



## Wilderness

*Robert B. Parker*

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## **Wilderness** Robert B. Parker

Aaron Newman, a respected writer, witnesses how a woman is shot and killed in bright daylight, and goes to the police. He can identify the perpetrator as Adolph Karl, a brutal gangster against who the police have never found any proof. A few hours later Newman arrives at his home and finds his wife Janet tied up in the bedroom: an unmistakable threat. Newman withdraws his statement, but realizes that, even if he keeps silent, he is a constant danger to Adolph Karl. So he decides to act: together with his wife and Chris Hood, a war veteran, he plans a murderous chase in the wilderness of North America...

## **Wilderness Details**

Date : Published September 15th 1980 by Dell (first published 1979)

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Author : Robert B. Parker

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# **From Reader Review Wilderness for online ebook**

**Mike says**

**Yeah, a nice diversion from Spencer**

So, the bad guys don't always win, and couples therapy can often take some strange twists and turns but still work out

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**marit gustin says**

**Justice is Served**

Nice plot! Interesting characters. The wilderness setting added added suspense and interest. Also, the leading characters were able to resolve their their issues in a believable manner.

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**Cathy DuPont says**

Reviewing The Robert B. Parker Companion, I realized that I had read this book a few years ago. The description (there is a short synopsis of every book written by Parker) not the title reminded me that I had read it.

This was before mine(and Jeff's) effort to read the entire Spenser series so Robert B. Parker just didn't click with me at the time. If I remember right, my favortie bookseller, Vanessa, suggested it knowing I love mysteries. Just see how you like his writing, I'm sure she said.

What a great book it was...and worthy of a re-read anytime.

Knowing so much more about Parker and particularly the Spenser series, I can't compare it with anything I've read of Parker recently, but the plot of the book was outstanding with great solid character descriptions. It just enticed me with every page I turned and recall reading it quickly because I had a difficult time putting it down.

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**Rose Anne Hutchence says**

As with all Mr. Parkers's books, Wilderness is a good story well told, with a trace of humour. And empathy. His character portrayals are believable; people we'd like to meet.

In Wilderness, the author poses the thought-provoking question: what we would do in the protagonists' shoes?

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## **Mark says**

Aaron Newman is a successful novelist who, on an early morning jog, happens to witness a murder. When he identifies the suspect, Adolph Karl, to police, he goes home feeling like he's done his duty. Except Karl's thugs have already got there first, stripping his wife Janet naked and tying her to the bed, with instructions that he must recant his evidence or worse will happen. Humiliated and cowed, Newman does as he's told but then he, Janet and their neighbour Chris Hood decide the only way to really be free of Karl is to kill him.

I like Robert B. Parker a lot but this is the first non-Spenser novel of his I've read and if I'd started here I'm not sure what I'd have done. Newman isn't a likeable character, for the most part and his marriage with Janet is perhaps best described as dysfunctional - she likes to control her environment, he loves her more than she loves him and they clearly wind each other up. Worse, since their love life is in tatters, when he sees her tied up, rape crosses his mind - which is very unpleasant and even if it was a product of its time (this was published in 1979) it's very jarring. The rest of the characters are as well sketched as all Parker's tend to be, from the thwarted man of action Hood to the distinctive and quite scary Karl whilst the best ones, ironically enough, are a very much in love assassin called Steiger and his wife of twenty years Angie. The locations are well used - Newman lives in Boston and eventually trails Karl to his weekend cabin in the backwoods of Maine - and Parker is at home as much as in sleazy city sidestreets as he is in the middle of a forest.

Perhaps because he couldn't get away with it in his Spenser novels, Parker seems to revel in his opportunities for swearing and explicit sex here and also ups the ante with the violence, though he uses it superbly - when people get killed, that's it, there's no extended death scene, the plug just gets pulled, which is as refreshing as it is unpleasant.

If I didn't know Parker from the Spenser novels, I'd probably have enjoyed this more but Newman remains unlikeable for a long time and his transition from a gym-loving writer to a cold-blooded killer is quick (though not as brisk as Janet's transformation). There's also a lot made about him being 46 and not over the hill, which is around about the age Parker was when he wrote this.

Well written and briskly paced, this isn't a bad novel at all (taking all of the above into account) and I'd recommend it.

