



Walking Shadow

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In a shabby waterfront town, an actor is shot dead onstage. Granted, the script left much to be desired. But there's more behind the scenes than an overzealous critic--and Spenser and Hawk are combing Port City's underworld to find it...

Walking Shadow Details

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Author : Robert B. Parker

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From Reader Review Walking Shadow for online ebook

Mei says

This one started off a little slowly (for a Spenser) but picked up its usual pace about one third of the way through. It wasn't the most enjoyable of the Spenser books (can it be in finally feeling a little jaded after about 7 in a row) but it certainly did the trick. Nothing like a damaged maiden in distress. Mainly self-harm, though.

Steve says

This book was back to the old Spenser! Hawk and Spenser take on the world...who can stop them!!!

Cm Perkins says

I am reading everything Robert B. Parker wrote and down to my last few books. Just finished this one today and when I first started it I thought "OH NO - a dull book". But once I got past the set-up it once again was such a fun ride with Spencer-Hawk-Susan interaction, and throw in Vinnie for more laughs. Did not figure things out until close to the end - really good twists and turns. Once again - I highly recommend all his books!!!

Stephen Mettee says

It's hard to explain why I only gave this novel four stars. It might be that I'm holding the bar higher for Parker than I would another author.

Any Spenser novel with characters Susan Silverman, Hawk, and Vinnie Morris on board is a good read. But--is there always a "but"?--Parker moved some of the literary gambits he employed in his Spenser novels onto the back burner where they simmered gently rather than boiled.

The usual long, clever, introspective conversations with Susan seemed truncated. The retaliatory violence delivered by Spenser, Hawk and Morris seemed almost quaint, maybe with a hint of old lace tossed in. And Spenser's culinary skills--exhibited by Parker, along with Spenser's multiple literary allusions, to soften his detective's rough edges--were more of the cooked-in-the-microwave variety than the celebrity-chef variety. Still, as I said, maybe I've unfairly elevated my expectations for this master of detective fiction. Perhaps another author would have garnered a 5-star rating. You read it and decide.

Henry McLaughlin says

I thought I had read all of the Spenser novels. Somehow, I missed this one.

Both a refreshing and exciting read. Refreshing to be back in Parker's mesmerizing style with succinct

descriptions that bring his settings and his characters to life. And to enjoy anew one of the best masters of dialogue I've ever read.

Parker adds an exciting plot with plenty of twists and turns that kept me guessing until the final reveal. The end was a satisfying surprise.

And along the way, I got to spend time with Spenser and Susan and Hawk. And Pearl the wonder dog. And a cast of the deadly dangerous and the loopy loony all wrapped up in the story world of Boston and its environs as only Parker could present it.

Kellie says

The setting for this #21 in the Spenser series is Port City Massachusetts. Susan is on the board of directors for a small little play house. One evening, as Spenser and Susan are watching a play, a terrible tragedy occurs. This launches Spenser into an investigation that becomes very dangerous. Vinnie from the mob appears in this one to help Hawk protect Spenser. A new character, Mei Ling, who Spenser hires as a Chinese translator, is introduced.

The mystery is complex and is slow to develop. This didn't take away from the enjoyment, however. This was a pretty good one.

I'm on a roll with the Spenser books lately. It's been a long time since I have done a marathon reading on a series. I need to get some more.

Cathy DuPont says

I haven't read a Spenser/Hawk series in a few months since I was getting weary of him and Susan, but this fun merry-go-round story put a spark back for me. (Never would I get weary of Hawk for heaven's sake.)

The story kind of went nowhere and Spenser and Hawk said so and that's what I liked about it. Spenser and Hawk both acknowledged that they were on a wild goose chase always coming up with zero answers in trying to find the shooter of an actor who was on stage performing when killed. There were no suspects and no one knows anything about anything.

And we aren't in Boston, Dorothy, but on the Mass. coast in a smaller snobby town delineated by class geographically. The name of the town is Port City where illegal immigration of Chinese supplies the ranks of a Chinese mob who speak only Cantonese (or Mandarin.) And of course, they have their own closed society answerable only to their mob boss.

But is there any connection to anything? The answer is no, nothing and it turns into a bit of a joke between them; there's nothing to go on through most of the book. Toward the last 1/5 of the book, clues begin to surface and good thing because the book was almost over.

Hawk is black, shaved head, 18" neck, works out regularly and drives a new white Jaguar. He's the hippest and best dressed in the entire paperback world.

If I turn up missing here on Goodreads.com it's because I'm in a white Jag with a white scarf in my hair blowing in the wind with a hot dude driving. And Tom Bodett, don't leave the light on. We'll be at a much

classier joint than you can provide.

William says

(The word "maroon" appears 3 times in this novel)

3.5 stars

This book is graced with a classic femme fatale in the noir style.

Solid plotting with a good pace from the start, a mostly inscrutable enemy, and very menacing situations at times.

An above-average Spenser for Parker's later books.

