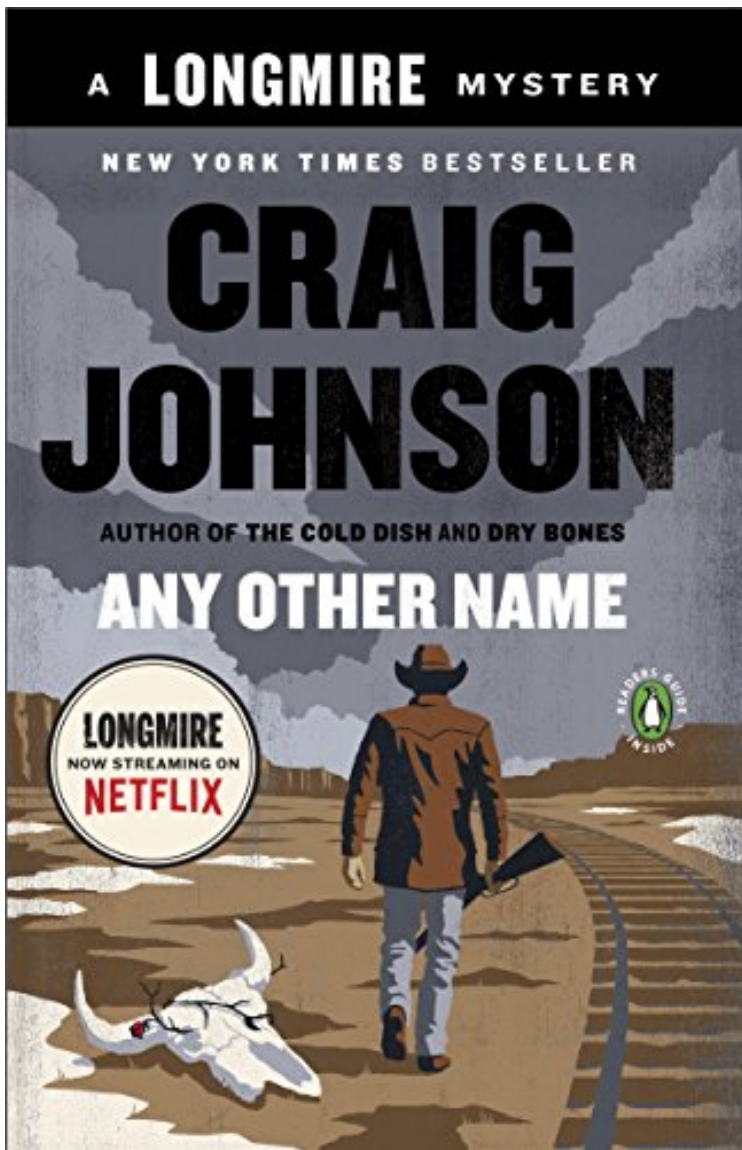


[E-BOOK] File size: 70.Mb

# Any Other Name: A Longmire Mystery



*Par Craig Johnson*  
*\*Download PDF | ePub | DOC | audiobook | ebooks*

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #154331 dans eBooksPubli le: 2014-05-13Sorti le: 2014-05-13Format: Ebook Kindle

[E-BOOK] Any Other Name: A Longmire Mystery

Par Craig Johnson : Any Other Name: A Longmire Mystery before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Any Other Name: A Longmire Mystery:

Download

Read Online

## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurA sheriffs mysterious death spurs the tenth novel in the New York Times bestselling Longmire series, the basis for the hit drama series LONGMIRE, now on NetflixCraig Johnson'sThe HighwaymanandAn Obvious Factare nowavailable from Viking. In Any Other Name, Walt is sinking into high-plains winter discontent when his former boss, Lucian Conally, asks him to take on a mercy case in an adjacent county. Detective Gerald Holman is dead and Lucian wants to know what drove his old friend to take his own life. With the clock ticking on the birth of his first grandchild, Walt learns that the by-the-book detective might have suppressed evidence concerning three missing women. Digging deeper, Walt uncovers an incriminating secret so dark that it threatens to claim other lives even before the sheriff can serve

