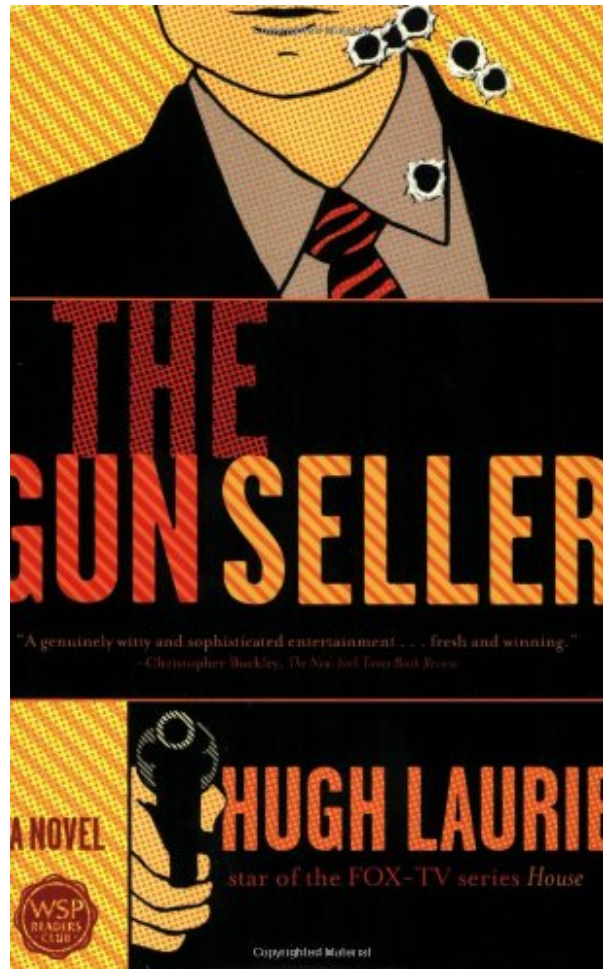
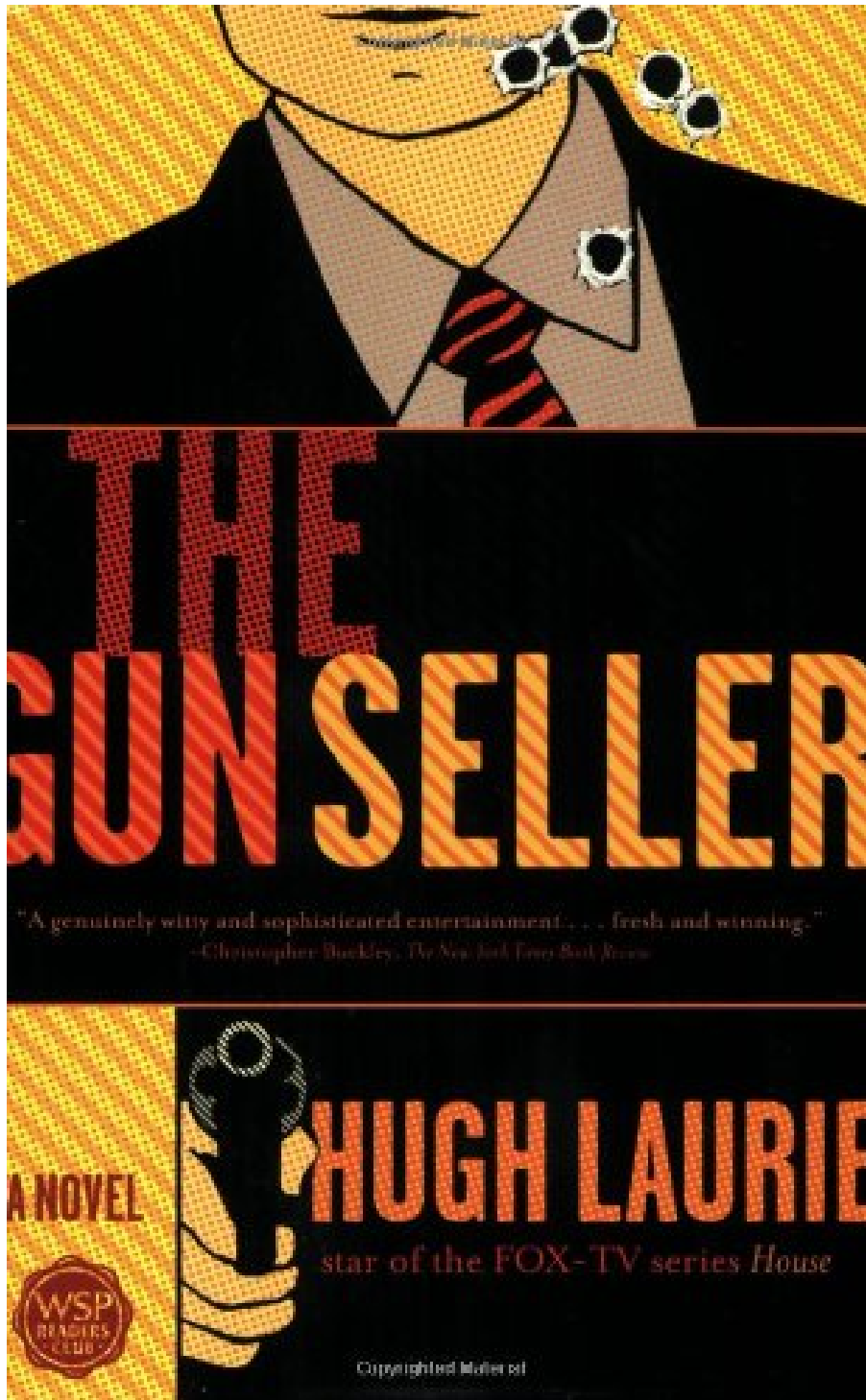


