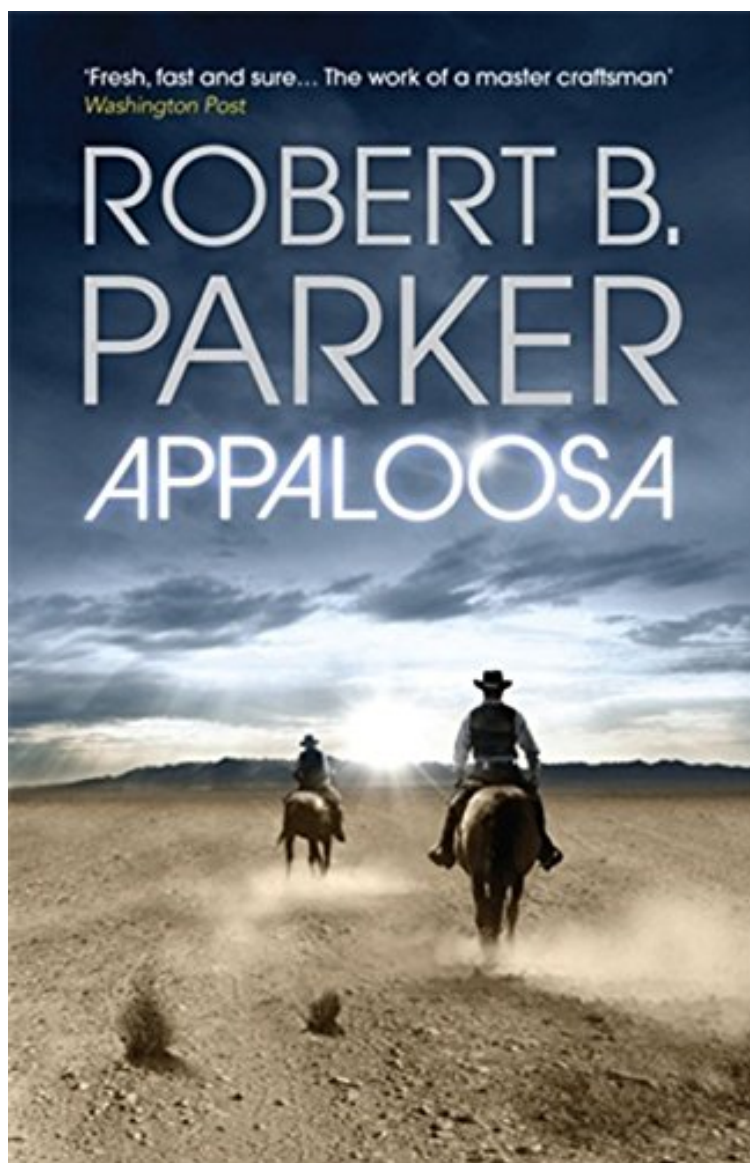


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Appaloosa



Par Robert B. Parker
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Par Robert B. Parker : Appaloosa
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Description : Description du produitA richly imagined novel of the Old West, as spare and vivid as a high plains sunset, from one of the world's most talented performers. It was a long time ago, now, and there were many gunfights to follow, but I remember as well as I remember anything the first time I saw Virgil Cole shoot. Time slowed down for him. Always steady, and never fast . . . When it comes to writing, Robert B.

Parker knows no boundaries. From the iconic Spenser detective series and the novels featuring Sunny Randall and Jesse Stone, to the groundbreaking historical novel Double Play, Parker's imagination has taken readers from Boston to Brooklyn and back again. In Appaloosa, fans are taken on another trip, to the untamed territories of the West during the 1800s. When Virgil Cole and Everett Hitch arrive in Appaloosa, they find a small, dusty town suffering at the hands of renegade rancher Randall Bragg, a man who has so little regard for the law that he has taken supplies, horses, and women for his own and left the city marshal

and one of his deputies for dead. Cole and Hitch, itinerant lawmen, are used to cleaning up after opportunistic thieves, but in Bragg they find an unusually wily adversary—one who raises the stakes by playing not with the rules, but with emotions. This is Robert B. Parker at his storytelling best.

