

Red Light

Simon Young

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Sunday Blues is just an average guy following in his dad's footsteps. He's an international thief and mercenary who's gone into business for himself. Anything one might want one can have provided the price is right to support Sunday's lavish lifestyle and his rampant cocaine habit.

Unfortunately business has been a little slow lately so Sunday his brilliant gorgeous fiancée Belle and his band of fellow thieves make the mistake of accepting a job from Nicolos a powerful and brilliant drug lord in Colombia. After successfully completing one assignment Sunday gets sucked in again only this time the stakes are much higher: the loathsome Nicolos is holding Sunday's entire team hostage and will only release one member at a time in exchange for a series of highly dangerous assignments Sunday must accomplish in the dangerous world of drug cartels.

Author Simon Young brings Sunday Blues to vivid life. His anti-hero is complex: he's a lovable killer a faithful fiancé in the midst of the worst kinds of decadence a good son and extreme cocaine addict. He and Belle snort coke with the frequency and ease of chain smokers. The author writes about the drug trade and the world of mercenaries with great detail drawing the reader into the abhorrent yet seductive lifestyle.

Red Light's suspense starts accelerating from the very beginning of the story and roars right along. The consequences of mistakes on Sunday's missions are horrific as Nicolos finds severe ways of punishing him for failures. Sunday's strained conscience grows ominously lighter as he is forced to commit the most cold-blooded murders in order to save his fiancée and his friends: "The accountants then had nowhere to hide in the open field and were easy pickings. The look of terror on their faces was a treat. As they stopped at the door of the helicopter — its security and a new life — they were both sprayed with blood from the downed agents. They turned toward each other then looked around the field. They felt alone and afraid as they watched each other die."

Just as the reader is convinced he knows what's going to happen next the plot takes a truly original turn as Sunday's world comes crashing down around him and he has a change of heart in a Colombian jungle finding a new mission in life. Are his visions a result of a nervous breakdown resulting from stress and rampant drug abuse or is God really trying to communicate with him?

The answer to that question leads both Sunday and the reader on a path both spiritual and yet very practical (the reader will be fascinated by the solution the author presents and the fallout from the protagonists' actions are both believable and thought-provoking) that will shake the foundations of the drug trade to its very core. "Red Light" provides fascinating illumination both into the international world of the drug trade as well as the innermost recesses of the human heart.

KATHLEEN YOUMANS (April 30, 2006)

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