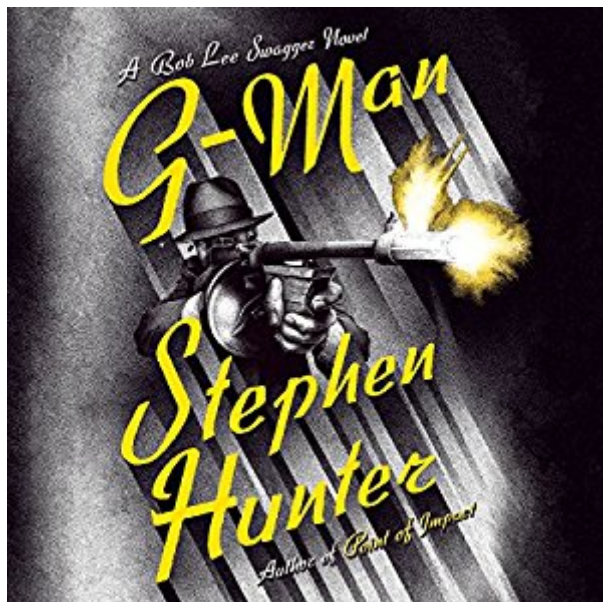


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G-Man: Bob Lee Swagger, Book 10



Synopsis

From bestselling author and Pulitzer Prize-winner Stephen Hunter, the latest episode in his Swagger family saga - replete with Hunter's wicked suspense, vivid gun fights, and historical truths. 1934 was a pivotal year in the ongoing battle between the FBI and America's most famous outlaws - it was a year of giant personalities and huge shoot-outs, and it marked the deaths of John Dillinger, Bonnie and Clyde, and Pretty Boy Floyd, among others. But that year, FBI agent Sam Cowley's priority was to nab the most dangerous gangster this country has ever produced, a man so violent he scared Al Capone and was booted from the Chicago mob - Baby Face Nelson. To stop him, Cowley recruited the most talented gunman of the time - Charles Swagger. When Bob Lee Swagger, now in Idaho, finally sells the land he owned in Arkansas, the developers begin to tear down the old homestead and uncover a steel case hidden in the foundation. The case contains a batch of 1934 memorabilia - a much-corroded FBI badge, a .45 automatic preserved in cosmoline, a gun clip, and a cryptic diagram, all belonging to Charles Swagger. Bob never knew his grandfather Charles, who died before he was born, and his father Earl refuses to mention him. Fascinated by this new information, Bob is driven to find out what happened to his grandfather, and why his own father, whom he worshipped, never spoke of Charles. But as he investigates further, Bob learns that someone is following him, someone with his own obsession of finding out what Charles Swagger left behind.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Dear Mr. Hunter, When last I reviewed your work I implored you to give us another Earl Swagger

book. We all know and love Bob Lee but aging him out was perhaps not the best decision. It now appears that we can all welcome the backstory of Bob's grandfather. And as usual it is a grand story told in glorious prose, interweaving fact and fiction. As always it will have its critics. I for one am growing weary of Bob Lee as a detective (maybe you can find it in you to uncover some untold story from Bob Lee's sniper days). I can give this book a two thumbs up review. If you are familiar with the "Swagger" series it is one of the better books and certainly an entertaining read.

This startling novel stayed in my mind long after I finished reading it. The author paints a remarkable picture of 1930s gangsters, particularly the little-known Lester Gillis (aka Baby Face Nelson), as unstable as liquid nitroglycerine, and his ever-loyal girl, Helen. Bob Lee Swagger features in the tale along with his grandfather, Charles Swagger, but they fade into the background compared with the gaudy, glamorous mobsters of Depression-era Chicago. Over the whole story hangs a sense of impending doom, which Gillis and his pals are well aware of. Their only goal is to go out in a blaze of glory -- or what counted for glory in a sad, desperate era when many people thought America's traditional institutions had failed them. The author's language is lyrical and fluent, a brilliant contrast to the brutality of the era. This book is a real tour de force, easily the best yet of the excellent Swagger series.

Pretty good return after a couple of mediocre books, *Third Bullet & Ripper*. A little long, a little disjointed but overall very good. Proofreaders missed his wife's name, however the return of the Grumley folks was great. Author definitely captures the essence of the 30's with language and settings. I will buy the next one.

The author is following the Swagger family in this tale. Bob Swagger is informed that a buried lock box found while demolishing the old homestead contains some "artifacts" from the early 1930s and he sets out to find out about them and as well the history of his Grandfather Charlie Swagger. The story encompasses the period of the nascent FBI, the historic bank robbers of the period, Baby Face Nelson, Bonnie and Clyde, Dillinger and others. Charlie is hired by the Division as the FBI was called then to act as the gunfighter and to teach the young agents out of college tactics and weapons following a disastrous raid earlier on the year. The story switches from the 30' to the present as we follow Charles and his confrontations with the bad guys and then following Bob as he tries to piece together Charles' history. A good read, haven't read a Hunter novel for quite a while and glad I picked this one up.

Just finished Stephen Hunter's G-MAN in a marathon reading session, and WOW! I was blown away. G-MAN is a masterpiece from the greatest writer doing thrillers today. Hunter's strength as a writer is making his villains into real people. This story is chock full of them, from John Dillinger, Pretty Boy Floyd, Homer Van Meter, and the bad dude who carries the story, Lester Gillis, also known by the trade name of Baby Face Nelson. The novel is actually two stories told in parallel, one about Bob Lee Swagger today on a quest to learn about his grandfather, Sheriff Charles Swagger, also a gunman. The second is set in 1934, when the fledging outfit that would become the FBI is tackling the Tommy-gun packing bank robbers of the day, and brings in Charles Swagger to help them take them down. The two stories come together in the end, of course, in a totally unpredictable climax that is pure Hunter. If you only read one thriller this year, make it this one, from the modern master of the gun thriller. You won't regret it.

Not the best of Stephen Hunter's novels but I am a devoted follower so it automatically gets 4 stars. While it is subtitled "A Bob Lee Swagger Novel" the legendary Bob at age 71 doesn't get into any of his traditional action. It is about his search to track down the truth about his grandfather, Charles, another Arkansas lawman. During the 1930's Charles became involved in the pursuit of the most famous criminals of the era and Bob seeks to uncover the true story. Mr. Hunter's exhaustive detail about weapons of all kinds is here and Charles's story, told in flashbacks is a good one. An entire book devoted to Charles' story might have been a better choice.

Anything by Stephen Hunter, particularly including Bob Lee Swagger and his family is worth the time and money. Another can't-put-it-down read going back to 1934 and what REALLY happened to Baby Face Nelson and John Dillinger (at least in the book). The story in 1934 tracks the recorded history with just a few detours along the way. Like The Third Bullet this reads like it might have really happened.

This novel gives a different perspective on how law enforcement may have worked in years past. Mr. Hunter fills his novel with a fictional story that keeps a reader captivated. I have googled many weapons, times in history, people that Mr. Hunter has mentioned in past and present novels. I feel that earlier novels have had better story lines, but I enjoyed the read of a story pieced together by the protagonist. This story is told differently by jumping back and forth in time. It was a bit confusing, but once settled in to read the story came together quite well.

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