



# Grind Joint

*Dana King*

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## **Grind Joint** Dana King

A new casino is opening in the rural town of Penns River, Pennsylvania but just where the money is coming from no one really knows. Is it Daniel Hecker, bringing hope to a mill town after years of plant closings? Or is the town's salvation really an opening for Mike The Hook Mannarino's Pittsburgh mob to move part of their action down state? Or could it be someone even worse? When the body of a drug dealer is dumped on the casino steps shortly before its grand opening, Detectives Ben Doc Dougherty and Willie Grabek have to survive their department's own inner turmoil and figure out not only who's behind the murder, but what it means to whoever is behind the operation itself. Between the cops, the mob, and the ex-spook in charge of casino security Daniel Rollison, a man with more secrets than anyone will ever know Grind Joint is a mesmerizing mix of betrayal, police action, small town politics, sudden violence and the lives of the people of a town just trying to look after itself.

## **Grind Joint Details**

Date : Published November 21st 2013 by Stark House

ISBN : 9781933586526

Author : Dana King

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Genre : Mystery

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## From Reader Review Grind Joint for online ebook

### Jack Getze says

This crime fiction reader has been in a funk since Elmore Leonard died, knowing I have only one more of my favorite author's novels left to read. And then along comes Dana King. Yahoo! If you could see me in the Charlotte airport, you might think the TSA police are on their way, and maybe they are -- I'm dancing and grinning and these southern people are staring while I celebrate the book's big finish. GRIND JOINT is everything I won't be missing in the years to come: Tight woven sentences of action and insight; clever humorous dialogue that carries the story; and a real talent for leaving out what I would have skipped. Thank you Dana King, Stark House, and Charlie Stella, who deserves much credit his for Italian cooking.

In GRIND JOINT, the lonely suburban stretches of highway outside Pittsburgh teem with crimes and criminals -- a mafia crew on the decline, an upswinging Russian gang led by Yuri the crazy man (who scared the hell out of me). Good villains are tough, but King gets it perfect. Watch Yuri in fascination, the sweat forming on your lip. I was worried from the page he appears, not only because the heroes of this novel -- the local cops and a cousin -- are the kind of people you want living next door, but because they are honest cops. Good cops SMART cops. People to root for, most notably Doc and his cousin Nick. I cannot remember a book I've read -- including anything by Elmore -- where the cops sounded more like cops, tricking suspects, stumbling with women, smart-talking the tough guys, and finally getting out of a big shootout (another Elmore favorite) with brains, brawn, and guts.

Can't wait for another about Doc and Nick.

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### Tertia R Armstrong says

#### Rough and gritty

Realistic dialogues between believable characters for the most part. Stereotyping of the Russian mobster Yuri was the exception. Small town politics at their worst. Impressive action finale. It left you wanting to read the next installment.

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### Michelle Turlock isler says

Dana King is smacking those balls out of the field! He has developed his own voice with his novels. I am not comparing him to anyone because he is in a league of his own. The characters are well developed and his dialogue hits the nail on the head every single time. It doesn't matter if the character is a politician or a street-smart thug, Dana has the dialogue spot on.

Grind Joint is a police procedural that has Detective Ben Dougherty, or "Doc", investigating a case that starts out with a body dumped in in the parking lot of a new casino that has been opened up in Penns River. Honestly, you do not know who to trust in this case. You have a corrupt police force, the Italian mafia, the Russian mafiya, and some other drug dealing lowlife characters. You can be sure that "Doc" in not going to give up until he has the right guy behind bars.

The best thing, in my opinion, in King's books is no one is ever safe. You just never know with this guy and

he has you biting your nails until the end. I love how you get a little bit of everything in Grind Joint. You definitely develop a relationship with some of the characters in it. This is a really great read and I highly recommend it.

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### **Still says**

I've had some annoying health issues over the holidays.

I was captivated by this novel initially but after the introduction of way too many characters I've had to give up on anticipated read.

I fully intend to start this book over in the near future.

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### **Patti Abbott says**

It is hard to imagine a book that so perfectly nails its themes. If you like books about the mob and its reach. Read it.

