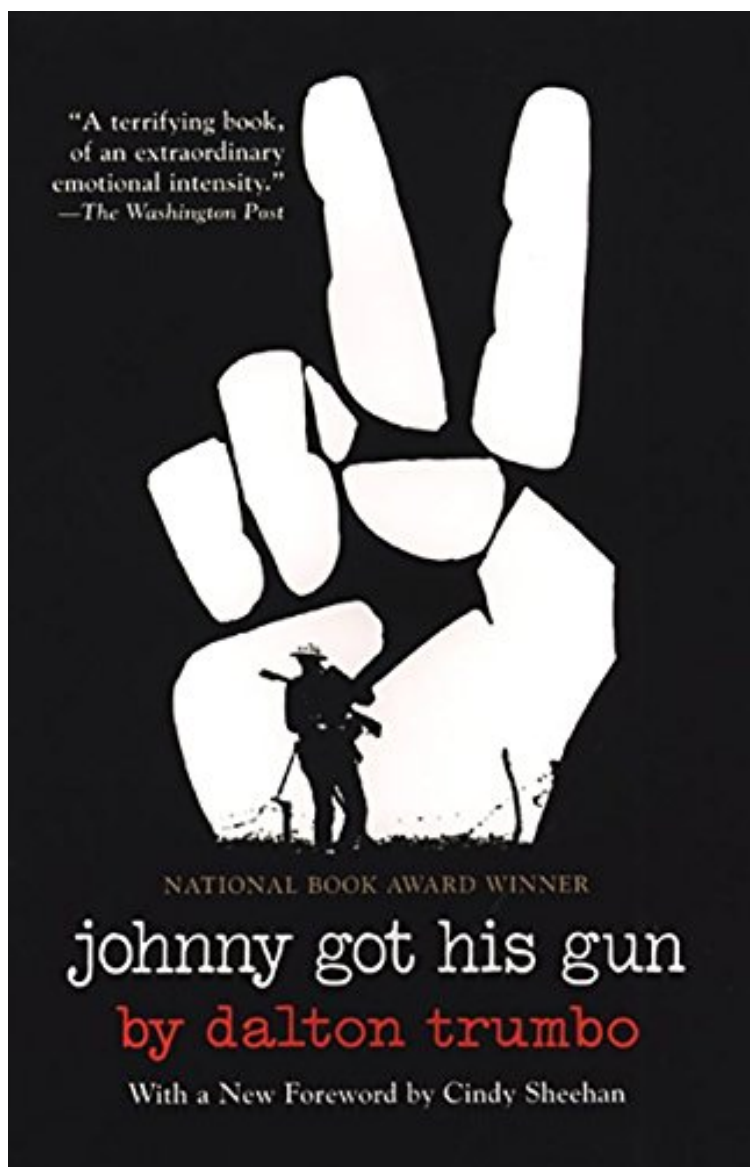


(Online library) File size: 64.Mb

# Johnny Got His Gun



*Par Dalton Trumbo*  
*DOC / \*audiobook / ebooks /*  
*Download PDF / ePub*

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #106158 dans eBooksPubli le: 2007-07-01Sorti le: 2007-07-01Format: Ebook Kindle

(Online library) Johnny Got His Gun

**Par Dalton Trumbo : Johnny Got His Gun** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Johnny Got His Gun:

 [Download](#)

 [Read Online](#)

## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurThe Searing Portrayal Of War That Has Stunned And Galvanized Generations Of ReadersAn immediate bestseller upon its original publication in 1939, Dalton Trumbos stark, profoundly troubling masterpiece about the horrors of World War I brilliantly crystallized the uncompromising brutality of war and became the most influential protest novel of the Vietnam era. Johnny Got His Gun is an undisputed classic of antiwar literature thats as timely as ever.A terrifying book, of an extraordinary emotional intensity.--The Washington Post"Powerful. . . an eye-opener." --Michael Moore"Mr. Trumbo sets this story down almost without pause or punctuation and with a fury amounting to eloquence."--The New York Times"A book that can never be forgotten by anyone who reads it."--Saturday ExtraitChapter OneHe

