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Rory Flynn

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Boston narcotics detective Eddy Harkness is on the case again, and this time the soul of the city is at stake.

When a late-summer hurricane slams into Boston, Detective Eddy Harkness and his Narco-Intel crew are thrown into the eye of a very different kind of storm. Dark Horse — an especially pure and deadly brand of heroin — has infiltrated the gritty Lower South End. Harkness soon finds that the drug is also at the center of an audacious land grab by the city's corrupt new mayor and his shadowy power brokers. Meanwhile, Lower South End residents displaced by the storm use an obscure bylaw to move into Eddy's hometown, and soon enough tensions are running high along Nagog's tree-lined streets.

Fast-paced and atmospheric, Dark Horse moves from dive bars to Harvard dorm rooms to the city's elite social clubs, as Harkness puts everything at risk — his department, his nascent family, and his life — to try to derail the seemingly unstoppable conspiracy before it's too late.

Dark Horse Details

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From Reader Review Dark Horse for online ebook

Cyndy says

Took me awhile to get into. I didn't realize it was a series and the 2nd book in the series. I liked it enough to check out the first book.

Shauna says

Better than the first. Too short though felt it was rushed in the end

Kate Horsley says

Dark Horse is the second novel in Rory Flynn's Detective Eddy Harkness series, recounting the exploits of a hero created in the great tradition of American urban tough guy protagonists – men knocked about by life, tarnished but fearlessly dedicated to Dark Horsegetting the job done. At the beginning of the book, Eddy is already legendary, both for tackling Boston's criminals and for getting himself into trouble. Courageous and compassionate, he is deeply committed to the city he loves and willing when necessary to bend the rules to protect it.

In the first chapters, Harkness, half drowned, battles for survival as a hurricane floods Boston. As he rides on top of a taxi that lurches through the raging water, he tenaciously keeps his hold on the deaf boy he is trying to rescue: "They thrash through the tempest, swept underwater and dragged down with the cars, trashcans, and stinking debris, the sepia water pulling at them with greedy hands. Harkness struggles toward the dim light above them..." It's a terrific, dramatic opening, and one that foreshadows the narrative conflicts of the novel as a whole – the detective's strength of character, his determination to help the weak, and his struggle against the vicious, submerged forces of economic and political corruption that pull at people with "greedy hands", threatening to wreak havoc on the life of the city.

As head of Narco-Intel, Eddy's remit is to investigate drug crime, and the 'dark horse' of the novel's title is a particularly dangerous drug, a mix of high-grade heroin with cheap brown lactose that's ultimately responsible for more than a thousand overdoses. But as he tracks the sources of this deadly threat, Eddy finds that the distribution of dark horse is "just the beginning", a part of something larger and even more sinister that menaces Boston's Lower South End: "The more you dig, the more dirt you'll find." True to character, Eddy unhesitatingly persists in digging more deeply, and the closer he gets to the men responsible the more warnings he receives: "They're cold-hearted power brokers, Eddy. And if they decide to, they'll crush you."

Read my full review here at [crimeculture](#).

Kelly Roll says

I always enjoy when place is also character and Boston certainly is in this novel. Enjoyed both the people

and the place and it didn't hurt that Boston public along with one its employees played a role in resolving some of the conflict :)

Maureen says

quick easy read...looking forward to the 3rd

Elan says

It was OK. Third Rail was better. Story just not as believable.

Schuyler Wallace says

Rory Flynn is the pen name of the author of "Dark Horse." He uses a pseudonym to outrun an early reputation of being too dark a writer to touch and has developed a flawed character with positive character traits to soften his once acerbic thoughts. Change of name... change of attitude in characters that have evolved from dark to somewhat shady but with a personable side.

In "Dark Horse," Boston, reeling from a late-summer hurricane, faces another storm as a deadly heroin offshoot invades its gritty Lower South End. Detective Eddy Harkness, from the city's aggressive drug enforcement unit, tries desperately to stem the tide but faces opposition from the mayor and his corrupt cronies, homeless squatters, and greedy powerbrokers interested in their own welfare. All the warts of egotistical power grabbing money hogs, and their feverish sycophants, are on display here.

Flynn spins an eye-popping tale of the dark effects of drug usage and the ruthlessness of those who would promote it. Overdose deaths are on the rise but attempts to downplay that fact plague Harkness and his crew's investigation into the source of the drug. The author's concerned knowledge of his home city is obvious as is his love of the environment found in this snowy and frigid Northeast metropolis. He does a wonderful job of taking the reader there.

