



Savage Season

Joe R. Lansdale

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Here comes Trudy back into Hap's life, thirty-six but looking ten years younger, with long blonde hair and legs that begin under her chin, and the kind of walk that'll make a man run his car off the road. Here comes trouble, says Leonard, and he's right. She was always trouble, but she had this laugh when she was happy in bed that could win Hap over every time. Trudy has a proposition: an easy two hundred thousand dollars, tax-free. It's just a simple matter of digging it up ...Hap Collins and Leonard Pine, white and black, straight and gay, are the unlikeliest duo in crime fiction. Savage Season is their debut.

Savage Season Details

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From Reader Review Savage Season for online ebook

Lou says

Hap a tough country boy with iron foundry muscles just spent eighteen months in prison, during this time his wife Trudi was filing for divorce.

Leonard a Vietnam vet and a certified hardhead. His expertise is Martial arts, boxing, kenpo and hapkido. Trudi ruled men with brains, passion and her downy triangle.

Hap a bird lover.

Leonard a dog lover.

An inseparable duo of characters.

On his release from prison Trudi tempts Hap into a money making deal or shall we say money finding.

A bank job money stash needs to be recovered and she wants Hap to find it and get a cut. Thing is, its an idea coming from Trudi's other lover. Things don't pan out as they should. Along down the line Revolutionaries and gun deals come into the picture and matters get a whole lot more complicated for Hap and Leonard.

This was a good promising starter to a series of books involving the characters Hap and Leonard. They are fun guys to be around and when they need to be serious and get the job done they get it done properly.

Also on my Blog Here.

Char says

3.5 stars!

For my Year of Lansdale project I had this audio book all lined up and then the TV show came out. I have to say that the show spoiled me as far as the voices go. The actors will forever be the voices of Hap and Leonard in my head. (If you haven't seen the show, I highly recommend it!)

The drama mirrored this book pretty closely except for a few changes near to the end. The humor that I found so appealing in the other two Hap and Leonard's that I've read **was** here, but not as much, and I found myself wishing for a little more.

I'm still glad that I listened to this book, but I will be reading, rather than listening, to the rest of the series. Recommended to fans of Joe Lansdale!

P.S. The narrator of this book, Phil Gigante, has a disturbing recent past, to which he plead guilty, and this, too, played a part in my decision to READ the rest of the series, rather than listen. I cannot with good conscience support Mr. Gigante in the future.

Danger says

This dude is such a good writer that I sat down immediately after finishing this book and began writing myself and my output was 25% better than it normally is. Lansdale is just one of those people who

understand language, and harness it like a samurai sword. *Savage Season*, the first of many Hap and Leonard books, was a page-turning crime novel - at times funny, at times touching, at times violent - much like the best Coen Brothers movies are. You're doing yourself a disservice by not reading this book.

Kelly (and the Book Boar) says

Find all of my reviews at: <http://52bookminimum.blogspot.com/>

Joe Lansdale was barely a blip on my radar until a few months ago when it seemed *errrrryone* started reading his stuff. Since I am an idiot, I had no idea *WTF Hap and Leonard* even was or that it was a soon-to-be television program. I just knew that Real Dan and Kemper were reading the crap out of these stories and everybody else seemed to be reading Lansdale too. Then during one of our ~~bitch~~-sessions highly intellectual conversations, Shelby reminded me the show had premiered. It sounded like something my husband would **TOTALLY** dig so I cued it up for him and planned to get back to my regularly scheduled ~~porno~~ Pulitzer winner. But then Omar appeared on my screen and my hubs was like “are you seriously going to watch T.V. and not read right now??!?!?!?” and I was like . . .

Alright, so there’s the backstory of why I’m so late to this party. My apologies for the couple minutes of your life you just wasted and will never get back. Now let’s get on with the show.

Hap and Leonard are just a couple of good ol’ boys – never meaning no harm. They’ve been makin’ their way the only way they know how, but then Leonard’s ex-wife shows up with her magic poonany and reveals a scheme that’s just a little bit more than the law will allow . . .

“One hundred thousand dollars for each of us.”

“Shit. What we got to do, shoot someone?”

“ Nope. We have to swim for it.”

