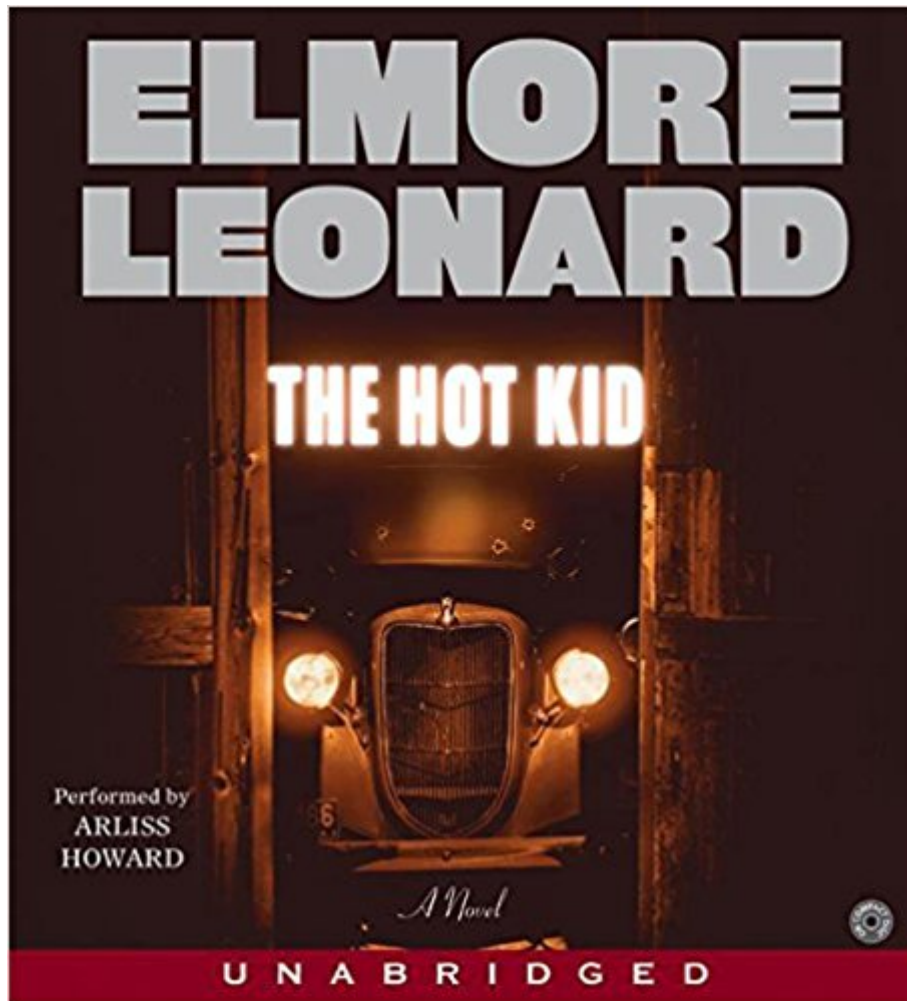




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Hot Kid CD



Synopsis

Carl Webster, the hot kid of the marshals service, is polite, respects his elders, and can shoot a man driving away in an Essex at four hundred yards. Carl works out of the Tulsa, Oklahoma, federal courthouse in the 1930s, the period of America's most notorious bank robbers. Dillinger, Baby Face Nelson, those guys. Carl wants to be America's most famous lawman. He shot his first felon when he was fifteen years old. With a Winchester. Jack Belmont wants to rob banks, become public enemy number one, and show his dad, an oil millionaire, he can make it on his own. With tommy guns, hot cars, speakeasies, cops and robbers, and a former lawman who believes in vigilante justice, all played out against the flapper period of gun molls and Prohibition, *The Hot Kid* is Elmore Leonard -- the true master -- at his best. Performed by Arliss Howard

Book Information

Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

Before Elmore Leonard abandoned westerns to blaze across the pantheon of bestsellerdom with his hip, stylish thrillers, punctuated with dead-pan humor and dialogue worthy of a David Mamet play, he might have written *The Hot Kid*; it has some of the same crisp pacing and well-defined, if not especially complex, characters that marked his earlier novels. A show-down between Tulsa oil wildcatter and millionaire Oris Belmont and his 18-year-old son, who's attempting to shake him down, says all there is to say about both men: "I don't know what's wrong with you. You're a nice-looking boy, wear a clean shirt every day, keep your hair combed ... where'd you get your ugly disposition? Your mama blames me for not being around, so then I give you things .. you get in trouble, I get you out. Well, now you've moved on to extortion in your life of crime ... I pay you what

you want or you're telling everybody I have a girlfriend?" Jack Belmont's blackmail scheme doesn't work, but after destroying his father's property, forging checks in his name, kidnapping his mistress, and joining a gang of notorious bank robbers after his release from prison, he encounters another man trying to get out from under his father's large shadow and create his own, bigger one. Deputy U.S. Marshal Carl Webster, who at age 15 shot a man trying to steal his cows and six years later dispenses equal justice to Emmet Long, the leader of Belmont's gang, now has Jack Belmont in his sights. Webster's exploits have earned him even more celebrity than Jack, who dreams of rivaling Pretty Boy Floyd as public enemy number one. We're in the early 30's here, just as a dust cloud is rolling across the Oklahoma plains--the days of Bonnie and Clyde, when gangsters captured the public attention, and Leonard makes good use of place and time. His minor characters are much more interesting than his protagonists, especially the women, and the writing shows occasional flashes of his trademarked ironic humor. But it's not as cool--or as hot--as even his most dedicated readers are used to, and there's barely a trace of the bizarre plot twists and unlikely coincidences that define his most recent caper novels in this one. --Jane Adams --This text refers to an alternate Audio CD edition.

