



The Untamed

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The mysterious Whistlin' Dan Barry rides a black stallion named Satan, followed by a wolf dog named Black Bart. Dan has his own problems, but they multiply when he encounters Jim Silent and his outlaw gang.

The Untamed Details

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Author : Max Brand

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From Reader Review The Untamed for online ebook

Morris Nelms says

This was my first experience with Max Brand. I don't think I'll read more of his stuff. This was an unique spin on an archetypal story with a well developed hero. I have to give him high marks for that alone. Most heroes are less interesting than the villains. Brand worked as a cowboy early in his life, and that gives this book a more authentic quality, especially when he writes about horses. He and Zane Grey have an excellent gift for describing the landscape.

Now, to the problems I have with this book. The biggest one is dialogue. Most of it sounds like these people learned their language from a book of Western cliches. Robert Parker's dialogue in his Westerns is far more convincing, though I sometimes wonder if the curse words used by Parker's characters were around at that time. I'm not sure if the author has a poor opinion of women or if the characters do. Perhaps both. There are only two women in this book, and one is the blonde blue eyed ingenue, and the other woman is the mother of one of the outlaws. Neither has much personality. They feel like stock characters.

I'd recommend this book for anyone interested in popular fiction in the 20th century. It's clear this book has been influential, and it has a kind of pulp fiction excitement that helps move things along.

Great book? Great writer? No, not at all. Worth a look? Yes, but not for everyone.

Stephanie says

While I enjoyed this story, it had a little bit too much supernatural about it. It's supposed to be a straight western, but Whistling Dan is just too unusual.

Mike says

Dan Barry is an unusual man, or is he a man? He seems to have other-worldly characteristics that help him protect and avenge those around him. He is the superhero of the old west. He appears to be a mild-mannered, child-like young fellow who is sheltered from the goin's on down in town and the new saloon. His adopted family wants to shelter and protect him. Little do they know he has powers and abilities from which the saloon should be sheltered.

I like Max Brand. His old-style writing of 100 years ago is unlike today's modern writing. He is much more eloquent and verbose. He provides details that many of today's modern writers would gloss over. I'm not sure what to think of Whistlin' Dan Barry, but I'm intrigued enough to read more so I can find out if he is man or beast.

KB says

First in a series of a Man, a horse and dog. Liked!

Julia says

Whistlin' Dan is quite an unusual and mysterious character. He appears simple, naive, mild mannered, and unassuming to strangers; but watch out if you push him too far. He becomes like a panther, with strength unequalled. He is totally loyal to his friends and good people in general. He has two devoted creatures that love him beyond understanding: a wild horse named Satan, and a wolfish dog... maybe all wolf, named Black Bart. In this first story, he gets picked on by some local thugs, who mistake his slow initial response for cowardice. From then on it's full-on war between him and the local outlaws and those of the law enforcement who have knuckled-under to them. They kidnap the woman he loves and his adopted father, who raised him from a young orphan (found wandering in the wilderness.) I can hardly wait to read more in this series: *The Night Horseman* and *The Seventh Man*. First published in 1919, I listened to this as a free audio download by a wonderful reader, from LibriVox.org.

Pop says

This was the LibriVox recording. Love the prose of Brand and the early authors of western fiction "He says, she says, etc". A very good story and entertaining.

Scott Pinzon says

Max Brand is the pen name of Frederick Faust, perhaps one of the most prolific authors who ever lived. He penned 500 novels, and that is just the tip of the iceberg. He started out as a pulp hack and found success later in life by inventing Dr. Kildare, which was not only a series character in novels but became a prime time television show, which Faust wrote.

I am intrigued by the pulp novelists of the early 20th century, and I love a well-written Western, so I picked this up. To enjoy it, it helps if you lower your expectations and realize this is an accumulation of six or more episodes dashed off for a WEEKLY fiction magazine.

It is, indeed, pulpy. All the characters are cardboard stereotypes, about as thick and well-rounded as the pixels on your e-reader.

But writing at the breakneck speed he did, Faust/Brand does surprisingly well. You can see him straining to create lasting Western iconography, and darned if tropes and images in this book from around 1920 are not seen in the 1960s Clint Eastwood spaghetti westerns. It is the earliest book I've seen where a cowboy whistles mystically as he rides, a sound that was often exploited in theme music for Westerns from the 1950s and early 1960s (with appropriate cool reverb).