If the paraphrased lyrics above don’t ring a bell or if you are a millennial, there’s a good chance Hap & Leonard probably aren’t the guys you want to spend time with. However, if you’re not easily offended by foul language or some pretty gnarly asskicking and want to read the best dialogue of your life - Lansdale will provide. I may have shown up way more than fashionably late for this party, but I’m most definitely here to stay . . .

3.5 Stars rounded up because I need some wiggle room as I continue the series and also because the final action sequence went on just a *wee bit* too long for my liking. I blame the waning of my attention during that part on my lack of penis. Happy belated International Women’s Day ;)

Stephen says

A recipe for Delicious Fiction:

Take a pair of **VERY UNCONVENTIONAL** good old buddies + one **BITCHOSAURUS** of an ex-wife.

Add in half a million in lost, stolen money, a group of wannabe radicals and an awesomely **PSYCHOLARIOUS** duo of drug dealers.

Spice all the above with sharp writing, brilliantly witty dialogue, heaping helpings of southern humor and stir in several pounds of violence, bloodshed and betrayals..... and VOILA....

Criminally YUMMY Buddy NOIR Cake.

Definitely one I am going to recommend as this book has made me an instant fan of the *Hap and Leonard* series. Joe Lansdale has an slick, breezy writing style that comes across with a very authentic, rural Texas feel to it. I haven't read much of Lansdale's work, but what I have read has been very engaging. That is certainly the case here.

Good writing aside, the true charm of this story begins and ends with the two main characters, Hap Collins and Leonard Pine. Hap and Leonard are a terrific "odd buddy" tandem that mesh perfectly together, despite their rather different backgrounds.

Hap Collins is a straight, white 40 year old, former 60's idealist, who went to prison for 18 months for refusing to go to Vietnam. He has since become rather cynical of his former radical-ness. Leonard Pine is a gay, black vietnam vet who is distinctly "non political," reads Walden and loves country music (especially Patsy Cline and Hank Williams). Leonard has few friends (besides Hap) and loves his 6 bird dogs like they were family. Both Leonard and Hap work together in east Texas, like to shoot skeet and are martial arts buffs. The bond of friendship they share is something that comes across immediately and I have to give Lansdale full marks for that because it is central to the feel of the story.

Plot-wise, there is really nothing ground-breaking here, but it is still very effective. Hap's "trouble on two legs" ex-wife, Trudy, shows up out of the blue with a scheme to retrieve hundreds of thousands of dollars of stolen money lost years ago. Trudy's return sends Hap's angst meter into the red as Trudy's pattern has been to blow into his life every couple of years and make it go KABOOM!!

Despite that, Hap still has strong feelings for her though he has learned to be much more guarded. For Leonard it's pretty straight-forward: he can't stand the bitch for everything she has put Hap through and has nothing but contempt for her and her "causes."

Well, turns out that Trudy is part of "yet another" radical group that wants to use the stolen money to help fund their activities. She offers to cut Hap and Leonard in if they can help locate the money which is buried in an area Hap knows well. From there, the violence, bloodshed, vulgarity and betrayals quickly commence.

Despite a fairly conventional plot, this story is still pure gold. The magic is in Lansdale's writing and the terrific banter/dialogue between Hap and Leonard which is constantly witty and loaded with "down home"

irony and sarcasm. I laughed out loud on more than one occasion listening to these two go back and forth and was chuckling for much of the rest.

Great writing, a fast-paced plot and two of the best buddy characters I have ever come across add up to an enthusiastic thumbs up for this one. I was left wanting more and I can't wait to see what they get into next. 4.0 stars. **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.**

James Thane says

First appearing in 1990, this is the book that introduced Joe R. Lansdale's most popular characters, Hap Collins and Leonard Pine. Brothers under the skin, Hap is a good-old-boy white guy from East Texas while Leonard is a black, gay Vietnam War vet. The two practice martial arts together and when we first meet them, they're living close to poverty and eking out a living working in a rose field.

Still, life is fairly copacetic until, out of nowhere, Hap's very sexy ex-wife, Trudy, suddenly shows up. There's no love lost between Leonard and Trudy, but Hap is a guy who more often than not is happy to let his little head do the thinkin', especially when it comes to Trudy.

