



**Title:** Live by Night

**Author:** Dennis Lehane

**Description:**

Combining edgy suspense and the vivid period detail that made *The Given Day* a smashing success, award-winning, bestselling author Dennis Lehane delivers a masterful epic of Prohibition-era America told through the story of a charismatic young gangster on his rise through the glitz and the violence of the Roaring 20s.

**Reviews**

**Kirkus (starred review):**

The acclaimed mystery writer again tries his hand at historical fiction, combining period detail from the Prohibition era with the depth of character and twists of plot that have won him such a devoted readership.

Though this novel serves as a sequel to *The Given Day* (2008), it can be read independently of Lehane's previous historical novel and is closer in its page-turning narrative momentum to his more contemporary thrillers such as *Mystic River* (2001). The novel builds to a powerful series of climaxes, following betrayal upon betrayal, which will satisfy Lehane's fans and deserves to extend his readership as well.

Power, lust and moral ambiguity combine for an all-American explosion of fictional fireworks.

**Publishers Weekly (starred review):**

Bestseller Lehane chronicles the Prohibition-era rise of Joe Coughlin, an Irish-American gangster, in this masterful epic. Lehane has created a mature, quintessentially American story that will appeal to readers of literary and crime fiction alike.

**Booklist (starred review):**

This is an utterly magnetic novel on every level, a reimagining of the great themes of popular fiction -- crime, family, passion, betrayal -- set against an exquisitely rendered historical backdrop.

**The New York Times:**

Cryptic, doomy, romantic yet ominous, this opening salvo signals the most important thing about Mr. Lehane's latest: precision. All of *Live By Night* is written with that

same degree of cleverness and care. Yet his idea of plain old crime is sophisticated, literary and barbed enough ("How does anyone become so callous" "Takes less practice than you'd think") that it makes this book a sentence-by-sentence pleasure. You are in the hands of an expert. And you'll know it.

**Stephen King:**

*Live By Night* is *The Godfather* for thinking people.

**The Washington Post:**

Reduced to a bare-bones summary, *Live by Night* might sound like the sort of standard crime saga we've all encountered far too many times. In Lehane's hands, however, it becomes something larger and infinitely more complex. With its fresh, precise language, its acute sympathy for the passions that shape -- and sometimes warp -- its central characters and its lovingly detailed recreation of an earlier age, *Live by Night* transcends the familiar and assumes an unimpeachable reality of its own.

But the true heart of the book -- and the heart of Lehane's achievement -- lies in the character of Joe Coughlin and in the moral quandary that comes to dominate his life. That bitter and hard-won knowledge defines Joe's life, lending resonance and depth to this meticulously crafted portrait of our violent national past.

**New York Daily News:**

In *Live by Night*, Dennis Lehane continues the saga from *The Given Day*, with a rich tale so dramatically realized that it's HBO-worthy.

*Live by Night* belongs somewhere in a realm where Mario Puzo meets the Bible. It's a morality tale, but in keeping with the best of those, it's complex and layered and damnably entertaining, too.

**Daily Mail (UK):**

A masterpiece by the crime writer's crime writer, this is the finest gangster novel of the year with a spare, stark edge that cuts into your very soul.

No one captures menace quite as elegantly as Lehane, nor understands the Mob better.

The bittersweet taste of violence mixed with greed oozes from every page, with a heartstopping ending to complete the portrait of crime that charges a high price for success.

It is *Boardwalk Empire* on speed, the Thirties gangsters brought to vivid, never-to-be-forgotten life.

**Daily Mail (UK):**

Dennis Lehane is the crime writer's crime writer; with a spare, stark edge to his work that lifts it into the truly great class. The gangster world is superbly evoked and the story is as tight and powerful as the trigger on a Thompson sub-machine gun.

**The Guardian (UK):**

This is noir with added value: Lehane is terrific on family ties and at conveying the

buzz of a city powered by immigrant labour of often dubious legality.

***The Independent (UK):***

This is not just brilliant period crime writing but brilliant writing full stop.

***The Sunday Times (UK):***

History is merely a backdrop in a story that seeks just to be exciting, sexy and atmospheric. The author's trademark combination of dark deeds, graceful pose and sassy dialogue ensures it succeeds.

***The Spectator (UK):***

Lehane's tough, muscular prose captures the era well; and his dialogue brings to life the inhabitants of its underworld -- something one might have expected from an author who wrote several episodes of *The Wire*.

