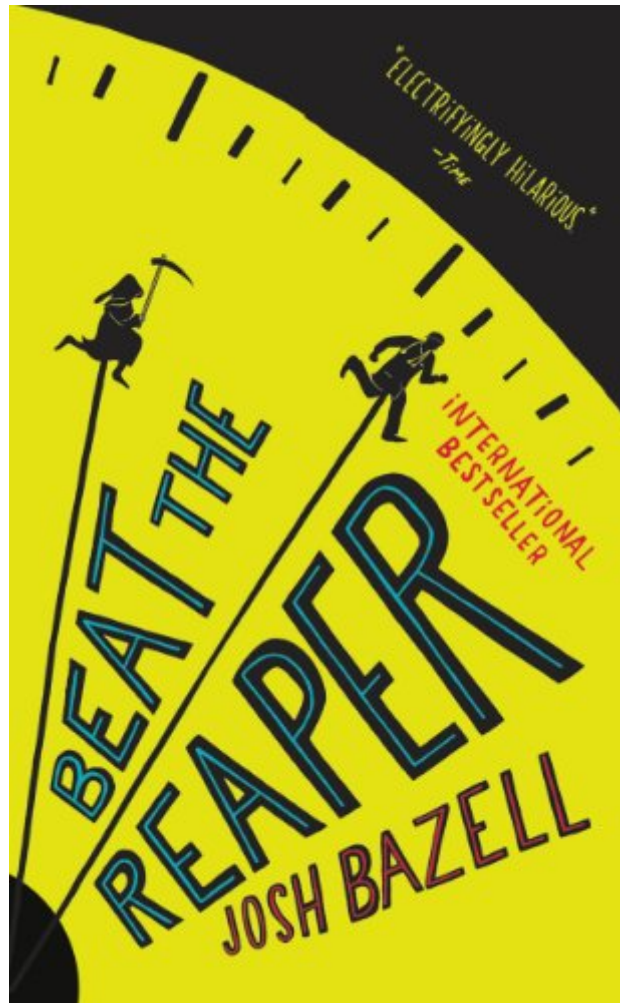


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Beat The Reaper: A Novel (Peter Brown Series Book 1)



Synopsis

Dr. Peter Brown is an intern at Manhattan's worst hospital, with a talent for medicine, a shift from hell, and a past he'd prefer to keep hidden. Whether it's a blocked circumflex artery or a plan to land a massive malpractice suit, he knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men. Pietro "Bearclaw" Brnwna is a hitman for the mob, with a genius for violence, a well-earned fear of sharks, and an overly close relationship with the Federal Witness Relocation Program. More likely to leave a trail of dead gangsters than a molecule of evidence, he's the last person you want to see in your hospital room. Nicholas LoBrutto, aka Eddy Squillante, is Dr. Brown's new patient, with three months to live and a very strange idea: that Peter Brown and Pietro Brnwa might-just might-be the same person ...Now, with the mob, the government, and death itself descending on the hospital, Peter has to buy time and do whatever it takes to keep his patients, himself, and his last shot at redemption alive. To get through the next eight hours-and somehow beat the reaper. Spattered in adrenaline-fueled action and bone-saw-sharp dialogue, BEAT THE REAPER is a debut thriller so utterly original you won't be able to guess what happens next, and so shockingly entertaining you won't be able to put it down.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

1. As if it were a TV show: It's "House" meets the "Sopranos." 2. In historical context: It's the best comic crime fiction debut since Robert Crais's "The Monkey's Raincoat." 3. Through a mourning veil for David Foster Wallace: Greatest footnotes since he died. 4. If you are one of those who only read nonfiction: It will teach you cool stuff about medicine, the Mafia and Auschwitz. 5. In case you like dramatic irony: The violence in it is clinical, the clinical sloppy and vile. 6. As if it were on Facebook: Its friends would be Jonathan Lethem's "Motherless in Brooklyn" and Richard Dooling's "Critical Care," but it would be the funny, outgoing one. 7. On a personal note: It is only the fourth book in my adult life I stayed awake to finish once starting it that night. 8. As if it had already been made into a movie: The book is better. 9. As a bar mitzvah present: Coolest ever. 10. As if flipping through its pages randomly: Did you notice fat men have diagonal creases in their nipples? Who does Michael Corleone imitate when he drops the gun after he shoots the cop? How about an exquisite description of the Hudson in midwinter? There's at least one of these on every page. 11. If you were to judge it by its cover: Don't. It's not Dean Koontz. 12. As an investment; Get the first edition. 13. As if it were the first of many: Please.

I'm not sure what kind of experience it would have been reading the paper version of this book, because the audio version kicks so much butt I don't want to experience it any other way. I'm not an audio book snob or anything - I get turned off very easily by boring narrators with weird voices trying to fake voices enough so that you know when a different character is supposed to be talking. It takes a lot to grab my interest. But Beat the Reaper just grabs you from minute 1 and doesn't let you go until the end! The narrator is an amazing match for the force and clarity of the main character. I was completely entertained, even as I was shocked, disgusted, amused and tickled. In the audiobook, the "footnotes" are backed by a kind of quick drum beat that doesn't distract at all from the story. Somehow the narrator manages to change his voice to an "as an aside" tone, breaking away from the action in an almost freeze-frame effect to fill you in on usually gruesome medical or historical details that give context to the action itself. And some of the action scenes have a cool back beat as well. I listened to it on my ipod, with the ipod tucked in my running armband and my headphones in as I cleaned my house and finished some really boring projects in my basement over the course of a weekend. I was so bummed when it ended and so psyched to come here and read that the sequel is coming out in Feb. I've rarely enjoyed an audio book as much as this one!

I love this book. It has tremendous energy right from the first page, and it doesn't let up pretty much

the whole way through. It's fast and smart, and I never felt that the author was talking down to me -- he expected me to keep up, and nothing is throw-away, not even the funny footnotes (that are much more than footnotes in the end...). I'm not sure I'd recommend it for my wife, who likes her thrillers a little more civilized. The ending is over-the-top and not for the squeamish. Then again, it's so consistently outrageous and enjoyable that I want her to read it just so I can talk to her about it! It's that kind of book. I can't really think of anything I've read that's like it. Patsy Cornwell? This is way more fun. Tarantino, sure. And "House," maybe. But nothing on the page. Still, I'd prefer to give it 4 1/2 out of 5 stars, because it isn't perfect; there are some spots that seem a little less polished, some things that are maybe too hard to follow. It's not always smooth. But those are quibbles, because overall, this is the coolest, smartest, most exciting book I've read in YEARS. It's a rush.

I expected to love this book. As it turns out, I was not nearly as enamored with it as most readers seem to have been. I enjoyed the opening couple of chapters. The narrative starts out with an edge of dark humor. It's fast-paced. The story and the main character felt unique. Then we're jolted out of the present and, from there through to the end, the story vacillates between flashbacks and present day. The constant back and forth gave it a disjointed feel. A lot of sections felt like they were more about the author showing off his knowledge than about building a captivating plot. And some of the things that happen along the way seemed ridiculous to me. I have to mention the footnotes. I hated them. Unless a novel contains foreign words and phrases, I don't think fiction should ever need footnotes. I read a lot of nonfiction, which is where I expect to find them. In this book, the barrage of footnotes (sometimes every page and often long paragraphs) was just distracting. The information in the footnotes was unnecessary. I couldn't decide if the author felt the need to show off more of his knowledge, or if he thinks his readers aren't smart enough to understand the context of his references within the text. Either way, I found them annoying and stopped reading them about a third of the way through. In all, it's a quick easy read that, for me, had an equal measure of good and bad.

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