After a blissful and energetic reunion, Trudy confesses that she hasn't returned just for a quick romp. She and her current beau, Howard, have a line on what may be upwards of a million dollars that was stolen from a bank years earlier and apparently lies sealed in containers under the deep, frigid waters of a tributary of the Sabine River. Trudy, an unreconstructed hippie, would like Hap to help them recover the money so that she and Howard can donate it to Save the Whales and other worthy causes.

Trudy is willing to give Hap two hundred thousand dollars of the loot for his trouble since she, Howard and their two other confederates have only a vague idea of where the money might actually be while Hap, who was born and raised in the area has a very good idea. Sexually exhausted, Hap isn't thinking all that clearly, but he agrees to at least consider the scheme. Much to Trudy's consternation, Hap immediately brings Leonard into the action, promising to share his end of the money 50-50.

Much against his better judgment, Leonard agrees and what follows is an action-filled and often hilarious romp. Inevitably a scheme like this is going to go sideways almost immediately, putting everyone involved in the harebrained scheme in grave danger. It's a lot of fun watching all of this play out, and this book provides the basis for the first season of "Hap and Leonard" which is now playing on the Sundance Channel. I'm a huge fan of Michael K. Williams ("The Wire" and "Empire Boardwalk") who's signed on to play Leonard. For that reason alone, I'm really anxious to give the series a try.

? Irena ? says

3.5

I've heard so much about this duo and finally started this series. Unlike so many other books, *Savage Season* has a perfect summary.

The two main protagonists can't be any different even if they tried, but they work well together.

Hap's ex-wife Trudy asks him for help to find some money that's been hidden for the last twenty years, he lets his best friend in on the scheme and that's the basic plot. The thing that makes *Savage Season* different and more interesting than other maybe similar books isn't the plot, but the relationship of the two main characters and their seeming inability to keep their mouths shut. The worse the situation is, the more they banter and talk.

At first a character annoyed me so much that I thought I would be happy to see them suffer at least a bit. In the end the author made me feel sorry for them.

As an introduction to the series and to these two, *Savage Season* does what it set out to do very well with an additional unexpected punch in the end.

Dan Schwent says

When laborer Hap Collins' ex-wife Trudy pops back into his life with a story about retrieving unrecovered money from a bank robbery, Hap's up for it. In tow is Hap's best friend, Leonard, a gay black man who happens to be the toughest son of a bitch on the planet. Will Hap and Leonard finally make the big score that saves them from a life of backbreaking labor or is Trudy leading them to their deaths?

2014 reread: Since nothing on my unread pile looks appealing at the moment and a Hap and Leonard TV series is in the works, I thought it would be a good time to revisit the Hap and Leonard books I read pre-Goodreads. One of the perks of getting older is that old books magically become new books after seven or eight years. I remembered the basic plot of this book but forgot most of the wrinkles.

Savage Season introduces Hap Collins and Leonard Pine to the world. Hap is an ex-hippy who spent a year and a half in prison for dodging the Vietnam draft and Leonard is a gay black Vietnam vet who is the toughest man on Earth. Together, they coast through life on crap wages and make a lot of smart ass remarks.

Since originally reading this, I've read a lot of other crime books. It seems to me that Hap and Leonard owe something to Robert Parker's Spenser and Hawk characters, transported to Lansdale's rural east Texas setting. No matter how you slice it, though, Hap and Leonard are one of the most entertaining duos in crime fiction.

The plot of this one is pretty straight forward. Some money from a bank robbery was stashed on boat and sunk in the Sabine River. Trudy, Hap's ex, with some other radicals in tow, want Hap's help in retrieving it. Funny quips and bloody double-crosses ensue and Hap and Leonard wind up in the hospital for the first of many times in the series.

It always surprises me how funny Joe Lansdale's books are without lessening the impact of the violence that often follows. There are some pretty brutal images in this one.

While *Savage Season* isn't the best book of the series, it's a great beginning. Even in their first appearance, Hap and Leonard are very much the losers I've come to love over the years and I'm excited to be experiencing their adventures once again. Four out of five stars.

Richard says

I really loved The Thicket last year when I chose it to quench my thirst for a good Western read. I was impressed by how engaging the writing was. I decided this year to jump into more books by author Joe Lansdale, and I thought a good start would be his popular Texas crime series featuring his characters Hap Collins and Leonard Pine. This first novel in the series lived up to my lofty expectations!

