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THEY THOUGHT SHE'D BE EASY. THEY THOUGHT WRONG.

It all began with the phone call asking former porn star Angel Dare to do one more movie. Before she knew it, she'd been shot and left for dead in the trunk of a car. But Angel is a survivor. And that means she'll get to the bottom of what's been done to her even if she has to leave a trail of bodies along the way...

Money Shot Details

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From Reader Review Money Shot for online ebook

Jim says

I expected to like this more than I did. Overall the story was good, almost 4 stars, but the heroine's motivations degraded it. On the plus side, there was a wonderfully gritty trip through the porn industry & some memorable characters that were quickly, but well sketched. Our heroine was strong, tough & capable. Lots of action & sexual tension. Not much actual sex & what there was didn't detract from the story. It didn't read like a porn novel, which would have been very easy to do. The story was fast paced & the writing was pretty good; hard bitten, earthy & without pretense.

Downsides: Our heroine was too upset by events that I felt she should have taken more in stride & with more intelligence. Her reactions were over-blown & that's what most of the story hung on, so it constantly felt forced. Supposedly a smart gal, she makes a series of dumb decisions that dig her deeper into a situation that can only lead to her deeper into a morass of murder & betrayal. I had to suspend my belief a little too often.

The shock value was over done, too; gratuitous scenes & actions. A little less emphasis on how bad the bad guys were would have made a much better story, IMO. Their motivations were suspect, at best. Lots of murder & mayhem without much reason at times. The last death scene was unbelievable, too. Neat idea, but not well scripted.

Mindy says

I have recently become obsessed with the Hard Case Crime books. I want to collect them all! The covers are so amazing!

Unfortunately, this book wasn't as amazing as the cover. I enjoyed the beginning and end, but the middle dragged for me. Angel Dare is a great character and I am looking forward to reading the next one.

The Shayne-Train says

This was a great, fast-paced, and well-written noir romp.

Heh heh, I said romp. I used that word because this particular "detective story" is set in the world of the SoCal porn industry. And the word "romp" is a sexy-sex-sex word to me.

I highly enjoyed the fact that this particular seedy story had a female protagonist/narrator. Angel Dare is both the damsel AND the "hero."

This hits all the right noir-ish notes: dirty back alleys, untraceable pistols, suitcases full of moolah, bad dudes with greasy hair, and a main character who repeatedly gets the shit kicked out of her, but keeps on going.

I loved it, and I'm moving directly on to the next one, Choke Hold.

Mike (the Paladin) says

I thought about dropping this all the way to a 1 star rating, but I really didn't hate the book. I only sort of disliked it. And before anyone jumps to the conclusion it was the subject matter it wasn't. I can stand an "adult" type story. The problem here is simply that the book was a kind of one trick pony with what I found some fairly weak storytelling.

Of course I know everyone won't feel that way and to be fair it is complete and total "mind-junk-food" so. you know to each their own.

Our protagonist here (Angel Dare) is a semi-retired porn star. She runs an agency sending young women out on jobs now but can't resist doing the occasional come-back. The thing is she finds herself caught in the middle of something, unexpected this time.

The writer here can't resist pontificating (a lot) on her views of porn, life, love and marriage (a really jaded view of marriage by the way. I'd guess at some background on that but have no real evidence...)

I got through the book and in case anyone wants to know there is very little actual overt sex in the book. You get a lot of graphic language, descriptions of porn situations, some porn movie shots/filming and so on. It's not a book for kids. It's simply a somewhat predictable mystery that leans a bit heavily on what I suppose would be called prurient interest.

Don't plan to read the sequel, can't recommend it. Up to you.

Corrie says

Christa Faust writes like she means it. I loved her sole lesbian noir **Butch Fatale** so much I had to venture into her mainstream work as well. **Money Shot** is dark, tough and stylish contemporary Noir that's full of invention and builds to one hell of a climax.

When former porn star now talent agent **Angel Dare** is set up, raped, busted up, shot and left for dead in the trunk of a car she has nothing left to live for except to take revenge on the men responsible. With the help of former cop **Malloy** she sets out to do just that.

Follow this kick-ass avenging Angel as she visits the darkest places of the porn industry.

"There were maybe five guys actively working the various stations of Tabby's anatomy while another six or seven stood back on standby, keeping their pumps primed and waiting to be rotated in. One funny thing about working in porn is how quickly you get used to seeing guys jack off. When I first started out, I couldn't stop staring. It gave me a nasty kind of thrill I can't quite explain, seeing something that was supposed to be this shameful secret done in such a public, nonchalant sort of way. I was fascinated by the wide variety of techniques and the odd, individual quirks each guy seemed to have to get the job done. But that didn't last. By my fifth or sixth film, I barely even noticed it anymore, unless the shoot was on standby, waiting for word.