justiceWyoming style.Extrait\*\*\*This excerpt is from an advance uncorrected proof.\*\*\*Copyright 2014 by Craig Johnson1Joseph Conrad said that if you wanted to know the age of the earth, look upon the sea in a storm; if you want to know the age of the Powder River country just be on the wrong side of a coal train. A guy who worked for the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe once told me that the trains in northern Wyoming are about a hundred and forty cars and a mile and a half long, but it sure seems longer than that when youre waiting on one. .Lucian Connally, my old boss and the retired sheriff of Absaroka County, reached into his pocket and pulled out his beaded tobacco pouch the Cheyenne elders had given him along with the name Nedon Nes StigoHe Who Sheds His Leg. Damn, this is a long one. He also pulled his briarwood pipe from the inside coat pocket of his light jacket, much too light for the weather, and fingered a small packet of wooden matches along with it. We used to get calls from the railroad detectives, what a useless bunch, wanting us to come down and identify the hobos that climbed in the hoppers back in Chicago and Milwaukee, and with the slick sides on the railcar walls, they couldnt get out. . . . He stuffed a small amount of the tobacco into the bowl of his pipe. Theyd pull those cars into the mines and dump tons of coal onto em imagine their surprise.Homeless.He turned to look at me. What?Homeless; they dont call them hobos anymore.He nodded his head and looked back at the train. Flat as a damn pancake is what I called em.I watched the cars roll and felt the ground shake. The single largest source of coal in the United States, the Powder River Basin contains one of the largest deposits in the world and has made Wyoming the top coal-producing state since the late eighties.He pulled a match from the pack and made ready to strike. Pulverized pepper steak; wasnt a lot to identify, I can tell ya that much.The major cities of the Wyoming portion of the basin are Gillette and Sheridan; in Montana, Miles City. The rest of the twenty-four thousand square miles is what they call sparsely populated and I called Durant and home.It was a Saturday. Flat as a flitter.I was tired. Identify my ass.And I was about to lose my patience. Looked like hamburger.I scrubbed a hand across my face.. Old man, youre not going to light that pipe in my truck.He looked over at me for a moment, the silence between us carrying the electric charge of decades, grunted, and then pulled the door handle and climbed out of the Bullet. The clanging of the warning bells amplified through the open door before he slammed it behind him and hobbled on his one real and one fake leg to the corner of my grill guard, at which point he recommenced lighting his pipe with a great deal of dramatic flourish.It was December on the high plains, but youd never know it to look at him, cupping his knotted hands together without a shiver or gloves for that matter and ducking his Stetson Open Road model hat down against the wind. Amplified by the flashing red lights of the railroad-crossing barrier, the brief flicker of orange light glowed, reinforcing the impression that he was the devil and that the deal I had struck with him was venal and binding.He raised his head, the consistent wind that battled the onward rushing of the train pulling at the brim of his hat like a miniature tornado, his eyes almost squeezed shut with nothing showing but the stained, walnut-colored irises glinting black in the half light.I looked down at the letter lying on the center console; the postmark was from a week ago, and the return address was Gillette, in the Iron Horse Subdivision, which was located on the other side of the rumbling coal cars. Gillette was in Campbell County, technically out of my jurisdiction as the Absaroka County Sheriff.My daughter was having a baby in a matter of days, and I was supposed to be visiting her in Philadelphia; instead, I was here, helping Lucian resolve his debt to a dead man.A barely audible whine keened from the backseat, and I reached around and ruffled the fur behind Dogs ears. The combination St. Bernard/German shepherd/dire wolf glanced at Lucian. The brim of my mentors hat was pressed against the crown of his forehead, making it seem like he was galloping at high speed like some soul-damned ghost rider in the sky.I thought about how easy it would be to just throw the big three-quarter-ton into reverse and back out, turn around and take Route 14/16 back up to the Gillette airport to jump on a plane, but they likely wouldnt allow Dog, so that was out.Wondering what it was I was doing here, other than playing the role of chauffeur, I leaned back into my leather seat and felt the pressure of my Colt 1911. Maybe theyll have this talk, and then well turn around and go home.I looked at Dog again, but he didnt seem convinced. Turning back and watching the old sheriff stare at the train, I sighed. Yep, me neither.Pulling the collar of my sheepskin coat a little tighter and cranking my hat down so that it didnt follow the train to Oregon, I pulled the handle on my door and slid my boots to the gravel surface. I crunched around to the front of the Bullet to lean on the grill guard with him. I spoke loudly, in the field voice my father had never let me use in the house, just to be heard above the endless procession of open cars and the bells that hammered their warning. They still do.He studied me with a clinched eyeball and said nothing, puffing on his pipe like he was pulling the mile of coal himself.Find bodies in the hopper cars.The ass end of the train went by, another disappointment in that it was not a caboose but rather another set of locomotives helping to

