

Cashed Out

Michael H. Rubin

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Cash in on this thrilling read from Michael H. Rubin. Set in the sweltering heat of the Louisiana bayou, *Cashed Out* is enthralling. It keeps eyes glued to the pages and pulses racing along with lawyer Hypolite Schexnaydre (“Schex” is what his friends call him—or would, if he had any).

The novel begins with the high-profile murder of Schex’s first client in some time, G. G. Guidry. Guidry has a lot of money, a lot of problems, and a lot of secrets. After meeting with Schex for a few minutes, Guidry leaves him with millions of dollars stuffed in a suitcase.

After he learns of Guidry’s murder, Schex, who is down on his luck, is left to figure out what to do with all of the money, whether he can legally keep it, and how to get through everything alive.

Schex is a sketchy character with a lot of morally corrupt tendencies that make him hard to like, yet he is still easy to root for in the end. He has been burned by his promiscuous, manipulative ex-wife, Taylor—who, as it turns out, was in a relationship of sorts with Guidry—and has become an outcast in the legal community.

Conniving Taylor finds herself the prime suspect in Guidry’s murder, and she turns to Schex for her salvation, though she’s clearly more wrapped up in the event than she lets on. Only Schex can see through her. Though Taylor, like Schex, is set up as an antihero, her character proves to be more erratic and less relatable, even downright unlikeable.

While Schex’s roots and motivations are made clear, other characters are underdeveloped, with their backgrounds and personalities only lightly skimmed. Such undefined secondary characters don’t contribute much depth to the story, and some seem present just to have a momentary villain.

Rubin’s writing style is both refreshing and interesting. The novel is written in a conversational tone, making it easy to absorb and to follow. Most characters have a developed, regional way of speaking that helps bring the Louisiana setting to life. Short chapters and a fast-paced plot make the page-turning here even more enjoyable, while the whodunit aspect adds to the intensity.

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ALLISON BUTLER (July 14, 2017)

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