



Point of Impact

Stephen Hunter

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He was one the best Marine snipers in Vietnam. Today, twenty years later, disgruntled hero of an unheroic war, all Bob Lee Swagger wants to be left alone and to leave the killing behind.

But with consummate psychological skill, a shadowy military organization seduces Bob into leaving his beloved Arkansas hills for one last mission for his country, unaware until too late that the game is rigged.

The assassination plot is executed to perfection—until Bob Lee Swagger, alleged lone gunman, comes out of the operation alive, the target of a nationwide manhunt, his only allies a woman he just met and a discredited FBI agent.

Now Bob Lee Swagger is on the run, using his lethal skills once more—but this time to track down the men who set him up and to break a dark conspiracy aimed at the very heart of America.

Point of Impact Details

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Author : Stephen Hunter

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From Reader Review Point of Impact for online ebook

Mike (the Paladin) says

I like this book. There are things in it that bug me a bit, but on the whole nothing that really requires comment.

Bob Lee Swagger is a solitary man who lives alone in the Arkansas hills with his dog and his rifles. He loves to shoot though he doesn't hunt for meat anymore as since the war, he's lost his taste for the kill (something I've come to share. Maybe it's an age thing to?). Bob is part of the (so called) gun culture. He reads gun books, he loads his own ammunition and works at accuracy. He keeps to himself since he was disabled out of the Marines. Sergeant Swagger was known as Bob the Nailer. He was one of the deadliest snipers in the theater of operations. Now, he's called back, offered a job that someone knows he won't be able to turn down. Only things aren't what they seem. Those who've contacted him are not what or who Bob has been led to believe and he's to be the fall guy. Only, the ones who plan to set him up, don't know Bob Lee.

If you've seen the movie Shooter, it's based on this novel. There are some (a few) fairly major differences. For one thing the movie is set much later. Bob Lee Swagger is a Vietnam Vet, in the movie he's placed in a later era. While there are "fairly" major differences in the book and movie, I suspect anyone who likes one will like the other. The liberties taken with the story aren't used (as so often happens) to "rewrite" Bob Lee or any of the story's key points. Enjoy both as sort of "complimentary stories" or possibly two similar stories where some of the characters happen to have the same names.

What can I say here? I'm a shooter and I suppose that shooters might be slightly more prone to like the book, but I truly believe anyone who likes action novels will enjoy it. While there are some details as to ballistic performance and some detail on the rifles themselves there isn't so much as to drive away those who aren't "aficionados". (Actually most of this touches directly on the plot). You'll get to know Bob Lee, as well as Nick and some others well (including our villains) but you won't be overwhelmed with information. You won't come away knowing what Bob's favorite food is or if he has "hang-ups"...and Bob would look at you like you were from some other planet if you asked. You will get to know what you need and in some of your cases, you'll have known people like Bob Lee.

The story is fast moving slowing only slightly in a couple of places and it holds interest. While there are a lot of action novels out there this one is moderately original. I've actually set out to find books like this one and while a few are close, so far I've not come up with any (other than by this author) that I'd say are "like it". I suspect that readers will either like and identify with the protagonist of this one or not understand him much at all and not really like him. Maybe not...try it and see. I think you'll like it if you like Vince Flynn, Don Pendleton, Harold Coyle, Tom Clancy, Larry Bond, and others. I call this an action novel, it could also be called a thriller and will fit into either category. I'm not really fussed about pigeonholing it. Whatever you call it, it's not dull.

I like this book, I plan to put it on my shelf with my "keepers" and have already taken steps (read reserved with one of my favorite book stores or ordered where I couldn't find one in town) the next 4 books in the series about this character. I recommend it. 4 stars. Enjoy.

Since I wrote this I got all the Bob Lee books...

Note on Stephen Hunter's books.

I have reviewed several of his books and have liked some more than others. I have a concern and I'd like to put this out for what it's worth. The books are sort of a mixed bag. There are two that I rated 3 stars but one I rated 5 and put on my favorites list. That one is *I, Sniper* which is book #6 in the Bob Lee Swagger series. It occurs to me that if someone is less than thrilled with one of the books in the series before #6 they might never move on to that novel.

Let me suggest that even if you have been less than thrilled with one of the other books and have pulled away from the series, you give *I, Sniper* a try. With lots of action, a good cast and some great humor I think it's (so far) the best...though the jury is still out on *Time To Hunt* #3 as I skipped it and am about halfway through...so far it's excellent.