push from the rear, and I got that familiar feeling I always did whenever a train passed; that I should be on it, but it was going the wrong way. Suddenly the bony arms of the crossing gates rose and the incessant clanging stopped. We listened to the wind for a while, and then the old man beat his pipe empty on the hard surface of the grill guard, unintentionally repeating the coda of the claxons. Hard times. With this singular pronouncement he turned and climbed back in, leaving me watching the skies peeled back in folds of gray, darker and darker to the horizon. He honked the horn behind me. Flakes were streaking in the wind like bad reception as we pulled up to the house, an unassuming one; one that you'd drive right by, thinking that there must be happy people inside at least that's the way I liked to think. We both sat there, dreading what was coming. He cleared his throat and started to say something. What? Gazing out the side window at a deflated Santa Claus that looked as if it might've over imbibed in holiday festivities, he grumbled, Boom or bust. What? Oil, natural gas, and coal; they used to have bumper stickers over here that read Campbell County Give Us One More Boom and We Wont Screw It Up. He continued to study the Santa, looking even more like it might've arrived in the bottom of a train car. Used to see a woman here back in the day; used to drive over here on Sundays. She lived alone in this big old house and had money used to like spending it on me. Never saw her out on the town, never mentioned other men, never bothered me calling or anything like that and was always glad to see me. Whenever we got together we'd end up in motels over in Rapid or up in Billings we'd mix drinks in this big champagne-gold 62 Cadillac she had . . . What ever happened to her? He stayed like that for a moment, not moving, and then nodded once. Hell if I know. Lucian got out of the truck, and I trudged along after him through the snow that had just started blowing to South Dakota; I made a detour into the yard and reattached the small air compressor to the hose that led to Santa's boot heel. The jolly old elf rippled on the ground as if trying to crawl away but then slowly grew and stood with an arm raised, a fine patina of coal dust covering his jaunty red suit. I walked onto the porch where Lucian had rung the bell. That your civic duty for the day? Evidently not. Here I am with you when I should be in Philadelphia with Cady. Nothing happened so he turned the knob and walked in. What are you doing? He looked at me, still standing on the front porch in the wind and scattered snow. He didn't say anything but limped off into the house; I had the choice of following him or standing out there freezing my butt off. I entered, careful to wipe my feet before stepping onto the unusually wide plastic runners that lay on the white carpeting, and, leaning to the side, I saw Lucian round a corner past a room divider to go into the kitchen. I unbuttoned my coat and stuffed my gloves in my pockets and followed, hoping that if somebody got shot it would be him and not me he was gristly and could take it. When I got to the kitchen no one was there, only an electric wheelchair parked beside a door open at the far end of the room that led to a basement with one of those fancy stairway elevators that you see in the octogenarian catalogs I've been receiving far too often lately. I reached over and touched the joystick on the spacey-looking machine and it jumped forward, crashing into my leg. Ouch. I gently pushed the stick back so that the contraption parked itself in the exact same spot. Glancing around the kitchen, I was struck by how clean and orderly and white it was like a museum or somebody's heaven. There was a humming sound from the basement and what sounded like typing, and peering down the steps, I could see that lights were on down there, flickering blue ones as if from a couple of televisions. Easing myself around the track for the chair elevator, I started down the steps. Lucian was sitting on an overstuffed leather sofa and was leafing through a magazine. At the bottom of the stairs, I got a better view of the dimly lit room, which was dominated by three huge flat-screen televisions surrounding a counter with two computer monitors; an older, platinum-haired woman, seated in another wheelchair, raised her hand and waved at me. I took off my hat and waved back. She smiled and shrugged, her head encased in a massive set of headphones, her eyes redirected to one of the screens to what I could now see was an end of the season football game Oakland and San Diego. Stepping around the counter in front of Lucian, I watched as she casually tapped the elongated keys of the stenotype-like machines at her fingertips, belying the speed at which the words were magically appearing up on the closed-captioned portions of the screen. After a while, with no other recourse, I sat on the sofa with Lucian and waited. There was another door, which must've led to another room, but little else. She does closed captioning for the NFL? He flipped another page in the Field Stream magazine and glanced up at Phyllis Holman, still tapping away like Morse code. Football, baseball, hockey . . . you name it, she does it. His head dropped back to the tips on wild turkey hunting. Knows more about sports than any man I know. Hi. She had pulled one of the ear cups back and was looking at me. Commercial break. Nice to meet you, Mrs. Holman. I glanced around at all the technology. Quite a setup you've got here. She shrugged. It keeps me occupied. I looked at one of the TVs, my mind playing pinball in an attempt to find something to say as the talking heads came back on the

