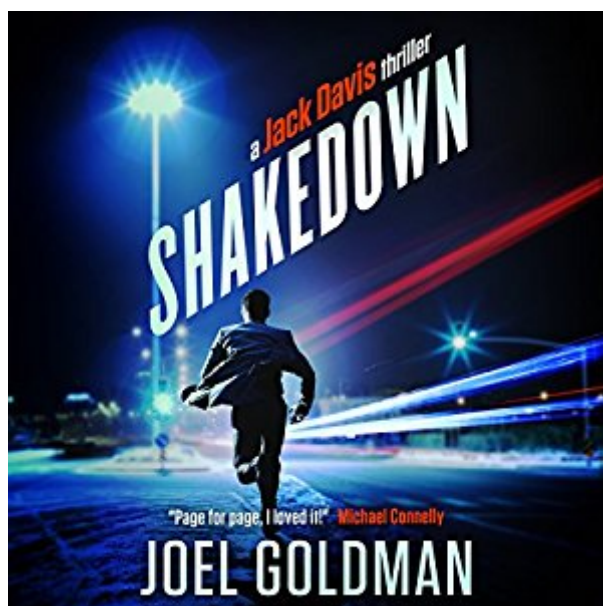


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Shake Down: Jack Davis Mysteries, Book 1



Synopsis

Crack. Rock. Crystal. Dead faces stand at city crossroads and sell their wares to the hopeless - the forgotten - in exchange for their souls. The war isn't overseas. It isn't south of the border. It's in Everytown, USA. FBI Agent Jack Davis is neck deep in a dark urban war and it's not some pansy-ass X-Box Modern Warfare fantasy. He's caught in the crossfire of a war that rages on in the bleak and brutal streets. And Jack is fighting another war; this one inside his body as a mysterious disorder makes him shake when he should shoot. Jack's latest case sends him on a dark journey steeped in the stench of death and endangering his daughter. Critical information is leaking - no - pouring out of the case. He can't trust anyone as betrayal buries the truth in a deadly web of deception.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Actually, it's two firsts... Usually, when a book gets off to a weak start, I can push myself through it for a while, resisting the urge to cut my losses, and then eventually the story gains some traction. For the first time in my life (I'm in my late 40s), I had to stop reading a book in the middle. It was just too painful. The not-even-almost-believable characters and dialog were causing me to roll my eyes with such frequency I thought they might get stuck in the back of my head. The characters were weakly developed so you never really care about any of them, one way or another. As an example, the main character was like an "average Joe" kind of guy that's unexceptional in every way, makes stupid mistakes, has weak people skills, has no leadership qualities, is not especially bright or

interesting... We're supposed to believe that he's some kind of FBI boss? Just about every character is similarly two-dimensional and I often find myself literally cringing at the dialog. By halfway through the book, I had long lost count of how many times I asked myself how much longer should I subject myself to this completely unengaging story. One other odd thing I'll mention--it's not really significant but it's just kind of funny--the story starts out in third person, before switching over to first. During the third-person part, the narrator suddenly, for no apparent reason, starts talking in "gangsta." I kept wondering if perhaps there were missing quotation marks, perhaps it was supposed to be part of the drug dealer's dialog, but no! The narrator went from an average white guy to an urban gang-banger and then back to the white guy! Needless to say, this was highly disruptive to the reading experience and the engagement process.

FBI Agent Jack Davis is in the process of getting divorced, he's fighting a never-ending battle to keep his daughter straight, he lost his son to a child-molesting killer, and he's afraid that his daughter's boyfriend may be a corrupt agent. Developing uncontrollable shakes is not the best way for him to deal with his problems, but that's what his body has decided to do. When he starts shaking at the scene of a mass murder--which took place on a group he was actually investigating--he's suspended from his job and given a strong message that he won't be welcomed back until the doctors give him the okay. But Jack is certain he saw something in the darkness. He can't just back off and let the team he built mess up the case. And when he learns that his daughter might be involved, he becomes a bulldog after any evidence that will prove her innocence. In the meantime, he's got a sexy witness expert, and a sexy near-ex-wife who both seem interested. Author Joel Goldman keeps up the suspense as Jack digs himself more and more deeply into trouble. Relying on friends, providing only partial information to his former co-workers in the FBI, and boning up on the techniques for reading microexpressions, Jack seems determined to learn the truth--no matter how much it hurts. For the most part, the story works. With his multitude of problems, Jack is sympathetic. That his dog loves him and two women are attracted makes him admirable, as well. Since he's doing the crazy things he does for his family, for his daughter, we're prepared to cut him a lot of slack. Ultimately, Goldman relies a bit too much on coincidence. It's a coincidence that the killer happens to murder right when Jack is unable to see.

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