Nathaniel Gage says

Before I start a review of this book, there's two caveats that I should probably address. The first is that I have a deep and abiding interest in guns and all the information that surrounds them, which makes the information in this book—length of pull, turned case necks, all kinds of manufacturers and statistics that are too numerous to name—a pleasure to read about rather than a chore. It's not everyone's cup of tea, and I know and respect that. But this is my own opinion, and it was just the icing on the cake for what is already a very well written book. The second caveat is that I already saw the movie which was (loosely) based on this novel, called *Shooter*, and starring Mark Wahlberg. Having seen it, I could at many times predict what was going to happen and had a more intimate knowledge of the characters.

Anyway, on to the good stuff.

I don't read a great deal of what you'd call thriller novels. One or two on occasion, usually while I'm on vacation. In the past, a great deal of Tom Clancy, which I always feel inexplicably guilty for having read. Don't ask me why. But reading thrillers on the whole is something that leaves me feeling like my time could have been better spent, as if there were novels with deeper plots, better developed characters, generally more complexity to them.

Point of Impact, however, ignored all my feelings and went straight for the kind of themes I love, and threw in some truly memorable characters along with plot twists that just kept catching me by surprise. I read it in two days after I first picked it up and like any good book it would not let me go, whether because I wanted desperately to know if one character or another was still alive, or whether I viciously hated another and wanted to see the main characters bring him to justice—one way or another.

A lot of people give Bob Lee Swagger, the main character of this book, a bad rap for being who he is. Sure, he's a backcountry hermit who lives with his guns and devotes himself to them as one might a lover, and to most that will make him irredeemably crazy. But anyone who focuses on that is ignoring several important details, not the least of which is the fact that the U.S Marines teach that kind of singleminded dedication to one's weapon, and that Swagger has used this dedication to overcome vices such as drinking to excess.

To be sure, his character is painted in broad strokes at times, and when he lapses back into a Southern drawl for long periods where it seemed before that he hadn't had it before, it can be a little hard to take with a straight face. But he's not what you'd call stereotypical. He reads some of the famous nature writers, like

Emerson and Thoreau. He writes and types because he enjoys it, and has a gift for it—though many do not see it in him. And he has a gift for hard work, not just in terms of shooting but of planning, along with the nearly inhuman patience required for the setup work of long-range shots.

I won't detail the other characters too much, but suffice to say that there are some that I adore and some that I loathe, and while only a couple feel as real as Bob I think that's all the reader really needs. The real centerpiece of the book is the plot, in any case.

With conspiracies that run so deep and wide they make your head spin, strategies and tactics that seem to defy the abilities of human reasoning, and enough plot twists to keep you consistently on your toes, *Point of Impact* is typical of the thriller genre. But what makes it believable is the scale: the plot isn't to end the world, not to wipe out an entire country. It's to kill one man and save the asses of a few people who by all rights should be in jail or on death row. Given the world we live in today, that's a lot more believable, and makes the book seem a good deal more realistic and down to earth. Apart from the rifles, there's not much gadgetry, either. Even the 'bad guys' are crammed into musty old trailers, not much better off than the characters they're hunting.

I won't say that this book is perfect. There's not a few points where I grew bored while I was reading, particularly during FBI agent Nick Memphis' long blocks of description. Bob grew to caricature proportions on occasion, and some of the feats that he accomplished were simply too big to be believable. But if you manage to forgive these small mistakes, you'll find *Point of Impact* to be a rewarding book that will take you for a hell of a ride.

David Graham says

A series of books that I would like to recommend is Stephen Hunter's first three books of the Bob Lee Swagger series (*Point of Impact*, *Black Light* and *Time to Hunt*). I have only read one of the later books in the series and they seem to be more straight-forward action-thrillers but the first three books had the most wonderful plots and some of the best twists I have ever read. Hunter took what could have been a very one-dimensional character in Marine sniper Swagger and made him intensely interesting. *Time to Hunt* was subsequently made into the movie *Shooter* but as is often the case the movie did not even capture a small piece of the complexity of the book. Nor did the movie build the suspense of the wonderful final courtroom scene which Hunter masterfully built. There seemed no way out of the predicament for Bob Lee when the prosecution presented their case. Beyond the great action, plot and final twist, the courtroom scenes alone stand against any of the best legal thrillers in my opinion.

Tim says

POINT OF IMPACT by Stephen Hunter is the first novel in the 'Bob Lee Swagger' series that has produced both the movie and series named "Shooter".

Bob Lee Swagger is a former sniper for the military who has gone out of his way to live a quiet life in solitude until his peaceful existence is shattered by a visit from a man who claims to be military and convinces him to help them nail an elusive sniper who reportedly plans to shoot a political figure.

Anyone who's seen the "Shooter" movie or the series knows how this develops, although the movie is closer to this book than the series is.