THE GUN SELLER BY HUGH LAURIE



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Amazon.com Review

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this comedy-thriller is laugh-out-loud funny and very readable. Highly recommended. ?Joanna M. Burkhardt,
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Hugh Laurie concocts an uproarious cocktail of comic zingers and over-the-top action in this "ripping spoof of the spy genre" (Vanity Fair) -- the irresistible tale of a former Scots Guard-turned-hired gun, a freelance soldier of fortune who also happens to be one heck of a nice guy.

Cold-blooded murder just isn't Thomas Lang's cup of tea. Offered a bundle to assassinate an American industrialist, he opts to warn the intended victim instead -- a good deed that soon takes a bad turn. Quicker than he can down a shot of his favorite whiskey, Lang is bashing heads with a Buddha statue, matching wits with evil billionaires, and putting his life (among other things) in the hands of a bevy of femmes fatales. Up against rogue CIA agents, wannabe terrorists, and an arms dealer looking to make a high-tech killing, Lang's out to save the leggy lady he has come to love...and prevent an international bloodbath to boot.

- Sales Rank: #296446 in Books
- Published on: 1998-10-01
- Released on: 1998-10-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x .90" w x 5.31" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 339 pages

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Most helpful customer reviews

231 of 268 people found the following review helpful.

A promising first novel--think Wodehouse writing James Bond

By Glen Engel Cox

I was trying to be pithy when I said to Jill that the difference between English and American comedians is that the English ones write their own material, for books by comedians are becoming quite common on both sides of the Atlantic. There is a difference, however, and it is in the "type" of books that the two nationalities differ in: American comedians write up their monologues in a collected set of essays (Jerry Seinfeld's *Seinlanguage*, Bill Cosby's books, Rita Rudner's *I'm Naked Under My Clothes*, Paul Reiser's book), whereas English comedians write novels (Python's Terry Jones and his books for children, Stephen Fry, and the case in point). I attribute the difference to education. Your typical American comedian skipped university to work through the comedy club circuit, hoping for that gig on the *Tonight Show* to make a break, get their own HBO special, then maybe movies or TV. British comedians typically begin in the comedy glee club of their universities (I believe it's the Cambridge "Footlights", or is that Oxford? As an American, I can't keep them straight, which is to Americans like saying I can't tell the difference between a Yankee and a Southerner), spend years as bit actors in off-West End productions, until finally they get picked up for a movie or a starring spot in their own West End revue. The British, thus, tend to be grounded in the literature of humor, rather than just the anecdotal type so favored by the Americans. Of course, I'm making this up out of whole cloth without bothering to do a spec of research, so I wouldn't base a thesis on it.

