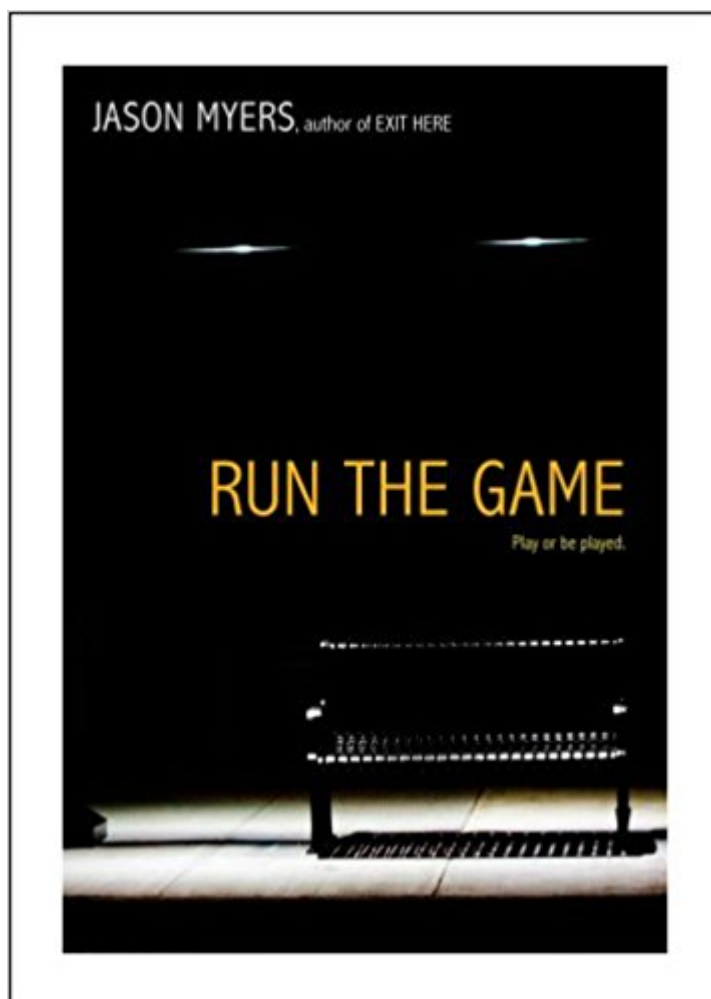


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# Run The Game



## Synopsis

Love is a high-priced and dangerous game: Play or be played. Alexander didn't believe in love at first sight until he met Patti. She's the kind of girl you hear about in songs: gorgeous, feisty, and dangerous. Being with Patti is better than any high, and he can't live without her. But Alexander's not the only one who wants to be with Patti. Burke ruthlessly takes what he wants and will kill to protect what is his. And he won't let Patti go without a fight. If Patti and Alexander are going to be together, their love will come at a steep price. Because some promises are meant to be broken, and not all debts can be paid in cash.

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## Customer Reviews

Jason Myers is the author of five teen novels, including his debut, *Exit Here.*, which became a cult classic. He lives in San Francisco, California. Find him online at [JasonMyersAuthor.com](http://JasonMyersAuthor.com) or follow him on Twitter at [@JasonMyersBooks](https://twitter.com/JasonMyersBooks).

1. THE FIRST TIME I SEE HER, SHE'S ON ONE KNEE, TYING her shoe in the A-Lot, next to a lamppost, and I'm stepping out of this guy's car with thirty dollars in all fives. He says something while I do this, but I don't pay it any mind and he drives away. The girl looks up at me and smiles. She's supercute and shit. I stuff the cash in my pocket. She's wearing a jean skirt with a Blondie patch, a yellow-and-blue paint-splattered shirt