screen. Whos your favorite announcer?She quickly pulled the headphone back over her ear, her attention returning to the keyboards. Anyone who talks slowly and distinctly.I watched her work for a while and then with my interest not being piqued by either of the teams or by any of the Field Stream turkey tips, I sidled into the corner of the sofa and pulled my hat over my face.It was not a new dream, the one that overtook me; rather a continuation of an experience that Id had back in the spring. There was snow, there was always snow in my dreams or visions, as my good buddy Henry Standing Bear called them. In this one I was post-holing my way in thigh-deep snow, old and laden both me and the snow. The collar was up on my coat, and my hat was hard on my head, defending against the wind. The visibility was horrible, and I could only see about ten feet in front of me. I was following something, something that didnt want to be followed. There were other shapes, darker ones that hurtled around me, but the creature continued on.The tracks were difficult to see in the whiteout, but the others continued to dodge their way around me and I could hear their breathing, heavy and dangerous. I reached down to clutch the side of my hip where my sidearm should have been resting under my coat, but there was nothing thereand that was when I saw that the thing had turned and what I was following had horns. . . . You know Gerald, Lucian. He never wouldve done something like this; it just wasnt like him.I didnt move, just stayed as I was a stakeout under a hat. Lucians voice sounded tired, and I started to weaken, thinking of all the conversations like this that hed had to endure. He was a good man, Phyllis, but Im not so sure theres anything anybody can do about this. I spoke with Sandy Sandburg and he saidDont mention that mans name in this house. There was a silence. Nonetheless, he said that They wrapped it up too quickly, Lucian.He made a guttural noise in his throat. Goddamn it, Phyllis, it was the investigators down in Cheyenne that did the autopsy at DCI. You know as well as I do that when a man like Gerald Holman dies they have to do a completeThey didnt like him; they didnt like him, and theyre trying to cover something up, I can tell by the way they look at me. I was a court reporter remember, and I developed an ability to read people; I can tell when people are lying, believe me, Ive heard enough of it. Another long pause. You know as well as I do that these things happen for two reasons: either its trouble at home or trouble on the job. Now I know there wasnt any trouble at home, soHows your daughter, hows Izzy?There was a pause, and then she answered. Connies fine. I could feel the two of them staring at each other. We havent had to use the room, if thats what youre asking.Do you know what it was he was working on? They wont tell me. What did they tell you?They said he was carrying a full caseload, including a missing personsThe whore, doesnt it figure that thats the case they would focus on.The old sheriff adjusted himself on the sofa in order to sit forward. Were there other things you know about?Things that would make a lot of very important people in this town more than a little nervous. Yes.Lucian sighed. Things like what?Im not sure I want to tell you about them if youre not going to help me. Another longer pause. He was a good man, Lucian. He helped you when nobody else would, and now hes dead; I think you owe him something more than a phone call. I could feel him nodding. Not as young as I used to be, Phyllis.Im assuming thats why you brought him.Even with my hat over my face, I could feel their eyes shift to me.It is.He as good as they say?I waited and listened. When I hired him I told him two things: no man has any sense till age thirty-five and damn few afterwards . . .Amen to that, and the other?Never go after a man to arrest him unless you are certain you are legally right, but then arrest him or die. I felt him shift and was sure he was looking straight at me now. In all the time Ive known him, Ive never seen him quit, which is where most of em aint up to snuffthey give out. If hes got any give in him, aint nobody found it yet.Hes big.That he is, but that aint the half of it. He got up from the sofa, and I could hear him limp over to her. Is that the room over there, the one where you kept Connie? She didnt say any- thing, so he continued. I want to warn you that if you put Walter on this youre going to find out what its all about, one way or the other. Another pause, and I could see the face that was peering down at her, a visage to which I was accustomed. Youre sure you want that? Because hes like a gun; once you point him and pull the trigger, its too late to change your mind.Oh jeez, if it isnt dangerous and dangerouser. Sandy Sandburg, the sheriff of Campbell County, pulled out a chair, sat at our table, and propped up a large manila folder onto the windowsill beside him, careful to pick a spot where the condensation wouldnt do any damage.It was cold in the little Mexican restaurant in Gillettes industrial section beside the interstate highway; late on a Sunday night the patrons were few and far betweenas a matter of fact, we were the only ones around. A skinny waitress came from behind the counter and sat a cup of coffee in front of Sandy. Cmo est?Hola, guapa. Qu tal?Cansado.Sandburg reached out and gripped one of her thin arms and slid the sleeve of her sweater up to reveal a speckling of old scabs. Se mantiene limpia?She shrugged, pulled her arm away, and yanked a pad and pencil from her apron. Qu otra opcin tengo?His eyes diverted to us as he let the girl go. As you might expect, the burritos are pretty damn

