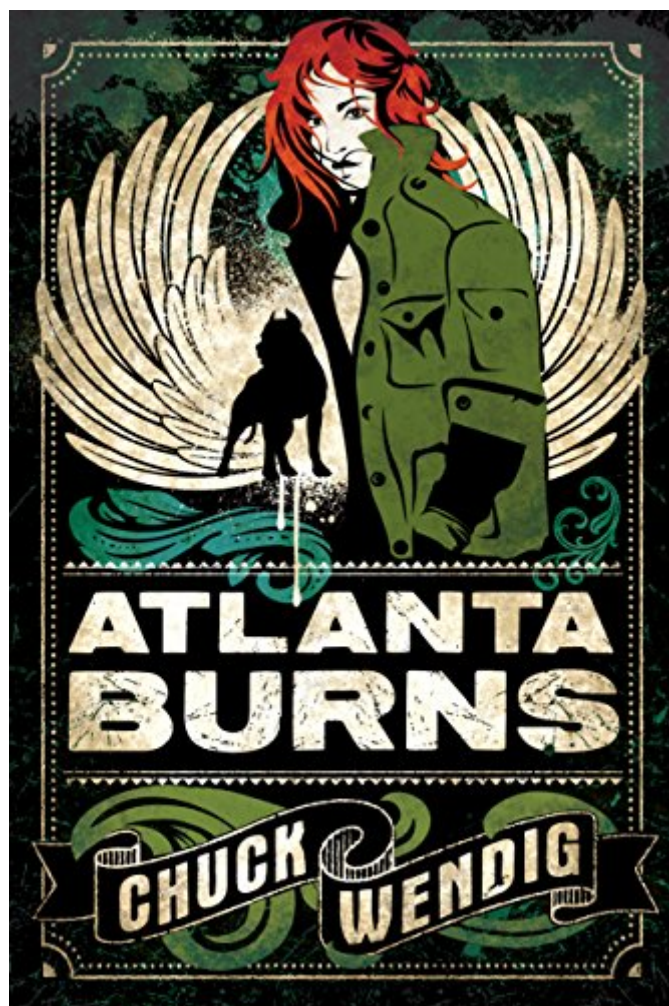


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Atlanta Burns



Synopsis

You don't mess with Atlanta Burns. Everyone knows that. And that's kinda how she likes it—until the day Atlanta is drawn into a battle against two groups of bullies and saves a pair of new, unexpected friends. But actions have consequences, and when another teen turns up dead by an apparent suicide—Atlanta knows foul play is involved. And worse: she knows it's her fault. You go poking rattlesnakes, maybe you get bit. Afraid of stirring up the snakes further by investigating, Atlanta turns her focus to the killing of a neighborhood dog. All paths lead to a rural dogfighting ring, and once more Atlanta finds herself face-to-face with bullies of the worst sort. Atlanta cannot abide letting bad men do awful things to those who don't deserve it. So she sets out to unleash her own brand of teenage justice. Will Atlanta triumph? Or is fighting back just asking for a face full of bad news? This book is intended for mature audiences due to strong language and violence. Revised edition: Previously published as two volumes, *Shotgun Gravy* and *Bait Dog*, this combined edition includes editorial revisions.

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Customer Reviews

Having worked through and thoroughly enjoyed Wendig's fiction oeuvre, I thought I was prepared for Atlanta Burns. I hereby acknowledge that no one, let alone this gal, is ready for her. Atlanta is a YA heroine straight out of German Expressionism and Japanese Kaidan: artfully rendered, immersed in a brutal world. To be frank, I didn't want to read this book. Readers sensitive to violence, especially sensitive to these acts perpetrated against those less capable of withstanding it, should be forewarned. Because Chuck is a disturbingly and abnormally talented writer, I suspected this book would show aspects of an all-too-real world that would hurt me. And yes, Chuck's prose hurt me. His main and supporting characters (heck, even his settings) makes the reader keenly feel the poverty that erodes the souls of the town. "Atlanta Burns" is also compulsively readable: I couldn't put it down, even when I wanted to. The book tossed my feelings aside and charged at me like an Adderall-riddled teenager suffering from PTSD. The honesty of his writing wouldn't let me go and I didn't want it to. And then Chuck and Atlanta patted me on my fool head and sent me on my way -- exhausted, older, and wiser in some ways about this here world. Now I'm left hoping that she'll pass my way again, because Chuck made me love her (dang you both for it).

