

Open Season (A Joe Pickett Novel)

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As Wyoming game warden Joe Pickett races against time to save an endangered species, he finds himself plunged into a deadly mystery that soon threatens his family and the life he loves. A first novel. 15,000 first printing.

Penzler Pick, July 2001: Mystery debuts are both exciting and problematic. Exciting, because one may always be about to discover the next Hammett or Chandler (or so the copywriters and publicists would have us believe), and problematic because originality in such a well-grooved genre is becoming more and more at a premium.

In advance reviews, *Open Season* has been pronounced "something special." (Booklist), and it lives up to the billing. It is not C.J. Box's skill at plotting (the story of greedy business interests and local corruption is fine, but familiar), but rather the character of hero Joe Pickett, a Wyoming game warden, that makes this a series kickoff to remember. Like all the best mystery protagonists, Pickett is stubbornly ready to risk everything when his own personal sense of morality is at stake. But Joe is also a guy who sometimes gets things wrong, and this characteristic of messing up adds a dimension of humanity to the book.

C.J. Box makes the town of Twelve Sleep, Wyoming (where Joe and his pregnant wife and his daughters have come to live in a tiny house that could be a lot nicer if Joe only had a job that paid better), come alive to the extent that one can almost smell the crisp mountain air and pine needles. The locals display an impressive array of grudge holding and "don't mess with us" attitudes, but Joe is unwilling to forget he's sworn to uphold and enforce a full battery of laws that many of these neighbors have no intention of obeying.

When a well-known poacher, with whom he has humiliatingly tangled, suddenly turns up dead in his own backyard, Joe finds himself at the top of a downward path that, first, will lead to more bodies and then will put his entire family into peril. *Open Season* doesn't pull its punches, and Box does allow bad things to happen to good people. Read it and find out how skillfully he handles both his hero's complexities and also the ambiguities inherent in a life dedicated to law enforcement. --Otto Penzler

C. J. Box is the author of five Joe Pickett novels, and has won the Anthony, Macavity, Gumshoe, and Barry awards. He has also been an Edgar Award and Los Angeles Times Book Prize finalist. A Wyoming native, Box serves on the board of directors for Cheyenne Frontier Days Rodeo.

Other Books

Endangered. In this New York Times bestseller, Wyoming game warden Joe Pickett is determined to find out who put his daughter's life in danger—even if it kills him. Joe Pickett had good reason to dislike Dallas Cates, and now he has even more—Joe's eighteen-year-old daughter, April, has run off with him. And then comes even worse news: She has been found in a ditch along the highway—alive, but just barely, the victim of blunt force trauma. Cates denies having anything to do with it, but Joe knows in his gut who's responsible. What he doesn't know is the kind of danger he's about to encounter. Cates is bad enough, but Cates's family is like none Joe has ever met.

🔍 🔍 🔍 🔍 🔍 . Don't miss the JOE PICKETT series—now streaming on Paramount+ In this New York Times bestseller, Wyoming game warden Joe Pickett is determined to find out who put his daughter's life in danger—even if it kills him."