good. He glanced back at the waitress and held up three fingers. Tres, por favor. Beef with the green stuff. He watched her go and then turned back to the two of us. Gentlemen, theres no mystery. Lucian cocked his hat back on his head, looking like Will Rogers ready to make a run on a casino. Phyllis Holman, by-God, seems to think otherwise. The bereaved widow . . . Well, she would. I volunteered. She doesnt seem to like you. Lucian glanced at me, now sure I had been awake on the sofa. Yeah, I get that, too. Sandy shrugged. Hell, I dont know what I did to her but offer her retired husband a job on the Cold Case Task Force. Maybe that was it. I eased back in my chair as far as I could without fear of breaking it. How many on the Cold Case Task Force anyway? One. Sandy grinned with his matinee idol smile, the one that got other people in trouble, his teeth white against the tan he acquired at Coco View Resort in Honduras every Christmas. Started it up just so Gerald would have something to do. The smile faded. Then this happens; I gotta tell you of all the fellas I wouldve thought would go out this way, Gerry wouldve been the last. I sipped my already cold coffee. Why? Sandy clicked his eyes to mine. Ever meet him? No. He was so by-the-book that he might as well have published the damn thing. He looked at Lucian. Am I right, or am I right? Gerald Holman never broke a rule by force of bending one, thats for damn sure. He glanced at the folder next to Sandys elbow. That the report? It is. Weve got a DCI field office up here with two cashiers and a bag boy. The colorful euphemisms the sheriff used were a result of the Division of Criminal Investigations headquarters in Cheyenne being an old grocery store. But they drove the Death Mobile up here anyway and did a full autopsy. I sat my mug down with more of a thunk than Id really wanted; they both looked at me. Sandy reached over and opened the folder and read On December 13th, one Gerald Holman placed the barrel of his issued sidearm, a .357 revolver, in his mouth and pulled the trigger. It was established by agents of the Division of Criminal Investigation that the individual, locked in the room from the inside, had opportunity and the condition for the decedent to have self-inflicted his injury. Further investigation revealed that no one else had been in the room, verified by eyewitnesses, position of the decedents body in relation to the unlikely position the assailant would have to have assumed, blood spatter, and the gun-powder residue on the decedents hand. A gun-cleaning kit was found on the bed beside the decedent, but it was determined that the firing of the weapon was not accidental. Less he was licking the damn thing clean. I ignored Lucians remark. Demonstrations of intent? Sandy continued reading. He used a pillow to muffle the noise. I looked out the window at the reflection of three men at-tempting to understand why one of their own had done what he had done. Personal effects? Untouched. Note? Nope. He studied me. Theres nothing here, Walt. Can I have the report? He folded it up and started to hand it to me but then stopped as my fingers touched it. Promise to bring it back? I didnt move. Make copies if you want. He shoved it at me. I trust you. I began looking at the photos and reading the summary report from the DCI investigators. Who is Rankaj Patel? Oh, the Pakistani guy that owns the Wrangler Motel where the incident took place, about a mile east of here . . . Indian. Sandy studied me. What? Indian; the mans Indian. I watched him think about it. No, he aint Indian. Lucian interrupted. Dot, not feather. Huh? I continued leafing through the folder the photos were, as usual, gruesome. About a third of all motel owners in the U.S. are called Patelits a surname that indicates that theyre members of a Gujarati Hindu subcaste. I looked up at his confused face and figured I might as well educate him on the subject. The Indian caste structure has four principal divisions and a myriad of subcastes, of which Patel is one; Vaishyas, or traders, were at one time employed to calculate the tithes that were owed to medieval kings by farmers in Gujarat, an Indian province on the Arabian Sea. Sandy shook his head and looked at Lucian. Was he like this when you hired him? He nodded. Better than a bookmobile. I put the folder behind me, uninterested in looking at it any more before I ate. What was he working on? Lots of things nothing earth-shaking. Can I see those files? Richard Harvey says hed be glad to meet with you tomorrow morning. I nodded. That his replacement? Sandy smiled again, and I knew the real trouble had begun. Of sorts. The Wrangler Motel sat on the eastern side of Gillette like it was run out of town. With a lone strip of eight ground-floor and nine second-floor units, it was anchored to the high plains by a decrepit caf/bar, the Aces Eights, on one end and an equally run-down office on the other. I was standing in said office arguing with Rankaj Patel about a twenty-dollar pet fee for Dog; he was a tiny man and, as Id suspected, of Indian descent. I looked down at the worn, stained carpet, the collapsed chairs, and the moth-stained art on the walls. Youre kidding. He responded in a singsong lilt. It is corporate policy, sir. What corporation? He spread his hands in a gesture of largesse. The Wrangler Motel Corporation, sir. Of which you are the chairman of the board and CEO? I pulled out my wallet and adjusted my thinking to the fact that I was paying half as much for Dog as I was for Lucian and me. Ill also need the key to room twelve. He half-turned with the key to room five, the one he had selected for us, and froze. Im afraid that room is not available, sir. I pulled my new

