



Jackrabbit Smile

Joe R. Lansdale

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Edgar Award-winner and fan favorite Joe R. Lansdale is back with Hap and Leonard's latest caper: investigating the disappearance of a revivalist cult leader's daughter.

Hap and Leonard are an unlikely pair--Hap, a self-proclaimed white trash rebel, and Leonard, a tough-as-nails black gay Vietnam vet and Republican--but they're the closest friend either of them has in the world. Hap is celebrating his wedding to his longtime girlfriend, and his and Leonard's PI boss, Brett, when their backyard barbecue is interrupted by a couple of Pentecostal white supremacists. They're not too happy to see Leonard, and no one is happy to see them, but they have a problem and only Hap and Leonard will take the case.

Judith Mulhaney's daughter, Jackrabbit, has been missing for five years. Well, she's been missing from them for five years, but she's been missing from everybody, including the local no-goods they knew ran with her, for a few months. Despite their misgivings about Judith and her son, Hap and Leonard take the case. It isn't long until they find themselves mixed up in a revivalist cult believing that Jesus will return flanked by an army of lizard-men, and solving a murder to boot.

With Lansdale's trademark humor, whip-smart dialogue, and plenty of ass-kicking adventures to be had, you won't want to miss Hap and Leonard's latest.

Jackrabbit Smile Details

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Author : Joe R. Lansdale

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From Reader Review Jackrabbit Smile for online ebook

Tony says

JACK RABBITT SMILE. (2018). Joe R. Lansdale. **1/2.

I used to be a steady reader of Lansdale's works, but suddenly tired of his style and moved on to other authors. I saw that he had this new Hap and Leonard novel out, and decided to give him another try.

Disappointing. He has written the same book that he has written numerous times before. The story involves the team being hired to find the where-abouts of a young girl, but she hardly enters into the tale at all. It is really a collection of smart-assed quips and pungent insults tossed about between the two men and to any other character that appears in the story. The pages reek with testosterone, and little reason. It's time to take another break from Lansdale for a few more years. It is noted on the jacket that this series is now available on TV through a Sundance presentation. I don't get that on my cable, but wonder how it can be presented. Maybe I can find a friend who gets that channel and can watch an episode. Then again, maybe not.

Robert James says

I felt like this one got back to the Hap and Leonard from a few years ago. Lots of one-liners and violence and who cares what the mystery is. The ending is a little anti climatic however.

Dan Schwent says

When a white supremacist and his mother show up at Brett's detective agency, Hap and Leonard are conflicted but agrees to track down Jackrabbit, the missing sister/daughter. Marvel Creek is on its way to being segregated and Hap and Leonard run afoul of The Professor, the mastermind behind it all. Will Hap and Leonard be able to bring Jackrabbit home alive?

Hap and Leonard are up to their old tricks, cracking wise and generally pissing off the bad guys until everything erupts in a hornet's nest of violence. This time, they're in Hap's old stomping grounds, Marvel Creek, which is under the thumb of a segregationist.

Disclaimer: These are my opinions and should not be treated as a personal attack if they don't match yours.

Let's hit the positives first. Hap and Leonard are still hilarious and Joe Lansdale is one of my favorite writers. I've read 50-something of his books and he always makes me laugh. Not only that, he can write some horrifying scenes, which he does in this one. It's easy to forget he started off as a splatterpunk writer. The confrontation at the end was one of his best. The callbacks to previous Lansdale tales, both from Hap and Leonard's previous outings and other works, like Fender Lizards, were nice nods to the things past. The bad guys were bad but Hap and Leonard were "more bad" as Hap would say. It was a pretty entertaining read. However...

...This is the 13th Hap and Leonard book. If you've stuck around this long, Hap and Leonard are as familiar as the bickering old couple that lives down the street. I've been reading about Hap and Leonard for almost half my life at this point and there aren't a lot of surprises left anymore. With the guys working for Brett and

Marvin Hanson vouching for them every time they get into a scrape, everything feels safe and comfortable and there's none of the desperation of the earlier books left.

Jackrabbit Smile is an engaging, entertaining read but I didn't think it was nearly as good as some of the other books in the series. Three out of five stars.