I look at reading a book like going into a relationship. Sometimes you have a date with a bland nobody, other times an insane weirdo who looks nothing like their photo from OKCupid (I am looking at YOU, Julie Ann!). It's the same thing with reading a book; you can have one that makes reading the phone book (remember those?) seem appetizing, while others are so far out in left field, they just got signed by the NY Mets. Atlanta Burns is that date you always remember. Starting off with a bang, and barely letting up enough for you to realize the ride you are on, this book Superglues your fingers to it and dares you to pull away as it punches you in the facial region with awesomeness. The titular character is a strong female character in every facet of the term. While she is not afraid to stick her foot (and the rest of her) in situations well above her pay grade, Atlanta drives the story throughout and never allows it to come to her. That's what we want, right? An actual protagonist who isn't afraid to step up when she knows it's the right thing to do, even though it is completely cutting into her downtime of....well, Atlanta didn't really have that much else to do, but STILL THE POINT IS MADE. As a massive fan of the author, I would really suggest checking this tome out, if only because the more books he sells, the more likely the story of Ms. Burns will continue to....well, burn I guess (sorry, lost that one along the way).

Though I found Atlanta maybe a little too lucky at times (or maybe all these gritty shows are getting to me and I forgot bad guys may hesitate too) this was a wonderful read. Took me a while to get into

the story but once I did, I was hooked. I even had a HP moment where I couldn't believe what happened to a character. And considering the subject matter, Atlanta is the heroine we all need.

When someone says, "strong, female protagonist," too often they just mean someone who kicks butt, and maybe stoically flits about from one tragedy to the next, being all stoic while stoically doling out cans of stoic whoop-(ahem). And I can't tell you how thrilled I was when Wendig chucked this formulaic approach to making an SFP and instead gave us, through language more explosive than a pyromaniac in a firework warehouse, the raw, visceral, shotgun vigilante that is Atlanta Burns. In an escalating, bombastic narrative, we see the lowly Atlanta go from one encounter to the next, sometimes victorious, sometimes beaten and terrified, and every time further extending a chain of events that turns her Pennsylvanian town upside down. A delight to read, unflinching when dealing with drugs, violence, and bullying, Wendig has managed to pen a novel that is nigh-impossible to put down, and weaves together the story of a girl who refuses to back down, a girl who on the outside is almost an archetypal, epic hero, while on the inside is the frightened, worried, and uncertain teenager we all were at that age.

Damn it, Chuck Wendig, now why'd you have to go and do that?! I picked up Atlanta Burns after quitting the previous book I read in the middle. I was frustrated, and wanted a good, light YA fiction book. Ha ha. Ha. Sob. So first of all, yeah, it's good. It's also fiction, and unless I've been reading a toaster, it's a book. It's definitely not light, and as far as being a YA book... well, the protagonist is a teen, which maybe makes it YA. I wouldn't let my son read it until he was, I don't know, forty three. But seriously, this book is intense, and handles very dark issues, so if you're under fifteen, approach with care. The writing is witty and smart, the characters are interesting and lovable, and the plot hooks you. Also... I don't like writing spoilers, but I'll mention that there's a dog fight in the book. And in that dog fight, Chuck Wendig pulls a trick that was completely new to me. He essentially makes the reader merge with the protagonist... only to swat the same reader on the nose with a rolled newspaper for doing just that. So, yeah, recommended.

I wasn't sure what to expect of Chuck Wendig's Atlanta Burns since it is considered a YA novel. This novel is not my old YA novel. It's dark, deals with how hard and harsh high school can be, how painful life is when it is REAL. I loved this book, it was a tough read, but I'm so glad I read it. I loved the main character Atlanta and her band of friends. I hated the villains more than Atlanta even did. I cried at scenes, laughed when there were parts that were funny, it was like reading real life. I also

felt like I could have lived some of Atlanta's life (no mine is not that extreme, but like all teens I went through dark stuff) so if you want a book that will give a kick in the butt and make you realize how tough life can be, while make you celebrate how good your life is, this book is for you!

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