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### **Benjamin Sobieck says**

Grind Joint realizes the promises made in Dana King's first two excellent crime novels, Wild Bill and Worst Enemies.

First to the reader, in the most vivid yet readable entry in the crime author's catalog. Even the most degenerate lowlife - and there are plenty of them in this tale of casinos, cops, cash and corruption - lives and breathes in the writing. With a large roster of characters, this easily could've become bogged down. But King's tight prose is such that it can accomplish in two sentences something that could've eaten two pages.

That keeps the action flowing forward from the first page onward. King's done this before in other novels, but this time the urgency is as built in as part of the setting. There's a death before the first 1,000 words is up.

That may have something to do with the publisher, Stark House Press. It's about damn time someone figured out what a great writer King is in this genre. Wild Bill and Worst Enemies set the scene for this debut with Stark House, and things couldn't have turned out better.

If mob fiction is your thing, and even if it isn't, Grind Joint is a great crime novel to get lost inside. From the small things, like the way the police officers talk to each other, all the way up to the grand schemes at the heart of the story, Grind Joint is a mob fiction must. You'll never gamble at a casino again without looking over your shoulder.

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### **Rob Kitchin says**

Grind Joint is a tale of a town in decline, local politics, personal rivalries, turf battles, inter-agency rivalry, family relations, and a cop determined to try and uphold law and order in the face of greed, betrayal, and

rising crime and poverty. King packs an awful lot into an excellent story, with multiple, intersecting plotlines, and he hits all the right buttons -- excellent characterisation, strong sense of place, good contextualisation, engaging plot, and tight, expressive prose. There are a fair few characters in Grind Joint, but King has a way of quickly presenting their essence and is particularly good at capturing their interactions and the nuances of their relationships. They are not black and white one-dimensional figures, but have depth and resonance. In particular, Detective Ben 'Doc' Dougherty is an engaging, thoughtful presence. Moreover, King firmly places the reader in Penns River, a former industrial town that has a declining economy and is struggling to find a new path. The plot is cleverly worked, placing in tension the aspirations of a powerful businessman, the machinations of local government and policing, the ambitions of organised crime, and the thin blue line of an honest cop, a couple of his colleagues and his family. King works that tension to great effect, but sticks firmly to social realism rather than veering off into a thriller with a capital T. And despite the themes of corruption and violence, there's compassion running throughout the narrative, embodied in Dougherty and his family. If I were a movie producer I'd be looking to buy the rights. A very fine tale that is told very well. Highly recommended.

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### **Carl R. says**

Grind Joint is the latest Penns River detective novel from Dana King, and it's better than Worst Enemies, which I read (sort of by mistake) and reviewed recently. As the subtitle suggests, King's setting is still a small town outside Pittsburgh in the Pennsylvania rust belt. Our man Detective Dougherty (hereafter known as "Doc" because you pronounce "Dougherty" "Dockerty.") is an ex-military cop who has returned to his home town because he loves it and wants to keep it livable even through hard times.

Since many businesses are shut down and boarded up, Penns River is a natural target for nefarious dealings. Thus, when a guy with money wants to open a casino in an abandoned mall, the council jumps at the chance. Oh, dear. Turns out this guy doesn't have so much money and has brought in some Russian mobsters to augment his capital. Plus the local drug dealers have their turf disrupted. Plus, Doc's beloved police chief has a heart attack, opening the way for the bad-guy next-in-line to come in as acting chief and gum up the works good.

Sounds good, and it is. King's writing is excellent, keeping us in suspense all the way. His interrogation scenes are worthy of Elmore Leonard. They really are. And all the hanging threads left over from Worst Enemy, still bothering Doc, who hasn't given up on them, add dimension.

i still think King has major problems with dialect. As a general rule, I think it's better to give a flavor with a few words and expressions and let the reader's imagination fill in the rest. If you try to render the speech exactly, it comes off as phony even if it's accurate. Thus, a major black character is pretty much ruined because he sounds like a crude stereotype rather than a genuine human being. The Russians sound okay to me because King uses standard foreign-speaker construction mistakes--inversions and malaprops--which, again, give the flavor without trying to duplicate.

