news story appears on the Elbow Room's antique television set about an architect who fell asleep at the wheel five years earlier and killed a girl named Becky Morse. The guilty driver was convicted and sentenced to probation, with the requirement that he must serve two days in jail for every year of his probation.

Mike and Darryl have a personal connection to the case and Darryl believes that the architect has gotten off much too lightly. Without telling Mike, Darryl decides to even the scales of justice a bit. When it appears that Darryl has done something enormously stupid--or maybe two things, Mike could wash his hands of the whole business. But he owes Darryl his life and so sets off into the woods to try to save his friend from himself.

Mike heads out into the Lake Country, followed by a couple of teams of television reporters and two seriously dangerous goons who also have it in for Darryl. Once the race is on, all hell is bound to break loose.

This is a well-written book, and once the chase is on, it's hard to put it down. One might argue that Doolittle does a better job in this book creating interesting villains than he does sympathetic protagonists, but that's a relatively small complaint.

Brenda says

Might be a great read but the language turned me off so I quit.

Fox says

I won this book through the wonderful first-reads program.

When I first began reading this book, it was with a great mixture of emotions. I typically don't read crime thrillers, but here was Dennis Lehane praising Sean Doolittle on the cover. Dennis Lehane of Shutter Island fame, and well known for just about everything else he'd ever written. Fears of reading outside my general genre somewhat abated, I opened it up.

It took me a while to get used to the writing.

The general premise of the book is a fascinating one. Years earlier, a young girl was killed by a well known architect - not in a drunk driving accident, but rather in a *tired* driving accident. The architect, terribly wealthy, got off fairly easy and without great injury. The girl was in a coma for forty eight hours before passing away. The girl's brother was killed in combat, the girl's father committed suicide. The girl's mother certainly wasn't getting it easy.

To make matters worse, the fellow behind the wheel of the car who killed her - he got off easy with a fine and the added punishment of spending forty eight hours in prison on the anniversary of her death for five years. That's it. This is justice? The whole novel hinges upon that question.

On the fifth anniversary of this, it looks like someone had finally had enough of this and taken matters into his own hands. The architect's daughter is kidnapped, and all signs are pointing towards the kidnapper being a relatively unhinged ex-vet who was friends with the murdered girl's brother. Our protagonist, who also knew the murdered girl's brother, is trying to figure out just what's going on.

The novel switches between the reporter covering the story, a bookie trying to collect from the kidnapper, and the friend of the kidnapper's point of view making for the case being watched from all eyes. The writing is crisp, quickly moving, and easy to read. I can't say I had any complaints stylistically, or plot-wise with the piece. It made for fast reading, and while I would refer to it as 'genre fiction' is there really anything wrong with that?

All in all, this is a good book to read during the summer, and one that I would pass on to friends who I know love the thriller genre. Sean Doolittle does have great writing chops, and I'll be keeping my eyes open for more of his books. Heck, I'd be surprised if some of his books didn't get tapped for movie adaptations in the near future. This is writer with a bright, bright future.

David Hale says

Hard to write a better review than this blurb! "With Lake Country, Sean Doolittle has out-Fargoed Fargo. Already a master of Midwestern noir, he takes a huge, novelistic leap with his newest work, a complex, quirky, and tremendously satisfying story of revenge and redemption. If you haven't yet read a Doolittle novel, you've missed the cutting edge of crime fiction today. Trust me, this guy is the future."—William Kent Krueger, New York Times bestselling author of Northwest Angle

Alison Hardtmann says

I don't usually read thrillers. The focus on action often means that characterization is short-changed, with cartoon-depth villains and women who exist only for the hero's enjoyment. That is changing. In his last adventure, not only does Jack Reacher not sleep with his much younger female partner, but he also indicates interest in a woman his own age, wishing that he had time to get to know her in between fight scenes. But the patterns and expectations remain.

Luckily, there are exceptions and the best of those exceptions is Sean Doolittle. He writes well, but most importantly the characters in his books feel like real people. Sure, *Lake Country* follows the pattern of a guy rescuing a woman in peril, but he's tweaked the expected into something both surprising and a lot of fun to read. The woman in peril is a lot more capable than anyone expected. There are two bad guys, neither of whom are stock villains, although one comes close, Doolittle provides just that little insight into his motivations to make him human. And as for heroes, there are two. A female television news reporter who is both a little burned out and a veteran of the war in Iraq, with a rebuilt knee who is unemployed and spending a lot of time in the local bar. Doolittle doesn't short-change readers on the action. There's plenty of that. But the action makes sense, the hero is not indestructible. His plans don't always work and when they do the consequences aren't what he anticipated. The pretty face reporting at the scene is able to notice things the cops don't and she's worried about what being that person who is first to arrive at the homes of victims means about her own morality.