Hap & Leonard are best buddies, are minding their own business and shooting some skeet in Hap's backyard, when a cute blond heartbreaker walks back into Hap's life, offering more of that sweet love that he remembers fondly. But like any experienced femme fatale knows, most human men would agree to any post-coital request no matter how stupid. So in bed, he agrees to help her and her new man find a treasure trove of cash lost after a bank heist years ago.

"I didn't want to be anywhere near Trudy right then. I had a hunch she would have harsh words to say about me and Leonard, and I wasn't up to it. I didn't want her to get me near a bed either. She could really talk in bed, and if she talked long enough and moved certain parts of her body just right, I might agree to have Leonard shot at sunset."

Lansdale is one of those writers that makes it seem so easy. He manages to find that balance between economic storytelling and lyrical, expressive prose; a balance that my favorite writers possess. It makes for a captivating read that's entertaining and still leaves an impression. In just this one book, Hap and Leonard become two of the most enjoyable protagonists I've come across in a crime series. They seem like two guys I'd like to be friends with and so I would be willing to go on any adventure with them in the future. In this way, they're right up there with Walter Mosley's Easy Rawlins and Dennis Lehane's Kenzie and Gennaro as some of my favorite crime heroes. Likeable, everyday people caught up in dark, extraordinary situations, where they have to step up and be heroes. Hap and Leonard are so different on the surface but are perfect compliments for each other, making for hilarious banter between them that makes the proceedings that much more enjoyable. Can't wait to see what craziness they get into next.

"Yea, that money could make up for a lot of missed ambitions, but without it we were nothing more than a batch of losers, standing cold and silly, empty-handed on the muddy bank of an unnamed creek."

Kemper says

Hap Collins and his friend Leonard Pine seem like pure east Texas rednecks in a lot of ways. They have crappy jobs working in rose fields, shoot clay pigeons with their shotguns, drive worn out piece-of-shit vehicles, raise hunting dogs and listen to country music. But Leonard is black and gay, and Hap is a former damn dirty hippie who got sent to prison for refusing his induction notice during Vietnam as a protest against the war. So they aren't exactly the Dukes of Hazard.

Years after his prison stay ended his marriage, Hap's ex-wife Trudy still likes to come around regularly to break his heart all over again. Trudy is another former flower child who still thinks she can change the world while Hap's time in prison took care of all his idealistic notions. When Trudy shows up again, she's got a

new proposal for Hap.

Trudy and some other old damn dirty hippies have gotten a lead on a lot of cash from a bank robbery that was believed lost. They think it's in a sunken boat in an remote river area that Hap grew up in. Trudy wants Hap's help, and Hap insists on cutting Leonard in, too. But both have second thoughts when they meet the old radicals they'll be working with. Still convinced that they can revive the spirit of the '60s, they want the money for their pet causes while Hap and Leonard just want to be able to stop working in the rose fields.

Joe Lansdale is one of the funniest guys I've ever read, and he really knows about rural living and the redneck lifestyle. Every time I read one of his books, I feel like I'm sitting on a front porch in my old hometown while listening to some entertaining story teller spin a yarn about the trouble that some idiot good old boys got themselves into. The series is profane, politically incorrect, violent, and hilarious. Lansdale created a couple of my all-time favorite characters in Hap and Leonard.

Cerisaye says

Binge watched the first series of the TV adaptation of the Hap & Leonard books, loved it and so I had to read the source novels, since everyone at the AV Club comment pages said they were SO much better. Not sure I agree, then it's always like that when much loved books make the transfer to the screen- see *Game of Thrones*, *LOTR*, and many more (hence my mixed feelings about the rumoured adaptation of Dorothy Dunnett's Lymond series, my all-time favorites). Having seen the show I had the back story filled in that's missing from the first novel but I doubt that would've mattered had I read the book first.

The story is roughly similar to what plays out over six episodes of TV, with some changes. Again, that doesn't bother me. These are books I will read with pleasure simply for the wonderful relationship between Hap & Leonard. I can't get enough male friendship and will happily absorb both versions, double the fun. The East Texas setting adds colour for sure. The writing goes down easy, with dry humour and some memorable characters, e.g. Teacher, Angel and Paco.