***Minneapolis Star Tribune:***

*Live by Night* is, first and foremost, a great story. But it is also proof positive that Lehane's 2008 novel, *The Given Day*, was no fluke -- more than just a crime writer, Lehane is an author who works on a higher literary plane. *Live By Night* is a morality tale in which, as one character notes, 'No one's good, no one's bad.' Except for the author, who once again shows just how good he is.

***The Washington Times:***

The first page of *Live By Night* hooks you with a paragraph written in the quintessentially unemotional style of Dennis Lehane, an author who takes no prisoners. This is a vivid and coldblooded summary of the life of a modern American outlaw. In less expert hands, this would be one more book about a Boston gangster. From Mr. Lehane it is a classic take on the underworld and how to survive in it.

***People:***

Ben Affleck is directing and starring in a movie version of this gangster thriller, and I can't wait to see to see it onscreen. The movie could be a tropical version of *Boardwalk Empire* with epic romance, great Cuban music and Panama hats.

***Tampa Bay Times:***

Boy, does Lehane deliver.

*Live by Night* isn't just a vibrant historical jaunt. Lehane is a past master of suspense and action, and his turn here from characters who solve crimes to those who commit them offers him rich territory.

*Live by Night* takes on big subjects -- race, class, money, religion, friendship, family, violence -- by embedding them in irresistible storytelling about a compelling, conflicted and mordantly funny man.

**South Florida Sun Sentinel:**

For some criminals, crime is a business that supports families and feeds a desire to lead unconventional lives. And that has made for some intriguing, iconic films and novels such as *Goodfellas*, *Once Upon a Time in America*, *The Sopranos* and *The Godfather* saga.

Add to that list the exquisitely plotted *Live by Night*. Like those other works, *Live by Night* goes beyond the life of crime, skirting that fine line between glorifying the illegal and showing the humanity behind even mobsters. In this 10th novel, Dennis Lehane examines our history, morality in an amoral world and what motivates some people to "live by night," making up their own rules as one character says.

*Live by Night* is a masterful outing by an author known for superior storytelling.

**The Denver Post:**

No one writes crime fiction like Dennis Lehane. Great ones are practicing the craft with their own take, but when it comes to capturing a working-class surround that yields both heroes and villains -- both of whom may be on the wrong side of the law -- Lehane is without match. His stories are built around his characters' lives and resulting decisions.

*Live by Night* is no less than all that, thought-provoking, page-turning and emotionally satisfying.

Lehane presents a 1920s world view that resonates. He delivers in prose both digestible and memorable. At times, he is truly Chandleresque, in all its cynical glory.

**Readers Digest (UK):**

Don't open it at a time when you need to do anything else, such as work sleep because I guarantee that all you'll be able to do is keep on turning the pages. The prose crackles with Chandleresque jokes, the narrative never flags and there's even a genuinely heart-stopping love story.

**Big Issue (UK):**

"A fantastic piece of work, a mesmerising page-turner with buckets of character and social comment thrown in," adding, "when a story is delivered with this much style, class and skill it doesn't really matter which category it's filed under in bookshops or online. Suffice to say, *Live by Night* is a cracking read and you be hard pushed to better it."

**Catholic Herald (UK):**

This is an assured and fascinating novel about moral choices, fate and the harm we do ourselves.

**The Scotsman (UK):**

This is a book that should put his name where it belongs, right up there alongside Doctorow and Dreiser.

**Horowhenua Chronicle (New Zealand):**

No one is without sin in this fine story, particularly Jo, who hasn't fallen far from the tree: he's 'a 12 o'clock fella in a 9 o'clock town,' and his adventures are endlessly fascinating.

**D Scene (New Zealand):**

Crime writing normally leaves me as cold as the corpses strewn through its pages, but Dennis Lehane's skill as a writer transcends the cliches of his genre.

**Praise from booksellers**

**Cody Morrison, [Square Books](#), Oxford, MS:**

A stunning achievement. I can't wait for the book to come out and have the pleasure of putting it into readers' hands. I may even have to read this one again when it is published this fall.

**Annie Philbrick, [Bank Square Books](#), Mystic, CT:**

Gritty and gripping. Lehane has written an epic tale of crime, love and betrayal. *Live by Night* will blow your socks off.

