

Don't Go There

Jeremy Logan

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The Russian mafia, drug lords, the FBI, Peru, and the wheeling-and-dealing energy biz: what more could you want from an international thriller?

Jeremy Logan, in *Don't Go There*, has written a fast-paced international thriller that gives readers a peek into the world of drug lords, the hard work of oil pipeline creation, and FBI intrigue. Protagonist Eli Taylor is forced to use his determination and detail-oriented mind to beat a master manipulator at his own game on the rough oil fields of Bolivia.

Taylor always had the desire to be famous. When his dream of becoming a major-league pitcher didn't pan out, he decided to set his sights on the legal profession. This new career puts in motion the events that lead to his eventual encounter with Andrew Johnson, a drug trafficker who worked for the Russian mafia. Taylor is sent to Bolivia to oversee the building of a pipeline to the coast of Peru, but when the project becomes a cover for a drug cartel, he feels he must act.

Taylor makes the most progress as a character throughout the book. Early on, he struggles to perfect his pitching technique, which emphasizes his drive and determination to excel. These same qualities are evident as he moves to succeed at his job with West Industries, creators of oil and natural gas pipelines, and later when he is forced into a confrontation with Johnson. His experiences give him the opportunity to grow and change, so by the end of the book, he is no longer simply focused on career advancement. He has experienced the evil of the drug cartel and the Russian mafia, and his new priorities are established.

Initially, there is an overabundance of characters. Names and titles fly all over the pages, and it is a struggle to keep track of everyone and his/her position. Fortunately, as the story plays out, the very minor characters fall off, and it becomes easier to follow the key players. The other main characters are flat, even though many of them have unique personalities. Andrew Johnson, the leader of the drug ring, is a stereotypical con man who has found a way to make a great deal of money. Overall, the writing style is readable. However, occasionally, there is more telling than showing, and that leads to some lengthy passages that don't move the story forward.

In the first few chapters, Logan employs the use of flashbacks to take readers from present to past. These moments are in the form of memories Taylor has while in the hospital recovering from injuries he sustained during his confrontation with Johnson. Early on, Logan introduces Danielle, Taylor's love interest, and the narrative bounces between Taylor's childhood memories and the present, including his recall of the pipeline project. Logan handles this very well. He supplies important information in the flashbacks and clearly establishes the setting during the shifts in time and place.

Readers interested in the international wheeling and dealing of the energy business will appreciate *Don't Go There*.

LYNN EVARTS (December 20, 2013)

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