Leonard's (Get Shorty) 40th novel is a nearly flawless audio production. Initially, Howard's lackadaisical meter and reading style comes off as flat and unenthused. But as the flavor of the story steeps, his low-key, deliberate delivery sets the perfect pitch for Leonard's stripped down dialogue. His slow cowpoke pace leaves plenty of space for the nuance with which he breathes life into Leonard's characters. Everyone is tough, everyone is cool, and nearly all speak in clipped Hemingway-like sentences. However, Howard carefully assigns each character a specific voice, timber and speed, saving the most calm and cool for Carlos "Carl" Webster, the young, quick-drawing U.S. marshal hero of the tale. The only thing amiss with this package is the music that opens and closes each CD. This is a western tale of shootouts, cattle rustlers and bank robbers. The swanky, sultry jazz music with lilting sax better fits Chandler than L'Amour. Once past these spurious strains, however, the listener is in for a satisfying earful. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

This is one of many novels that will cause the late Elmore Leonard's readers to miss him all the more. Set in the Pretty Boy Floyd era of the Oklahoma oil boom, the story pits Carl Webster, a newly minted hot shot young deputy U.S. marshal, against the bad guys who plied their nasty trade between Tulsa and Kansas City. Although this crime story is set in Depression-era Oklahoma, it

harkens back to the shoot'em up Westerns that Leonard wrote earlier in his career. Deputy Marshal Webster always warns the evildoers in advance that if he has to draw his gun, he'll shoot to kill. Of course, they don't take the Hot Kid seriously and end up transitioning from the quick to the dead. Their last thought presumably being: "How'd he draw and shoot that fast." Webster's exploits and his quick-draw justice are chronicled by Tony Antonelli, a reporter for True Detective magazine, who is an anti-hero for those of us who worked the crime beat back in our newspaper days.

nothing against Raylon Givens, but Marshall Carlos Webster is a man with a story! one of EL's longer novels, it's a bit episodic, with a string of intertwining conflicts. this, of course, gives EL plenty of opportunity to develop some interesting characters--rotten hearts, gorgeous molls, and idiot gangsters--who people the land around Tulsa in the most memorable way. I've read around half of EL's novels, and this may be my favorite so far.

Elmore Leonard tells a great story here. He tells it clearly and engagingly, effortlessly presenting wonderful characters, period details, and plenty of action. At the same time, he is commenting on the all the richness of story telling; how to tell a story, what to put in what to leave out, what kind of language to use. I was sad to come to the end. Fortunately, some of the same characters reappear in Up In Honey's Room, a sexier, more violent, funnier book, if you can imagine!

This is a very nice departure for Elmore Leonard. The master of noir and the Runyonesque dramedy, he is also one of our top writers of westerns. In this novel he appropriates many aspects of the western to create a 30's period novel. These are the hardscrabble 30's, with elements of the depression and dustbowl sitting cheek by jowl with the exploits of the likes of Baby Face Nelson. The period details are exquisite--as finely etched as the lineaments of his characters. We are, quintessentially, in the world of genre fiction, with predictable characters--marshals and molls--inevitable results, and a string of laconic aperçus along the way. Very few can do this with the steady hand and light touch of a writer like Leonard and no one but Leonard can sustain focus and the reader's attention while sketching a narrative that is unhurried and episodic. Leonard's sense of place is always impressive, whether that place be Miami, Los Angeles, or his native Detroit. Here the master does Tulsa and Kansas City. Enjoy and learn.

I have read several Elmore Leonard books. This one did not hold my interest.

Elmore Leonard, the king of dialog and suspense does it again. This is a page turner that never lets you down.

The joke is that those who can't do, teach, but Elmore Leonard disproves that. His rules for writing are readily available on the Internet and they aren't just advice: he also follows his own rules. Rules such as only using "said" in dialogue to avoid distracting the reader with unnecessary words like "exclaimed", "commented" or "remarked". Then there is probably his most well-known rule, to not write the things people skip over; in other words, keep the description to the minimum and focus on the dialogue and action. While it is quite possible to write a good book while defying these rules, Leonard shows that sticking to them works quite nicely as well. Such is the case with *The Hot Kid*. The title character is Carl Webster, son of Virgil Webster (from the earlier Leonard book, *Cuba Libre*). After killing a cattle thief as a teenager in 1920s Oklahoma, Carl is motivated to become a U.S. Marshal to capture fugitives. From the start, he is very good at his job, getting involved in dramatic shootouts and capturing notorious outlaws. Paralleling Carl's life is Jack Belmont. Like Carl, Jack is a son of a wealthy man, but where Carl is essentially noble, Jack is a sociopath whose behavior is getting more and more erratic. His crimes will put the two of them on intertwining paths that can lead only to one place, a final showdown. As is typical of a Leonard book, plot is almost secondary. What he is more interested in are characters and dialogue. Unlike some authors who seem to feel that every bit of conversation must be linked directly to the story, Leonard goes for something more realistic, using speech to reveal elements of the character. Also, as in most Leonard books, there are few master criminals; Belmont and the other crooks often bumble around; they're dangerous, but they're no geniuses. In other words, they're human. I've always considered Elmore Leonard books to be a real treat, and *The Hot Kid* continues his own string of quality books. To read one of the true masters of the crime novel, you can't go wrong with Leonard in general or *The Hot Kid* specifically.

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