Veteran cops and paramedics are unfazed by the sight of sucking chest wounds or decomposed babies. Porn pros don't bat an eye at the sight of six guys standing around yanking their cranks."

m/f explicit

Themes: very violent, dark, sex trafficking, expect the bodies to pile up, disguises-R-Us, from victim to hero, Angel is resilient as fuck.

4.3 stars

F.R. says

Trying to explain what I was currently reading to my wife, I described the passage I'd then reached thus:

"The former porn star who is in our heroine is at the home of another former porn star, one who is washed up and drugged out, trying to get a current porn star – this one drugged up and paranoid – to leave the bathroom, before a third former porn star comes back."

My wife looked at me with baffled disapproval. But really, I can think of no better description for the level of exaggerated, over the top tawdriness at which this novel operates.

Obviously the world of porn is likely to be seedy with many dark corners. And this book revels in every disgusting and dangerous nook and cranny. There's no lace-clad, sugar coating here. No glorification of the world it depicts. Indeed if you knew someone who for some reason wanted to enter the world of pornography, handing over this book would be a fantastic deterrent.

Former porn star, Angel Dare, is kidnapped, tortured and left for dead. She comes to wanting revenge and to understand just what the hell happened to her. Angel does make a fun and frank narrator, contrasting her sexual provocativeness with a very human terror and horror of the violence that's suddenly overcome her world. And I'll be honest, her wit and her arched observations are the main reason this reader made it to the end. As this is such a dark and sleazy book, one that revels in the filth around it, that you're likely to feel the need for a good cleansing shower every forty pages or so.

Erin *Proud Book Hoarder* says

"Coming back from the dead isn't as easy as they make it seem in the movies."

Hard Case Crimes have been hit or miss with me. Most I find good but not many great. I know there's more out there waiting for me to discover and fall in love with them - I've read about five (sad number).

Angel is a retired porn star who currently keeps afloat by running a company of working women for the entertainment industry. After receiving a phone call from a director she respects and trusts, she agrees to do one last job - but finds out there is a gigantic catch. Now on the run and having escaped death, she must clear her name and get revenge on those who almost put her in the coffin.

The author doesn't hold back with the porn industry business - definitely more insight than I'd had before (or wanted.) It's told with no apologies in a matter-of-fact way through memories and a present set visit. I had NO idea men put injections there, yikes.

Usually books like this are told through the point of view of men who run into the classic noirish dame, but in this case it was a woman writer doing a good job telling a story with an experienced woman's point of view. The writing style is awesome and casual, easy to digest and read through quickly.

Characterization is well done too, particularly in the strong and independent personality Angel has. Every once in awhile there's a touch of vulnerability that makes her come across more real. Even the "good guys" in this show realism as they sometimes betray Angel when she and I weren't expecting them too.

It's pure crime and no mystery, a well-done and tense book that's well-structured. It gets a little silly and overreaching in the end with some of the deaths, but it does so while still embracing the pulpy feel these kind of books promise.

Robert says

Aside from the cool name and cover, what really took this story to the next level for me was Angel Dare. Needless to say, Christa Faust knows how to spin a tale with a strong, capable heroine (not to be confused with the substance that might have been consumed by sex slave workers). The story clipped along like a Greyhound on I-70 in the middle of Colorado. Angel knows how to deal with the pond scum in the sex slave trade and porn business, and she can take a beat down about as well as any red-blooded male. She doesn't cry or whine or wallow in self-pity; she just wraps her hand in plastic and punches out glass windows.

If you've ever wanted a behind-the-scenes look at the porn industry, then MONEY SHOT should answer a few questions for you. And while this is Angel's tale, and it's rather aptly told, the secondary characters are painted rather convincingly with some quick sketches. Even though this book introduces some seedy characters and takes the reader to some seedy places, it doesn't let sex and violence rule the tale. All-in-all, if you find feminine noir enjoyable, then you'll want to check this book out.

Melki says

Ex-porn star and talent agent Angel Dare has been set up, beaten up, and left for dead. Now she's hiding from the law AND the bad guys who want a missing suitcase. What does Angel want? Revenge, and she'll do whatever it takes to get the men who ruined her life.