with the sleeves cut off, and black Chuck Taylors with no socks, the shoelaces obviously untied, but she's getting them there. This is the order I always take people in. Face. Clothes. Features. She has oily black hair that's cut into a she-mullet with two lines shaved into the right side of her head. She's got freckles and decent-sized tits and a slim waist from what I can tell. It's late in the summer but she's pretty pale, just like I am, and her eyes are big and brown. She stands up as I'm lighting a Pall Mall 100, and I notice that her knees are scuffed red. Features. "You got one of those for me, man?" she asks, her voice low and raspy, like she's been drinking and smoking for years, even though she only looks maybe sixteen. "Sure," I answer, sliding out a second one and handing it to her. "Give me a light, too, please?" "Yeah." I hold the lighter to the end of her cigarette. "What are you doing out here anyway?" "Enjoying this amazing weather." I make a face. "Huh?" "Come on, man. I just got dropped off, like you." "Shit," I say, tucking the smokes and lighter back into the pocket of my sleeveless red-and-black-plaid shirt. "How old are you?" "Why do you care?" "I don't really. You just look a little young to be doing what you're doing." She shrugs and rolls her eyes. "And you look a little too much like a boy who digs chicks to be doing what you're doing." "I need the money," I say. "That bad you need the money?" I glance quickly at the track marks on my arms then back to her. "That bad," I go. "I see." Pause. "Is that heroin you shoot into them holes?" she asks. "Kinda." She laughs. "Kinda, dude?" "It's mostly straight coke, sometimes speedballs. Those are my poisons." "That shit will make you go crazy." I take a drag and exhale. "Fucking life will make you go crazy. This just makes it more interesting." She grins and smoke flows out of her nostrils. "I get it." "So how old are you?" "How old do you think I am?" "Sixteen." She shakes her head. "Wrong." "Higher or lower?" She turns her thumb down. "Fifteen," I say. "Wrong again, man." "Fourteen?" She nods. "Jesus," I say. "Ain't you?" She cuts me off. "Ain't I what?" she snorts. "Ain't you really superyoung to be kicking it around the A-Lot?" "Not the way I see it," she answers. "And how's that?" I ask. "Walk with me." She smiles, winks, then tilts her head to the side. "Come on, now. I don't bite on the first meeting." "Ain't you?"

Ã¢â¬Å We walk back toward the center of town. The sidewalk is cracked and weeds are growing everywhere. ItÃ¢â¬Ås muggy and the sun is shining into our faces, making us both squint. I curse myself for not bringing my shades. Take a drag. Ã¢â¬ÅSo tell me, then. . . .Ã¢â¬Å

Ã¢â¬ÅHow I see it?Ã¢â¬Å she asks. Ã¢â¬ÅUh-huh.Ã¢â¬Å Ã¢â¬ÅI love fucking and I love sucking dick. So why not get paid to do what I love more than anything in the world besides buying clothes and records?Ã¢â¬Å Ã¢â¬ÅSo you do this because you like to?Ã¢â¬Å

Ã¢â¬ÅYessir.Ã¢â¬Å SheÃ¢â¬Ås smiling big. Ã¢â¬ÅI do it because I like to fuck dudes and sometimes bitches, and the money gets me the records and clothes.Ã¢â¬Å Pause. My eyes become fixated on her. A surge of rage, jealousy, and passion slams through me like a tornado, and I want her for some reason. I want her so bad it aches. IÃ¢â¬Åm pissed at the guy who dropped her off for getting to touch her and have her touch him. And I donÃ¢â¬Åt even know her. She makes a face. Ã¢â¬ÅWhy are you looking at me like that?Ã¢â¬Å Ã¢â¬ÅLike what?Ã¢â¬Å I ask. Ã¢â¬ÅLike you want to fuck me and then hate me right after for it.Ã¢â¬Å A bug flies into the side of my face, and I swipe at it. The emotional twister dissolves into nothing just as suddenly as it arrived. My heart slides back into place. And I go, Ã¢â¬ÅWhoa, there. Whoa.Ã¢â¬Å

Ã¢â¬ÅThatÃ¢â¬Ås what your face looks like, man. IÃ¢â¬Åm just being super-duper honest.Ã¢â¬Å Ã¢â¬ÅIÃ¢â¬Åm sorry,Ã¢â¬Å I say. Ã¢â¬ÅThatÃ¢â¬Ås not what IÃ¢â¬Åm thinking or anything.Ã¢â¬Å Ã¢â¬ÅSo you donÃ¢â¬Åt want to fuck me?Ã¢â¬Å

SheÃ¢â¬Ås grinning again. My cheeks flush, and I wipe the sweat from my forehead.

Ã¢â¬ÅNo, thatÃ¢â¬Ås not it.Ã¢â¬Å A truck filled in the back with tan kids in dirty jeans and dirty shirts flies by us. Ã¢â¬ÅWhores,Ã¢â¬Å a couple of them scream out. She flips them off.