Hugh Laurie should be recognizable to you from his role as Bertie Wooster in "Wooster and Jeeves" (shown in American on Masterpiece Theater), as well as his supporting roles in the British comedy series "Blackadder" (a personal favorite), the Kenneth Branagh movie "Peter's Friends," the Ang Lee/Emma Thompso collaboration of Austen's "Sense and Sensibility," and the recent dreadful live-action remake of Disney's "101 Dalmatians." *The Gun Seller* is his first novel, and after the Disney movie, I think he should chuck the acting business and go into writing full time, because he shows extreme promise as an author. Imagine Wodehouse deciding that he wanted to write a James Bond novel, and you've got some idea of what *The Gun Seller* is like.

The plot, which is actually more important here than it is in most modern comic novels, concerns Thomas Lang, ex-officer of the Scots Guard, who finds himself approached in Holland and asked to murder a man for an obscene amount of money. His sense of honor not only has him turn down the offer, but when he returns to England, he sets off to warn the man that someone is offering money for his death. In the best tradition, complications ensue, including the British Secret Service, the young daughter of a wealthy American businessman, an art gallery, the military-industrial complex, a terrorist organization called "The Sword of Justice," and a "kick-ass" helicopter.

Laurie is extremely witty, and chuckling at the language in this book should be expected. Take, for example, the typical description of the attractive woman--every spy and detective book seems to have one, right?--and how Laurie makes it unique:

"She came towards me and stopped. She was shorter than she'd looked on the other side of the room. I smiled

again, and she took a cigarette from the packet, but didn't light it. She just played with it slowly, and then pointed a pair of green eyes at me.

I say a pair. I mean her pair. She didn't get a pair of someone else's eyes out from a drawer and point them at me. She pointed her own pair of huge, pale, grey, pale, huge eyes at me. The sort of eyes that can make a grown man talk gibberish to himself. Get a grip, for Christ's sake."

I like the way he is able to be self-referential without breaking the flow of the paragraph.

This book also has one of the best last lines I've read in a long time, making an ironic point that is quite amusing and yet also draws up the story in a conclusion. I liked this book a lot, and hope to read more by Laurie in the future.

46 of 50 people found the following review helpful.

a great book/ 1st or otherwise

By E. Kleine

If you like Hugh Laurie on "House" you'll love him as a writer. This is a witty, satirical send up of the spy novel and Thomas Lang is as refreshing and interesting a character as any today. He's a world wise, and somewhat weary, hero whose biting insights and view of life reflect the best and funniest in all of us.

Laurie has a great gift for dialogue and a flowing, almost stream of consciousness narrative style. It's a Great Book first or otherwise. Did I mention Exciting?

85 of 97 people found the following review helpful.

A Great Read

By Severen

I discovered Hugh Laurie on the TV series "HOUSE". After I found out he had written a novel I had to read it. And I wasn't disappointed!! What a funny, witty, exciting novel!

Thomas Lang, a sort of bodyguard-for-hire, turns down a job to assassinate an American businessman, which leads to all sorts of trouble involving beautiful women, the CIA, helicopters, and terrorists. Wow!

Hugh Laurie has a great way with words. One tiny quibble--Laurie is British and the novel is of course full of British slang, some of which I don't understand. But hey, you can't win them all. I hope Hugh Laurie comes out with another book soon!

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