Lake Country, like the other books by Sean Doolittle that I've read, is intelligent and entertaining. I'm looking forward to reading more by him. Still not a fan of the genre, however.

Lakis Fourouklas says

Lake Country by Sean Doolittle is not a police procedural and it's not really a thriller. It's a story about some people and their haunted past, about the ghosts that no matter how hard they try, they cannot escape.

What I mostly liked about this book I must admit is its size. What do I mean by that? I mean that the author did a great job working on the economy of the novel. There's not a single word out of place here, there are not too many subplots to make it a doorstopper, and thus less enjoyable, and there are no wild stretches of the imagination in order to surprise the reader. All Doolittle seems to want to do is tell a story, and that he does well.

Two of the main characters in this novel are ex-soldiers, survivors of the war in Iraq, and each one of them carries their own psychological baggage.

Darryl Potter is a troubled young man who's seen his fair share of war and bloodshed and who always manages, in one way or another, to get into trouble. He hates the way his life turned out, he hates that the justice system doesn't really care about imposing the law when it comes to the rich and powerful and he hates the fact that he wasn't able to save the life of one of his army comrades, and feels guilty about what happened afterwards to that man's family. He almost hates everything and everyone. His day to day life bathes in misery and now, more than ever, he's determined to do something to change it, even if that means taking the law into his own hands.

Mike Barlowe though, his brother in arms, doesn't seem to hate anyone. He just feels kind of sad about his life and he tries to relieve his psychological, but also bodily pain, since he carries a serious wound on the knee, by drinking alcohol and taking scores of pain killers. What a life, one would say. What a life!

We meet a lot of human wrecks in this story; people who have lost everything in an accident, or during the war, or at a moment of pure madness. Even though some of the protagonists seem to lead quiet and peaceful lives that is not really the case. They also have harmed people and have been harmed by others. They've also suffered, or still suffer loss, sadness, loneliness. Actually when it comes to it I would say that none of these people seems to belong to this world anymore. They can only be grateful for what they have and that's what keeps them going: a job, a family, a very good friend who'll stand by their side no matter what, a purpose that could prove misguided, but which at the same time will give them the opportunity to face their inner demons.

The author is not very kind with his heroes. They are all full of faults, full of out-of-control passions, even full of themselves. But maybe that's exactly what makes this book so special. It talks about people who could be living right next door to us, or maybe down the street; people who meet once a year to celebrate a life and mourn for a death; people who sit at a dark corner of a bar where they desperately try to hide their fears away.

If you like adventures you'll get some here; if you like mysteries, not so much; if you love police procedurals, well, this could work for you; but it would be better if while reading it you just let yourself go, and enjoy the ride. It may be a bleak ride in a way, but it's a great one nevertheless.

Gloria Feit says

In this, his sixth novel, the author takes the reader to the Twin Cities area of the US, and focuses attention in particular, for crucial parts of the tale, on the eponymous region known for its excellent fishing. As one character, who owns a cabin there, puts it, "no matter how tired he is, no matter how low he goes, no matter how shitty or screwed up life ever seems to get, for him it's nothing a couple weeks in the lake country can't fix." But nothing as innocuous as that in this telling.

The pivotal event from which everything else stems is the death of Becky Morse, a college sophomore, killed one rainy night when a car crashed head-on into hers, the other driver having fallen asleep at the wheel. Ultimately, Wade Benson, a successful, hard-working architect in his 40's with a wife and young daughter of his own, avoided criminal charges and was convicted of misdemeanor reckless driving, given five years probation, with the added provision that he spend two days in jail for each of those five years, to be served on the anniversary of the girl's death.

Needless to say, Becky's death, and the outcome of the trial, sparked quite a lot of outrage through the area, the local as well as national media dutifully covering the man's time in prison each year. As the book opens, the fifth anniversary of the accident is approaching. Maya Lamb, 26-year-old reporter for one of the local tv stations, is among those covering the event. That morning, Benson's daughter, now almost exactly the same age Becky Morse had been when she died, disappears.

The plot revolves around the ensuing investigation, which grows more intense as the hours go by, with no clues as to who is responsible or why. Two local men, buddies for years since they served in the Marines together in the Iraqi desert, returning much the worse for wear, appear to be involved. The tension and the suspense mount as the hunt goes on for the missing girl.

This is a terrifically entertaining novel, with nail-biting, breathless stretches, and it is highly recommended.

