

Last Man Standing by Stephen Leather

5 stars

Non-stop action

The plot starts in Syria some years ago when SAS member, Matt Standing's life is saved by a Navy SEAL by the name of Bobby-Ray. As a direct result of his injuries, Bobby-Ray is forced to leave the service he loves and enters employment with a security group. When he contacts Standing, it's because he is in deep trouble, needs help and cannot trust anyone else. Standing responds without a second thought and that's when the fun starts.

This story has everything. It's bang up to date and on the face of it is a crime thriller involving such organisations as the Russian mafia, SAS, SEALS and various other nefarious groups but is in fact much more complex and sinister than that. Nothing is straight-forward, and double-dealing isn't limited to the criminal groups. There's a good deal going on behind the scenes which not even Standing's boss, Spider Shepherd is aware of.

I devoured this book in little more than 24 hours. Once picked up it was very difficult to put down and the only reason, I did was to ensure I still left something to look forward to the next day. It's very violent so it won't suit everyone, but the violence is not gratuitous. Standing knows how to look after himself and is not slow in ensuring that his own life and that of others are not put in jeopardy by reacting too slowly.

The plot is set mainly in the USA, but there remains a very English feel to it, probably due to the gritty dialogue. The action is non-stop as Standing tries to find his friend before several other organisations, who don't have the same friendly intentions.

I cannot finish without a word on the physical book itself. I received an advance hardback copy and thank Hodder & Stoughton for producing an article of quality. It was a pleasure to handle, and my reading experience was enhanced by the clear font and paper quality. First class.....as were the contents. Stephen Leather is right up there now with my favourite authors.

mr zorg

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of the book to review.