Char says

Hap and Leonard return to Hap's hometown of Marvel Creek in Joe Lansdale's latest release JACKRABBIT SMILE.

This time around our heroes are hired by a man and his mother to find their missing sister/daughter. The relationship between Hap, Leonard and Brett and their new clients isn't a good one, since both the man and his mom are openly prejudiced against any and all who aren't white. Which, of course, doesn't sit well with Leonard. Will the dynamic duo find the missing girl? Will the people who hired them get their due? You'll have to read this to find out!

The humor Joe Lansdale is famous for is here in spades, but there's a lot of darkness as well. Hap's hometown is full of racism, violence, and both false prophets and profits. (It's hard to believe good-hearted Hap came from such an ugly place.) All of this makes for a quick, extremely entertaining read.

If you're reading the Hap and Leonard series, you already know how addicting these books can be. If you're watching the television series on the Sundance Channel, you'll note some similarities between the current season and this book. Both take unflinching looks at the ugliness of racism in all of its different faces and forms; but they do it with bravery and a sense of humor. I think that's what makes this series, (both the books and the television show), so special and enjoyable.

If you're not reading this series or watching the show, what are you waiting for?

Highly recommended!

Thanks to Mulholland Books and NetGalley for the e-arc of this book in exchange for my honest opinion. This is it.

Nick says

You really can't go wrong with Lansdale and his Hap and Leonard series. An always reliable good time.

Karl says

'Hokey Smoke Bullwinkle' Joe R. Lansdale's new book "Jack Rabbit Smile" certainly shows that the man is

still capable of writing a compelling Hap and Leonard novel. The last few books have certainly not been up to par. They contained some good stuff, however not, in my humble opinion, what they could have been.

For those who don't know, Hap and Leonard are a couple of lifelong friends who now work for Hap's new wife Brett in a detective agency. In this installment they are hired by a couple of white supremacists to find a missing relative by the name of Jackie Mulhany, known as Jackrabbit, due to her having big front teeth. She has been missing for five years.

Finding a missing girl is a trope used by Mr. Lansdale several times in the ongoing Hap and Leonard chronicles, and he manages to put a fresh spin on each subsequent iteration. The story begins at Hap's wedding and quickly accelerates forward into the investigation.

There is plenty of Mr. Lansdale's country humor and enough racism to choke a hog, making this one of the better installments in number of years. The story moves at a brisk clip as we rejoin our likeable protagonists in a quest for what really occurred versus what they are meant to believe.

This Hap and Leonard novel is an ARC (Advanced Reading Copy), Uncorrected Proof, On sale date -March 27, 2018.

Lynn says

A few hours well-spent studying the adventures of Hap and Leonard makes for a happy reader. Another good one....and that Leonard.

Trish says

The Hal & Leonard series is full up with crazy male bravado and vulnerability, pressing hard on our moral, sexual, and racial understanding until we squeeze out a guffaw and decide to fall for these guys sitting on our faces. These two take on challenges others would let fall into a fast-flowing river, and now that the series has become a regular gig on Sundance Channel as an Original Series, starring America's own brilliant, tough-seeming, and comedic Michael Kenneth Williams and British star James Purefoy, hopefully Joe Lansdale will get more airtime .

Lansdale barrels ahead riding roughshod over anyone who hasn't updated their hard drive with new information about the lives of gays, trans, and people of color. No more excuses will be made for those faltering on the road to total acceptance of these folks living in America. Lansdale doesn't make any bones about it, just assumes the bad guys are the unreformed who 'haven't quite gotten there yet.' There is damage being done daily to the psyches of ordinary folk with extraordinary skills who have to put up with crippling prejudice.

This fast-paced addition to the series addresses white supremacy head on: WHITE IS RIGHT is emblazoned on the T-shirt of a young man seeking the investigative services of Hap & Leonard, not knowing Leonard can be rattlesnake mean to those who disparage him for his color...or any old thing he might take it in his mind to do. This is the book #12 in the series so Lansdale doesn't spend much time explaining the two main characters. The chapters are short and speedy, racing to a gruesome dénouement that features a hog farm, some mean twins, and a jackrabbit smile.

This is the kind of book one can read in a day, relaxedly, since it is mainly composed of dialogue and a few hard whacks of a rifle butt. But it will put you in a good mood since the bad guys get theirs and the good guys, well, they may not ever get paid, but think of what they're doing for the planet! I ♥?Joe Lansdale.

