



The Job

By Douglas Kennedy



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An adrenaline-pumping story that also delivers surprisingly shrewd ruminations on the frustrations of modern life. Brutally fired after several years of working for a successful computer magazine, Ned Allen desperately solicits employment from a somewhat disreputable real estate tycoon. All too soon, he realizes the terrible, irrevocable repercussions of his Faustian bargain.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

At first, it's hard to like Ned Allen, the ambitious, yuppie salesman who is the protagonist of Douglas Kennedy's new thriller. The moral dilemmas and frustrations that trouble Ned on his rise to the sophisticated heights of Manhattan seem an afterthought, perhaps tacked on in response to their total absence in his first, highly trumpeted but ultimately unsuccessful novel, *The Big Picture*. But Ned begins to grow on the reader. Brutally fired, then blacklisted in his own industry, he watches his Faustian bargain with a ruthless real estate tycoon unravel, and it gets easier to root for him.

This entry in the recent genre of thrillers set in the world of downsized corporate America isn't quite up to the high standards established by Donald Westlake in *The Ax*, but it'll make the time go by a little faster on the red-eye back to the home office. --Jane Adams

From Publishers Weekly

Kennedy's first novel, *The Big Picture* (1997), was a riveting commercial thriller that was perhaps overhyped. His second, though it shares the first book's galloping pace and strong sense of close-of-century angst among the well-fixed, seems, two-thirds of the way through, to give up the ghost for what reads like an overplotted, underwritten homage to Grisham. Ned Allen is a brash young ad salesman for a striving computer magazine in Manhattan, and the perils and pleasures of such a life are brilliantly set out in the opening chapters. Then a German conglomerate (in what may be a particularly timely reference among book people) takes over, and disaster strikes. In no time, Ned is without a job and, because of a quarrel he got into with a powerful space buyer and an enraged swing at his creepy German boss, is perhaps unemployable. Meanwhile, wife Lizzie is tiring of his remoteness and tantrums. To the rescue comes an old school chum who works for a high-profile but shady real estate tycoon, and Ned finds himself enmeshed in money laundering and murder?with him as the suspect. The concluding chapters brim with Grishamesque ploys: offshore bank accounts are manipulated, traps are set, time is running out. The trouble is that Ned's world has been so accurately and meticulously set forth early in the book that all this breathless, barely credible skullduggery seems to belong to a different, and poorer, book entirely. Kennedy can certainly make the pages turn; he must learn to make them turn to more consistently rewarding effect. \$500,000 joint marketing campaign with *Big Picture* paperback; author tour.

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From Library Journal

Probably most computer industry denizens are salesmen of one kind or another. Immensely valuable when they close a sale, immensely expensive otherwise. In this second novel by the author of *The Big Picture* (Hyperion, 1997), Ned Allen sells ads in a computer trade magazine until it is suddenly sold and he finds himself jobless and unemployable through his own impetuous behavior. An old friend offers a job that seems too good to be true. And that could be the death of poor Ned. Caught up in money laundering, murder, and the loss of his sensible wife (by far the most sympathetic character), Ned stumbles through a series of confrontations with criminals and with his soul. For a jazzier view of high-tech shenanigans, stick to Po Bronson's novels. For a view of the computer industry, look elsewhere. Ned could be any salesman, anywhere, but he's no Willy Loman.

-A. Elsa Pendleton, *Boeing Information Svces., Inc., Ridgecrest, CA*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Rita Dubois:

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