wished the phone would stop ringing. It was bad enough to be sick let alone having a phone ring all night long. Boy was he sick. Not from any of their sour french wine either. A man couldn't hold enough of it to get a head this big. His stomach was going round and round and round. Fine thing nobody'd answer that phone. It sounded like it was ringing in a room about a million miles wide. His head was a million miles wide too. The hell with the telephone. That damn bell must be at the other end of the world. He would have to walk for a couple years to get to it. Ring ring ring all night long. Maybe somebody wanted something bad. Telephones ringing at night are important. You'd think they'd pay attention to it. How could they expect him to answer it anyhow? He was tired and his head was plenty big. You could stick a whole phone in his ear and he couldn't even feel it. He must have been drinking dynamite. Why didn't somebody answer that goddamn telephone?" Hey Joe. Front and center. "Here he was sick as hell and like a damned fool making his way through the night shipping room toward the telephone. It was so noisy you wouldn't think anybody could hear a tiny sound like a phone ringing. Yet he had. He'd heard it above the click-click-click of the Battle Creek wrappers and the rattle of the belt conveyors and the howl of the rotary ovens upstairs and the rumble of steel route bins being hauled into place and the sputter of motors in the garage being tuned up against the morning's work and the scream of dollies that needed oil why the hell didn't somebody oil them? He walked down the middle aisle between the steel bins that were being filled with bread. He threaded his way through the floor litter of dollies and boxes and crumpled cartons and crippled loaves. The boys looked at him as he went. He remembered their faces floating by him as he moved toward the telephone. Dutch and Little Dutch and Whitey who took shots in his spine and Pablo and Rudy and all the boys. They looked at him curiously as he passed them. Maybe that was because he was scared inside and showed it outside. He got to the phone. "Hello." "Hello son. Come on home now." "All right mother I'll be right there." He went into the lean-to office with the wide glass front where Jody Simmons the night foreman kept a close watch on his crew. "Jody I got to go home. My father just died." "Died? Gosh kid that's too bad. Sure kid you run along. Rudy. Hey Rudy. Grab a truck and drive Joe home. His old--his father just died. Sure kid go on home. I'll have one of the boys punch you out. That's tough kid. Go home." Rudy stepped on it. It was raining outside because it was December and Los Angeles just before christmas. The tires sizzled against the wet pavement as they went. It was the quietest night he had ever heard except for the tires sizzling and the clatter of the Ford echoing between deserted buildings in an empty street. Rudy sure stepped on it. There was a rattle somewhere back of them in the truck body that kept the same time no matter how fast they went. Rudy didn't say anything. He just drove. Way out Figueroa past big old houses and then smaller houses and then on out some more to the south end. Rudy stopped the car. "Thanks Rudy, I'll let you know when everything's finished. I'll be back to work in a couple days." "Sure Joe. That's all right. It's tough. I'm sorry goodnight." The Ford grabbed for traction. Then its motor roared and it went sideslipping down the street. Water bubbled along the curb. The rain pattered down steadily. He stood there for a moment to take a good breath and then he started for the place. The place was on the alley above a garage behind a two story house. To get to it he walked down a narrow driveway which was between two houses close together. It was black between the houses. Rain from the two roofs met there and spattered down into wide puddles with a queer wet echo like water being poured into a cistern. His feet squashed in the water as he went. When he got out from between the two houses he saw lights on over the garage. He opened the door. A rush of hot air swept over him. It was hot air perfumed with the soap and scented rubbing alcohol they used for bathing his father and with the powder they put on him afterward to fight off bedsores. Everything was very quiet. He tip-toed upstairs his wet shoes still squishing a little. In the living room his father lay dead with a sheet pulled over his face. He had been sick a long while and they had kept him in the living room because the glassed-in porch which was the bedroom for his father and mother and sisters was too drafty. He walked over to his mother and touched her shoulder. She wasn't crying very hard. "Did you call someone?" "Yes they'll be here anytime. I wanted you to be here first." His younger sister was still asleep on the glassed-in porch but his older sister only thirteen was crumpled in a corner in her bathrobe catching her breath and sobbing quietly. He looked over at her. She was crying like a woman. He hadn't realized before that she was practically grown up. She had been growing up all the time and he hadn't noticed till now when she was crying because her father was dead. A knock came on the door downstairs. "It's them. Let's go into the kitchen. It'll be better." They had a little trouble getting his sister into the kitchen but she came quietly enough. It seemed she couldn't walk. Her face was blank. Her eyes were big and she was gasping more than crying. His mother sat on a stool in the kitchen and took his sister into her arms. Then he went to the head of the stairs and called down quietly. "Come in." Two men in gleaming clean collars opened the door down there and started up the stairs.

They carried a long wicker basket. Quickly he stepped into the living room and pulled aside the sheets to have a look at his father before they reached the top of the stairs. He looked down at a tired face that was only fifty-one years old. He looked down and thought dad I feels lots older than you. I was sorry for you dad. Things weren't going well and they never would have gone well for you and it's just as good you're dead. People've got to be quicker and harder these days than you were dad. Goodnight and gooddreams. I won't forget you and I'm not as sorry for you today as I was yesterday. I loved you dad goodnight. They came into the room. He turned and walked into the kitchen to his mother and sister. The other sister who was only seven still slept. There were sounds from the front room. The men's footsteps as they tip-toed around the bed.