Jette Harris says

RIP My Feels.

Jackrabbit Smile is a roller-coaster of a book, full of colorful, well-crafted characters. It has the same laugh-out-loud humor and the most natural-sounding dialogue a book can have.

Although I had a suspicion in the back of my mind what the resolution would be, Lansdale kept me second- and third-guessing over and over again. He made me feel like he had pulled the rug out from under my feet not once, but twice.

Other than the nasty characters, there was nothing I did not like about Jackrabbit Smile. It's Lansdale at his best, maybe second only to Mucho Mojo.

Truman32 says

Jackrabbit Smile is the 12th book in the Hap and Leonard series, but the first I have read. Now with your first time, you want it all to be special and gentle, with a lot of candles, patchouli incense, maybe some Barry White playing over the speakers and a fair amount of canoodling and spooning after. Unfortunately, that is not what author Joe R. Lansdale had in store for me with **Jackrabbit Smile**. He was fast. He was rough. He did not seem to care about my feelings at all. With this book, Lansdale really put me through the wringer. I have little doubt he probably uploaded video of our uncomfortable encounter all over the Internet for strangers to type mean-spirited observations about my facial expressions in the comment sections.

Hap and Leonard are best friends who also solve crimes. Hap is white, smart-alecky and best resembles an open-minded distant Southern cousin to Rosanne's Connor family. Leonard is black, gay, grouchy, and best resembles notorious Baltimore stick-up man, Omar Little. This time around, Hap and Leonard are hired by a white supremacist family to track down their missing and estranged daughter, Jackrabbit Mulhaney. Jackrabbit has been hanging around with some unruly and belligerent lowlifes so this is no small task. And when the bodies start stacking up, nobody is really surprised. Hap and Leonard must navigate through a field of aggression, racism, dreadful coffee, weird religions, and personal history to find out what exactly became of this missing woman and her young infant.

Jackrabbit Smile is loaded with memorable personalities and witty observations. The dialogue crackles more than my knees in the morning when I squat down to extract the newspaper from my shrubbery. The story is hardboiled like an Easter egg before it gets submerged into a cup of Paas light green dye. Edgar-winner Lansdale is a great writer at the top of his game. He stocks his story full of uncomfortably violent characters. His driving plot grabs on like a panicked squirrel grabbing onto your head after you startled it looking through those shrubs for that early morning edition of the paper, digging in it's little squirrel claws and refusing to let go in spite of your growing shrieks and howls. And he has a mean streak vital to any pulpy noir tale that makes the book almost impossible to put down. This was a really fun and strong read!

Craig Sisterson says

Although I've had some Lansdale books on my TBR shelves for a little while, I first experienced his riveting, quirky world via the screen drama Hap and Leonard. Adapted from his first three books in his long-running series, that stars James Purefoy and Michael K. Williams as the seemingly mismatched pair of lifelong best friends. It's a great show - full of action, humour, intrigue, memorable characters, social issues and more - and it's well worth visiting the original material.

Lansdale has been called 'the bard of East Texas', and he has a distinctive storytelling style and vivid world creation, a sort of 'swamp noir' that is both bizarre and brilliant. It's violent and action-packed, but also funny and thoughtful and laced with character and a potpourri of relevant issues. For readers who haven't yet experienced Lansdale, it's a little tricky to offer a comparison with other authors.

He's created something terrifically unique.

JACKRABBIT SMILE is the twelfth instalment in Hap and Leonard's escapades. Working as private eyes, they're approached by a couple of Bible-misusing redneck racists who are searching for their troubled sister and daughter, 'Jackrabbit'. Hap and Leonard don't care for the mother-son duo, but their concern for the young woman has them reluctantly on the case. Plus, they could use the cash.

The search takes Hap and Leonard back to Hap's hometown, a place full of striking characters and bizarre leads. From the local sheriff whose brothers are hired goons for a cult-leader-like white separatist-not-supremacist, to old friends and enemies, there are plenty of people keeping things off-kilter. Lansdale demonstrates his deft touch for character in among all the action and confrontation. He sprinkles the tale with 'grotesques' in the Southern Gothic tradition, without falling into cliché. There's a verve and freshness to his characterisation, an authenticity to the relationships and nice moments of surprise that ensure crime readers aren't just seeing the same-old, same-old.