Prsentation de l'diteurNew Mexico Territory, 1882: two itinerant lawmen walk their horses down the long, shale-scattered slope into the frontier town of Appaloosa. Below them, lies rancher Randall Braggs' new fiefdom. Ever since he gunned down Appaloosa's marshal, Braggs and his men have owned the town, stealing, beating, murdering with impunity - living off it like coyotes feeding off a dead buffalo carcass. Summoned by Appaloosa's oppressed aldermen, Virgil Cole and Everett Hitch are here to restore the rule of law. They've done it before, they know what to do only too well: shoot quick, shoot clean, reload. But they aren't the only new arrivals in town. The enigmatic Mrs Allison French has stepped off the train with only a dollar to her name, a keen sense of survival and a good eye for a strong man. Finding one isn't going to a problem - Appaloosa is full of them: Cole, Bragg, Hitch. The problem is that Allie French isn't afraid to hedge her bets... and that Virgil Cole's heart isn't as steady as his gun hand. Appaloosa is an intelligent, emotionally profound novel, told in bone-clean prose wryly leavened with whip-sharp dialogue. It's deeply satisfying on four levels: one, it's a well-told historical adventure and a modern re-interpretation of a classic theme; two, it's an ode to unassailable friendship; three, it's a subtle love story between two profoundly flawed people; and four, the way Parker writes, you'd swear the pages turn themselves. From Publishers Weekly Starred . It's been years since Parker has won a major literary award for a novel (he did collect a Grand Master trophy from MWA in 2002), but that may change with this stunning western, a serious contender for a Spur. This is only Parker's second western, after the Wyatt Earp story Gunman's Rhapsody (or third if you count the Spenser PI quasi-western Potshot), but he takes command of the genre, telling an indelible story of two Old West lawmen. The chief one is Virgil Cole, new marshal of the mining/ranching town of Appaloosa (probably in Colorado); his deputy is Everett Hitch, and it's Hitch who tells the tale, playing Watson to Cole's Holmes. The novel's outline is classic western: Cole and Hitch take on the corrupt rancher, Randall Bragg, who ordered the killing of the previous marshal and his deputy. Bragg is arrested, tried and sentenced to be hung, but hired guns bust him out, leading to a long chase through Indian territory, a traditional high noon (albeit at 2:41 p.m.) shootout between Cole's men and Bragg's, a further escape and, at book's end, a final showdown. Along the way, Cole falls for a piano-playing beauty with a malevolent heart, whose manipulations lead to that final, fatal confrontation. With such familiar elements, Parker breaks no new ground. What he does, and to a magnificent degree, is to invest classic tropes with vigor, through depth of character revealed by a glance, a gesture or even silence. A consummate pro, Parker never tells, always shows, through writing that's bone clean and through a superb transferal of the moral issues of his acclaimed mysteries (e.g., the importance of honor) to the western. This is one of Parker's finest. Agent, Helen Brann. (June) From AudioFile The town of Appaloosa is in a world of hurt as Randall Bragg and his brutal ranch hands rule. Lawmen Virgil Cole and Everett Hitch aim to take back the town. Parker's talent for amplifying meaning from just a few words shines here. Cole and Hitch are complex characters--hard, violent men who live by a strict code of honor. Despite the sparse dialogue, patient listeners will fully grasp the depth of respect and trust these men share. Reader Titus Welliver is the perfect voice: deep, resonant, sometimes as gritty as a sandstorm. With a cadence that matches the nineteenth-century pace of life, his storytelling is just right for this first-person narrative. Listen carefully. Don't miss a word. T.J.M. Winner of AudioFile Earphones Award AudioFile, Portland, Maine-- Copyright AudioFile, Portland, Maine