A faint woosh of covers being thrown toward the foot. Then a sound of bedsprings relaxing after eight months' use. Then a sound of wicker squeaking as it took up the burden the bed had left off with. Then after a heavy squeaking from all parts of the basket a shuffling of feet moving out of the front room and down the stairs. He wondered if they were carrying the basket evenly down the stairs or if the head was lower than the feet or if it was in any way uncomfortable. His father performing the same task would have carried the basket very gently. When the door at the foot of the stairs closed behind them his mother began to shake a little. Her voice came like dry air. "That's not Bill. It may seem like it but it's not." He patted his mother's shoulder. His sister relaxed down on the floor again. That was all. Well why couldn't it be all then? How many times was he going to have to go through it? It was all over and finished and why couldn't the goddam phone ever stop ringing? He was nutty because he had a hangover a big hangover and he was having bad dreams. Pretty soon if he had to he'd wake up and answer the phone but somebody should do it for him if they had any consideration at all because he was tired and sick of it. Things were getting floaty and sickly. Things were so quiet. Things were so goddam still. A hangover headache thumps and clatters and raises hell inside your skull. But this wasn't any hangover. He was a sick man. He was a sick man and he was remembering things. Like coming out of ether. But you'd think the telephone would stop ringing sometime. It couldn't just go on forever. He couldn't go over and over the same business of answering it and hearing his father was dead and then going home through a rainy night. He'd catch cold if he did that much more. Besides his father could only die once. The telephone bell was just part of a dream. It had sounded different from any other telephone bell or any other sound because it had meant death. After all that bell was a particular kind of thing a very particular kind of thing as old Prof Eldridge used to say in Senior English. And a particular kind of thing sticks with you but there's no use of it sticking too close. That bell and its message and everything about it was way back in time and he was finished with it. The bell was ringing again. Way far off as if echoing through a lot of shutters in his mind he could hear it. He felt as if he were tied down and couldn't answer it yet he felt as if he had to answer it. The bell sounded as lonesome as Christ ringing out in the bottom of his mind waiting for an answer. And they couldn't make connections. With each ring it seemed to get lonelier. With each ring he got more scared. He drifted again. He was hurt. He was bad hurt. The bell was fading. He was dreaming. He wasn't dreaming. He was awake even though he couldn't see. He was awake even though he couldn't hear a thing except a telephone that really wasn't ringing. He was mighty scared. He remembered how when he was a kid he read *The Last Days of Pompeii* and awakened in the middle of a dark night crying in terror with his face suffocating in the pillow and thinking that the top of one of his Colorado mountains had blown off and that the covers were lava and that he was entombed while yet alive and that he would lie there dying forever. He had that same gasping feeling now. He had that same cowardly griping in his bowels. He was unchristly scared so he gathered his strength and made like a man buried in loose earth clawing out with his hands toward air. Then he sickened and choked and fainted half away and was dragged back by pain. It was all over his body like electricity. It seemed to shake him hard and then throw him back against the bed exhausted and completely quiet. He lay there feeling the sweat pour out of his skin. Then he felt something else. He felt hot damp skin all over him and the dampness enabled him to feel his bandages. He was wrapped in them from top to bottom. Even his head. He really was hurt then. The shock caused his heart to smash against his ribs. He grew prickly all over. His heart was pounding away in his chest but he couldn't hear the pulse in his ear. Oh god then he was deaf. Where did they get that stuff about bombproof dugouts when a man in one of them could be hit so hard that the whole complicated business of his ears could be blown away leaving him deaf so deaf he couldn't hear his own heart beat? He had been hit and he had been hit bad and now he was deaf. Not just a little deaf. Not just halfway deaf. He was stone deaf. He lay there for a while with some pain ebbing and thinking this will give me something to chew on all right all right. What about the rest of the guys? Maybe they didn't come out so lucky. There were some good boys down in that hole. How'll it seem being deaf and shouting at