In his author's photograph, Rory Flynn, whose real name is Stona Fitch, displays the persona of the ex-hooligan that he is; unapologetic, pugnacious, and defiant. It also mirrors his writing style and, from what I can ascertain from various interviews, his outlook on life.

It's a very good read, full of attitude, sneaky humor, and depictions of alternative lifestyles. There's something for everyone in a novel with a dark undercurrent that doesn't offend. I recommend it for a different read that still provides the thrill that detective story readers appreciate.

Ronald Koltnow says

DARK HORSE is Rory Flynn's superior follow-up to THIRD RAIL. Again, the novel is named after a drug but this time the action deals with politicians, street people, librarians, and arcane laws. Eddy Harkness, now

working in Narco-Intel, uncovers a plot reminiscent of John D. MacDonald, dealing with developers who will stop at nothing to get the land they crave. This is a prescient novel in these days of Trump. The wide array of characters are well drawn and the action is sustained. Flynn, we hope, will continue to follow Eddy's adventures in Boston's drug demimonde.

Evan Scott says

Nice follow-up to *Third Rail*, Flynn is definitely mastering the detective genre.

Truman32 says

I'm of the mind that you can never have too many tough guy detective stories. Especially the ones where the geographic region they work (Scudder's New York City, Marlowe's Las Angeles, Robicheaux 's New Iberia, Davenport's Minneapolis, etc.) acts like the detective's disheveled, little-bit dirty, and baggage-carrying partner.

It's like saying there is too much cheese in the recipe, or you brought home too much Halloween candy. There were too many college girls on the beach in bikinis this afternoon, or Michael Phelps has too many Olympic Gold Medals. This rings particularly true when the detective tale is told as well and as exciting as Rory Flynn's new novel **Dark Horse**, the second book in the Eddy Harkness series.

Dark Horse begins in thrilling fashion as a hurricane hits the city of Boston, flooding the Lower South End and causing tremendous destruction. Yet as detective Eddy Harkness discovers, this destruction pales next to the wreckage from a new and particularly lethal strain of heroin (known as Dark Horse) also flooding the streets. As the city recovers, it appears that the homeowners in the ravaged areas are not allowed back to their homes. They must find sanctuary in the neighboring suburb of Nagog using an arcane 200-year-old Massachusetts squatter's law.

The powers that be, led by the new mayor as well as an ancient secret society called the Harbormasters (think of the Stonecutters from the *Simpsons* with markedly less beer drinking, Ping-Pong, and Homers) are planning to rebuild the flood damaged working class neighborhood into an affluent and extremely exclusive province. Those who had homes there would not be allowed back. It's up to Harkness to uncover the corruption and conspiracy. Is the influx of Dark Horse heroin (that recently killed two Harvard students) connected?

There is plenty going on here and Flynn manages to weave all the threads—gentrification, the political workings of the big city, deadly drugs, as well as the sense of location and place (living just outside Boston myself, I can tell you he really nails the area—both city and suburbs) into one fabulous tapestry. The character of Eddy Harkness—leader of the Narco-Intel team is appealing and winning. A local boy from the area, he's salty, smart and as rugged as a set of American Tourister luggage. **Dark Horse** was a fun and gripping read, and it deserves to get some notice out there—it's really good!

By the way, here are some more things there can never be too many of: spiders in your enemy's shoes, scoops of ice cream, churros, kisses from Mom, tank tops so you can display the “gun show” to any nearby ladies, and afternoon naps.

Cara says

Eddy Harkness NEVER just walks away! Ever....

Anyone looking for a new series should try the Eddy Harkness books. Fast-moving, Boston based, book two is even better than book one. While the author does take some creative license with the city of Boston and the surrounding towns, there WAS a Greek place called the Fill-a-Buster on Park Street, and they had the best fries in town. I can't wait to read more from Rory Flynn!

Aditi says

"The trouble with conspiracies is that they rot internally."

----Robert A. Heinlein

Rory Flynn, a Boston-based mystery writer, is back with yet another edgy and twisted thriller in his new book, *Dark Horse* that is the second book in the *Eddy Harkness* series where the stories are revolving around a Boston-based cop, Eddy Harkness, the local hero, commonly known as the "Harvard Cop" and his adventures while serving the Narco-Intel department of his city. This book unfolds the story of a deadly drug wiping clean of any lives, those are found alive despite of a deadly hurricane, of a fictional town in Boston and the few lucky ones are wandering into Eddy's hometown, thus creating more trouble that Eddy can sniff from the very comfort of his own home.