This was a fun read of the fast and furious variety. The ass-kicking female protagonist kept me turning the pages when I really should have been doing something else. It definitely satisfied my thirst for seeing bad guys go down (and not in the fun way.)

Be warned - this is violent and gritty. And, while the porn industry may seem like titillating subject matter for a novel, there's not a lot of sex in this book. Faust does not sugar coat the toll that sex for pay takes on the

performers.

Years in porn are a lot like dog years. They tend to age the girls much quicker than human years.

Don't get me wrong - there are some laughs here. I liked some of the porn star names, particularly **Heidi Ho**.

And, yeah, I used the formula - *childhood pet + street where you grew up* to calculate my porn star name. It's Princess Channel. Eh. That's okay, I suppose, but I always thought the ultimate porny name would be Lickety Split.

Don't worry. I won't be appearing anytime soon on a screen near you.

Dan Schwent says

When you shoot a woman and leave her in the trunk of a car, you'd better make sure she's dead...

Former porn star and current talent agency owner Angel Dare is duped into meeting an old friend, beaten, raped, shot, and left for dead in the trunk of a Honda Civic, all because of some missing money she knows nothing about. But Angel doesn't die and, with the help of an ex-cop named Malloy, goes looking for those responsible...

Money Shot is a quick read, full of action and suspense, as befits its place in the Hard Case Crime series. Angel's quest for vengeance leads her through the underbelly of the porn industry and the seedy world of sex slavery. Her feeling that her life was stolen from her is completely understandable. The action is quick and brutal. Christa Faust is a fairly capable writer. Money Shot reads like an action movie. I suspect porn enthusiasts would enjoy it even more than I did.

Richard says

This is an awesome little pulp crime novel set deep in the porn industry community of Los Angeles's San Fernando Valley, which also happens to be where I lay my head at night! It follows Angel Dare, a former porn star who now runs an agency for new talent. One night she gets a call to shoot one last scene and she can't resist the urge to prove that she's still got it. But the shoot turns out to be a front and she winds up shot and left for dead in the trunk of a car and framed for murder. She then must use all of her wits to find those responsible and pay them back in full!

I enjoyed the character of Angel Dare, a well-rounded heroine who at first doubts herself and her ability to handle the situation that she's in, but then grows and realizes that she actually can be a badass and totally handle her own with the tough guys and take care of herself. I mean damn, she gets a bullet in the chest and still manages to walk to a local mercado and call for help! It made for interesting reading because at first, I was a little disappointed because Angel felt like your run-of-the-mill damsel in distress, feeling sorry for herself and relying on some ex-cop to help her. But then at a point in the book, you realize that this is all necessary as Angel comes into her own and evolves in a potent character arc that was enjoyable to read! Christa Faust skillfully finds a great balance with her narrative voice, injecting just the right humor at the right times, even managing to get a snicker out of the reader in tense situations.

I wanted to shout something tough and manly like Freeze motherfucker, or I'll blow your balls off! In the end I just pointed the gun and yelled, "Hey!"

And she's the real star of this crime show, that Christa Faust, writing with great confidence and wit, with good pacing and a clever style. Aside from a slightly stumbling resolution, I had lots of fun reading this and I can't wait to see what she does with her other work!

I'll also take some time to mention Glen Orbik, the awesome cover artist who also contributed other amazing covers for Hard Case Crime (including the great cover for David Goodis's *The Wounded and the Slain*, and the covers for Hard Case's popular Stephen King and Michael Crichton releases), and who sadly passed away while I was in the middle of reading this.

Eventually, morning came instead of bad guys. That was the thing about mornings. No matter how fucked up your life got, how deep and black your despair, how sure you were that you couldn't take another second of this shit, morning just kept on coming.

Mohammed says

It all began with the phone call asking former porn star Angel Dare to do one more movie. Before she knew it, she'd been shot and left for dead in the trunk of a car.

When i read that part of the synopsis i thought no way im gonna get a book that sounds so clichè,so far from my taste. The cool cover pose with the gun, the female author being a contemporary noir author is what made me try this.

I liked Angel Dare despite her porn star name sounds silly. She had a strong voice,attitude that made her belivable and easy to like despite all the things she does in the book. The novel was fun to read and had some real word darkness in the story. Which is pretty much all i ask of modern noir novels. I havent really enjoyed the new noir novels i have read by Hard Case Crime so far. Most of the HCC novels i have enjoyed have been written by alltime greats,masters of the field.

Strong 3 stars for me, rate it higher than most 3 stars novels.