Ã¢â¬ÅFaggots!Ã¢â¬Å she yells back. I take the last drag of my cigarette. Ã¢â¬ÅI donÃ¢â¬Åt want to hate you afterward, and I know I wouldnÃ¢â¬Åt at all. I swear to you that I wouldnÃ¢â¬Åt.Ã¢â¬Å

This admission seems to throw her off. The truth shakes her for just a second, and I catch that beautiful grin again, flashing just for me. Her guard coming down just ever so slightly. Her eyes get even biggerÃ¢â¬Å they sparkleÃ¢â¬Å and she winks, the last drag of her smoke flowing through her nose as she says, Ã¢â¬ÅThatÃ¢â¬Ås nice to know.Ã¢â¬Å

The moment passes, but my feelings of blatant attraction and love at first sight whip through me even harder. Ã¢â¬ÅThanks for saying that.Ã¢â¬Å Ã¢â¬ÅYouÃ¢â¬Åre fucking welcome, man,Ã¢â¬Å she says back. Ã¢â¬ÅÃ¢â¬Å

The street turns from old pavement into faded red brick as we cross the Arch, the small bridge that stretches over the small creek that divides Beaver Falls into two. Some kids are partying under the bridge. I hear them laughing and their boom box blasting out Guns NÃ¢â¬Å Roses, and I wonder if I know any of them. Ã¢â¬ÅI

hate the kids who hang here," she says. "Why?" "I think they're a bunch of idiots." "I hang out down there sometimes." She looks at me, and her fucking eyes are sparkling. "Am I an idiot?" I ask. "I don't even know you, man." "Based on this conversation," I say as we get over the bridge and it turns onto Main Street. "Do you think I am?" "You haven't said anything stupid. That's pretty darn cool. Usually guys say stupid shit to me right away." "Like what?" "Like, 'Hey, cutie. Those lips would feel great around my dick.' Or, 'Yo, girl, that ass needs worked out. I can be your personal trainer.'"

"Shut the fuck up," I go. "No way dudes are that lame." "Oh, hell yeah, they are. That stuff really gets thrown my way a lot. It's fucking pathetic." "Well, that ain't me." The grin turns into a full-on smile that goes from ear to ear. "I like that." "But I still hang out under the Arch sometimes." She shrugs.

"You're just the exception, then." "It really can be fun." "They were playing fucking Guns N' Roses," she goes. "I can always get behind that." "You're a GN'R fan?" I ask. She shoots a look right at me. "You need me to answer that? Do you?" "I think you just did," I say. "Good. Love me some of that old GN'R." "Me too." "Obviously, man." We continue down Main Street. Shops and bars and hardware stores. Two small diners. A pizza place with video games and cheap beer. An ice-cream shop. And Larry's Chicken Shack, with my apartment right above. Cars line the street. It's just after one. Lunchtime. We stop at the intersection of Main and I-22, the road that runs through town. We glance tough at each other. "I live up there," I say, turning and pointing at Larry's.

"Right above the chicken place." She nods. "Does your place smell like chicken?" "Sometimes it does." "I don't think I'd like that, man." "You get used to it." "Could be you can. But maybe not." "Well, it's a good thing you don't live there, then." Pause. "Where do you live?" I ask. She turns and points west down I-22. "About a mile down there, like a block from Frank's Bar, in an apartment with just my mom and whoever her boyfriend is for that week or month." "That brown building? I've walked by there before." "Yeah, it ain't much." She shrugs. "But it's home, ya know. It's the one I've spent most of my life in." "You think