Overall, there is a crackling, anarchic energy to Lansdale's storytelling in JACKRABBIT SMILE. It's a quick read that doesn't feel 'thin', that is overflowing with unusual moments and characters, while also raising plenty of thought-provoking contemporary and evergreen issues. Lansdale veers towards 'pulp' in style and mindset, but he's so much more than such distillation. A terrific read.

Gary Branson says

My first novel by Lansdale, won't be my last. Fast plot and good story, short and to the point. Well done.

Marvin says

After reading 13 novels and a handful of short stories and novellas about Hap Collins and Leonard Pine, I do not just feel like I know them. I'm feeling like I am a part of their East Texas town. Hap and Leonard would be the two guys my parents would tell me to steer clear of and the first person they would call, reluctantly, if they got into a jam. As police chief Marvin Hansen would say, they are assholes and hardheads but he would trust them with his life.

Jackrabbit Smile has all the fixings of a Hap and Leonard novel. The duet is fronting their own detective agency, owned by Hap's old time girlfriend and brand new wife Brett. They are given a job to find a missing woman, Jackie aka Jackrabbit. Hap and Leonard are hired by Jackie's extremely racist mother and brother who gay and black Leonard pounces on like a cat and treat in his psychologically aggressive style like a chew toy. The job takes them to Hap's childhood stomping grounds Marvel Creek and they find out that the town has added a bunch of questionable characters that includes a white supremacist called Professor. Of course, the big question is; is Jackrabbit missing or dead and how was she involved in Marvel Creek's chaotic mix of low life schemers and racemongers?

There are always social issues of race and class lurking in a Hap and Leonard novel but novel #13 really brings them to the forefront which goes far to make it one of the best book of the series in a long while. We get all the snappy dialogue and hard ass action we would expect. Brett plays a minor role which is OK since the meat of the plot is always centered around the rapport of liberal and idealistic Hap and conservative and overly aggressive Leonard. But here is where I need to discuss something that is both disturbing and exciting that I am catching in the last two novels.

As the series goes, we always expect Leonard Pine to be the one most likely to kick ass. Hap kicks ass too but it is usually reluctantly. Yet as the last two novels plays out, and all the novels are in the first person perspective of Hap Collins, Leonard is more blatantly expressing a darkness that was always there. Hap realizes it and seems to know that he has no control over Leonard and that darkness. The thing is, after 13 novels, where is Joe R. Lansdale leading us? Will this bode well or ill for the macho bromance that is Hap and Leonard. I hope the author follows through on this because it could be taking the series out of its very popular formula and leading us in new and very tense territory. For this book, it is one of the thing that vaults this book out of the formula and keeps me guessing where the two friends may be headed. Do the other readers of the series agree with me or do they think I'm off the rails a bit? Let me know.

The Hap and Leonard series is one of those series that I highly recommend starting from the beginning. However if you are reluctant to do that, this one is stand alone enough to enjoy on its own merits. Ten to one odds though, after you are through you will be picking up the rest of them.

Ronald Koltnow says

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One of the best Hap and Leonard yarns in years. Our intrepid duo are hired by white supremacists to find a young woman who has gone missing. Technically, she had left home years before, but there has been no trace of her for months. Their investigation takes them to Marvel Creek, Hap's home town and one where is remembered, sometimes fondly. What they find is a town held in thrall by a town boss, one with a social engineering philosophy that doesn't include people like Leonard. The clash of races, the blighted world view of the racist religious right, and plight of the disenfranchised poor in the South form the backdrop to a well-plotted thriller. There is grotesquerie, it is by Joe, and wild character portraits, and this one hangs together well. My only gripe is that it's too short.

Ian Cockerill says

I just love the Hap & Leonard stories. Joe R Lansdale, speaking as Hap, has a wonderful lyrical style, telling stories of horror, racism, poverty, revenge and true evil with a lyrical, poetic voice and laugh out loud dialogue as a bonus. I've now binge read them all and hope we get more, even as the pair get older.

Do yourself a favour, read them all in order.