Toby says

Read on plane from Doha to London, full review may follow

Full of potential this Hard Case Original from Christa Faust reads like the anti-Megan Abbott of modern female written noir. Whereas Abbott focuses on the domestic life of her female characters Faust has a protagonist who used to be a porn star and tries acting like a male action star.

I wish it could have hit the height my imagination had in mind but still a highly enjoyable pulp read.

Adam says

Christa Faust's *Money Shot* is the first Hard Case Crime original I've read, and it's a doozy. Some have complained that the new paperback originals that Hard Case publish are too self-conscious, and work too hard at recreating all the conventions of pulp narratives from the '40s, '50s, and '60s without taking the time to think about whether or not those conventions might work in a modern setting, or even why they may have worked in the first place, but this is definitely not the case with *Money Shot*. Faust brilliantly uses all the old conventions of hard-boiled fiction (e.g., first-person narration, clipped dialogue, brutal violence, MacGuffin-driven plot, damsel[s] in distress, constant sexual tension, interchangeable thugs who stand between the hero and his or her ultimate goal) while still creating a believable female character who operates in a 21st-century milieu. The book isn't without its problems. Many scenes make you question whether or not the protagonist, Angel Dare, would even be present were she not narrating the novel, and there are a few plot contrivances that I just didn't buy; they seemed to exist merely to move the plot forward. Overall, though, I wholeheartedly recommend this book. It's entertaining, violent, pulpy, funny, and all the little details of life in the adult-film business seem dead-on. Also, the cover art might be the best in the Hard Case Crime series so far.

Lynda says

It's often said that the most sensitive part of your body during a porn session is your ears - no one likes getting busted with their undies around their ankles.

Well, no-one that is, unless you're Angel Dare.

"I'm sure you're wondering what a nice girl like me was doing left for dead in the trunk of a piece of shit Honda Civic out in the industrial wasteland east of downtown Los Angeles. Or maybe we've met before and you're wondering why it hadn't happened sooner.

My name's Gina Moretti, but you probably know me as Angel Dare. Don't worry, I won't tell your wife. I made my first adult video when I was twenty, though I lied on camera and said I was eighteen."

And No! I'm not reading cliterature *ahem*! Honest! I'm actually reading my first novel from the Hard Case Crime series. That said, I did learn a hell of a lot about the porn industry from this book! And it ain't pretty!

Money Shot caused a sensation when Hard Case Crime released it in February 2008, not only because of its content, but because it's the first Hard Case Crime release written by a woman.

Money Shot is about an ex-porn star, Angel Dare, who after working 9 years in the business, decides to set up a talent agency called 'Daring Angels', to better protect girls in the business from the hands of suitcase pimps and talent agencies. Angel gets duped into meeting an old friend and is beaten, raped, shot, and left for dead in the trunk of a Honda Civic, all because of some missing money that she knows nothing about. But Angel doesn't die and, with the help of an ex-cop named Malloy, goes looking for those responsible....

Money Shot is a slow train wreck through the adult entertainment industry. It doesn't paint a pleasant picture of the industry or the people in it.

"If you spend any amount of time working in the porn industry, you quickly get numb to drug casualties, just like you get numb to prolapsed rectums on set and guys who stick needles in their johnsons and all the other workaday atrocities of the modern smut racket."

In creating Angel, a feminist porn star action hero and avenging angel who stepped into her G-string and heels and loaded her gun to take down a sex slavery syndicate, Faust has been touted as "rewriting the femme fatale guidebook and upending the whole noir spectrum."

Written in a casual but confident first person perspective, Money Shot delivers some hardboiled action with some great humour and moments of unexpected poignancy. Angel is not a shallow character. She has a lot of depth and goes through a personal transformation throughout the story. But make no mistake, Money Shot, as the title suggests, is also gritty raunch in places; disturbing and even grotesque.

[Source: Urban Dictionary]

This is Christa Faust's first Angel Dare mystery. And the good news is that fans of Money Shot can get to read about Angel again in another Hard Case Crime novel, Choke Hold.

There are many sites on the internet that deal with porn, including name generators. I'm thinking of getting into "the industry" so I gave it a shot. My industry name would be **Skimpy Pleaser**. I kinda like it.

And just so GR readers don't have to worry about getting busted with their undies around their ankles, I thought I'd share with you a sneak peak of my first audition. After all, you needn't worry about hiding out if you are on a book review site, right?

Oh c'mon... you don't think I'm that stupid, do you?

For just \$19.95, including postage and packaging, I will send you a copy.

As you can see, my Nan has one already. She got hers for free, family n' all.

3.5 stars/5