Sheila Bayley says

Another good one

Robert Parker was one of the best. The mystery winds through theater and Chinatown with Spencer being his stoic, funny self.

Bill Kerwin says

Walking Shadow is one of those ho-hum Spensers. It's a page-turner—all the Spensers are page-turners—but the reader is not left with a lot of pleasure after all that page-turning is done.

Still, there's a lot going on: a stalker dressed in black, a busty—and needy— young actress, the sexy wife of a Chinese gangster, a once-good police chief mired in corruption, a Vietnamese gang ("The Double Dragons"), a *tong* lord, both Hawk and Vinnie Morris for backup, human trafficking in the dead of night, a kidnapping on videotape, and an actor shot dead on stage just after singing "what else matters if your lucky in love?"

Perhaps that's the trouble: there's just too much going on. It's as if Parker just threw a lot of stuff into his top hat, and out popped this story. And the biggest problem is that the solution to the murders seems just as arbitrary as anything else.

The atmosphere of Port City, particularly the boat landing at midnight, are both very fine, as is Spenser's interview with an illegal fish plant worker in his tiny rented room. But these bright spots are not enough to make a good book.

It is Spenser, course. And this series is always entertaining. But if—unlike me—you haven't resolved to read the whole series, you could easily find a better Spenser mystery.

Kemper says

You know Spenser's in real trouble when he thinks that Hawk isn't enough back-up.

A theater manager is being stalked by a mysterious figure and asks Spenser to help. Before he can start investigating, an actor is shot and killed on stage during a performance. An actress also complains of being followed. While he's trying to figure out exactly what's going on, Spenser gets threatened by the leader of the local Chinese gangs. After surviving a hail of bullets, Spenser and Hawk turn to gunman and gangster Vinnie Morris for assistance.

OK, I'm starting to seriously question my memory at this point. I'd remembered this as being one of my least favorite Spenser books, but after this reread of it....Not too bad at all. Vinnie had been lurking in the background of several previous books as a potential deadly enemy for Spenser, and it was a nice twist that they ended up working together.

The mystery piece was pretty good, but once again in this series too much of the plot become wrapped up in one character's psychological problems. Less head shrinking and more gunplay with the Chinese tong would have bumped this rating up a star. The Susan factor isn't too bad in this one because there's a subplot about them buying a farm house that they're renovating. When Spenser and Susan actually have shit to do other than look deeply in each other's eyes and declare their undying love, they're a lot more tolerable.

Next up: Spenser has to assault a fortified building without any help from Hawk in *Thin Air*.

Brent Soderstrum says

In Parker's 21st book from the Spenser series four words come to mind, "The girl be crazy".

The book starts out with Spenser going to the local Port City theatre to see a very bizarre play. In the middle of it one of the actors is shot to death right in front of the audience. Susan gets Spenser to help the theatre find the killer and a stalker who has been stalking members of the production crew prior to the killing.

The Chinese mob is involved and illegal immigration is examined. It comes down to someone who really is crazy manipulating others leading to three murders.

Hawk and Vinnie (who has left Joe Broz) protect Spenser during his investigation. Spenser needs the protection because the Chinese mob wants Spenser dead and it is the Death Dragons job is to make sure that gets done.

Hawk even ends up with a girlfriend by the end of the book. It will be interesting to see if she will be with Hawk in future books or if she was a short term adventure for him.

Jerry B says

"Shadow" is another typical entry in Parker's lengthy 39-book Spenser series – this one a middle outing at #21. Susan is on the board of a struggling small theater group in run-down coastal town Port City. While she and Spenser are attending a play, the leading man is shot dead from the back of the auditorium, so naturally our hero is recruited to find the perp. Clues are so slow to surface that both the characters and we readers are rather frustrated. Finally Spenser's usual poking and prodding develops some possibilities of many bad things going on, with Hawk and Vinny providing almost protective custody as Spenser gets both death threats as well as several near-miss attacks. We did not at all guess the plot's final outcomes, in a somewhat more twisty tale than usual – but despite that suspense, this was not necessarily one of our favorite story lines. But as usual, we were sufficiently entertained despite polishing off the entire novel in a single reading session while on an airport layover!

Mike says

I was in "Bob's Used Books" several years ago looking for a new series to start, and the owner asked if I'd ever read Spenser. Nope but I'll try it. This book was actually my first entry in the novels even though it's #21. I started back at the beginning and worked my way through and here I am again.

I enjoy the characters, especially Spenser and Hawk, and their sarcastic bantering. I've seen several reviewers who detest poor Susan, but to date, the primal and intellectual bond between her and Spenser is good.

Here, Susan asks Spenser to look into a theater manager's worry that he has a stalker. We soon find ourselves knee deep in murder (onstage), a Tong gang, and smuggling of illegal aliens.

Ed says

#21 in the Spenser series.

Spenser novel - Susan engages Spenser to find out who is stalking the artistic director of a theater group in a waterfront town north of Boston and then who killed an actor during a performance. The local leader of a Chinese tong tries to discourage him
