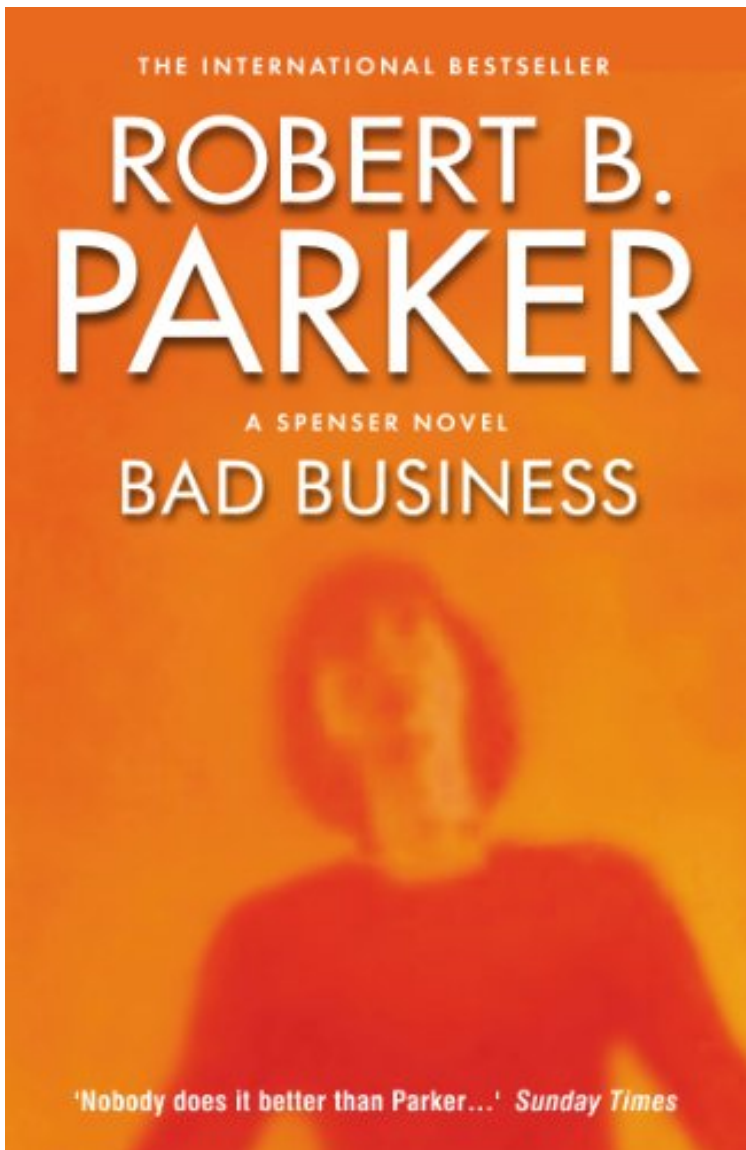


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# Bad Business



Par Robert B. Parker  
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**Par Robert B. Parker : Bad Business** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bad Business:

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**Description :** Description du produitOne of the great series in the history of the American detective story gets even better when Spenser is hired by a jilted bride to follow a cheating husband, only to cross paths with a detective hired to tail the two-timing wife. They aren't the most trusting couple in town, but as it turns out, they are the most dangerous.

Prsentation de l'diteurWhen Marlene Cowley hires Spenser to see if her husband, Trent, is cheating on her, he encounters more than he bargained for: Not only does he find a two-timing husband, but a second investigator as well, hired by the husband to look after his wife. As a result of their joint efforts, Spenser soon finds himself investigating both individual depravity and corporate corruption. It seems the folks in the Cowley's circle have become enamoured of radio talk-show host Darrin O'Mara, whose views on Courtly

Love are clouding some already fuzzy minds with the notion of cross-connubial relationships. O'Mara's brand of sex therapy is unconventional at best, unlawful-and deadly-at worst. Then a murder at Kinergy, where Trent Cowley is CFO, sends Spenser in yet another direction. Apparently, the unfettered pursuit of profit has a price. From Publishers Weekly Spenser #31 finds the veteran Boston PI tackling corporate crime in a routine yet absorbing outing. As usual, Spenser enters the case at an angle, this time because he's hired by one Marlene Rowley to prove that her husband Trent, CFO of energy firm Kinergy, is cheating on her. Before long the PI learns that marital cheating is all the rage among Kinergy's players, with the hanky-panky orchestrated by radio personality Darrin O'Mara, who runs popular sex seminars on the side. Maybe all that cheating explains why Spenser keeps running into other PIs hired by Kinergy folk, but it doesn't point to why Trent is found shot dead at Kinergy headquarters. Spenser links Kinergy's slick founder/CEO to the sex ring and blackmails him to gain access to Kinergy's records, unveiling a pattern of accounting deceptions that reveal a company about to go under. There's less violence than usual in this Spenser novel but more detecting, which may explain why there's little of the PI's tough sidekick Hawk but much of his psychologist girlfriend Susan, which may not please the many Spenser fans who grew tired years ago of the love banter between the soul mates. The novel ends with suspects crowded into a room to be questioned by Spenser, a classic yet tired climax that is emblematic of the tale: Parker is treading water here, albeit with some flair and a good deal of humor. One suspects that his heart belongs not to this story but to his other book due out this year, in May, the highly anticipated Jackie Robinson novel Double Play. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From AudioFile The CEO of Kinergy, a wildly successful energy-trading company, has his eye on the White House rather than his business. Meanwhile, trusted senior executives are cooking the books and makin' whoopie in a spouse-swapping setup engineered by a free-love radio talk show host. Bad business, indeed! Robert B. Parker's writing has never been sharper, matching an engaging plot with Spenser's famous razor-sharp one-liners. Joe Mantegna, who plays Spenser in the made-for-cable Spenser movies, does a great job giving vocal identity to each of the odd assortment of good guys, bad guys, and ladies of questionable character, using pace and emotion to effectively separate one from another. In this 31st Spenser novel, Parker is still on his game, and Spenser is still the same irrepressible Spenser. T.J.M. AudioFile 2004, Portland, Maine-- Copyright AudioFile, Portland, Maine