



The Long Fall: A Novel of Crime

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At once authentic and flip, by turns wildly funny and deadly serious, as riveting as it is inventive, *The Long Fall* twists sibling rivalry inside out and sets the conventional crime novel on its head. In sunbaked Phoenix, Arizona, this never-predictable tale tosses into its antic mix a dead father, his two sons—one a small-time ex-con with a consistent genius for sabotaging his own best interests, the other a straight, uptight solid citizen with a moneymaking chain of dry-cleaning stores and a restive ex-stewardess of a wife named Evelyn—and a sicko cop with a twisted worldview. Recently released from prison—twenty-four months for possession of a truckload of black-market saguaro cacti—and in deep debt to an unforgiving crank dealer, Jimmy Coates returns home only to discover that his brother has cut him out of his inheritance. A not-unjustifiable desire to settle old scores and new sends Jimmy on a robbery spree that wipes out four of his brother's dry-cleaning establishments. But when he finds himself tumbling for a mutinously sexy Evelyn, the impulse to vengeance reverses itself. Unwittingly, however, Jimmy has already set in motion a series of dangerous consequences—adultery, blackmail, love, betrayal—that culminate in a blueprint for murder. And it could be Jimmy himself who is taking the long fall.

The Long Fall: A Novel of Crime Details

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From Reader Review The Long Fall: A Novel of Crime for online ebook

Dee Renee Chesnut says

I downloaded this free ebook to my Nook library in March 2012.

It is a noir novel with characters who just can't catch a break.

I recommend it only to readers who enjoy the noir genre as the author aspires to write like Elmore Leonard.

Francis says

You know I kinda liked it. I think this guy can write. Just not enough story. Sorta, like building a really good foundation for a pale pink, three bedroom, two car garage, stucco in the suburbs.

You kinda admire the intent, but you don't truly get the sense of it.

Chris says

So I feel a little weird reviewing a book written by one of my former professors, but I thought I'd give it a shot anyway.

At first, I wasn't really into it. The first few pages tripped me up rather badly, in fact. I couldn't quite get my bearings as to where Jimmy was and what he was doing. And then there was a long passage that was all commas and tons of metaphors. I felt completely out of breath by the time I reached the end of it (which was the intended effect, so, you know, well done). I have to admit, though, that it was bit off-putting. But, once I made it past that first chapter, it was a much smoother ride.

The characters in the book are all interesting, but by far the coolest bit of description was of Newt Deems's tattoo of a tarantula on the back of his hand. I don't care how you spin it, that's just awesome. And this coming from someone who's terrified of spiders. Maybe that's why it captured my attention so much?

Anyway, yes, the characters are interesting, if not exactly likeable. They're all flawed, some moreso than others. They all get into trouble and commit questionable acts. But they keep the action moving quickly and though the story takes a few unexpected turns, everything comes together nicely and with a very noir-ish feel.

I'm not sure how well some of the references have aged, though. Do people still have Furby and Beanie Baby collections? That seems like it was old by the time I left high school. But then this book has a few years on it by now, and that really doesn't take anything away from the book. It does make for a somewhat amusing robbery attempt, though.

I'm not exactly sure why I gave this a 4 and not a 5. I enjoyed it well enough, and I have no real complaints. It's really good for its genre. And it has some really great moments, like the bar bet: 50 different words for titties in under a minute. That's just a classic.

But despite all that, it didn't really set my world on fire. So, a 4 out of 5.

Jim Thomsen says

An absolute gem of a literary crime novel, "The Long Fall" is an expertly concocted cocktail of character development, tight plotting and musical language that explores deep themes of discontent and desire to change.

It somehow manages the trick of not wasting a single word while rising high above the Patterson writing waterline. It has all the tone and discipline of high literature but skips the flat affect-less affectations of the "serious" MFA-grad-style novels, balancing wit and generous color with a genuine, undistanced affection for its multi-dimensional dirtbags. (The scene in which main character Jimmy Coates, a minor-league criminal, wins a bar bet by listing at least fifty synonyms for breasts in a minute's time, is just one example.)

An absolute pleasure to read, and re-read. And re-read again.

