

Winterkill by C. J. Box

On a recent vacation to Wyoming, my husband and I listened to several audiobooks from the Joe Pickett series by C. J. Box. Pickett is a game warden working in the wild mountains of Wyoming. Being a game warden is a very solitary profession – driving the winding (and scenic) mountain roads in a truck looking for elk, bear, moose, and errant humans. Joe encounters all kinds of strangeness in the wild and has to use his wits to solve crimes – often in opposition to the local sheriff's department and occasionally federal officials. In *Winterkill* (book 3 in the series), Joe stumbles across a well-known local man on a crazy shooting spree of wild elk at the onset of a blizzard. Before he can get him to jail, the man is killed by an unknown assailant. Tracking the killer in the snowy days to come brings to light a band of militants who have taken over a mountain campsite. The situation turns deeply personal when Joe's beloved foster daughter is kidnapped by her birth mother – a member of the militant group.

This is an engrossing story of one man's sheer force of will to not only solve the crime but get his foster daughter back. Listening to this while driving through the very mountains portrayed in the story (and yes – we saw snow even in early September) made it even more vivid. Author C. J. Box does such a good job with his descriptions though that you do not need to be in Wyoming to enjoy the scenery and the story. There are currently 23 books in this series.