



Blown

Chuck Barrett

Chuck Barrett (May 19, 2015)

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Barrett simultaneously advances the plot and character development with fast action scenes and observant descriptions.

“Once in, never out.” In Chuck Barrett’s first-rate thriller, *Blown*, this oath between Army Delta Force comrades brings peril and violence into the life of Gregg Kaplan. From the opening scene to the final wrap-up, Barrett has written a winner.

Barrett is the author of several popular thrillers, and his experience shows. From the first page of *Blown*, the action doesn’t stop. The pacing propels the reader to keep turning pages to find out what’s around that next corner:

He fended off the snarling dog’s teeth with a forearm block, knocking the large animal to the ground. He reached for another syringe, but the dog attacked again knocking it from his hand. Kaplan was toppled flat on his back as the dog pounced again clamping his sharp teeth into his forearm.

The first scene, which involves a fire in a diner in Little Rock, deftly provides a great amount of insight into Kaplan. Barrett skillfully uses description and Kaplan’s own powers of observation to flesh out the scene and Kaplan’s character at the same time. “Within minutes after he set foot inside the restaurant and sat down, he recognized the impending threat. He’d seen similar situations before. Several times. And each time, somebody died. He should have listened to his gut.” This ability to size up situations and people is what makes Kaplan the man that he is, and Barrett wastes no time making that clear. Secondary characters are also well drawn, particularly Deputy Moss, a marshal who helped on a previous case. “Moss had become a good friend in a short time and he wanted to touch base with the deputy one last time before he rode out of town.”

Attention to detail adds dimension to Barrett’s story, fleshing out the scenes and characters even further. Barrett is clearly a disciple of the “show, don’t tell” writing style, and this makes his novel even more interesting.

Kaplan found a wooden support column beneath the midway point of the catwalk and shimmied up as far as he could without exposing his presence to the man above. He pulled out his knife and clenched it between his teeth. When he was in position he gave Moss a nod—there was no turning back now.

Thriller readers and those who like their books fast and furious will absolutely love this book.

LYNN EVARTS (April 17, 2015)

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