A sample of Kostoff's sucker-punch prose:

"Jimmy figures his teachers, Mom and Richard had been right all along. There must be something missing in him. He's never wanted things bad enough to work for them. He knows he's supposed to want them, but it never worked out that way. The idea of accumulating a bunch of things just never held any juice for him. That's why it was so easy to take them. Most people had more than they needed anyway, and they always wanted more, and Jimmy basically filled the gap between the attic and the yard sale."

Benjamin says

Pretty good page turner.

Dave says

Decent, Elmore Leonard-ish crime novel

Ron Smith says

The author expects the reader to root for a small time ex-con who bungles and burgles his way through life, pisses off the wrong people, and has a torrid affair with his brother's wife. That's a lot too ask, because the main character, Jimmy Coates, is the epitome of a LOSER. Yet, Kostoff pulls it off without a hitch. This was a fun read.

Valerie Downs says

Hmmm

I have to admit the author did a fine job of developing the characters, it was generally easy to like - well dislike them. I am not so sure that there was a likable character in the book at all. Most of them were "victims" of society or someone else's actions, a hard childhood or a stifling marriage. Really? No characters in the book that actually had any kind of moral compass? This was a dark book, and I wish I had listened to my intuition that by 25% into the book that it wasn't going to improve. I hated that there really wasn't anything really redeeming in the book, just violence, crime, lust, adultery, and characters thinking of whatever they can do to further their wants. I didn't like the beginning, middle or the end. Though I think this author could write a good book. This one isn't it.

Stan Lanier says

Am I the only person who's not long known this man's writing? He is too good.

Alan Mills says

Loved this book. First I ever heard of the author (Thanks, TyrusBooks for practically giving it away, while I only paid 99 cents, I'll gladly pay full price to read more!)

Down and out loser, just out of prison, get rich quick scheme disappeared on a bad bet at the track lands Jimmy deep in debt to the local loan shark. His brother wrote him off as a loser, and cheated him out of his inheritance. Jimmy's life spirals away, into mayhem and murder, but always with a smart mouth and a good line. More than anything, reminds me of Elmore Leonard at his best.

Jzinind says

One of the best books I've read this year.

Patrick Jr. says

One of those chances people take on new authors, and I wasn't disappointed. The combination of a tightly wound plot and honest characterization along with a really biting prose made it so I could barely put this thing down. Great read, will definitely be looking for more from Kostoff.

Ian O'brien says

good read. liked the characters and they all stayed true to themselves.

James Thane says

Fresh out of prison for stealing a load of valuable cacti, Jimmy Coates borrows \$6,000 from a loan shark and blows it on a losing bet. Shortly thereafter, he also loses his job as a performer at the Old Wild West Park in Phoenix when he fails a drug test in rather spectacular fashion.

Ray Harp, the loan shark, is hard on Jimmy's trail, looking to make an example of him. Harp's right-hand man, Aaron Limbe, has a personal score to settle with Jimmy whom he blames for getting him kicked off the Phoenix police force. Limbe is looking forward to spending some quality time alone with Jimmy, some vise grips and a soldering gun.

Jimmy is owed an inheritance from his grandfather who died while Jimmy was in the pen. Jimmy hopes to cash in the inheritance and pay off Harp, but he discovers that his straight-arrow brother, Richard, has pulled a fast one and effectively cheated Jimmy out of the inheritance. Richard insists that this is for Jimmy's "own good," and that Richard is simply protecting Jimmy until he gets his life in order.

Richard owns a chain of dry cleaning stores, and Jimmy decides that an appropriate revenge would be to launch a lightning string of robberies against his brother's stores. But things become further complicated when Richard's disillusioned wife, Evelyn, recognizes Jimmy during one of the robberies. From that point, Jimmy's efforts to save himself and to gain some measure of revenge against his self-righteous brother quickly gather momentum, leading Jimmy to take a number of increasingly desperate steps that culminate in an explosive climax.

This is a fast-paced book that will remind some readers of the early Elmore Leonard, although Kostoff is not really in the same league as Leonard. But, of course, virtually no one is in the same league as Elmore Leonard, and *The Long Fall: A Novel of Crime* stands on its own as a very enjoyable book

Angel **Book Junkie says**

If there is one thing in life I cannot stand it is a Moocher. Someone who likes to take from others without one thought or care in the world. I thought this is what Jimmy was. I think the author did a great job developing characters but as for the story it was predictable and the characters were not likeable at all. This was an easy read and I liked it but could not find anything that made me fall in love or want to go read another by this author.