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## **Bridget says**

Brilliant, scary, exciting.

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## **Allen J says**

**Very Interesting well worth your time to read!**

This was a kinda one of a kind story well done. This story keeps you guessing and makes you want to continue to the end! Enjoy!

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## **James Elliot Leighton says**

If this had been my first exposure to Robert B. Parker's work I would not have read another of his offerings. The plot is amateurish, naive & simplistic, the characters elicit no empathy nor are they even likeable. They react in ways that are improbable from a socio-psychological point of view. If I had a wife who acted the way this woman did, I'd gift wrap her and sent her to the bad guys with a note suggesting they finish the job.

In real life a Ruger Blackhawk, a bulky, difficult to conceal copy of an old cowboy's gun, would be the least likely choice for a professional killer. They are not particularly accurate and are single action - they need to be manually re-cocked for each shot. Robert Parker has never been realistic with regard to weapons and their usage and it remains true in this effort. He has a bad guy not being aware that a 1911 Colt Auto was out of ammunition and "clicking" the trigger trying to fire another round. The pistol, like most semi-autos, will stop firing with the slide locked open after firing the last round in its magazine. Impossible not to know it was empty, and impossible to "click" it.

In real life the Police would not rely merely on one witness - once aware of the crime they would look for other ways to support a charge. In real life a killer facing a death sentence would not assault and threaten the wife of a witness, they would eliminate the witness.

None of it is plausible. Heroes who cry a lot and are married to cold, self-centred bitches don't hold much appeal.

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## **Gloria Bernal says**

4.5 stars (I'm very stingy with 5 star ratings)

But WOW! What a change from the Spenser, Randall and other series he's written. This was written in 1976 from what the hardcover says. An independent stand alone novel unlike any of Parker's that I've ever read. BIG on suspense and totally un-put-downable, right from the get-go. This is a violent mystery/thriller, but not gory. It is also a study in human characteristics and relationships. The main couple Aaron and Janet Newman actually have a strange relationship as a back story. He's a writer, she's an accomplished business woman.

Aaron runs to keep in shape and one morning on his run he witnesses a murder and identifies the killer to the police. When he gets home he finds his naked wife tied up, her lower belly cut superficially with the killers initials, and she's madder than blazes that he wasn't home sooner to untie her. She's not scared, she's mad, and an enigma to the reader through out the novel. What a strange woman. From that point on their lives take a drastic turn in the road, and it takes a journey through The Wilderness to find resolution. A truly riveting dilemma. Loved it!

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## **Bruce Long says**

**Fabulous**

Parker was a particular kind of genius. His Spencer books are priceless. Aaron Newman, the lead character in *Wilderness*, is me. The danger and adventure and romance are so well written. I am sorry that I have no more Parker books to read. I hope his widow, Joan, whom I have never met, is doing well

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### **Jack says**

Robert B. Parker is known for his series of mystery novels featuring the wisecracking private detective, Spenser. *\*Wilderness\**, published in 1979, is one of Parker's very few stand-alone, non-series books. It's a straightforward revenge tale told with (for Parker) an unusual amount of grit and suspense, and a notable absence of humor. One of Parker's best, I think.

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### **David says**

last 50 pages are the meat!

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### **Michael says**

I like Parker. But I got one third thru this and hated the characters. If there's nothing and no one to root for I give it up.

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### **Mei says**

I ordered this by accident, thinking it was an early Spenser. Sadly, it wasn't. I'm not quite sure what it was - some kind of thriller, *Lord-of-The-Flies* type story about man's descent into violence (man witnesses murder, man's wife is threatened by mobster, man, wife and psycho friend decide to take matters into their own hands and plot revenge)...

Quite apart from the basic story line, there is some random psychological stuff going on, exploring the relationship between the man and his wife, the psycho friend, relationships between men and women, control issues, etc. I really should go and read up on Parker, to see if he was trained in psychology in some way, because these things tend to creep up in his novels.

Long story short, I read this expecting Spenser, it wasn't Spenser, I didn't really enjoy it. It was like eating grits for the first time - I thought they'd be sweet, took a mouthful, and actually they were salty - almost an out of body experience. Not that salty is necessarily bad, but it just wasn't what I was expecting.

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### **John says**

Humorless.

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