

[PDF] L.A. Confidential

James Ellroy - pdf download free book



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Author: James Ellroy
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Description:

James Ellroy's *L.A. Confidential* is film-noir crime fiction akin to *Chinatown*, *Hollywood Babylon*, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, and Jim Thompson. It's about three tortured souls in the 1950s L.A.P.D.: Ed Exley, the clean-cut cop who lives shivering in the shadow of his dad, a legendary cop in the same department; Jack Vincennes, a cop who advises a *Police Squad*-like TV show and busts movie stars for payoffs from sleazy *Hush-Hush* magazine; and Bud White, a detective haunted by the sight of his dad murdering his mom.

Ellroy himself was traumatized as a boy by his party-animal mother's murder. (See his memoir *My*

Dark Places for the whole sordid story.) So it is clear that Bud is partly autobiographical. But Exley, whose shiny reputation conceals a dark secret, and Vincennes, who goes showbiz with a vengeance, reflect parts of Ellroy, too.

L.A. Confidential holds enough plots for two or three books: the cops chase stolen gangland heroin through a landscape littered with not-always-innocent corpses while succumbing to sexy sirens who have been surgically resculpted to resemble movie stars; a vile developer--based (unfairly) on Walt Disney-- schemes to make big bucks off Moochie Mouse; and the cops compete with the crooks to see who can be more corrupt and violent. Ellroy's hardboiled prose is so compressed that some of his rat-a-tat paragraphs are hard to follow. You have to read with attention as intense as his—and that is very intense indeed. But he richly rewards the effort. He may not be as deep and literary as Chandler, but he belongs on the same top-level shelf. --This text refers to the edition.

From Publishers Weekly Ellroy's ninth novel, set in 1950s Los Angeles, kicks off with a shoot-out between a rogue ex-cop and a band of gangsters fronted by a crooked police lieutenant. Close on the heels of this scene comes a jarring Christmas Day precinct house riot, in which drunk and rampaging cops viciously beat up a group of jailed Mexican hoodlums. But, as readers will quickly learn, these sudden sprees of violence, laced with evidence of police corruption, are only teasers for the grisly events and pathos that follow this intricate police procedural. Picking up where *The Black Dahlia* and *The Big Nowhere* left off, the book tracks the intertwining paths of the three flawed and ambitious cops who emerge from the "Bloody Christmas" affair. Dope peddling, prostitution, and other risky business are revealed as the tightly wound plot untangles. Ellroy's disdain for Hollywood tinsel is evident at every turn; even the most noble of the characters here are relentlessly sleazy. But their grueling, sometimes maniacal schemes make a compelling read for the stout of heart.
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