The plot is kinda fun and Whistling Dan is an interesting creation because he's the only unpredictable character in the story. This is a brief and easy read, and is worthwhile if you're curious to see the grandpappy of a lot of cowboy stereotypes that survived the following 40 years. There is a fair amount of action, which is always fun. But don't mistake this for anything but what you'd expect from a writer churning out prose for a penny a word.

More historically interesting than actually enjoyable, yet also enjoyable if you're in the right mood to take it for what it is. I liked it enough to read two more Max Brand novels before finally going, "I get it already!"

Ron says

Max Brand burst on the scene with this striking novel less than two decades after Wister's *The Virginian* and just as Zane Grey was topping the bestseller lists. In those three writers one can trace the evolution of western storytelling from history into myth. Wister's Wyoming and his cowboy characters were drawn from life, while Grey romanticized the desert Southwest and the heroes and villains he put there. Brand stripped away realism and romance in *The Untamed* and left pure myth—with even a touch of the supernatural. . .

Read my review at my blog.

Daniel Ghanim says

1. What did you like about the book and what could have been better?

In the book *The Untamed* by Max Brand, the classic western novel was an enjoyable read, which kept you going till the end with trouble and mishaps. The description was put in the right spot, and the imagery of the landscape was great, which was better than other westerns, but lacked intensity. The book was no different than an ordinary western, other than both having the dog and horse together, but was not as appealing to me because the author used too many names for the same people, and constantly was jumping around from scene to scene.

2. Discuss the style of the book?

As mentioned in the paragraph before, Brand's use of imagery, and descriptive language put this western better than others in that category. His use of organization with names was more informal, and the dialogue was choppy, as if it was word for word what the cowboy said.

3. What was the overall message/ dilemma?

In this western Brand didn't present a message to portray to his readers. *The Untamed* was more of an enjoyable read that was for pleasure, and not for academic thought. Dan's trouble with the law was constant, but the hardest part on him was when he got shot, and barley survived.

Susana789 says

Westernové paparbacky vydavate?stva Návrat :-) zo zlatých devä?desiatych.

Cindy says

This was a typical old fashion Western written in the early 1900's. You have a good guy, Whistling Dan. The good guy has to have a lady love, that was Kate. The Outlaws were the Silence Gang. I don't know if it was intentional but Whistling Dan almost seemed like a super hero. A character you would find in a comic book, not a western. He had a strange past. Someone found him wandering in the mountains. He had a black horse named Satin and a wolf named Black Bart. He had an iron grip and eyes that would turn yellow if there was trouble. People said his whistle was hypnotizing. It starts out slow, I stayed with it for 50 pages and the pace picked up. Some parts were tedious, it is Dan trying to track down and kill Jim Silence because they got into a bar fight and drew blood. To make things worse, the Silence gang kidnapped Kate. The final showdown was disappointing. The ending left me flat. It was open ended so you read the next Whistling Dan story.

Gary says

Close to Zane Gray, the best Western writer. Max Brand really can tell a good story.

Ed [Redacted] says

The Untamed was Max Brand's first western novel and possibly his first novel of any kind. Originally published in 1919 in "All Story Weekly" as a six part serial. It reads like the script of a cowboy movie serial. The protagonist "Whistlin' Dan Berry" is about as indestructible a superman of a protagonist as you will ever meet. He does everything perfectly and never appears to be in any real danger save for a period of time where he is shot in the shoulder with a rifle and nearly dies, only to perform miraculous feats of hand to hand combat a few days later. This is pulp stuff, good not great, but enjoyable enough.

Cindy Winder delong says

I enjoyed this book. I wasn't sure what to think of the main character, Whistlin' Dan. I was never sure what he was going to do but whatever he did always seemed true to his character. Whistlin' Dan was a very likable character but in a way I felt sorry for him and I always worried about him. I started to be concerned about how the book was going to end. If it ended badly, I was sure that I never wanted to read another Max Brand book again. The book did not end how I expected but the ending fit perfectly. On the downside, I had to work to keep the characters straight because sometimes they were referred to by their first name, sometimes by their last name, and by nicknames, too. I was surprised that the author spoke of werewolves and shape-shifting since these seem to be modern fads and this book was written many decades ago.

P.S. Winn says

Dan Barry, along with a black stallion named Satan, and his dog Black Bart, really more of a wolf are headed for trouble with outlaws in this thriller.
