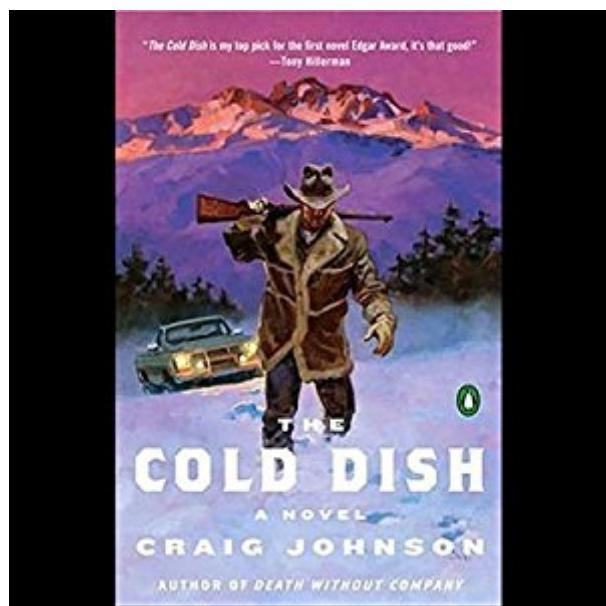


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# The Cold Dish: A Walt Longmire Mystery



## Synopsis

Introducing Wyoming's Sheriff Walt Longmire in this riveting novel from the *New York Times* bestselling author of *Dry Bones*, the first in the *Longmire* series, the basis for the hit Netflix original series *LONGMIRE*. Craig Johnson's *The Highwayman* and *An Obvious Fact* are now available from Viking. Fans of Ace Atkins, Nevada Barr and Robert B. Parker will love this outstanding first novel, in which *New York Times* bestselling author Craig Johnson introduces Sheriff Walt Longmire of Wyoming's Absaroka County. Johnson draws on his deep attachment to the American West to produce a literary mystery of stunning authenticity, and full of memorable characters. After twenty-five years as sheriff of Absaroka County, Walt Longmire's hopes of finishing out his tenure in peace are dashed when Cody Pritchard is found dead near the Northern Cheyenne Reservation. Two years earlier, Cody has been one of four high school boys given suspended sentences for raping a local Cheyenne girl. Somebody, it would seem, is seeking vengeance, and Longmire might be the only thing standing between the three remaining boys and a Sharps .45-70 rifle. With lifelong friend Henry Standing Bear, Deputy Victoria Moretti, and a cast of characters both tragic and humorous enough to fill in the vast emptiness of the high plains, Walt Longmire attempts to see that revenge, a dish best served cold, is never served at all. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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## Customer Reviews

I loved the *Longmire* TV series and the characters in the TV series, and so I finally decided to read the first novel in the series, which, I discovered, was a storyline that found its way into the TV series

(at least partially, but mostly unrecognizable). It's never fair to compare a novel to a movie or to a TV series, but hey, I'm human. And I feel obligated to report that I liked TV series' Longmire character much better than the novel's Longmire character. In the novel, Walt Longmire is a grumpy, overweight, gone-to-seed aging man with a creative sense of humor and a big heart. In the TV series, Walt isn't so grumpy, not overweight, and has not yet gone to seed, with a sense of humor and a big heart. I think the TV series would have failed miserably if the producers had cast the novel's version of Longmire. It's one thing to read about a, fat, grumpy, gone-to-seed character, and quite another to watch them be grumpy, overweight, and gone-to-seed on a TV screen. Key question: Is the Walt Longmire in the novel a likeable character? This was one of the questions I asked myself after reading four chapters. I hadn't developed any empathy for him. He just seemed like a sad character, going to seed, and with little to no direction other than mechanically going through the paces of his job. Walt's interactions with Henry Standing Bear and a few of the other supporting cast made him much more palatable/tolerable. Every writer has their own unique storytelling methodology/style, and, if this novel is representative, then Craig Johnson's style is one of slow, methodical, every scene drawn out, and at times laborious pace. Nothing gets rushed. It took me a few chapters to get settled into the slow pace, and the very slow development of the main plot. A lot of that slow, methodical pace is spent in the early going with character development. Slow pace will usually throw me out of a story, but the reason I stuck with this story was because of the writing. The writing is excellent. Character descriptions are well done and very creative. The descriptions of the geography were also well done and worthy of praise. It was the writing that held me to the story, not the character Walt Longmire. This is not a novel that should be read quickly. There is a lot of wonderful, subtle humor laced throughout the narrative. The exchanges between Walt Longmire and Henry Standing Bear merit reading twice, just to savor the humor. The writer requires the reader to pay attention if the reader wants to enjoy all of the storytelling value. Many of the less-positive reviews mentioned getting lost in the narrative. I would suggest that those readers were not paying close enough attention and could easily get confused as to who was saying what. I read the Kindle version while listening to the Audible version (for some reason I find this more enjoyable than just doing one of them). George Guidall, already one of my favorite narrators, is an excellent narrator for this story. He does an excellent job delivering all of the subtle humor and the wide variety of characters. I would rate his narration at 5-stars. The biggest disappointment I had with this story was that the key question posed by Walt Longmire was never answered. After it