badge wallet from the back pocket of my jeans. There was an accident. I know . . . The stiffness of the leather caused the thing to fall from my fingers and land on the counter between us like a shot quail, ruining what I had hoped to be a dramatic effect. I reached down and spread it open so that he could see the six-point star. I'm the guy who's supposed to find out why there was an accident. He studied the badge, taking in the fact that the county was adjacent. I told the investigators everything I know. I'm sure you did, but if you think of anything else I'd appreciate it if you would tell me. He nodded. How long will you be staying? I picked up the key to both rooms. As long as it takes. I ignored the signs, backed in, and parked in front of room five. Dog jumped out and immediately began sniffing the surroundings as I opened the tailgate and handed Lucian his overnight bag and the key. How well did you know Holman? Not that well; we worked a few cases together. Children? He nodded. A daughter; she's on the school board here. Think she'd be worth talking to? Hell, I don't know. I never met her. You're a liar; I heard you ask Phyllis about her and what's the story on the room in the basement? He studied me. Her name is Connie but Gerald used to call her Izzy for Isadora Duncan, the one that got killed in that Bugatti when her scarf got caught in the spokes of the wheels back in '27? Actually, it was an Amilcar, but her chauffeur's name was Falchetto and she used to call him Bugatti. He shook his head at me. Anyway, she was one of those ballet dancers, they say a really good one, but she got caught up in drugs trying to keep her weight down and . . . Anyway, Phyllis and Gerald kept her in that basement bedroom and got her clean. Model citizen, these days. I turned to watch my pet Kodiak snuffle the tires of a Jeep Cherokee. Dog. He sniffed a few more times just to show his independence and then joined the two of us at the door. Lucian, you take him and get settled in. The old sheriff looked up at me as I stuffed the folder Sandy had given me under an arm. Where the hell are you going? Upstairs, to twelve. Plenty of time for that tomorrow. I still have the greatest of hope that I can salvage my trip to Philadelphia. He stared at me for a moment, said nothing, and then slipped the key in the loose lock. Followed by Dog, who never met an open door he didn't consider an invitation, Lucian flipped on the light and shut the door behind them; I stood there listening to the eighteen-wheelers Jake-braking on the interstate. As I turned to go, I saw the curtain in the window of number 6 slowly pull closed. I thought about knocking on the door but instead walked over and looked at the only other vehicle parked in the lot, the one that Dog had irrigated, with Idaho plates, 6B 22119. Boise County, city of Boise; there was also a Boise State snorting bronc sticker in the rear window along with the black-and-white sticker of the lauburu, otherwise known as the Basque cross. Even with the Basque population of my county, an odd vehicle to be parked in this lot. If you're here to run me off, it's not going to work. I turned and looked at the tall young woman with a thick mane of dark hair pulled up in a ponytail, backlit by the light from room 6. Excuse me? She hugged herself, and I figured it was the cold but maybe just a habit. I'm not intimidated by any of you. I glanced around to indicate to her that I was alone. Okay. I saw you . . . looking at my car. It's a nice car. Well, it's not going anywhere. I repeated myself. Okay. Feeling I should make some kind of effort at western hospitality, I stepped forward and raised a hand to shake hers. Walt Longmire, I'm the sheriff of Absaroka County. She stared at my hand, her arms still wrapped around her chest, one set of fingers clutching the doorknob in an attempt to not let too much of the cold enter the room. This is Campbell County. I pushed my hat back on my head with my now free hand. Yes, it is and you are? She sighed and said her name mechanically. Lorea Urrecha. Basque? Her chin came out a little farther and her head turned, the high brows and cheekbones highlighted in the small amount of illumination classically beautiful but with character. Yes. My attention was drawn to a Cadillac Escalade EXT that had entered the parking lot to travel down the rows of rooms, the vehicle slowing when it got in front of us. The windows were fogged, but from the dash lights I could see that it was a woman behind the wheel. She slowed almost to a stop but then looked closer at my truck the stars and the bars and quickly pulled away. I got a glance at the plates as she rounded the corner of the motel at the Aces Eights bar and caf, 17 Campbell County. Turning back to the young woman, I stuffed my hand in my pocket. Been in the motel long? She didn't say anything at first but then spit the words. Is this an interview or an interrogation? Actually, it was just a question. She turned her head away from me, and I lost her profile. I glanced back at the closed office and the now lit No Vacancy neon light that Rankaj Patel must've turned on just before turning in. I can always ask the motel manager, if you'd like. I'd like. She stepped back, her lips compressed, and shut the door in my face. I stood there looking at the closed door and then raised my fist. Go Broncs. You crafty devil, you certainly played her like a Stradivari. I turned and started up the metal steps by the office, stopped at the landing, and looked at the numbers on the rooms until I got to the one with the yellow plastic tape that read Police Line Do Not Cross. Thoughtfully, the Gillette PD and the Campbell County Sheriff's Office had simply put the barrier on the door so that you could open it without having to retape. Convenient. I slipped the