people? You write things on paper. No that's wrong they write things on paper to you. It isn't anything to kick up your heels and dance about but it might be worse. Only when you're deaf you're lonesome. You're godforsaken. So he'd never hear again. Well there were a hell of a lot of things he didn't want to hear again. He never wanted to hear the biting little castanet sound of a machine gun or the high whistle of a .75 coming down fast or the slow thunder as it hit or the whine of an airplane overhead or the yells of a guy trying to explain to somebody that he's got a bullet in his belly and that his breakfast is coming out through the front of him and why won't somebody stop going forward and give him a hand only nobody can hear him they're so scared themselves. The hell with it. Things were going in and out of focus. It was like looking into one of those magnified shaving mirrors and then moving it toward you and away from you. He was sick and probably out of his head and he was badly hurt and he was lonesome deaf but he was also alive and he could still hear far away and sharp the sound of a telephone bell. He was sinking and rising and then going in lazy quiet black circles. Everything was alive with sound. He was nuts all right. He caught a glimpse of the big ditch where he and the guys used to go swimming in Colorado before he came to Los Angeles before he came to the bakery. He could hear the splash of water as Art did one of his high dives he's a fool for diving so far why can't the rest of us do it? He looked out across the rolling meadows of Grand Mesa eleven thousand feet in the sky and saw acres of columbines stirring in a cool August breeze and heard far off the roar of mountain streams. He saw his father pulling a sled with his mother on it one Christmas morning. He heard the fresh snow squealing under the runners of the sled. The sled was his Christmas present and his mother was laughing like a girl and his dad was grinning in his slow wrinkly way. They seemed to have a good time his mother and his father. Especially then. They used to flirt with each other right in front of him before the girls were born. Do you remember this? Do you remember that? I cried. You talked like this. You wore your hair so. You picked me up and I remembered how strong you were and you put me on old Frank because he was gentle and after that we rode across the river on the ice with old Frank picking his way carefully like a dog. You remember the telephone when you were courting me? I remember everything when I was courting you even the gander that used to rush and hiss at me when I took you in my arms. You remember the telephone when you were courting me silly? I remember. Then you remember the party line going eighteen miles along Cole Creek Valley and only five customers? I remember I remember the way you looked with your big eyes and your smooth forehead you haven't changed. You remember the telephone line and how new it was? Oh it was lonely out there with nobody in three or four miles and nobody really in the world but you. And me waiting for the telephone to ring. It rang two times for us remember? Two rings and you were calling from the grocery store when the store was closed. And the receivers all along the line all five of them going click-click Bill is calling Macia click-click-click. And then your voice how funny it was to hear your voice the first time over a telephone how wonderful it always was. "Hello Macia." "Hello Bill how are you?" "I'm fine are you through with the work?" "We just finished the dishes." "I suppose everybody is listening again tonight." "I suppose." "Don't they know I love you? You'd think that was enough for them." "Maybe it isn't." "Macia why don't you play a piece on the piano?" "All right Bill. Which one?" "Whatever one you like I like them all." "All right Bill. Wait till I fix the receiver." And then way out on Cole Creek way west on the other side of the mountains from Denver music tinkling over telephone wires that were brand new and wonderful. His mother before she was his mother before she thought particularly of becoming his mother would go over to the piano the only one on Cole Creek and play the Beautiful Blue Ohio or perhaps My Pretty Red Wing. She would play it clear through and his father in Shale City would be listening and thinking isn't it wonderful I can sit here eight miles away and hold a little piece of black business to my ear and hear far off the music of Macia my beautiful my Macia. "Could you hear it Bill?" "Yes. It was lovely." Then somebody else maybe six miles up or down the line would break into the conversation without being ashamed at all. "Macia I just picked up the hook and heard you playing. Why don't you play After the Ball is Over? Clem'd like to hear it if you don't mind." His mother would go back to the piano and play After the Ball is Over and Clem somewhere would be listening to music for maybe the first time in three or four months. Farmers' wives would be sitting with their work done and receivers to their ears listening too and getting dreamy and thinking about things their husbands wouldn't suspect. And so it went with everybody up and down the lonesome bed of Cole Creek asking his mother to play a favorite piece and his father listening from Shale City and liking it but perhaps growing a little impatient occasionally and saying to himself I wish the people out on Cole Creek would understand that this is a courtship not a concert. Sounds sounds sounds everywhere with the bell fading out and returning and him so sick and deaf he wanted to die. He was wallowing in blackness and nobody there to answer it. A piano was tinkling far far

away and he knew his mother was playing it for his dead father before his father was dead and before she had any thought of him her son. The piano kept time with the bell and the bell with the piano and in back of it there was thick silence and a yearning to listen and lonsomeness. Now the moon shines tonight on pretty Red Wing The birds are sighing, the night wind crying . . . Revue de presse "Mr. Trumbo sets this story down almost without pause or punctuation and with a fury amounting to eloquence." "New York Times" "It is hard to imagine a more persuasive argument for staying out of war than this smooth, savage, brilliant tale." "Chicago

Daily News