

Son of a Wanted Man

Louis L'Amour

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An outlaw's legacy...

In a remote corner of Utah lies the secret outlaw kingdom of Ben Curry. For fifteen years Curry has ruled supreme, as his men have pulled jobs from Canada to Mexico. But the king is getting old... he wants to turn his legacy over to someone younger, tougher. Mike Bastian is Ben's adopted son, a young man who can handle a knife, a gun, his fists, but a man who's never broken the law.

Now, as treachery explodes among Ben's riders, and two honest lawmen—Tyrel Sackett and Borden Chantry—begin to zero in on the gang, Mike must choose...between his loyalty to Ben and his yearning for a different life. Yet when the guns start echoing off the Vermilion Cliffs, the time for choosing is over—and the time for battle has begun.

From the Paperback edition.

Son of a Wanted Man Details

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From Reader Review Son of a Wanted Man for online ebook

William Lawrence says

Not much for westerns, but this short novel was pretty good. The description of the setting was my favorite part. L'Amour definitely brings you into his world.

Liza Verdon says

I like all of L'Amour's books and this was an enjoyable read, but not exceptional.

Greg Webb says

My first L'Amour book, so I don't know if it's a recurring theme/issue, but I was slightly frustrated with the way he would spend paragraphs saying the same thing over and over again.

****Slight spoilers****

For example, Chantry struggling over moving East for multiple paragraphs, several times throughout the book. And many times there was no transition between that and the previous thought (like he'd be in the middle of an internal dialogue about sending a telegram about his investigation, then the very next sentence would be "What would I do back East, anyway?")... only to not even have this addressed or resolved by the end of the book!

Vic says

Fun read. Fairly short. Entertaining picture of the wild west. Writing seemed a little rushed in places. Interesting characters. I think it would work better as a movie.

Morgan Bohn says

Son of a Wanted Man by Louis L'Amour

The main characters of this book is Mike Bastian, Ben Curry, and Kerb Perrin and so much more. These guys are all outlaws besides some of them. They all talked before and have backgrounds but they don't really like each other. The one group of people found out that there has been a lot of robberies but no one was shot. They found out that they wanted to find them and find out who it was. They robbed lots of states but not this one state so they went there. Later they wanted to find this one guy Kerb Perrin and they sent out to find him and fight him but then there was a fight back where they were. They killed the people that hate and after that had a good time.

I liked the book but it was kind of hard to follow along with it. I would read it then get lost where they were. I didn't really like the plot because it was really hard to follow but it was really good and fun to read about

old days and how they lived and how they track people and things. Plus it is nice to know how people lived out in the old days and how they lived back when we first started to build our country and buildings. In the book it says, "Had they gone down that? He knelt on the rock. Yes, it was the scar of a horse's shoe on the rock." (Pg 158 Lamour, Son of a Wanted Man) That is showing that he was a tracker and found out how to track out in the wild and find people even if you lose the trail.

So I have always loved to be outdoors and loved to learn about how people lived back in the old day and how they survived and compare it to my life. I have always wanted to be a farmer and work and shoot guns and be in the middle of nowhere and just have some fun. I can't do that anymore because houses are being built and there is no where else to go. This book reminds me of movie I have watched and talked about. One movie is called The Outlaw of Josey Wales and it is about some outlaws and how they survived and how people tracked just like this book was about. Nowadays people don't even know what farming is and how people lived back then we all have electronics and don't even care about how we lived back then. I don't like how that is but that is how this world is and how we live today. That is what I think of the book Son of a Wanted Man by Louis L'Amour you should read it and see what you think.

Collin Freeman says

I think this book is an alright one. It is predictable and the good guys are pretty much invincible. I always thought something big was about to happen but nothing ever did. It didn't describe certain things very well either. All in all though it had a good story.

Julie says

Not really one of the better L'Amours. It's too short to show off his skills as a storyteller, so the whole thing feels a little stiff and awkward.

John says

An entertaining read although the ending was a bit anticlimactic. Ben Curry runs an outlaw network where he plans everything to the last detail and avoids killing people. However, he is getting old and wants to retire leaving his gang to Mike Bastian his adopted son who does not want to be an outlaw. The plot revolves around the gang falling apart and Border Chantry protecting the bank in his town where he is Marshall. There is a big shoot out but the ending could have been better.

Alexander Elmore says

SON OF A WANTED MAN was my first L'Amour novel. I first came across it several years ago while on vacation with my parents. I read what felt like most of it then took the book home from the cabin we had rented and proceeded to never finish the novel.

Then a few weeks ago, I decided to read the whole thing again, just to mark it off my bucket list. And now I can say I have, if nothing more.

Overall, I liked WANTED MAN. It was no masterwork, but it was an easy and mostly enjoyable read. L'Amour does tend to have a neat writing style; he states things plain and simple. I also found that more often than not he wrote his conversation scenes like a screenplay mostly including only the dialogue and nothing else.

L'Amour started his novel quite well. He introduced several interesting characters and by the time you reached the end of the first chapter, you had the entire set up laid before you. L'Amour wasted no time, and I appreciated that. The action began to mount in a logical way, as the suspense built and we approached what felt like the climax. Then I realized I was only halfway through the book, and that's where all the problems began.

See, once we reached what should have been the climax, L'Amour began to switch back to characters who had barely been in the novel, he even introduced characters over halfway through the novel (which is less than 200 pages - pretty short) who had only been previously mentioned in a conversation up to that point. For me, this felt awkward and made the dragged-out third act feel overstuffed, with too many characters and too many events happening all at once.