that's the description of home? "I don't know for sure. But it seems like the right one." Silence for thirty seconds as our eyes wander away. I take a deep breath. "Say, I start. Why aren't you in school? Didn't classes start a week ago or something?" She runs a hand through her hair. "Yeah. But I don't need to go." "Why's that?" "I don't like it so much." "And your mom doesn't make you?" "I wonder aloud. Nah. She says it's my choice. She says I can do what I want if I'm happy with it, and school doesn't make me happy." "Wish my parents woulda thought like your mom." "Everyone says that." "Cos it's fucking true." Cars whiz by on I-22 to leave out the other end of the town. Then she says, "Well . . . I should be getting home now. My work is done for the day." I hate the way she says that so casually too. It makes me a little insane. It really does. Because she's so adorable and little and sweet, yet nothing about working at the A-Lot is even close to fucking cute. But there's something about her. A toughness. A playbook. An attitude that somehow makes it okay, I guess. It does and it doesn't, and I'm not trying to let her go just yet so I ask: "What are you gonna do at home?" "Probably drink some beers. Play some records I got yesterday." "What records did you get?" "Queens of Noise by The Runaways." I snap, cutting her off. Another big smile. "Fucking right," she says. "What else?" "Happy Sad by Tim Buckley." "Cool shit." "And Funky Divas by En Vogue," I say, interrupting her again. "Wow. You know your shit. I really fucking like that." "And you got some great fucking taste." She winks. "I've got great fucking everything, man." I laugh. "Is that so?" She winks again. "It sure fucking is." My heart is so on fucking fire for her right now. But then she says, "So, anyway, I'm gonna head back." This statement makes me tense up and ache all over again. I don't want her to leave, but I ain't trying to see her tonight either. I have band practice. But, still, something about being apart from her suddenly makes me nervous and paranoid. "You okay, man?" she asks. "Totally. Just thought of something." "What's that?" "I don't know your name." "I don't know yours, either." I hold my hand out and she shakes it. "Alexander," I say. "That's such a cute name," she says. "Cute fucking boy with a cute

fucking name. "Why, thank you." Our hands drop back to our sides, and she goes, "Alexander, my name is Patti. Patti Smith." "Patti Smith? Really? Is that really your name?" "Yup. It's the one I go by, anyway." I laugh. "I like it." Pause. "Actually, I love it." I finish. "Thanks." "Well, Patti Smith. I guess I'll see you around, then?" She nods with a hint of excitement. "Yeah," she says. She stops and looks back over her shoulder. "See ya around, Alexander." She giggles, and I wave bye and cross the street. When I get to the other side, I look back, and Patti Smith, she's looking back at me.

Being an avid fan of Jason Myers ever since I was in high school, this book has come off as a big disappointment. The previous books have been able to fully immerse me with unpredictable and intense drama. This book was different in the sense that the main character Alexander, is a delusional and naive junkie. His actions are super predictable throughout the whole book and personally I could not stand the character and wanted to stop reading just due to his dialogue. The drug use in this one is beyond ridiculous and is mentioned literally on every page. Ideas and memories from the character are repeated to an irritating amount. My biggest pet peeve is that Jason Myers writes for Alexander to mention HIS OWN book "The Mission" as well as describing him as a bad ass author. How big is your ego to the point that you have to brag about yourself within your own book? All in all, it was another cliffhanger book of Jason Myers that I could not put down but I feel the sense of quality and touch has been lost. I am going to check out Dead End next to see if that is any better.

The book is not for everyone. If grit and morbid realism is your thing, this book may intrigue you. But for those of you that aren't very tolerant of drug use, swearing, very explicit sexual scenarios, and unconventional viewpoints, this book may turn you off from the first chapter. If you are curious what this book has to offer, I suggest you keep your mind open, and try to enjoy the narrative.

This book changed how I perceived all young adult books. I didn't find anything like Jason Myers before and I still haven't. I seriously love all his books and I plan to acquire them all and re-read them over. I love Jason Myers.

I read Exit Here about a year ago and thought it was a very interesting and gritty read. The

characters were very realistic and human, and I was hoping for the same with Run the Game. I wasn't disappointed. It had me flipping pages like crazy. I also loved the short chapters. But this book has lots of "sex drugs and rock n roll" so don't give it to younger teens.

I love Jason Myers and this book is fantastic

I have read and been pleased with all of Myers' books. Except this one. This book annoyed me to no end. From the very beginning, the dialogue of the main character irked me with the excessive and unnecessary addition of "and s\*\*\*\*" to the end of almost everything. The way he talked not only unrealistic but entirely pretentious in the ways of the music scene. In addition, the label of a "junkie" without any real repercussions of the drug use and three day benders, the 500 page dragged out plot line where the ending is blatantly obvious, the main character's ego seeming to match that of Myers as he ungraciously mentions his own book and himself as a writer (even if he was trying to poke fun at himself, it was such a sad attempt and an awful addition to an already awful book), and the pedophelic relationship that is the main focus of this story. I am truly disappointed with Run the Game. It has not lived up to Myers' previous stories and I am wary of attempting to read any of his future works (James Morgan's character annoys me, so I definitely will not be reading Destroy). I caution Myers fans, if you want to continue to enjoy his work please skip this book. It is not worth your time or the headache of having to read the atrocious dialogue.

Jason Myers is a great author

As described

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