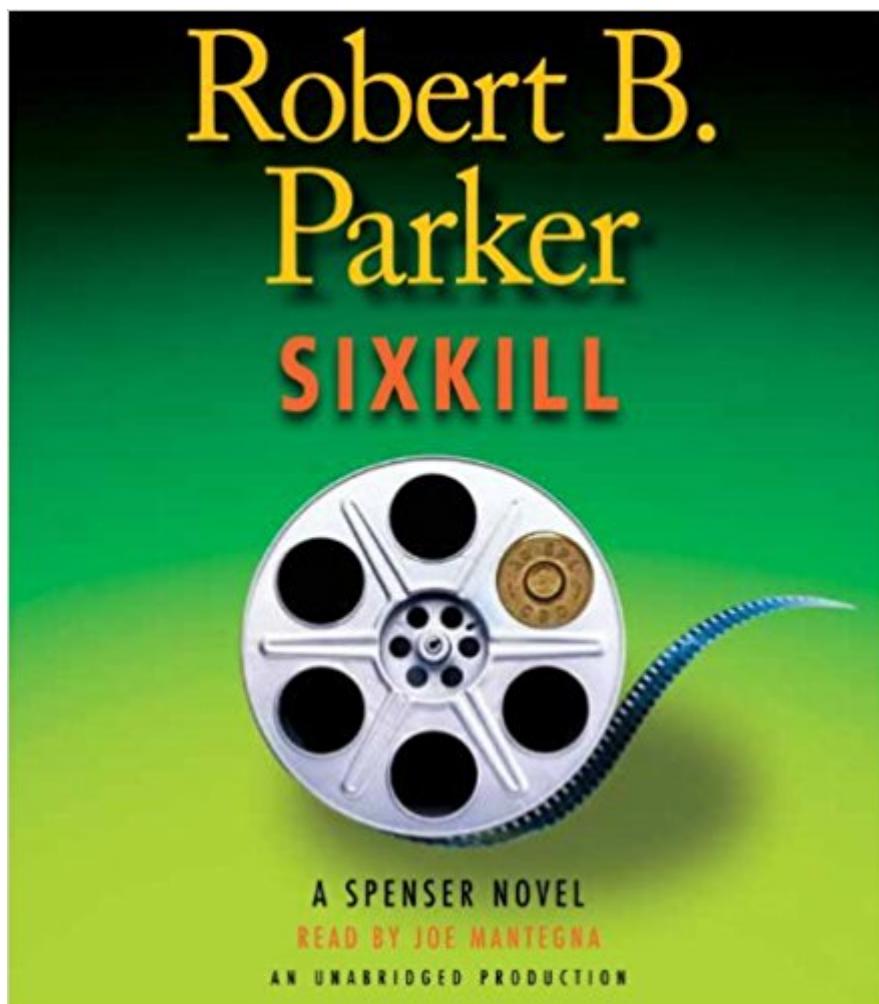


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Sixkill (Spenser)



Synopsis

The last Spenser novel completed by Robert B. Parker. On location in Boston, bad-boy actor Jumbo Nelson is accused of the rape and murder of a young woman. From the start the case seems fishy, so the Boston PD calls on Spenser to investigate. Things don't look so good for Jumbo, whose appetites for food, booze, and sex are as outsized as his name. He was the studio's biggest star, but he's become its biggest liability. In the course of the investigation, Spenser encounters Jumbo's bodyguard: a young former football-playing Native American named Zebulon Sixkill. He acts tough, but Spenser sees something more within the young man. Despite the odd circumstances, the two forge an unlikely alliance, with Spenser serving as mentor. As the case grows darker and secrets about both Jumbo and the dead woman come to light, it's Spenser "with Sixkill at his side" who must put things right.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Robert B. Parker, who died in January 2010, was the author of more than fifty books, including the recent New York Times bestsellers *Painted Ladies* and *Blue-Eyed Devil*.

I've read every Spenser book. Liked most of them. This was no exception. You'll want to read it straight through. I did. Like many good books in this genre you want to get to the end but are a little sad when you arrive there. The alternating chapters of dialog with Dr Silverman did start to get old but you take the bad with the good. Like most Spenser books, you start to recognize phrases and

entire sentences used in earlier books. I guess it can't be helped if you expect the book to sometimes be the reader's first exposure to Spencer. I liked the new character Zebulon Sixkill.