I had never heard of Hap & Leonard before finding them on Amazon Prime video, so book purists ought to be grateful their literary hero has gained wider recognition through the show. Personally, I think James Purefoy makes a fine Hap and Michael Kenneth Williams is a perfect Leonard. I was sold from the get-go with Hap & Leonard, one a cynical middle-aged former hippy who served time rather than be drafted, the other a gay black Vietnam vet. An unlikely friendship but an enduring one based on trust, dependency and mutual support, It's a kind of love though Hap is strictly hetero and Leonard only goes for men. Hap, of course, is attracted to the wrong kind of women, who inevitably let him down, though like a rejected puppy he keeps coming back for more. Leonard is only attracted to straight-looking men, though he says Hap is not his type. I was reminded of Larry McMurtry's *Lonesome Dove*, McCrae & Call, two very different men who make a perfect team, somehow incomplete without the other; though outside relationships sometimes get in the way they always come back together, each having the other's back and best interests at heart.

Nood-Lesse says

Avevamo una causa, e nessuno è più pericoloso di un fanatico

Non avevo mai letto Lansdale, qualcuno se n'è accorto e me ne ha regalata una copia. Una stagione selvaggia fa parte di quei libri che si leggono da soli, che non richiedono applicazione, basta seguirli in punta di dito, son pieni d'azione fino a traboccare. La prima parte mi ha divertito, Hap il narratore e soprattutto Leonard, l'amico suo, si prendevano gustosamente per il culo in qualità di reduci beatinik. Il divertimento ha preso scemare quando lo spirito degli anni '60 riesumato come pretesto, li ha infilati in un'avventura prima strampalata, poi strampalatamente tragica che è costata la vita ad un numero di personaggi da film di Tarantino. Non avendo riferimenti per giudicare questo tipo di narrativa, è proprio al pulp di Tarantino che mi vien da paragonarla. Nei film di Quentin però di solito ci sono colonne sonore strepitose, in Lansdale invece capita che Hap scriva:

-Misi su l'album di Hank Williams di Leonard, Greatest Hits, Volume 2, e alzai il volume.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ENKJq...>

Avrei premiato la facilità di lettura e l'ironia con tre stelle se Lansdale non avesse deciso di concludere con un gran bel messaggio edificante e metaforico in barba alla logica evoluzione ventennale dei suoi personaggi. Oltre alla colonna sonora e al montaggio, una delle caratteristiche che rendono piacevoli i film di Tarantino è l'amoralità. Mi può andar bene veder morire decine di personaggi come mosche senza venir sollecitato emotivamente, non mi va invece che alla fine di quello che è stato il pretesto per un *divertimento*, sia inserita la lezioncina etica.

Algernon says

What have we here? The old and reliable 'heist' story. One would think it's been done enough times already to get a bit stale and predictable. Fear not! Joe Lansdale has some surprises in store for you. And even if sometimes you feel you've heard it all before, a good storyteller will still get you hooked with a couple of sympathetic scoundrels and their sharp, hilarious banter, he would still keep you intrigued about motives and possible outcomes and he would still knock you down flat with intense, heartstopping terror before the end. I believe Joe Lansdale deserves all the accolade and literary prize nominations he gets, and "Savage Season" is a prime example of his style. This is only my second novel by him, but I know I will eventually try to read them all - he's that good!

If I were to break the novel into easier to chew components I would settle for these archetypical building blocks: the location, the team, the sell, the heist, the split, the endgame.

Location

East Texas, the same sort of small, impoverished town that was covered in *The Bottoms*. Texas is commonly associated with sweltering heat, sweeping vistas of dry brush and oil rigs. Lansdale though has a soft spot for the humid lowlands and in the present novel he also throws in an atypical snow and ice winter spell. Not the best season to be outdoors looking for buried treasure. Probably one reason to call it 'savage'.

They were nothing like the Everglades of Florida or the greater swamps of Louisiana. Not nearly as many miles as either of those, but they were made up of plenty of great forest and deep water, and they were beautiful, dark and mysterious - a wonder in one eye, a terror in the other.

The Team

For their first misadventure, we should probably start by getting to know the titular characters in the series.

Hap Collins : approaching forty, college reject, former hippie peace activist who went to jail to protest the Vietnam War. Now doing oddjobs and farm work, when he can get it. He likes karate and skeet shooting, but despises guns and killing on principle. He's big, has alcohol issues and women issues, mostly courtesy of his ex-wife Trudy who can still wrap him around her little finger.