Beth says

I know better. But I believed an author recommendation of LAKE COUNTRY by Sean Doolittle. That's because the author I believed is Dennis Lehane, an excellent author, one of my favorites, and a master thriller writer, which is what LAKE COUNTRY is supposed to be. But I know because I've seen and been told by the writers themselves that good writers often recommend books not on the basis of the books but on the basis of either their friendship with or empathy for the authors of those books. Lehane and other writers who are guilty of this do their readers a disservice, and that's not good business.

Obviously, I did not enjoy LAKE COUNTRY. I thought it was a thriller. And it could have been. But it takes 150 pages to get to anything thrilling. First are introductions to the characters and the beginnings of their stories. There's a TV news woman who keeps coming in handy to the police and gets herself involved in the investigation. There's a guy trying to bully his way into the action. There's the beautiful college girl who is kidnapped by a guy who is mad at the girl's father; the kidnapper was a Marine and in Iraq with a guy whose sister was accidentally killed by the girl's father. (HUH?) And we have our good guy Mike, a friend of the kidnapper, who tries to make things right.

When the book finally gets to thrills, it's only thrilling off and on; other chapters containing boring stories are stuck in here and there.

The end felt like "the end"; it leaves lots of questions and is as if the book is missing a final chapter.

I won this book through the librarything.com Early Reviewers program.

Linda Strong says

This was a Pick It For Me for March. I did have it on my TBR list and the reviews were really good. That being said, I was not all that enthralled by this book.

There really wasn't much of a mystery and honestly, I didn't like any of the characters ... other than the Uncle. I found him amusing if nothing else. I felt sorry for the vets and what they must have been going through with injuries and PTSD, but I didn't particularly like them.

Basically what I got was a girl was kidnapped because her father fell asleep at the wheel and he crashed into another car where another girl was killed. The victim's brother died overseas while he was in service. The father was sentenced to 2 days a year in jail for a total of 5 years. A friend of the deceased brother's decided that this father needed to know what it felt like to lose his own daughter and kidnaps his daughter.

After that, it just became mishmash to me. I admit I skipped over some parts because it was a jumble of bodies and was nearing boredom.

Not my cup of tea.

Madonna says

I found Lake Country to be entertaining and very realistic. Sean Doolittle makes you feel like you are right there while things are happening. Excellent characters and perfect execution of his plot. I am ready to read all his books. I have always enjoyed a good crime mystery and cannot think of one I have enjoyed more.

Thanks to Goodreads for making it possible for me to find another great author to read.

Rory Costello says

Another crisp and well-paced thriller from Sean Doolittle, featuring a "bad guy" who breaks the mold, a really lethal and scary bad guy, a good guy with a different dimension whose loyalty lands him in hot water, a plucky and tough young woman, and a host of other good characters against a Minnesota backdrop. I'll be looking at more of Doolittle's work in time.

Lou says

"As long as there are writers like Sean Doolittle out there, American crime fiction has got a sterling future ahead of it." —Dennis Lehane

"With Lake Country, Sean Doolittle has out-Fargoed Fargo. Already a master of Midwestern noir, he takes a huge, novelistic leap with his newest work, a complex, quirky, and tremendously satisfying story of revenge and redemption. If you haven't yet read a Doolittle novel, you've missed the cutting edge of crime fiction today. Trust me, this guy is the future." —William Kent Krueger, New York Times bestselling author of Northwest Angle

Wade Benson has to his name a crime that many feel has been overlooked and has not been dealt with enough punishment. He knows too well though every time he looks into his daughters face that the face of a dead girl will haunt him. Courts gave him five years probation period. Once a year, on the anniversary of the dead girl, he will spend 48 hours incarcerated. Something happens close to home on his admission to jail. The whole situation gets a bit of a mess not professionally organized and planned. A reward is put forward and the plot thickens as a motley crew of men enter the scene on pursuit for some hefty cash. It all pans out and proves to be a session of thrilling fast paced reading. There are two characters who are worth making note of they are Barlow and Potter two ex-marine corp buddies who served together in Iraq. They have the good fortune of being back in the USA alive from being in the worst danger zones. They don't at present have the good fortune of a great job or pockets filled with cash. Will they be the hunted or the hunters?

This story is packed into a neatly sized thriller that demands to be read in one sitting.

Review also @ <http://more2read.com/review/lake-country-by-sean-doolittle/>

Esther Somorai says

Wow, what a read. You become a part of this well written, true to life story. I'm so very glad I won this

outstanding, suspenseful crime novel through Goodreads, first-reads and look forward to reading other books by this author. ****Highly Recommend****
