



Open Season (A Joe Pickett Novel)

By C. J. Box

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Joe Pickett is the new game warden in Twelve Sleep, Wyoming, a town where nearly everyone hunts and the game warden--especially one like Joe who won't take bribes or look the other way--is far from popular. When he finds a local hunting outfitter dead, splayed out on the woodpile behind his state-owned home, he takes it personally. There had to be a reason that the outfitter, with whom he's had run-ins before, chose his backyard, his woodpile to die in. Even after the "outfitter murders," as they have been dubbed by the local press after the discovery of the two more bodies, are solved, Joe continues to investigate, uneasy with the easy explanation offered by the local police.

As Joe digs deeper into the murders, he soon discovers that the outfitter brought more than death to his backdoor: he brought Joe an endangered species, thought to be extinct, which is now living in his woodpile. But if word of the existence of this endangered species gets out, it will destroy any chance of InterWest, a multinational natural gas company, building an oil pipeline that would bring the company billions of dollars across Wyoming, through the mountains and forests of Twelve Sleep. The closer Joe comes to the truth behind the outfitter murders, the endangered species and InterWest, the closer he comes to losing everything he holds dear.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Penzler Pick, July 2001: Mystery debuts are both exciting and problematic. Exciting, because one may always be about to discover the next Hammett or Chandler (or so the copywriters and publicists would have us believe), and problematic because originality in such a well-grooved genre is becoming more and more at a premium.

In advance reviews, *Open Season* has been pronounced "something special," (*Booklist*), and it lives up to the billing. It is not C.J. Box's skill at plotting (the story of greedy business interests and local corruption is fine, but familiar), but rather the character of hero Joe Pickett, a Wyoming game warden, that makes this a series kickoff to remember. Like all the best mystery protagonists, Pickett is stubbornly ready to risk everything when his own personal sense of morality is at stake. But Joe is also a guy who sometimes gets things wrong, and this characteristic of messing up adds a dimension of humanity to the book.

C.J. Box makes the town of Twelve Sleep, Wyoming (where Joe and his pregnant wife and his daughters have come to live in a tiny house that could be a lot nicer if Joe only had a job that paid better), come alive to the extent that one can almost smell the crisp mountain air and pine needles. The locals display an impressive array of grudge holding and "don't mess with us" attitudes, but Joe is unwilling to forget he's sworn to uphold and enforce a full battery of laws that many of these neighbors have no intention of obeying.

When a well-known poacher, with whom he has humiliatingly tangled, suddenly turns up dead in his own backyard, Joe finds himself at the top of a downward path that, first, will lead to more bodies and then will put his entire family into peril. *Open Season* doesn't pull its punches, and Box does allow bad things to happen to good people. Read it and find out how skillfully he handles both his hero's complexities and also the ambiguities inherent in a life dedicated to law enforcement. --*Otto Penzler*

From Publishers Weekly

Enthusiastic blurbs even from luminaries such as Tony Hillerman, Les Standiford and Loren Estleman can sometimes leave readers feeling as if they must have read a different book altogether. Not this time. Box's superb debut, the first in a series introducing Wyoming game warden Joe Pickett, should immediately make him a contender for best first novel or even best novel awards. Young Joe is struggling to fill the shoes of his mentor, legendary Vern Dunnegan, as warden of Twelve Sleep County, and trying to support his wife and growing family on the meager salary he makes. The hours are long, the work hard but satisfying, and Joe's honesty and integrity would pay off if he could avoid "bonehead moves" like ticketing the governor of the state for fishing without a license, for instance, or allowing a poacher to grab Joe's firearm from him. When that very same poacher turns up dead and bloodied in Joe's woodpile with only a cooler containing unidentified animal scat, his life, livelihood and family will never be the same. Upping the excitement are a couple of murders, local political and bureaucratic intrigue, a high-stakes pipeline scheme and an endangered species that Joe's eldest daughter "discovers." No one has done a better job of portraying the odd combination of hardy and foolhardy folk that make their homes in Wyoming's wilderness areas, or of describing the dichotomy between those who want to develop the area and those who want to preserve it. Without resorting to simplistic blacks and whites, Box fuses ecological themes, vibrant descriptions of Wyoming's wonders and peculiarities, and fully fleshed characters into a debut of riveting tensions. Meet Joe Pickett: he's going to be a mystery star.

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From Library Journal

The publisher is really excited about this debut mystery, set in Wyoming and featuring game warden Joe Pickett. Events center on a desperate battle to save an endangered species, lifting this work above standard genre fare. Box is president and CEO of Rocky Mountain International Corporation, which manages tourism for several Western states.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Anne Stewart:

Do you have favorite book? Should you have, what is your favorite's book? Publication is very important thing for us to know everything in the world. Each reserve has different aim as well as goal; it means that guide has different type. Some people really feel enjoy to spend their the perfect time to read a book. They can be reading whatever they have because their hobby is definitely reading a book. Consider the person who don't like studying a book? Sometime, man feel need book once they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you will want this Open Season (A Joe Pickett Novel).

Ricardo Hamilton:

Do you one among people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys this kind of aren't like that. This Open Season (A Joe Pickett Novel) book is readable simply by you who hate the straight word style. You will find the facts here are arrange for enjoyable examining experience without leaving possibly decrease the knowledge that want to supply to you. The writer associated with Open Season (A Joe Pickett Novel) content conveys the thought easily to understand by many people. The printed and e-book are not different in the written content but it just different as it. So , do you continue to thinking Open Season (A Joe Pickett Novel) is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

Francis Gibbs:

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Arthur Fabry:

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