



The Last Mountain Man

William W. Johnstone

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Johnstone—Keeping the West Wild

The Story that Started the Saga.

From his Missouri farm, the boy travels west. In his heart is vengeance. In his hand is a Navy Colt. By his side is the old mountain man named Preacher, who'll teach young Smoke Jensen everything he needs to know about fighting like the devil, and—when the time comes—dying like a man. Although Smoke Jensen's enemies have destroyed everything he's ever loved, they made one mistake: they let him live . . .

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The Last Mountain Man Details

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Author : William W. Johnstone

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From Reader Review The Last Mountain Man for online ebook

Joyce says

I don't usually read books in the western genre but really enjoyed this one. Especially enjoyed the characters Preacher and Smoke Jensen. As a 16 year old boy, Kirby Jensen who will eventually be called Smoke, is taken into the West after his father returns to their Missouri farm at the end of the Civil War. Kirby's father is set upon revenging the death of his older son Luke and goes west on the track of his son's killers. They meet up with an old legendary mountain man named Preacher and Kirby's father leaves him with Preacher to train in the ways of the wild. The rest of the book goes on to describe how Kirby earns the nickname of Smoke and goes out to become a legendary person in the West known for his lightning fast gun draw. Johnstone has masterfully created a portrayal of the way of life of the mountain men and traders who preceding settlers moving into the West. His character development was fascinating to me. Although I am not a big fan of shooting and killing, of which there is plenty in this novel, that part of the novel seemed secondary to the characters and life they represented in history.

Graeme says

I was disappointed with this book. I have read a few of the later books in the series and was looking forward to catching up on the backstory, but this book just doesn't seem to be of the same standard as the later ones. While interesting in parts it seems a bit rushed in others and the overall effect is more of a dime western than the more well crafted books that come later.

Matthew says

Definately a book for a specific type of individual. Lots of shoot 'em up action with a heavy dose of the revenge motif. The book seems historically accurate and presents a balanced view of the opening of the west and the tragic fates of the many peoples that populated the pre-contact west. Although the book is Euro-centric the it makes no excuses for the white settlers/soldiers actions towards the natives and each other.

Wayne Barrett says

This book read like an old western dime novel. I think it carried every cheesy cliché imaginable. For some, I suppose this might be entertaining. It certainly is an action packed adventure with plenty of shootem up scenes. I just couldn't take it seriously. If not for a couple of mild sex scenes I would say this was a YA novel. This would have been enjoyable when I was a youngster but nowadays I think I'm much more of a Cormack McCarthy western guy.

Sarah says

Growing up I read almost everything I could get my hands on. From my church library, I read all the Janette

Oke Christian historical fiction titles and all of the Louis L'amour books from my public library. I guess Little House on the Prairie and Caddie Woodlawn (one of my Top Ten books ever) prepared me for a life of reading historical fiction.

On the advice of one of our school's maintenance men, I interlibrary loaned this title. Ron said I would love it, and he was right! It's a quick, easy read, and a lot like every Western movie or book you've ever read. But I think that's why this author is a success. Sometimes we read to comfort ourselves. I love knowing that Smoke is going to get revenge. I love that he's the fastest draw in the West. And I love that when he loves a woman, he loves her completely and wholly.

How long has it been since you read a Western? If it's been awhile, try this series.

Robert LoCicero says

If you like a bloody shootup in which the outlaws, rapists, robbers and in general "bad guys" get their comeuppance then this is the read for you. Mountain Man "Smoke" Jensen smokes dozens of "bad guys" using any means at his disposal. From hidden pointed sticks and boulders blasted by dynamite, to rifle and revolver fire, this amazing fellow reaps vengeance on men of little worth in the wild days in Western America. Cheered by townsfolk, lawmen and fellow "do-gooders" we have here a tale most resembling the spaghetti Western movies of the 60's and 70's. It is fun to read but not to be taken seriously (obviously).

Mike says

Your typical western book. Gunfights, horses, Indians, and the wild wild west. The book starts rather slow, but builds throughout and finishes with some good action. Overall the storyline and character development is rather weak. Its worth the read, but not a book I'd ever read again.