This is a flaw that cost him a star with me, and I hope he corrects in the future because it takes the shine off a pretty flashy novel.

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### **Brandon Nagel says**

Excellent. Another winner from Dana King. The mob lives again in this fantastic tale. Great dialog and

strong characters. It was like reading your favorite crime drama on T.V. Reminds me a lot of THE WIRE which was a bit more urban and set in Baltimore. It was one my favorite shows ever, and Grind Joint was just as good. I suggest picking up the first book in the "series" before this one so you get to know the characters a bit. Highly recommended. Heading to Amazon now to pick up another one of his older books. This is my 2nd book of his in 2 weeks. Read it.

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### **Rory Costello says**

This is a heck of a good cops-and-Mafia story in an unexpected setting: mill town Pennsylvania. Dana King starts with a fine concept: a low-end casino plopped down in such a town. He gives you the ethnic/blue collar/shot 'n' a beer flavor full force. He gives you memorable characters and solid plotting. Best of all for me was his salty dialogue, especially when characters are busting each other's chops. I smiled a lot.

The door is clearly open for more of Ben "Doc" Dougherty's adventures in Penns River. Count me in.

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### **Cphe says**

I came across this book in my recommendations and decided to try an author that I'd never read before. I was drawn to the title and the premise of the story. Penns River an economically challenged town undergoes a revival of sorts with the opening of a new casino. Of course everyone in Penns River wants a piece of the action and murder and other illegal activities aren't far behind.

I really enjoyed the main character in this rather straight forward police procedural Detective Dougherty, "Doc" to his friends. He's laconic, and smart career wise, is a master at self deprecation but when it comes to dealing with the women in his life he's tongue tied.

However, there were an awful lot of characters introduced into this relatively shorter length novel and they were difficult at times to follow. There were multiple story arcs that at times just seemed to be treading water and going nowhere fast.

So whilst it was a quick read I can't really say that it offered anything new to the genre. There were just too many characters and differing story arcs all vying for attention on the page.

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### **Jordan McPeck says**

Writing this review about six months after reading it so it'll be thin on details and full of remaining impressions. I liked it a lot. I usually don't like all the personal details of the lead characters. This is one where it all seemed to fit instead of padding it out to give the hero some dimension.

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### **Claudia McPherson says**

It is realistic in the language of everyday detectives and police officers. Found it gritty. Not one I would read again.

## **Timothy Hallinan says**

This slender book (192 pages) is kind of a model of compression. Without ever feeling overstuffed or over-dense, it contains more good plotting and more memorable characters than most books I've read that were twice as long. But it does something more than that, too: it more or less revitalizes the whole notion of the mob novel as a vision of a nation.

The primary character is a veteran cop, Ben "Doc" Dougherty, a man of principle (and a certain realistic flexibility) in Penn's River, a small but deeply corrupt town in Pennsylvania. The book opens with a murder, the victim left in the doorway of the as-yet unopened low-end casino, or grind joint, that's touted as the town's Next Great Thing in terms of local employment and fattening the tax base, but which is actually the fat end of the mob's chisel, which has already been inserted so deeply into the town's matrix that it was already too late six months ago.

From this classic opening setup, author Dana King (who is someone to watch) builds a gritty, compelling, and totally believable suburban fable of money, greed, and corruption about nothing less than the selling of American values and commitments for cold cash and the promise of power. The novel tells its story on the small scale of Penn's River but also makes it almost impossible to avoid the implication that this is a process that's being repeated over and over in 21st-century America, at all levels of power. The book's protagonists do what they can to contain the spreading stain and protect the innocent, and the fact that their victory isn't a total one doesn't mean that the effort they make isn't absolutely necessary and likely to grow even more so.

I love this book, and if I got a little ponderous above, it's not often that I read a knockout thriller with the kind of moral weight GRIND JOINT packs.

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## **AC says**

Good book, enjoyable..., rich in plot and character...not ground breaking, but well done.

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