



## Burnt Sienna

*David Morrell*

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## **Burnt Sienna** David Morrell

The ultimate showdown...Famous artist and ex-marine Chase Malone is asked by an emissary of mysterious businessman Derek Bellasar to paint a portrait of Bellasar's wife. He politely refuses, but when he finds his home bulldozed and his gallery sold, he has little choice but to take the job. Bellasar is one of the world's wealthiest and most dangerously twisted arms merchants. He has married a succession of beautiful women -- all of whom mysteriously died after having their portrait painted by a top artist. For Chase, rescuing the madman's current wife is only his first challenge. If he is ever to feel safe again, he must return to Bellasar's turf for a deadly confrontation -- that only one can survive.

## **Burnt Sienna Details**

Date : Published May 1st 2001 by Warner Books (NY) (first published January 1st 2000)

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Author : David Morrell

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Genre : Thriller, Fiction, Mystery, Suspense, Action, Crime, Mystery Thriller, Spy Thriller, Espionage

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## From Reader Review Burnt Sienna for online ebook

### David says

Tension with a vice-grip that seldom lets up. David Morrell gives the reader a sympathetic and capable hero in Chase Malone, but makes him seem ill-equipped next to the villain Derek Bellasar - a man whose physical strength, money, resources and ruthlessness make him seem overwhelming for most of the book. There are great action scenes and touching moments. A four star rating is safe and might have been a half-star higher if I had read the book instead of listening to the unabridged audio. Doing the latter is usually very enjoyable, but Phoenix Audio (the producer) made a bizarre choice of casting a woman narrator. She reads beautifully but every single limited third-person perspective is from the point-of-view of a man. There is only one single female character in the book, and she is third-billed. This was very distracting, but I am glad I stuck with this sizzling thriller to the end.

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### Phil James says

This is a fairly straightforward thriller about an artist who gets caught up with an arms dealer and sets out for revenge. Easy going beach read but not one of Morrells best.

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### Sailaway says

liked it.

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### Christine says

After leaving the marines Chase Malone has found success as an artist. So much success that he comes to the attention of international arms dealer, Derek Bellasar. Bellasar wants Malone to paint two portraits of his wife, Sienna. Bellasar wants him to do it very much and is willing to go to extreme lengths to “convince” Chase it would be a wise career (and life) choice to accept the commission. Despite the fact that Malone is officially a civilian the Secret Service jumps on the chance to get one of their own close to this international bad guy. Things go from bad to worse, and soon Chase and Sienna are on the run not only from Bellasar but from the government as well.

I have been a fan of Mr. Morrell's for several years. As I have mentioned in a prior post he is the creator of Rambo in his novel “First Blood” so that should give readers some idea of the type of books he writes. He has written others, one with a bit of a gothic undertone (Double Image) and one a quite funny tongue and cheek poke at his own genre (The Spy Who Came for Christmas), but with Burnt Sierra he is true to his strength ... the thriller. I enjoyed the book.

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## **Brian says**

BURNT SIENNA by David Morrell is a well written, action packed, romantic thriller. I've read a review on here that compared this book to Twilight (which, this novel was published 5 years before that, if I'm correct) and I just don't agree, nor do I see the correlation between the two works. They are completely different in both tone and the quality of the writing (Morrell is better, of course).

Getting back to the story at hand, Chase Malone is a former Marine helicopter pilot who turns to painting landscapes. Living in near seclusion in Mexico, he is approached by a wealthy tycoon's associate to do a painting of the tycoon's wife. Not only is the tycoon, the purely evil Bellasar, in reality a black market arms dealer, but he's also had numerous wives. It is revealed later on in the book that his wives all die of some tragic accident shortly after they are immortalized on canvas. After rejecting the offer, Chase is approached by Jeb, a man whom Chase saved in his military career. Jeb offers Chase the job of infiltrating Bellasar's fortress like home to save his wife, Sienna, and to also bring down Bellasar.

What follows after that is pretty predictable. Chase obviously falls in love with Sienna and the job becomes less about doing the CIA a favor and more just saving the woman of his dreams. The book starts off pretty fast and then slows down during the middle. The middle sections, which are not action packed at all, are necessary to develop the relationship between Chase and Sienna. Once their mutual attraction is out in the open, Morrell throws every obstacle he can at them to prevent them from being together. To be honest, as I was reading, I started to get a little aggravated by this. It was just one thing after another, which was a good thing, because it forced me to keep reading. I mean to say that I was aggravated as a complement towards Morrell's writing rather than a slight.