Emily says

Seemed unnecessarily explicitly violent. I mean, I get that it's a western with all those cliches, but this author goes above and beyond to be gross. I listened to this audio book and decided to not listen to the other ten by this author that I had on my shelf.

Rob Smith says

I'm hooked. This rolls off the blocks at a steady speed and then charges to the end...which is more of a beginning as this series is still coming out after this initial book from 1984. Johnstone does an excellent job of portraying the area and time of the mid-west and west in the late 1800s. The characters are well drawn to the point of leaving you wanting more and thus wanting to buy more of the series. I will purchase more and I'm not even a fan of the western genre.

As I read, it struck me how the current PC generation would be offended by some in the book. The thing is that what happens in this book happens to us today, we just let it go, expect others (government) to protect us

than actually attacking the problems. Johnstone in 1984 reflected how much of humanity has solved problems during the late 1800s and throughout the history of man. Most countries still solve such troubles the same way today.

Interesting to me are a few recent reviews of the book have that PC tinge. The idea that good and bad guys are old fashioned is a recent viewpoint by fellow Americans and certainly a new idea in the history of mankind. Johnstone's book brings one back to reality and that's something many Americans could use a good dose of.

Bryan457 says

Smoke Jensen learns to be a mountain man and a gunfighter. He gets revenge on those who have wronged him.

Warning graphic violence and rape.

Shirl says

Over the past four months I have been reading the Mountain Man series by William W. Johnstone. They are a throwback to the old west and come complete with rugged turrain, outlaws, Indians, and heroes. I enjoyed these books for the simple reason that I feel transported back to a simpler time when right was right, wrong was wrong, and there wasn't nearly so much gray. The reader gets to learn alot about what it was like for the men and women who broke open the territory but especially we get to cheer on an old fashioned hero or two. You will enjoy this trip back to the mid 1800's and you'll willingly cheer for the good guys who are interesting and funny characters, and hate the villains. Enjoy!

Ru says

The first Western novel I may have ever read did not disappoint at all, and was exciting with every turn of the page. I originally wanted to read William W. Johnstone's "A Lone Star Christmas" right around Christmas, but got sidetracked and never got a chance to. It worked out better for me to read the first in the Matt Jensen series, which introduces Smoke Jensen's protege in dramatic fashion, which I assume a Christmas story would not have done as effectively.

This is not the most-unpredictable book ever written, but that's not why you would elect to pick it up in the first place. The book does a great job of establishing those basic Western tenets of honor and justice above all else. The two themes constantly arise from the biggest gunfights (and, there are a lot of impressive gunfights!) to the smallest moments between Matt and the people he meets, most notably, with the women in this story.

Naturally, you almost cannot have a great Western tale without a third tenet, of sorts, that being revenge. Matt has a reason to live, and Smoke gives him the tools to seek out that reason. The setup between good and evil is also written really well, because the villains are not just buffoons essentially waiting to get shot; they are cunning and desperate and you aren't ever entirely sure how they are going to react. The element of the unknown in that respect added a lot to Matt's journey, I thought.

Looking forward to reading another Western novel soon. Perhaps it will be the next book in the series. I loved the simplicity of the setting, where technology is not a giant crutch in advancing the story. In a Western, you have your voice, your word, your gun, a few dollars, a horse, and your mission. That's about it. And that's all you really need to tell a good story.

Christopher Patterson says

If you like western books, the Mountain Man series is one of the best ever written. Smoke Jensen is the fastest gun in the west, and the last of a dying breed of men forged from the harshness of the mountains in the American west. Great series, that led to multiple other spin-off series from characters introduced within this series, such as Preacher the First Mountain Man, Matt Jensen the Last Mountain Man and Blood Bond

Timothy Boyd says

Very good western series. The story of Smoke Jensen, trained by the last of the mountain men as a boy. If you like men's adventure and westerns then you will enjoy the series. Recommended

Kevin Key says

The best short novel I've read! Next, the sequel.