Leonard Pine : Hap's best friend and guardian angel, a Vietnam vet and a man immune to Trudy's charms (he's gay and proud of it!). Also likes karate, loves his dogs, Hank Williams, vanilla cookies and an untroubled existence. Leonard tries to act as the brakes and the voice of reason for the more impulsive Hap.

Despite coming from opposing sides of the war in Vietnam, Hap and Leonard respect each other and share in a wicked sense of humour that manifests mostly in rapid fire repartees and sarcastic comebacks in high octane situations.

The Sell

winter is not the best of times for penniless, itinerant workers. Hap and Leonard are just killing time, shooting at ceramic flying saucers when temptation walks in. She's tall, blonde, curvaceous with impossibly long legs and a smile that promises illicit delights. Leonard is out in a huff and Trudy is back (in Hap's bed). Soon enough though it becomes evident that a second honeymoon is not on the menu. Trudy has a business proposition, and she believes men are more open to persuasion after sex. What she wants is for Hap to help her retrieve the loot hidden somewhere in the East Texas marshes, money from a decade old bank robbery. It appears her new husband, Howard, has found out about the sunken treasure during his own stint in prison. History tends to repeat itself, and Trudy, Howard and a couple of others are still in the eco-warrior business even though the sixties are long gone.

The Heist

Some of Hap's neurons are still functioning, and he convinces Leonard to come along, help retrieve the money and watch over Hap's back. The two buddies get to meet Trudy's team: a sorry and amateurish lot composed of Howard, a big boned sap not much different from Hap; Chub, a chubby loser who thinks he is a psychanalyst and Paco, a former homegrown terrorist, now heavily disfigured by a bomb mishap. The criminal club plans to use their share of the money for some unspecified 'good cause', probably saving the whales or stopping nuclear proliferation.

To make a long story short, the team members dislike each other intensely, but somehow manage to recover part of the loot.

The Split

Of course, where there's money, there's trouble and I don't think there ever was a heist movie or book where things didn't go pear-shaped after a succesful hit. Hap and Leonard are in deep s__t!

The Endgame

This is the part where all hell breaks loose, all bets are off and readers are reminded that Lansdale is a writer with a penchant for horror. The less I say now about the way the game is played, the better. Read it and weep! Or if you are of a more tender disposition and/or soft heart, turn around now and go watch a Disney movie. This stuff is bad for you!

>><>><>><>><>

I wouldn't sing so loud in praise of Lansdale if he was a one trick pony. Yes, he's good at mixing humour with horror and he writes excellent action scenes, but his range is much broader. Lansdale truly shines in the confessional mode, in the unguarded moments when his actors let their guard down and reveal their core values, their most cherished dreams.

Idealism was a little like Venus in the daytime. There'd been a time when I could see it. But as time went on and I needed it less and I wanted to pass on the responsibility, I had lost my ability to see it, to believe it. But now I thought I might see it again if I made an effort and looked hard enough.

>><>><>><>><>

I am planning to continue with the Hap and Leonard series, provided they get back on their feet after the drastic pounding they got for dreaming of easy money.

Melki says

I've read five previous Hap and Leonard adventures, but somehow managed to miss this first outing. Once again, Hap lets "lil' Hap" get him into trouble, and drags mouthy Leonard into the fray. Count on everything to go wrong. And if you have a lick o' sense, better stay far away from Leonard's vanilla cookies.

Shelby *trains flying monkeys* says

I finally got to meet the famous Hap and Leonard that I've heard so much about here on Goodreads.

Sorry, Terry Crews is in my head as Leonard Pike. Leonard and Hap are best buddies. Why? I have no clue. They really are not much alike.

Leonard is a gay, Vietnam vet who seems pretty mellow at first. Just don't mess with his vanilla cookies. Hap is a guy with a prison record because he wanted to make a statement during the sixties about the war. Hap was kind of stupid then.

Now Hap's ex-wife has returned to the scene and has a scam up her very short dress. She wants Hap to find some missing robbery money for her and her new man. Hap won't do it unless Leonard is involved. Leonard is not crazy about the ex-wife or the scam.

The two guys are fun. I think they are those two friends that when the shit starts to hit the fan they might make it worse because neither of them can keep their mouths shut. But then they kick ass so it evens out in the end.