**Bill Cusumano, [Nicolas Books](#), Ann Arbor, MI:**

Dennis Lehane continues his brilliant chronicle of 20th century America with a powerful story set in the Prohibition era. What sets him apart is not just the strong plot and characters, but an ability to perfectly evoke the society of the time for foreshadowing his society of the future.

**Nancy McFarlane, [Fiction Addiction](#), Greenville, SC:**

An unforgettable, beautifully written story. The story of Joe's life is an epic tale of love, friendship, loyalty and redemption even in a world of betrayal, violence, and revenge.

**Josie Leavitt, [Flying Pig Bookstore](#), Shelburne, VT:**

A fast-paced thrill ride so vivid that you can practically feel the Florida heat and taste the rum. A totally enjoyable tale that I was sad to see come to an end.

**Ellen Meeropol, [Odyssey Bookshop](#), South Hadley, MA:**

Another sharp and edgy novel from Lehane, set at the dark edges of business as usual in the unsettled decades after *The Given Day*, this is crisp writing with moments of surprising tenderness. Above all, Dennis Lehane can really tell a story.

**J.B. Dickey, [Seattle Mystery Bookshop](#), Seattle, WA:**

Lehane's writing is both disarmingly poetic and serious, even as it makes you smile.

**Jerry Brown, [The Bookstore](#), Radcliff, KY:**

Dennis Lehane has created an enduring epic saga full of wonderful bad guys and femme fatales worthy of being compared to *The Godfather*.

**Merry Cutler, [Annie's Book Stop](#), Sharon, MA:**

My interest was captured with the first paragraph.

**Darwin Ellis, [Books on the Common](#), Ridgefield, CT:**

A fascinating portrait of a deliciously sinful low point in American history -- ironic that in its cause can be traced to the influence of religion on government, an error soon rectified.

**Angie Self, [Country Bookshop](#), Southern Pines, NC:**

A wonderfully written epic tale.

**Dana Schulz, [Snowbound Books](#), Marquette, MI:**

There's a certain drive and freshness to Lehane's work. He challenges himself to explore new territory and I, for one, will happily follow him anywhere.

**Deon Stonehouse, [Sunriver Books & Music](#), Sunriver, OR:**

Reading a page of Lehane's latest is like stepping into a time machine and being transported to the prohibition era, it feels that real.

**Michael Hermann, Gibson's Bookstore, Concord, NH:**

Wow, just finished the new Lehane (coming in October) -- LIVE BY NIGHT. These are some of the best scenes and best characters ever written into a gangster novel.

**Tova Beiser, [Brown University](#), Providence, RI:**

In LIVE BY NIGHT Dennis Lehane has once again created a world packed with vivid characters, suspenseful action, and chock-full of his trademark gritty, honest dialogue, this time set during Prohibition. Lehane tackles race, class, justice and honor, and has written another non-stop, thoroughly engrossing, historical page turner. Smart, funny, larger-than-life, this sweeping novel will carry the reader away.

**Nancy McFarlane, [Fiction Addiction](#), Greenville, SC:**

LIVE BY NIGHT is an unforgettable, beautifully written story of how gangsters operated during the turbulent time of prohibition told by following the life of self proclaimed outlaw Joe Coughlin. The story of Joe's life is an epic tale of love, friendship, loyalty and redemption even in a world of betrayal, violence and revenge.

**J.B. Dickey, [Seattle Mystery Bookshop](#), Seattle, WA:**

Where THE GIVEN DAY was a large, David Lean-like saga, LIVE BY NIGHT is a big story writ small, shot in close-up, a national story told through nine years in one man's life like B-movie film noir that outlasts the blockbusters. It is a grand and timeless story of love and hate, revenge and fear and hope, as well as folly, greed and the age-old question of whether it is possible for anyone to outrun their fate or outrun a bullet. If his predecessor in writing deserved a stylistic moniker, so should he. I would say we need to have the term "Lehanian". For if Chandler is one of the brightest stars in the literary universe, surely Dennis Lehane's will be seen to shine just as brightly and his works will be celebrated just as deservedly as they're read and re-read over the decades.

**Bruce Henningsgaard, Birds Books, Rosemount, MN:**

Definitely a worthwhile read, but then again everything Dennis has written has been a worthwhile read.

**Sue Richardson, [Maine Coast Book Shop](#), Damariscotta, ME:**

Lehane's ability to submerge his readers into a world unknown to us is extraordinary. Joe Coughlin and the rest of the characters have stayed with me since finishing the last sentence.