The final third of the book starts to get a little over the top, though, and there was one very, all too convenient scene which involves Chase, Jeb, and a storm on a beach. You'll know what I'm talking about when you get there. Also, Chase begins to channel his inner John McClane as he is battered and bloodied but will still stop at nothing as he takes on Bellasar's private army at the end. The final showdown with Bellasar was kind of underwhelming for me, as I was expecting more of a close quarters fight between the two.

Overall, this book isn't perfect, but it is very entertaining and thrilling. I thought that the love story was very well done and, while the ending may have been a bit predictable, I still enjoyed it for being bitter sweet and not the cop out ending a lot of these types of stories have.

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## **Ed says**

Reading a David Morrell novel is like going to an action movie. If you want a complicated, realistic plot, you've gone to the wrong movie. If you want strong, principled, admirable men, beautiful women and unremittingly evil villains, wrapped up with fast moving action, you've come to the right place.

The protagonist here is Chase Malone, a former Marine and helicopter pilot who has secluded himself in Baja Mexico to paint, mostly landscapes. He is offered a commission to do a portrait of the current wife of a reclusive tycoon, an evil arms dealer named Bellasar. Chase rejects the offer but is harassed and has his life torn up. Soon after, he is approached by an ex-marine colleague, Jeb, and asked to take the offer, infiltrate Bellasar's operation and save Bellasar's wife, Sienna, from the same fate suffered by Bellasar's previous three wives. Malone accepts hoping to get revenge for his mistreatment by Bellasar's minion, Potter.

The story unfolds from there and while predictable is also developed in interesting ways. In an exciting conclusion, Morrell ties up all the loose ends and then provides a surprisingly poignant epilogue. The characters behave as expected and there are some over the top events but over-all, it is an enjoyable, easy read. I recommend it, especially for long plane rides or as a beach vacation activity.

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### **Frank Smith says**

Really hard to categorize this book, all throughout the book it reminded me of a sort of less symbolic or religious Dan Brown'ish' book mixed with a dose of action and little brains of a Clive Custler'ish' book, which wasn't too bad if you left you just enjoy the story and forget about the gaping holes, bt then right at the very end it takes a darker turn, which gives everything about the story a bittersweet ironic twinge, which I didn't enjoy as a reader of this story, but think maybe it might bode well for other stories from this author. I think I will definitely read some more of his books.

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### **Ronald Ward says**

I remember reading this a long time ago.

It was interesting because an ex-military guy is trying to forget his past and move on.

The quality/success of his work is recognized because a wealthy guy wants him to do a portrait of his missus.

Tension is created when he refuses and you are drawn along because you want to know the consequences for him.

The story thickens when he agrees and you can feel the danger level going up when he is living with the couple.

Then when he discovers the truth the pace quickens and you pulled along a roller-coaster ride fraught with danger from different angles and right at the end when you think the new couple is safe - BAM!

A good climax, plenty of opportunity to feel empathy/involvement.

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### **Nathan Segerlind says**

There's a really good story hiding in this somewhere.

Unfortunately, I couldn't tell what kind of story Morrell was trying to tell.

Was it an action-movie in book form? An awful lot of it read that way (especially the somewhat gratuitous explosive final confrontation).

Was it a spoof of action thrillers? ("The world's greatest artist is hungry for revenge... THEY CLOSED DOWN HIS FAVORITE RESTAURANT!!!" and the over-the-top if amusing fight at Sotheby's)

Was it a romance? Well, yes, definitely... too bad it kept getting interrupted with machine gun fire.

And to top it all off, Morrell plays fast and loose with shifts in the POV (including an early chapter apparently from the POV of a seagull hanging out on the deck of a CIA-rented sloop) and plays cheesy games like telling us "and then Malone told Jeb his plan"... you know, without telling us the plan. Because that would ruin the tension, or at least, ruin the fun for the narrator jerking our chains.

All that said, it's a strong page turner, Morrell does a good job of getting into the character's heads during the turmoil and cat-and-mouse games and the epilogue is a really good twist on reader expectations and interpreting what has gone before.

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### **April Pearson says**

The ending felt a bit off somehow, rather contrived and not quite fitting the woman's character.

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### **Cage Dunn says**

A story with an excellent flow, intriguing all the way through. a very enjoyable and fast-paced read.

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### **Darth J says**

I don't remember much about this, but I remember it was good. Was there a sex scene in it? Was that why I thought it was good??

Anyway, read it.

Or don't.

I don't give a shit.

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### **Glen Krisch says**

The one flaw: the evil character once again fails to see that his nemesis is dead before leaving him bloodied and near-death.

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### **Erzsebet Meszar says**

Excellent read, full of unexpected twists and turns!

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**Tim Smith says**

You can read my review at <http://world-of-sleuths.blogspot.com/....>

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