



The Mourner: A Parker Novel (Parker Novels)

Richard Stark

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You probably haven't ever noticed them. But they've noticed you. They notice *everything*. That's their job. Sitting quietly in a nondescript car outside a bank making note of the tellers' work habits, the positions of the security guards. Lagging a few car lengths behind the Brinks truck on its daily rounds. Surreptitiously jiggling the handle of an unmarked service door at the racetrack.

They're thieves. Heisters, to be precise. They're pros, and Parker is far and away the best of them. If you're planning a job, you want him in. Tough, smart, hardworking, and relentlessly focused on his trade, he is the heister's heister, the robber's robber, the heavy's heavy. You don't want to cross him, and you don't want to get in his way, because he'll stop at nothing to get what he's after.

Parker, the ruthless antihero of Richard Stark's eponymous mystery novels, is one of the most unforgettable characters in hardboiled noir. Lauded by critics for his taut realism, unapologetic amorality, and razor-sharp prose-style—and adored by fans who turn each intoxicating page with increasing urgency—Stark is a master of crime writing; his books as influential as any in the genre. The University of Chicago Press has embarked on a project to return the early volumes of this series to print for a new generation of readers to discover—and become addicted to. This season's offerings include volumes 4–6 in the series: *The Mourner*, *The Score*, and *The Jugger*.

The Mourner is a story of convergence—of cultures and of guys with guns. Hot on the trail of a statue stolen from a fifteenth-century French tomb, Parker enters a world of eccentric art collectors, greedy foreign officials, and shady KGB agents. Next, Parker works with a group of professional con men in *The Score* on his biggest job yet—robbing an entire town in North Dakota. In *The Jugger*, Parker travels to Nebraska to help out a geriatric safecracker who knows too many of his criminal secrets. By the time he arrives, the safecracker is dead and Parker's skeletons are on the verge of escaping from their closet—unless Parker resorts to lethal measures.

“Whatever Stark writes, I read. He's a stylist, a pro, and I thoroughly enjoy his attitude.”—Elmore Leonard

“Westlake knows precisely how to grab a reader, draw him or her into the story, and then slowly tighten his grip until escape is impossible.”—*Washington Post Book World*

“Donald Westlake's Parker novels are among the small number of books I read over and over. Forget all that crap you've been telling yourself about *War and Peace* and Proust—these are the books you'll want on that desert island.”—Lawrence Block

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Michelle Porter:

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Daniel Trimble:

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Holly Murphy:

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