became obvious that the murders had something to do with the rape of Melissa Little Bird, the obvious question was asked: "A little over two years, two years since the suspended sentences for all four boys. Why now? It just didn't make sense." Great question. As I came to the climax of the story, I was anxiously waiting for the answer to that question. Unfortunately, and disappointingly, the answer was never provided. The reader will never know why the murderer waited two years to extract revenge.

After Robert B. Parker died, I thought, well, I don't know what I thought. Max Brand (my Grandad introduced me to Max), Louis L'amour (my Dad), and RBP: I didn't think I'd find another - whatever. Super writer. But, all of a sudden, someone (just a friend) (a GOOD friend, it turns out) introduces me to Craig Johnson, and BAM! I'm bingeing on Longmire! The series is good, too! The books are hard to put down. Thank heavens there are 12 of them. Dialog crackles, characters are perfect. Put a fork in me! Please don't stop, Mr. J.

Yes this story won many awards and spawned a tv series. Even reading it over again it touches the heart in so many ways. The first time to meet Walt Longmire, Henry Standing Bear, Vic, Lucian and all the characters of North central Wyoming. The descriptive prose is worth the trip, but the mystery is great. Somebody is killing a gang of rapists and Walt must stop them even though most people feel the same way. But Walt is damaged goods himself and he meets a woman that could help him. If only he could climb out of his own depression long enough. The two threads of the story twine around and around pulling Walt away. Until we meet the old Cheyenne in a mythic masterpiece on a mountain side in a blizzard. Some of the best poetic writing I have ever read. In the end you long for more and the Longmire series begins. Too bad the tv series is not as good. But the books are excellent one after the other. I have to add that the story is all over central Wyoming and Montana. Some places do not exist. Others are miles away from each other. The reservation is in Montana. The roads have the wrong numbers. So don't worry about any of that. Just enjoy the story.

The first book in the Walt Longmire series, this was originally written as a stand alone novel. I will say that I do watch the television show, but it is more of a parallel universe than a true retelling of the books. Craig Johnson is a consultant, so that helps. But there are things you can do on the written page that are difficult to do on family-friendly television. I fell in love with the characters and have kept up with the series. I much prefer the books. The characters are more fully developed, there are more characters, and the story lines are more complex. Two of my favorite characters

never appear in the television series at all. But having said that: The Cold Dish introduces you to Walt Longmire, the widowed Wyoming sheriff of fictional Absaroka county. He's good at his job, has not recovered from his wife's death, and is haunted by a rape case that was difficult to prosecute. He is surrounded by a cast of characters: his best friend from childhood, Henry Standing Bear; his daughter, Kady (a lawyer in Philadelphia); Ruby, his dispatcher; Vic Moretti, a deputy sheriff; Dorothy, proprietor and headmistress of the Busy Bee Cafe; Lucien Connally, the crotchety, bourbon-drinking amputee and retired former sheriff who hired Walt as a young man. There are many others and the town of Durant and citizens of Absaroka County serve as local color and deep background, but they're more than extras in Walt's epic drama. My 80-year-old father now loves these books and likens Craig Johnson to "a modern Louis L'amour," though I think there's more depth than L'amour gave us -- and certainly more humor. Without question, the stories can be dark; but they can be laugh out loud funny, too. This isn't fast-paced, take your breath away action (although "Hell Is Empty", a later volume, certainly is!), but ride along with Walt for a while and you'll be absorbed. Highly recommended.

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