



The Mask of Anonymity

Preston Malone

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His charm is contagious. He speaks seven foreign languages. He wears a tuxedo to the opera. But when he leaves his beloved New Orleans and straps on his Colt he becomes the most dangerous man alive.

In this three-part western a secretive gunman travels to Dodge City to rescue his client Joan Clark and face the men who raped her, raped her daughter and killed her husband - twenty-two of the most vicious men that ever rode north out of Texas. In Part II he teams up with his friend Jose Mendez, a half-Mexican half-Apache former Army scout. Their goal - break the stranglehold on a small town in the Arizona badlands - a town terrorized by the mayor and his deputized killers gone mad. In Part III he meets Jose Mendez in El Paso where they face their greatest challenge - the largest rustling operation in U.S. history involving vast political stakes and bodies strewn across West Texas.

It started years ago with his brother's unavenged murder. Now he vicariously seeks revenge. It's an obsession. And yet his deadly occupation gnaws at his conscience. He operates in the shadows. He guards his name and his heart not knowing that the anonymity masking his identity will create a legend of historic proportions.

A beautifully written novel that paints the American West in dazzling fidelity - hard-edged, historically accurate and fast-paced - fiction at its finest.

The Mask of Anonymity Details

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From Reader Review The Mask of Anonymity for online ebook

Tonya says

I received this novel for free from the author in exchange for a review.

I found this to be a very entertaining well researched debut novel. The novel follows a secretive gunman for hire, a man seeking justice for others who have been wronged. Set in the old west, the author weaves many fascinating details about the landscape and new inventions of the time. The story is very action packed and I found myself rooting for the gunman throughout the story. I would recommend this novel to those who enjoy stories about the Old West, stories of the men behind the legends. The language is a tad coarse (but I blush easy) and there is violence involved.

Rickie Hinrichs says

Won a autographed copy of his book. You won't believe who this about until you reach the end. All through the book what a great mini series this would make and still do even after finding who the book was about. Like a good mystery. Thank you Preston.

Cathie says

My cousin received this book free from Goodreads & enjoyed it so much that she recommended it to me. I am so glad she did because it is not a book I would have normally picked up myself. It is a western & I only occasionally read that genre but I have to say that I truly enjoyed this book. Yes, it was very violent & brutal at times...but it seemed true to life. The ending was a surprise & my cousin & I did get a laugh about it. All in all I really liked this book & look forward to reading more from this author.

David Fraser says

Guts, glory and gunslingers what else could you want in a western. Justice prevails over evil, while the good guy always gets the girl.

"The Mask Of Anonymity" has everything a western could ever want and Preston Malone has me wanting more of the story. Malone has a way of keeping it simple while driving the story home. Crockett, the main character is a gun for hire helping out those who have been inflected by miseries wicked hands. He will aggressively seek out justice for those willing to hire him.

Part one Crockett is hired by a widow to gain revenge on a group of men who killed her husband and raped both herself, and her daughter.

Crockett takes his style of justice out on the gang and reduces the leader to nothing more than a outcast

In part two Crockett helps a town under siege by a corrupt mayor whom has taken control over the settlement

by his band of ruthless cronies.

Crockett turns the tables and spins his own web of deceit crushing the mayor and ultimately financial destroying him.

Part three involves cattle rustling on the U.S. Mexican boarder and a innocent girl whom finds her parents murdered by rustlers. She falls into

Crockett hands trying to elude her would be murders, but Crockett administers justice swift and deadly.

"Mask of Anonymity" was a DAM fun book to read, and Preston Malone ending was brilliant. Absolutely blew me away!

Jennifer Lea says

Sometimes we'd all like to wear a mask of anonymity ... just for a while.

The business card: JUSTICE FOR SALE, 720 Rue Saint Louis, New Orleans.

The pocket watch: CROCKETT SHIPPING CO OF NEW ORLEANS. PARTNER FOREVER, YOUR BELOVED BROTHER, JOHN.

A friend's final words: Justice. Never Vengeance.

'A man's impenetrable fortress - when turned against him - becomes his inescapable grave.' Perhaps this is the reason Crockett chooses to live the life of a hired gunman.

The loss of his brother, his grief, his impenetrable fortress has always left him so dark and empty. Justice with a vengeance has never filled these voids. The vengeance had to leave his heart before he could be completely free.

This was the story of a magical transformation of a man. One who performed acts of justice for vengeance to one who performed acts of justice simply to help others.

