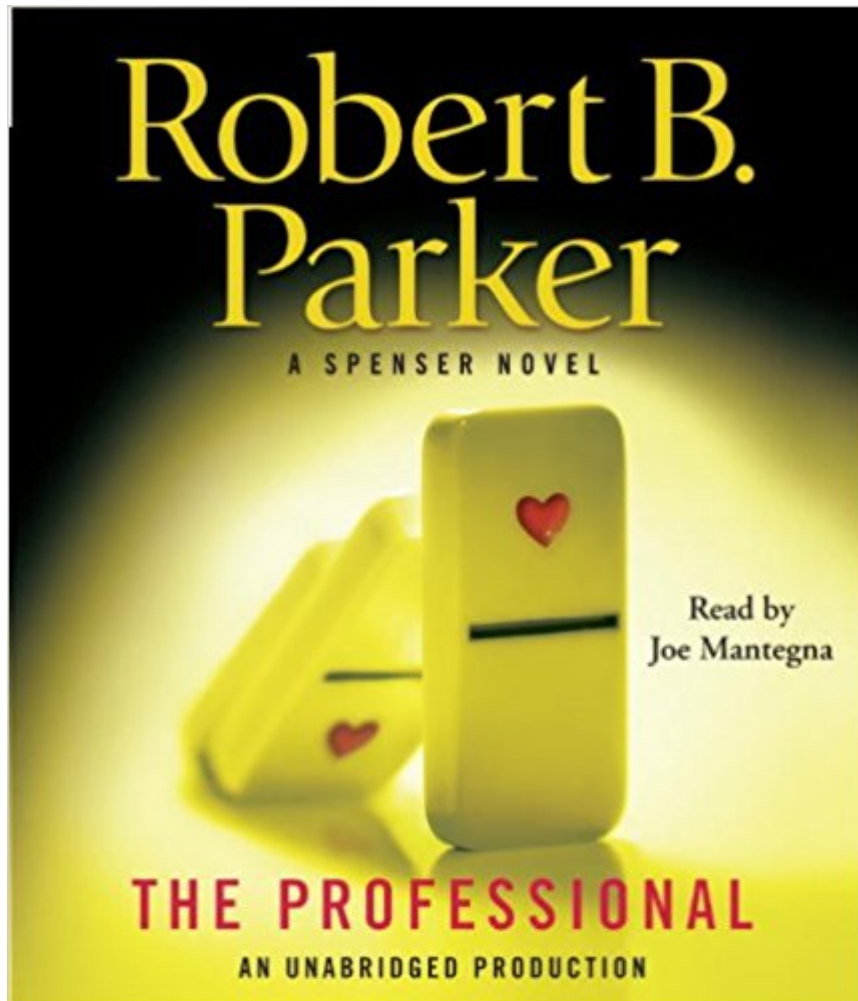


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The Professional: A Spenser Novel (Spenser Novels)



Synopsis

A knock on Spenser's office door can mean only one thing: a new case. This time the visitor is a local lawyer with an interesting story. Elizabeth Shaw specializes in wills and trusts at the Boston law firm of Shaw & Cartwright, and over the years she's developed a friendship with wives of very wealthy men. These rich wives have a shared secret: they've all had an affair with a man named Gary Eisenhower "and now he's blackmailing them for money. Shaw hires Spenser to make Eisenhower "cease and desist," so to speak, but when women start turning up dead, Spenser's case goes from blackmail to murder. As matters become more complicated, Spenser's longtime love, Susan, begins offering input on the case, analyzing Gary's behavior patterns in hopes of opening a new avenue of investigation. It turns out that not all of Gary's women are rich. So if he's not using them for blackmail, then what is his purpose? Spenser switches tactics to focus on the husbands, only to find that innocence and guilt may be two sides of the same coin.

Book Information

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Authors, A-Z > (P) > Parker, Robert B. #2964 in Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers

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Customer Reviews

The 37th installment of Robert B. Parker's series featuring the detective with no first name opens with Spenser in familiar surroundings. He's alone in his Boston office when a woman shows up in need of his services. This may seem familiar to fans of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, who introduced us to their famous fictional detectives, Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe, respectively, in a similar manner. But while the opening seems the same, Parker has taken the PI novel much further than his renowned predecessors ever did as he reinvigorates the somewhat stilted

genre. Longtime fans will find much to enjoy in *THE PROFESSIONAL*. The case appears straightforward: the woman who arrives in his office is a lawyer representing four rich married women who are all having affairs with the same man, Gary Eisenhower. Their husbands are older men in prominent positions. Eisenhower blackmails them with audio and video evidence of their trysts. Spenser starts investigating the case right away. He states, "But there was something wrong with the whole setup. Everything kept turning out not quite what it started out seeming to be." Something is awry, a staple of detective fiction, but Parker brings everything to a new level with his latest Spenser story. One of the things that throws a curveball into the case is that not only is Eisenhower not afraid of the cops, but none of the alleged victims of the crime are willing to press charges. And at least one woman sees no reason not to keep sleeping with Eisenhower! Since Spenser does not take money to rough up people or bump them off, the case is apparently at a dead end. He wishes the women good luck and leaves. But as fans know, Spenser just cannot let go as he tells the reader, "Nobody was paying me to do anything."

Sadly the days of the hard hitting... hard shooting... unyielding... snappy repartee... private detective Spenser... are no more. The former "MAN'S-MAN" who spent untold hours with the tough rough-edged men on both sides of the law... is now more content to exchange double-entendre's with the always annoying Susan. In between the relentless honey-dripping dialogue in which Spenser constantly reminds the reader Ad Nauseam that Susan is the most beautiful woman in the world and would look like a runway model even if she wore a ten-year-old unwashed mechanics uniform... Susan dutifully returns serve to Spenser... by unrelentingly jogging the reader's memory as to Spenser being the stud of all studs. And of course for experienced Spenser fans you know it has to be stated at least three times per "short-story" that assuredly Susan has a Ph.D. from Harvard. The concept of the crime to be investigated that this saga is built around is hard to swallow. A female lawyer approaches "Stud" Spenser representing four rich women who all have a similar M.O. They married rich older men... and they're all having adulterous sex with the same man Gary Eisenhower. And now Gary whose real name in a prior life was Goran Pappas is blackmailing all of them with sex tapes of their escapades. Even for a light hearted Spenser tale the fact that all four women still want to keep the amorous affairs alive seems farfetched. Where all credibility dissipates is when for some unknown reason Spenser takes a liking to Eisenhower/Pappas. Parker dutifully reaches into his extensive collection of former notorious Spenser characters... if not physically in the non-action... they are at least mentioned by reputation... such as... Rita Fiore, Tony Marcus, Junior, Ty-Bop, Vinnie Morris, Chollo, Frank Belson and Quirk among others.

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