



The Hired Gun

Bob MacKenzie

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In 1959, western Canada was only half a century removed from the old west already being commemorated in books and in the movies and television series. Cowboys and oilmen dominated the popular imagination in a rural economy of small towns surrounded by small family farms. The culture was in gradual transition, with an eye to the future but one foot planted firmly in the previous century. The new mythology of the old west fueled the imagination of every child bored by an uneventful hot and dry Alberta summer.

It's the summer of 1959. Three 12 year old boys. Two 12 year old girls. Summer is boring in a small Alberta town. A mysterious stranger arrives in a big black car. A hired gun, the kids think, a hit man. Life has become more interesting. The kids follow the stranger. A boy is murdered. A prominent shopkeeper is murdered. The kids tell Tom, the town Mountie, their suspicions. Tom seems not to believe them. There are rumours of major fraud at the local coop store. The kids follow the stranger and the coop manager. And then...

The Hired Gun Details

Date : Published April 15th 2016 by Dark Matter Press

ISBN : 9780991685875

Author : Bob MacKenzie

Format : Paperback 80 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Young Adult, Teen

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From Reader Review The Hired Gun for online ebook

Serena says

In compliance with FTC guidelines, I have won this book through the Goodreads Giveaways.

the Hired Gun ****

A realistic portrayal of the thoughts (or lack thereof), feelings and perspective of your average 12-year-olds. Which hasn't changed much since 1959 regardless of country. The Hired Gun revolves around a group of friends and their misfortune and adventure during the summer of 1959 in a small sleepy town in Canada.

the Dugout ****

A short story that engagingly weaves together the past and present of an individual of the above mentioned small town.

My Rating System:

* couldn't finish, ** wouldn't recommend, *** would recommend, **** would read again, ***** have read again

Allison Sanderson says

Nice little story. Not too complicated or intricate, but a decent read. I liked the story "The Dugout" in the back of the book even more. Both stories could have been dragged out longer, but in their short version as they are they are perfectly effective and good reads for young readers.

Aryan Sarath says

The story begins in a small town of Elizabeth in the Province of Alberta in Canada where a group of kids namely Alex, Dickie, Linda, Sam and the Anonymous (You can presume this as the lead character or the author himself) have been having a good time spending in Chinaman's or the Crown hotel by eating chips, drinking coke and listening to Juke Box - yeah, you heard it right and it's been ages that we got to hear about this.

During one such outing, the kids spot a stranger who was also sporting a gun. Unfortunately no one else apart from the kids had taken a note of it. As they suspected him to be a hired gun as he kept practising his aim and shots in a deserted place. The kids kept stalking the stranger till one day they heard a familiar voice from behind which made them frightened and when they tried to escape, Dickie gets caught and killed. While they started doubting the stranger even more after this incident, they decided to split up with one group deciding to keep an eye on the stranger and the other group to look for hints elsewhere.

In the mean while, they tried to catch up with Tom to tell about the stranger who did not believe the kids, initially. On the other hand, the co-op store in the town was in the news with funds and merchandise being missing from its inventory and everyone starts doubting Mr. Pauline who was the cashier and store in-charge.

There was Mr. Dutka as well who was looking over the operations of the store but he was hardly visible to the public.

Now things take a turn when this stranger also gets killed and only by then the real identity of the serial killer was revealed. To find out more as to who the killer was, buy the book and find out. The book is available on Amazon

This book kind of reminded me of reading Hardy Boys...

I received this book for FREE through Good Reads Free Book Program.

Aaron says

Two short stories are included in this novella. As the narrator recounts stories from his childhood, you get the feeling these events could have happened. With just the right amount of fogginess in memories of childhood, the stories unfold quickly, ending with a jolt of revelation.

The Dugout, even shorter than The Hired Gun, felt like a bonus story. In some ways, it eclipsed the longer story, with that same feeling of youthful recollection.

* I received a free copy of this book from Goodreads giveaways *

Susan says

I won this book through Goodreads. Loved it. Very exciting and quick read.