Recommended to all fans of military sniper action, and conspiracy/espionage type stories, kind of a mix of the Jason Bourne stories combined with American Sniper.

4 stars.

Adam says

This is the second novel by Stephen Hunter that I've read, and while it doesn't quite hit the cartoonishly hypertrophic heights of *Dirty White Boys*, it's more tightly focused and plotted. This is both good and bad, since after the first 100 or 200 pages it feels as if the characters are all slaves to the plot, which is unfortunate, since they actually had the potential to be pretty interesting people. On the plus side, the technical details of marksmanship and rifles are all pretty interesting, and--unlike so many overwritten thrillers--integral to the story.

Keri says

Bobby Lee Swagger is a loner. He likes things simple, just him, his dog and the cold silence of the north. He also has a talent...not to sing or dance, but to shoot and kill. He was a sniper for Uncle Sam, one of the best in the world. But when the government comes calling and presses on Bobby Lee's I love my country button, he must heed the call. But thanks to his daddy's teachings and how Uncle Sam has treated Bobby in the past, he takes no chances and takes steps to ensure that he is protected.

He has been asked to line up a shot at the President, not to actually take him out, you see, just to see if it can be done. So of course he does as he asks and tells them how, when and where it can be done. When an actual shot is fired and the President goes down, the clock starts ticking on Bobby's life. After all, it was his gun, his bullets and the shot that he himself lined out to the security detail, so he must have done it.

Only Bobby Lee knew he hadn't committed the crime and was prepared to give his life in order to prove his innocence. Along the way, he manages to pick up a low level FBI agent and a pretty little nurse. Not much of a team against the huge crushing weight of injustice. But Bobby has an ace up his sleeve. Now he just has to stay alive long enough to play it.

The movie Shooter with Mark Wahlberg was based on this book. The book was better than the movie and ended differently.

Lucas says

I finally gave up reading this book on page 270. Which honestly was hard for me to do because I've never given up on a book before. Well, I gave up reading FAST FOOD NATION but that was different. Anyway, reading this book was an uphill battle only because Hollywood had recently turned it into a movie --a bad movie and although I never saw it, the mere thought of it shied me away from reading it. However, I decided

to put my best foot forward and read the book and then see the movie and then draw my own conclusion as to what went wrong. But you see, in the very beginning of the book, I already had problems with the initial setup. Basically, Mr. Hunter paints himself into a corner because the character he creates of "Bob Lee 'The Nailer' Swagger" is so supremely almighty powerful and awesome that it's impossible for the reader to buy for one second that the bad guys would be able to convince Bob to work for them. Absolutely impossible. So, I overlooked this, thinking that Mr. Hunter's writing would carry me through the holes and blemishes and bestow upon me a sense of genuine enjoyment as I discovered how Bob exacts his revenge but alas, I just couldn't ignore my instincts, which were: this premise/characters are full of shit. And when the clay feet crack --the statue comes down next.

Sandy says

At the suggestion of a friend, I picked up a 5x7 paperback not expecting too much but I became so engrossed in this character and the clear writing that I ended up reading this book in a day. The author is just as skilled as Bob Lee Swagger...lines up the story, checks the wind, loads the right ammo in the form of words and gets to the point...BAM! Suddenly you're hit by a story that tells you everything you want to know but still feel mystified by the protagonist. Very, very good read. Never felt I was being left out nor bored. Paced perfectly.

Jim says

Bob Lee Swagger is a tough, unforgettable character. The action, settings & plot are all plausible. If you like conspiracy theories, guns & snipers, it's a great read. Well written & thought out.

The biggest surprise to me was that when I tried to re-read the books maybe 5 years later, I couldn't get back into it. I didn't think of it as a read-once book. It's better than that. Maybe a little too good & I remembered it too well to make a re-read worth it. Usually my memory is worse than that.

Bicky says

Point of impact

Almost perfect. Definitely more than my normal 5 stars.

For those, who like me, came to this book because they liked or loved the movie Shooter, the book is better, much better.

This is a book (first published in 1993) about a sniper and guns and it is not surprising that people involved with gun culture like it. This makes me conclude that the novel is authentic in its depictions and details. However, I think it is even more enjoyable for people who have never been involved with guns. I have never even held a handgun, a rifle or a shotgun. But here the details about guns and shooting and the culture associated with them is presented in a manner which, while detailed is never boring and is told so fascinatingly, lovingly and with so much impact that it even made a person like me appreciate how others can be in love with a culture I am never going to be part of. Is this not what a good novel does?

"Dobbler was fascinated. Guns everywhere, of every shape and form and description, for every taste and wallet. They could be so cheap and so expensive, so demure and so awesome, so ridiculous and so sublime.