'The Mask of Anonymity' - I won this book through the Goodreads Giveaways. I regard it as highly entertaining, an epic tale that drew me in from the start. This novel claims not only a spot on my book shelf, but an eternal one within my heart.

Gabriel Boutros says

Overall I would rate this book as fair to middling. It revolves around a mysterious man named Crockett, who travels around the Old West advertising justice for sale. The book is divided into three tales, and in each one Crockett sets out to help a different victim, or set of victims, fighting against the usual kinds of marauders and evil land barons that are found in these stories. The story is well-paced for the most part, with each adventure being wrapped up in about 130 or so pages. One of the problems I had was that none of the three stories, or most of the characters found in them, were particularly original. To be fair, one expects certain archetypes to be found in any genre, so the trick for the author is to find something distinctive either in his characters, or in the plot, or in his approach to the story, to make his effort stand out. I just didn't feel that the

author succeeded here. I got the impression that Crockett was simply Batman sent back through time to the 1880s. He leads a double life, living in a large mansion with a loyal servant (a woman who is described as "an exotic Creole wildcat." Puh-lease!), and dispatching the baddies with a wide array of weapons and gadgets. Plus, the bad guys were all one-dimensional, straight out of central casting.

I felt the narration was way over-written through-out, with florid descriptions of everything from the sunset, or the sound of birds chirping, or riders coming out of the dust. Getting a little poetic is a good thing, but here I felt the author could have toned it down. Also, much of the narration read like the author had watched a well-shot movie, and was describing the great cinematography, often giving his opinion about how glorious a scene was, or noting the incongruity between the beauty of nature and the violent deaths taking place, as opposed to a narrator describing things as the characters would see them, and maybe letting the reader decide if they're beautiful or incongruous, or just cliched.

As for Crockett himself, I found him to be a pretty boring character. He is a better shot, a better fighter, a better horseman and even a better lover than anyone else, which meant the outcome of every mission he takes on was pretty much a foregone conclusion, with very little tension or suspense. Everything came a little too easy to him, in a gunfight or in the boudoir; this just made me roll my eyes. It also doesn't help to build interest when his adversaries are all so weak or stupid in comparison. For example, the main bad guy in the middle story, Willard Jefferies was particularly clownish, falling for every trick Crockett could dream up with such ease I wondered how he got to be such a successful tyrant. (And the way he spoke was so hokey, I half-expected him to cackle and rub his hands with glee in some scenes.)

So, overall, it was far from a great western, and certainly not as good as it could have been.

(PS: It's "eminent domain," not "imminent domain.")

Kat says

I don't normally read westerns. That's my dad's territory.

I entered the story with no expectations and nothing preconceived. I was immediately hooked! Starts off pretty brutal and just when I was wondering if I wanted to read so much brutality, it takes you some place else entirely. And then gives insight. By now, you're surprised you're still reading a western!

Well done, Mr. Malone!

Anna says

I received this book free through Goodreads 1st reads from the author.

The detail to the scenery, towns and people was so good that it makes the reader feel like they are right there in the midst of the action packed adventure. You are always rooting for the hero (gunman). This is a must read for fans of the old west and legends. The ending took me totally by surprise.

Thomas Christian says

Very enjoyable book

Writer is wonderful in painting a picture in your mind of the location used to tell his story. I thoroughly enjoyed the heroes. Having 3 stories in the book was a bonus. Plan to read more books from this author.

Cheryl says

"JUSTICE FOR SALE"

I enjoy Westerns - have been reading them for years. "The Mask of Anonymity" is a different type Western than others I have read. Rawer and bloodier, it took off right from the beginning and held my interest to the very last page.

Well researched with great attention to detail, author Malone opens up the West of the late 1800s to the reader. Texas and New Mexico are drawn with caring hands, explaining the wildlife and vegetation, the grittiness of the towns, the danger and the excitement.

There is an abundance of graphic violence and sexual content that I usually don't see in more staid Westerns so be forewarned.

Also, author Malone could have used a better editor. There are incorrectly used words, some repetitiveness, and a few anachronisms scattered throughout the book. They are jarring because the book is well written otherwise.

The characters, both protagonists and antagonists, are well developed. There are three separate substories contained within the covers of the book and each has an excellent plotline and all three tie together nicely. The ending was a shocker even though it shouldn't have been such a big surprise. Pay attention as you read.

I enjoyed this debut novel and hope author Malone keeps on writing Westerns, maybe as sequels to this one. It would lend itself well to sequels.

NOTE: I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review.