key in and turned the knob, stepped inside and closed the door behind me as I turned on the light. The heat in the room was turned off, and it was cold, cold enough to still see my breath. Like a meat locker. With more than thirty thousand suicides a year, the act is the tenth leading cause of death in the United States. The rates for those above sixty-five years of age are much higher than the average, and Holman was sixty-seven. Fifty-six percent of male suicides are a result of firearms, whereas with females the predominant choice of departure is an overdose. Most suicides occur as a result of depression, but there are some where the motives are never fully ascertained. This line of thought is of little comfort to the survivors, but sometimes helpful to the investigating officer, who can become so immersed in the case that he or she is tempted to slash his or her own wrists. I flipped on the light in the bathroom and took in the chipped, stained porcelain, the worn tile, and the mold on the shower curtain. The thin towels were still folded hanging on the rod, and the little cakes of soap were still wrapped in paper and sitting beside the unused sample bottle of shampoo/conditioner. Even the toilet paper still had its folded and pointed edgemy compliments to housekeeping. I turned off that light and moved into the main room, past Gerald Holmans suit jacket and three-quarter-length parka, both carefully draped on hangers below the chrome shelf where his bone-colored cattlemans hat still sat, brim up. Nonetheless, his luck had run out or he had run it off. There were more tape lines set up that farmed off the area around the bed where Gerald actually shot himself, which was fine by me because I saw no reason to get any closer to the gore. The majority of the blood was centered not on the bed but on the floor where he slid after he had shot himself. Evidently his upper body was thrown back by the impact but then bounced off the bed, which forced his lower body and legs forward where he slipped onto the floor and bled out. Usually, when an individual shoots himself in the head, the weapon falls from his hand onto his lap, but from the photographs I knew that Officer Holman was well trained and the Colt Python had still been clutched in his constricted hand, a product of cadaveric spasm. This is a telltale clue that the victim died with the weapon in hand; no one could place the revolver there and recreate the same effect. In the movies the individual usually slips the barrel of the gun in his mouth, pulls the trigger, and a brief spray of blood fans from the back of his head onto a wall, usually white for cinematic effect, then the victims eyes roll back in his head and he falls sideways, leaving a relatively undamaged face with which the mortician can work. I've seen the aftermath of more than my share of suicides, and I've never seen one that ended like that; instead, according to the armament, the effects are devastating. The photographs in the folder under my arm told the tale of the Remington 158-grain semi-wadcutter that had traveled through the roof of the investigators mouth at over twelve hundred feet per second, taking off the top of his head and the majority of his face from the bridge of his nose up. I didn't need to see the soot and powder trace results or the evidence of blowback material on the Colt to know who and what had done the deed there was only one question that continued to puzzle me. Why twice. Because Gerald Holman was shot in the head two times. The only scenario is that two weeks ago today, he had raised the big revolver up in his left hand and shot himself in the left cheek, then he had placed the barrel of the .357 in his mouth and finished the job. He had started his career in law enforcement with the Wyoming Highway Patrol in the free-wheeling fifties, then had accepted a job as a deputy in the Campbell County Sheriffs Office in the sixties, where he had been promoted to undersheriff in the seventies, ran for sheriff himself in the eighties, had lost, but then had accepted a position as an investigator; after retirement, he had returned to duty in the Cold Case Task Force that Sandy Sandburg had created for him. A half century standing behind a badge; Gerald Holman knew where to point a weapon to kill a person. So why would he shoot himself in the cheek? There seemed to be only one answer, and it wasn't contained in the report from DCI. And that was that Gerald Holman did something that, to my knowledge of him, gleaned from his wife Phyllis and both Sandy Sandburg and Lucian, he had never done to another human being. He had punished himself. *Revue de presse* "Bracingly ruthless and unsentimental." *The Washington Post* Top-notch.... Johnson's hero only gets better both at solving cases and at hooking readers with age. *Publishers Weekly* "Well-crafted...filled with endearing characters and nonstop action." *Library Journal* (starred review) "Once more, you can count on Longmire...for action both physical and cerebral, a bit of humor and romance, and a mighty good mystery." *Kirkus* s Wyoming sheriff Walt Longmires eleventh case takes him out of his jurisdiction. Those who have followed the series all along will find no reason to stop now. *Booklist* [Johnson] has hit a home run.... Indeed, this may be [his] best Longmire mystery yet. *Wyoming Tribune Eagle* Any Other Name is yet another fast-paced novel filled with Johnson's brand of Wild West humor and quick wit. *Deseret News* Suspenseful and always entertaining.... The 11th Walt Longmire mystery is one of the best yet. *The Oklahoman* Praise for *As the Crow Flies* by Craig Johnson: Walt continues to be excellent company because hes always keen to learn

