



Title: Back of Beyond

Author: C.J. Box

Description:

Cody Hoyt, a brilliant cop but an alcoholic with only two months of sobriety under his belt, finds his mentor and AA sponsor Hank Winters burned to death in a remote mountain cabin. At first it looks like the suicide of a man who's fallen off the wagon, but when Cody takes a closer look at the scene of his friend's death, he sees foul play. After years of bad behavior directly related to his drinking, Cody is in a mess of hot water with his department, who want him to call it a suicide and move on. But Cody pushes back and finds a pattern of evidence eerily similar to four other "suicides" across the nation. There's a serial killer on the loose -- a killer who's linked to an outfitter leading tourists into Yellowstone National Park -- the very outfitter Cody's son Justin has just joined for a two-week trip into the wild. In a desperate cat and mouse game, where it becomes apparent the killer is aware of Cody's every move, Cody treks into the wilderness trying to stop a killer hell bent on ruining the one thing in Cody's life he cares most about. It's not at all clear whether he -- or anyone on the trip to Yellowstone's most remote wilderness -- will get out alive.

Reviews

Kirkus (starred review):

Once again, Box provides the complete suspense package: unobtrusively slick detection, buckets of surprises and mounting thrills, all amid his trademark settings in the majestic high country.

Booklist:

Box built his reputation with his ongoing series about Joe Pickett, a Wyoming game warden who's a bad shot and a good guy. But stand-alone thrillers have given Box room to experiment. His third features a cop, Cody Hoyt, who is everything Pickett is not. An alcoholic smoker with a short fuse, Hoyt has left his previous jobs and his family in shambles. When his AA sponsor is murdered, however, his stubborn single-mindedness may just be his saving grace. The trail leads Hoyt, decidedly not an outdoorsman, into the Yellowstone backcountry, where others are in danger -- and for a surprising reason. Part of the fun here is seeing Box take familiar elements from his other fiction and rework them into something different. It's terrifically entertaining stuff that comes together with a bang in the end. We almost hate to say this, but Hoyt has series potential, too.

HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Box is big news -- and with a 125,000-copy first printing, a 10-city tour, and a major marketing push, this book will do business.

Publishers Weekly:

Box makes the rugged expanses of the American West even more palpably compelling than his largely appealing characters.

The Sunday Times (UK):

The two most fully achieved recent thrillers are two simpler stories, set in America alone and paring away modernity so as to seem almost timeless. CJ Box's *Back of Beyond* centers on Cody Hoyt, an obstreperous, alcoholic sheriff's in Montana, who is led by a pattern of lethal incidents to suspect that the killer responsible is part of a group now trekking on horseback through Yellowstone national park.

As Hoyt races to intercept them, Box's narrative shuttles to and fro between him and the diverse set of riders, By this point his novel has grippingly come to resemble as Agatha Christie closed-community whodunit but with horses, bears, wolves and hunting rifles.

Library Journal:

As Box has shown in his Joe Pickett series, he knows life and death in the backcountry like few other writers today.

Houston Chronicle:

Cody is a great creation -- a gut-churningly convincing drunk who stubbornly forges on in the face of arson attack, his own paranoia, and some hapless horsemanship, intent on saving his son from a murderer whose identity is tantalizingly elusive.

The Associated Press:

Box's *Blue Heaven* won the Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Award for the best novel of 2008, but the new book may be his best yet.

The novel is beautifully written, especially when Box is portraying the Yellowstone landscape.

"It was still moist in the trees from a brief rain shower that came at dawn as they set out, and raindrops clung like tears to the tips of the pine needles. Occasionally, there was a break in the canopy and light streamed through like jail bars."

The plot is a roller-coaster ride of unexpected twists and turns, making *Back of Beyond* one of the most suspenseful wilderness thrillers since *Deliverance*. And Box's characters are so real that you want to reach out and shake their hands or flee from them as fast as you can.

USA Today:

Between work and money concerns, did your big summer holiday plans somehow end in a sad little staycation Let C.J. Box take you on an audio tour of Yellowstone National Park murder, mystery and mountains included. Box, a best-selling mystery writer and Wyoming native, crafts a taut tale, but it's his details about the untamed flora and fauna -- two-legged as well as four -- that inhabit the wildness out West that hooks you.

The Globe and Mail:

This is the third stand-alone mystery from Box, author of the excellent Joe Pickett series, and fans know they can expect lean prose and a tightly organized plot. Box delivers both in what is surely his best novel so far. If Box isn't already on your list, put him there.

The Seattle Times:

Wyoming native Box is a gripping writer and a shrewd observer of his state's rugged wilderness.

City AM (London):

Does the name C.J. Box sound familiar to you Perhaps not, as the Wyoming-dwelling, cowboy hat sporting bestselling writer has been a US hit for some time, but is only now being pushed on this side of the pond.

If you do know of Box, you'll know of him for his Joe Pickett series, from which *Back of Beyond* is a notable break. Fans of Joe won't be disappointed, though, with this typically heavy-breathing thriller involving murder and the Wild West.

A surprisingly complex but rewarding plot answers this and thousands of other questions: we dare you to try to figure out the mystery before the end. Grab this book for any late-summer holidays or for a bit of escapism if your summer break has been and gone.

Madison County Herald:

Back Of Beyond's superb pacing and change of pace from Game Warden Joe Pickett make it a welcome addition to the CJ Box lineup.