Synopsis:

Boston narcotics detective Eddy Harkness is on the case again, and this time the soul of the city is at stake.

When a late-summer hurricane slams into Boston, Detective Eddy Harkness and his Narco-Intel crew are thrown into the eye of a very different kind of storm. Dark Horse — an especially pure and deadly brand of heroin — has infiltrated the gritty Lower South End. Harkness soon finds that the drug is also at the center of an audacious land grab by the city's corrupt new mayor and his shadowy power brokers. Meanwhile, Lower South End residents displaced by the storm use an obscure bylaw to move into Eddy's hometown, and soon enough tensions are running high along Nagog's tree-lined streets.

Fast-paced and atmospheric, Dark Horse moves from dive bars to Harvard dorm rooms to the city's elite social clubs, as Harkness puts everything at risk — his department, his nascent family, and his life — to try to derail the seemingly unstoppable conspiracy before it's too late.

Eddy is back and this time the mystery is tied up with the VIPs of his town, messing with whom can cost Eddy his job. Dark Horse, a killer drug, is spreading like a deadly virus and is infiltrating the lives who braced the hurricane bravely in the Lower South End town, thereby forcing the handful of people to flee this

killer town and shift to Eddy's hometown, Nagog, and these kind of people although mean no harm, but can cause trouble if not kept under surveillance. Eddy is quite a sniffer when it comes to trouble with a capital letter 'T'. He can smell that there is poison spreading in their town, but those responsible for it holds an invincible rank in the town and disrupting their high-class lifestyle might put an end to Eddy's career. Can he make his boss believe about the people who are responsible behind the sacrifice of so many innocent lives with the help of a drug just to benefit themselves?

Having read the previous book, I already had this connection with the protagonist, hence Eddy easily seeped into my mind's eyes right from the very first page, thus allowing me to agree with his decisions and actions. Now this I do not consider as an added advantage, instead, the author has penned the book in such a way that the readers reading an *Eddy Harkness* book for the first time can easily comprehend with the story line. Flynn's books' titles are quite unique signifies the core ingredient of his plot- drugs! And not to mention the book cover images are ever so striking that has an ability to arrest the eyes of the readers.

The writing style of the author is articulate and that will make the readers contemplate with his equally emphatic prose. The narrative is short and simple and easy to understand yet has enough power to hook the readers right into the heart of the story. The pacing is moderate as the story keeps developing and forming with new twists that will keep the readers glued. This book falls in the crime-fiction genre where the "whodunit" or the people responsible for the deaths are very obvious right from the very start, but putting them to justice was the real challenge for the protagonist that will push the readers to the edge of their seats in order to giving the hero the essential company until the very end.

The characters are interesting and are drawn from realism. Eddy is an unusual hero, who can be tad boring and stupid at times to be a fearless cop. In this book, the author explores Eddy's relationship with his live-in girlfriend and his daughter thus portraying and emotional, mature and caring side to Eddy's demeanor. Even though he is laced with flaws and backstory, the first time readers might find it bit difficult to connect with Eddy deeply. The side characters are also well-developed and they might be able to keep the readers interested into the story.

The author paints yet another dark fictional town in Boston which is every bit believable and vividly captured into the plot thus giving an extra edge to this already enticing story. The author even brings out the misuse and the evil effects of a strange new killer drug and uses it to paint his story intriguing as well as frightening. There are some adrenaline-rushing action scenes which are not only strikingly depicted but will also make the readers feel like getting high on an invisible power erupting from this compelling story.

Overall, this book is perfect companion for crime fiction readers on a slightly windy evening along with a glass of red wine.

Verdict: *Thanks to the author, Rory Flynn's publicist for giving me the opportunity to read and review this book.*

Marian says

I'm a big fan of this series and am keen to see where it goes next. I hear a rumor book #3 may venture beyond Boston for a little road trip. Recently I had a great chat with author Rory Flynn - aka man of mystery Stona Fitch for the Literary Hub: <http://tinyurl.com/j2f3atl>

Spoiler alert: He's a bit of a badass, though he claims he just likes to drink tea and pet his cat.