something from the strong Indian characters in this series. This time a wizened old medicine woman takes Walt in hand, guiding him through a Native American Church peyote ceremony deep in the woods she [has] a vision that expands his mind and helps him solve the case. Marilyn Stasio, *The New York Times Book Review* A top-notch tale of complex emotions and misguided treachery. *Crow* is a superb novel steeped in the culture of the American West. *USA Today* The pleasure of the series rests in Walt's narration, with its laid-back, observant, bemused recounting of events. Solid landscapes, a mélange of fully fleshed characters (familiar and new), drily laconic dialogue and assorted power struggles including Walt's endless war with Rezdawg, Henry's recalcitrant, falling-apart truckkeep the latest in this rich and satisfying series on engaging course. *Houston Chronicle* Walt's voice lets readers in on his gentle and wry nature, while showcasing his devotion to bringing bad guys or gals to justice. Johnson enriches his narrative by using the setting itself as another well-developed character. Johnson's Northern Cheyenne characters defy stereotype with self-deprecating humor and strength. Chief Lolo Long and Tribal Chief Lonnie Little Bird are especially well-crafted and appealing. *The Denver Post* Johnson expertly highlights his conflicted hero's dual role as father and sheriff in this deeply satisfying installment. *Publishers Weekly* (starred review) All the elements his fans love are present: lively characters, easy banter, and, of course, a touch of the supernatural. In early books, Walt was less sure of himself, but, in his eighth adventure, it makes sense that he's now the one giving sheriff lessons. This book fits the hand like a well-worn glove. *Booklist* Praise for *A Serpent's Tooth*: Suspense propels the brisk plot, complemented by a sly sense of humor and a breathtaking look at Wyoming. *Publishers Weekly* (Starred) "Authentic....The story moves at a brisk pace, with room for some good-natured humor and plenty of gorgeous Wyoming scenery." *CNN.com* "A tense, action-filled story with Johnson's usual touches of humor and romance." *Kirkus* "Maybe [Johnson's] best one yet." *Charleston Gazette* "Johnson employs his trademark humor, many literary allusions, a cast readers can't help but love and Johnson's obvious love of the land he's writing about. Readers will experience the West in all its grandeur while Walt battles the evils trying to encroach upon his beloved county." *Shelf Awareness*