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Runner (Jane Whitefield Book 6)



Synopsis

Jane Whitefieldâthe fierce and resourceful heroine of Thomas Perry's most popular thrillersâreturns from retirement to guide a fugitive out of danger. For more than a decade, Jane Whitefield pursued her unusual profession: "I'm a guide . . . I show people how to go from places where somebody is trying to kill them to other places where nobody is." Then she promised her husband she would never work again, and settled in to live a happy, quiet life as Jane McKinnon, the wife of a surgeon in Amherst, New York. But when a bomb goes off in the middle of a hospital fundraiser, Jane finds herself face to face with the cause of the explosion: a young pregnant girl who has been tracked across the country by a team of guns-for-hire. That night, regardless of what she wants or the vow she's made to her husband, Jane must come back to transform one more victim into a runner. Her quest for safety sets in motion a mission that may be as much of a rescue operation as it is a chance for revenge.

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Customer Reviews

I came late to the Jane Whitefield series, reading them all last spring, then waiting with bated breath

for this newest installment. If I had started with RUNNER, I'm sure I would have liked it better, but it does seem pale in comparison with the earlier novels. Jane Whitefield has a calling: she guides people out of the world. If your rich and abusive husband is going to kill you if you leave him, Jane will help you vanish. If the Mafia is on your trail and the Witness Protection Program isn't enough, Jane will give you a new life. Through a combination of physical courage that borders on derring-do and hyper-vigilance, Jane guides the runner through the stages of a vanishing act: new identity and location for transition, another set of realities for the long haul. To make this possible, Jane consults the stars of the underground identity culture - forgers, photographers, bent math whizzes --and she grows identities of her own through a variety of clever strategies. The well-worn birth-certificate-of-a-dead-kid ploy is way too elementary for Jane Whitefield. If you like heist stories, the prep work she puts into identity-growing will fascinate you. And the real pay-off is this: she does it for good, not for money. Jane doesn't charge her runners. If they have money, she will use it to help them. If they later access money, they often send her a thank-you check. But it's all for the calling, nothing for personal gain. She says she does the work because 1) she is able to do it and 2) it needs to be done. This very moral stance is somewhat under-cut by the increasing physical violence of the series. Jane racks up a high body count. The implicit rationale for this is that Seneca warriors protect their families.

I read "Runner" by Thomas Perry so fast - What happens next! What happens next! - that the pages started to smolder and smoke. I was forced to read the rest of it wearing fire retardant gloves and with a fire extinguisher within easy reach. "Runner" hits bookstore shelves on January 14 and, once you've fireproofed your favorite reading chair, you should seriously consider adding it to your collection. "Runner" is a marvel, and already in the running for my pick for best suspense novel of 2009. Thomas Perry has always been an underrated scribe. He came out of the gates strong with his first novel "The Butcher's Boy," which won the 1983 Edgar Award for best first mystery novel. But Perry really didn't hit his stride until he created Jane Whitefield - a Native American woman who helps desperate people "disappear" - guiding them to new lives while helping them escape their pasts, usually filled with various nasty people with guns. Jane is hard as dried leather - and smart. Her character - the detail oriented, obsessive perfectionist with little humor and a demeanor as sullen as funeral - centers the novel. She's a fascinating case study as she plunges the reader into the underground world of forgeries and the act of "vanishing" without a trace. Jane made her first appearance in "Vanishing Act" in 1995 and appeared in four more novels before Perry retired her in 2000. The series, however, has proven so popular, that Perry has dusted off Jane nine years

later. Lucky us. The result is "Runner." Jane is now married to a surgeon in up-state New York and living under the name Jane McKinnon.

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