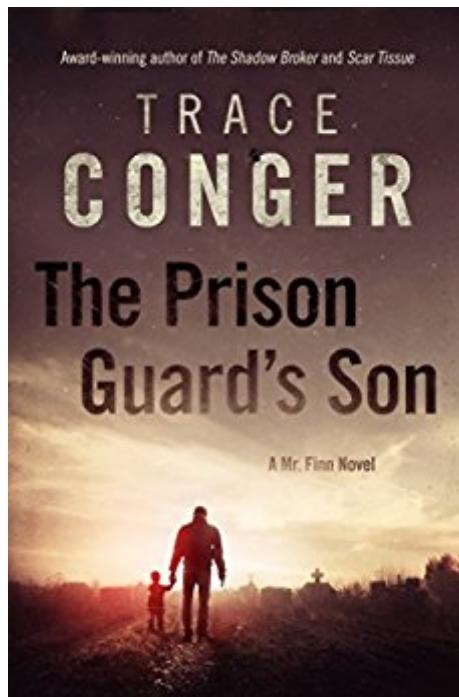


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The Prison Guard's Son (Mr. Finn Book 3)



Synopsis

SEARCH FOR MONSTERS LONG ENOUGH AND YOU MIGHT BECOME ONE

Thirty years ago Jacob Vance and Raymond Turner committed a gruesome crime that shocked a small West Virginia town. Only nine years old themselves, they kidnapped and murdered four-year-old Josh Baker. The two boys were quickly arrested, tried and convicted, but were released after serving only eight years in a juvenile detention facility. Because of the heinousness of their crime and the town's thirst for retribution, the government gave Vance and Turner new identities and relocated them to parts unknown. Now, the victim's father has hired Finn Harding to find his son's killers so he can levy the justice that was denied so long ago. Along the way, Finn clashes with a tenacious US Marshal determined to protect the killers' new identities and crosses paths with an infamous triggerman hired to do what the courts didn't. What begins as a typical job for Finn quickly spirals into a moral struggle between revenge and forgiveness as he learns details about the lives Vance and Turner have been living. As he fights with his conscience, Finn learns that monsters truly exist, you can't hide from your past, and some cases should stay buried.

Book Information

File Size: 3631 KB

Print Length: 238 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0996826726

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Black Mill Books (August 7, 2016)

Publication Date: August 7, 2016

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01K0G5IM8

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #36,964 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #347 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > Private Investigators #495 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > Private Investigators #814 in Kindle

Customer Reviews

Former private investigator Finn Harding lost his license a few years back, but that hasn't slowed him down a whit. Granted, he has to be more careful about running afoul of the law, but he's been making a decent living by operating in the shadows of the underground. This time, he's contacted by the father of a son who was tortured and murdered some 30 years ago in Parkersburg, West Virginia. All these years later, the intent is to find the two who did the deed and who, at the time, were just 9 years old. Tried and convicted as adults, they spent only a few years in a juvenile prison before being released. Problem is, it appears they disappeared into the government's witness protection program and now could be anywhere in the world. Finn is a bit torn because taking the case means he'll have to be away from his Cincinnati home, the young daughter he sees on weekends and an ex-wife who seems to be leaning toward reconciliation (he won't miss his Colombo-loving father, with whom he makes his home, nearly as much). Then too, he has ethical concerns over what the father intends to do to the pair after they're found; but in the end, the details of the murder are so gruesome that Finn sets his worries aside and agrees to help. As expected, locating the pair isn't easy, given that their original identities have been wiped off the face of earth as we know it. So here and there, Finn enlists help from a few friends - all interesting in their own rights - who have ways of ferreting out background information on just about anyone anywhere. The search takes him from Parkersburg to Texas and Tennessee - and quickly puts him in the crosshairs of a female FBI agent who's determined to thwart his efforts and let the two sleeping dogs lie where they were planted to those many years ago.

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Thirty years ago, in a small West Virginia town, two nine-year-old boys kidnapped and murdered four-year-old Josh Baker. The boys, Jacob Vance and Raymond Turner, were quickly arrested, tried and convicted. And, after eight years in a juvenile detention facility, they were released and given new identities. Josh Baker's father, Willie, hires Finn Harding to find his son's killers. Willie believes that his son's killers have been placed in witness protection, but he wants to find them. "Those two have to pay the real price for what they did to Josh." Finn Harding has a dilemma. He no longer has his PI licence and works underground. While work is falling into his lap at the moment, it's never easy to turn down a paying job. Willie Baker only wants Finn to find the killers, but Finn knows that that won't be an end to it. Still, after reviewing the information that Willie Baker gives him, and visiting Josh Baker's grave, he takes the job on. Finn Harding's search is not easy. Still, he's nothing if not resourceful and after some false starts he makes progress. Along the way he clashes with US Deputy Marshal Valerie Cheatham, and finds that he is not the only one searching for the killers. Two aspects make this novel particularly interesting. The first is the detail provided of the techniques used by Finn Harding to try to find the killers. The second is the moral ambiguity of a number of the characters. Is it possible that either of the killers can redeem themselves by having made a positive contribution to the community since their release? I read this novel during a four-hour long train journey last month. It held my attention from beginning to end.

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