As far as the events of the actual third act, there was much to be desired. Three main events took place in what would be considered the climax, and the reader is witness to two of them. This makes sense on a certain level, because it creates suspense about who survives the third showdown. So, here L'Amour's choices make sense.

What does not make sense however, is L'Amour's choice to have us spend lots of time with the protagonist chasing a villain, then switch and spend several chapters with the Sheriff investigating a gang and eventually stopping a bank robbery via a shootout (which was anti-climatic in its own right), then switch back to the protagonist fighting the villain in a very quick and anti-climatic way. This just feels boring to read and is a definite let-down.

My final issue with the book was the romance aspect. The supposed feelings between Mike (the protagonist) and Drucilla (a somewhat minor character) didn't feel natural. Everything about it felt forced and only really there to serve as a plot device and motivation for the main character's actions. I could understand adding female characters, it makes total sense. But when the 'romantic interest' and protagonist have only one brief meeting before he decides to risk everything to save her, it falls flat on its face. L'Amour even give secondary and much more believable motivations to Mike's actions in the third act, so why not just leave out the romance or simply hint at budding emotions instead of using them so heavily when they're so underdeveloped?

All this is not to say WANTED MAN was only full of let-downs and poor pacing. No, there was a good bit to be admired. As I said before, L'Amour has a nice writing style and from what I've read, so pretty good books too. There were nice motifs about modern technology such as trains and telegrams throughout the novel, as well as an interesting cast of characters. Of course the central moral dilemma was also compelling and was a good driving force for the story.

So, in the end while SON OF A WANTED MAN is an uneven book that leaves a bit more to be desired and a slightly burn taste in your mouth, it's a book that is not a terrible journey and you won't mind having taken.

Samuel says

This book seemed like it had too much set-up and too little payoff. L'Amour builds up this great, almost super-human young man, then doesn't have enough for him to do.

August Storkel says

Son of A Wanted man is about a young man named Mike Bastian. He lives in an isolated corner of Utah where the man that adopted him, Ben Curry, has a very successful cattle ranch. Being raised by outlaws Mike is good with a gun and a rough and tough guy but he has never broken the law. When the cattle ranch is soon to become his, two sheriffs move in the shut the band of outlaws down. Now Mike must choose whether or not to become the outlaw leader he was raised to be, or to keep his hands clean as a good law abiding man. With time crunching down he must make his choice fast or find himself in the middle of a very sticky situation. I thought the book was a very good read. My favorite part of the story was when the ranch was offered down to Mike. This is when the book started getting very suspenseful. I felt as though he was destined to take the leader position but at the same time you could tell that he did not want to become an outlaw. He also had a girl on his mind and had other members of the gang that wanted the gang to themselves. You really could not tell what was going to happen next. If i had to pick my least favorite part it would have to be the ending. It really did not end how I felt it was going to. All in all this is yet another book I would recommend to western fans and also fans of suspenseful books.

Violet says

I like the plot of this one ... it's a little bit different. Hard to believe that a man could lead a double life; one with a normal family and the other as a leader of a gang of robbers, and get away with it for many years. The good guys are this guy's adopted son, Mike Bastian, as well as town marshals Borden Chantry and Tyrell Sackett. Very entertaining.

Jeff Dickison says

Not quite up to L'Amour's usual good writing. The set up is not well done and the smitten lovers react to quickly. Still enough action to keep things interesting. Fair, not really good. Recommended only to L'Amour Fans.

Chad says

I enjoyed this story. I have never been let down by a L'Amour book and once again I was entertained from start to finish. There are better L'Amour stories out there, but I listened to this one on Audio CD and within the quick three hours of audio a complete Western story was told. A bonus to this Aduio CD was Mr. L'Amour himself telling several Western tales that he was directly or indirectly involved with.

Oleta Blaylock says

I have read some of the other reviews that have been written about this book and I think I am going to have to disagree with the ones saying Drusilla is a minor character. Yes she isn't introduced until the last half to third of the story but she makes an appearance and stays part of the story from then to the end. Most people

today don't understand that in the American West there wasn't a lot of time for courting a partner. There was work to be don't and most of the time that work required sevens days a week. Now sometimes there was time to go to church on Sunday and there was occasionally a dance or a box social if there was a town near enough ride in a day's time. So people fell in love quickly and they usually married quickly.

Mike Bastian has been training to take over his adopted father's, Ben Curry, outlaw organization most of his life. Now that he is old enough he knows that he is not going to be able to do the job. He isn't an outlaw and has no desire to be one. However troubling is brewing and Mike has to help his father out of the trouble. Add into this mix of brewing rebellion is the arrival of Ben's family that no one knows about. There is a plot to raid the ranch that the family is staying out and Mike must get there to save the women and the cattle. it is a race against time.

I understand that there are those that would have liked for this story to be longer but I am sure there was a limit on the number of words and publisher would consider. I don't think that many people that knows this. Having talk to a number of author that are currently writing I know this to still be true. I think that Louis L'Amour found these limitation difficult to abided by. His longer books are always much more detail and complicated that the earlier short ones. It is too bad that he died when he did. I think that he might have gotten the publishers to give him more lead way later in the twentieth century. I enjoyed this story as I have with all the others I have read and I am a little sad that this is the last of the Chantry/Talon/Sackett books.