Not the best Spenser novel, too much Susan and no Hawk. It was a sad read knowing that there would be no more Spenser books by Parker, but Ace Atkins is doing a good job carrying on the series. I've been reading these since I was a teenager so it's more nostalgia and the ever likable and humorous Spenser that brings me back time after time. The book follows formula, but it's a quick read and it has its moments.

Spenser series in Japanese started in 1976, three years after the original. During 35 years, Sixkill appeared in 2011, all of 39 episodes were translated into Japanese and Spenser has taken Japanese readers with him. What Spenser appeals to us is his ability of finding out serious backgrounds written invisibly on apparent common affairs and his never changing stance of doing only what he likes, only what he thinks right. This episode also reflects social conditions like money-laundering by film making. Parker, as usual, filled another story of becoming a tough guy into the main thread, which makes this story much more attractive. Zebulon Pike is not popular among Japanese. I learned he discovered Pike's Peak. Vibraphonist Dave Pike recorded Pike's Peak with Bill Evans for Epic label in 1961. Zebulon Pike never came to mind while listening the record. Zebulon Sixkill was struck with awe by encountering Spenser and had finally found someone he could emulate. He saw a similar beacon in Spenser with his grandfather Bob, always the same he did, had rules of his own. You can't teach someone to be a tough guy. He has to be tough on his own. When Zebulon learns what Spenser knows, and behaves as he behaves, then it allows him to slough off the costume. He's beginning to talk like Spenser. Keeping a warm eye on Zebulon, Spenser tries to turn him into a man who can resolve it himself. He might see something for the most likely successor to him, a different endowment with Paul Giacomin.

There's a new character--Sixkill--a Cree Indian; but he might as well be Hawk. Same racial jokes but now focused on American Indians. I read this because it is the last of Spenser's books (published posthumously) and I've enjoyed his books for all these years. It was similar to eating my mom's last frozen container of her Sunday Spaghetti Sauce after she had passed--bittersweet but predictably good). My big complaint about the series is the silly dialogue between Susan Silverberg and Spenser. I usually skip it because it contributes nothing to the plot and I get tired of rolling my eyes at the by-rote stuff they keep repeating. My other minor complaint is it seems that Spenser lives in a

world populated by people who are all masters of the pithy, witty rejoinder. Not one of his friends is ever at a loss for an understated, ironic wisecrack. It's still fun but it does stretch one's willingness to suspend disbelief. So, like the Seinfeld characters who say critical things and then add, "but having said all that" I enjoyed the book. I'm a sucker for Parker's artful writing and Parker's manly courage. Read it--it's the last one bona fide one you'll get. The new series written by someone else stinks.

I have read 38 of the 39 Spensers written by Parker and enjoyed all of them to one degree or another without begrudging the time spent on any of them. Some of them are among the very best of the Hammett, Chandler type detective stories. Since this was the last of the Parker-written Spensers, I was concerned that illness or exhaustion might have impacted the quality of Sixkill, but this was not the case. Sixkill is one of the best of the bunch and was a joy to read from start to finish, and this even though Hawk does not participate. The story is interesting, based loosely on an actual historic criminal case that many older readers will recognize, the action moves along at a brisk pace, the dialogue is as crisp and fun as ever, Spenser, Quirk, Susan, Henry and the new sidekick are people you wish you knew in person, and the bad guys are wonderfully venal and creepy. If you have liked any previous Spenser, do not pass on this one. gcm

Fans of Spenser will enjoy another foray into his day-to-day routines that are occasionally interrupted by violent encounters with despicable people. The plot is pure Spenser. Those new to the Spenser series will probably find the pacing disjointed, so be patient. A new character is introduced: Sixkill, a Cree Indian and Spenser's eager protégé. We can undoubtedly look forward to seeing more of this disciple of detection in future books. Parker's Sixkill is a fun read for a cold, snowy day. Brew a fresh pot, put up your feet, and turn the page to chapter one. Ahh, the joy of guilty pleasures.

I was introduced to Robert B. Parker and Spenser with Early Autumn. From that point I went back and read every story from the beginning and for many years, I looked forward to buying my Spenser novel. I even bought one with the Author's autograph. Some books were less than great, but every book added to the story. If you read the whole series, every novel builds on the past. It is one the reasons I loved reading these books. But all things have to come to a close. When I heard that Parker had passed away, I was sad, but he left a double gift - 2 Spenser novels. I pre-ordered them, then when they came, I took my time reading them. Both are strong contribution - no closure, but that's really the best way. I recommend them without hesitation.

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