He wondered about the men who worshiped them with such ardency, whose lives were bounded by their complexities or liberated by their possibilities.

What was there to see in all this?

Well, passion for order for one thing. So much of gun culture was about parts, units, systems, things fitting together. There were whole institutions that existed merely to sell parts of obsolete weapons. So there was a puzzle aspect to it, a sense of bringing order to chaos.

Power? The damned things were so absolute in their meaning that yes, there had to be the lure of power. But beauty also. Some of them, he was stunned to discover, were strangely beautiful. He especially liked one called a Luger and another called a New Frontier single action....

And then again: data. To him a gun was just a gun, but to some of these people it was obviously an endless font of information -- a history, a set of specifications, an involvement with a company, usually a corporate entity, a connection to certain traditions, a whole hierarchy of meanings that yielded yet some more meanings and had to be deciphered like some runic code. To shoot wasn't enough: there was something almost Borgesian about the labyrinths the damned things conjured in the imagination."

And how can you resist this:

"Howdy, ma'am," Bob sung out.

"Whachew want?" the old lady asked.

"See the colonel."

"Colonel don't see nobody these days."

"Hell, I have me a line on a pre-'64 70 in .270 once owned by a famous bad boy. Thought he might be interested."

"He's got enough guns."

"No such thing as enough guns, ma'am, I'll beg your pardon for saying so."

Bob Lee Swagger (not Robert) is from the Arkansas hills with a proud tradition of guns and serving the country. He himself was a Marine in the Vietnam War and when his ability to shoot was discovered, he became a sniper with the second highest number of confirmed kills – eighty seven and is also known as Bob the Nailer. He did three tours of duty till he and his friend and spotter Fenn were shot by an enemy sniper. Fenn died while Swagger was discharged as gunnery sergeant with a whole host of medals.

Swagger is unhappy with the way Vietnam veterans are treated by American society and after a bout of alcoholism and divorce has retreated to the hills with his dog as company and a few friends. However, he is not ashamed of who he is and what he has done:

"Don't kid yourself, wormboy. I'm a soldier. You're only a murderer. And because of what you've done, every man who ever loved a rifle is a suspect in his own house..."

He is still deeply patriotic though he has a rather pessimistic view of human nature and resigned to his routine till he is woken up by his adversaries:

"...You see, that's why they are so frightening. Most men care about life. In the end, most men always act out of self-preservation. But these two don't care and won't act that way. It's a function of self-hatred so passionately held that it's off the charts."

Another pause. Then Bob said, "You know, ..., you must come from some pretty soft places to find that so remarkable. You could be describing one half of the world's professional soldiers and both halves of its professional criminals. Truth is, I used to be one of those boys. Didn't give two hairs about surviving. Now I have something to live for. Now I'm scared to hell I'll die. Will it cost me my edge?"

He almost smiled, one of the few times Nick had ever seen anything so gentle play across the strong, hard features of his face.

"Sure is going to be damned entertaining to find out, isn't it?" Bob said."

I am not generally fond of sniper novels where an obscure government agency decides on who is an undesirable and therefore needs to be eliminated. But it is different in a war, where a sniper is as honourable a service as any other and maybe more difficult.

Above all, Swagger is an honourable man (one of his opponents describes him as sick with honor). After the war, he retains his passion for guns but no longer kills even for meat. He spends his time practising his skills or shooting bucks with bullets made by himself which only stun them while Swagger is able to cut their antlers so that they will not be targets for trophy hunters.

At this point Swagger is recruited to help prevent the shooting of the American President. Of course, this is a conspiracy with Swagger as the fall guy. The conspirators succeed (though it is not the President who is killed) to the extent that he is thought to be the actual sniper by virtually the whole nation but Swagger manages to escape. All the elements, which such a plot requires, are done extremely well with a precision of a chess game being played by grandmasters: the recruitment of Swagger, the trap and its execution, Swagger's escape, his search for the conspirators, his revenge and his exoneration.

What makes this novel truly special is that Swagger succeeds by using exactly and only the excellent skills developed by him as a sniper. Not just the long range shots but the ability to plan, the patience, the concentration and the ability to disappear. And all the insights he gets along the way to resolving the puzzle are based on his experience and knowledge gained by being a sniper. This is what makes this book different from other such books such as the Will Robie series etc. where we are just informed that they are world class snipers. With Swagger you feel it in every word he says and every action he takes.

Swagger's enemies are also aware of what it means that Swagger has escaped:

"You stupid asshole, don't you know a thing about how men's minds work? Or Swagger's kind of man? Don't you see the fucking joke in this? You see, we planned his death, but maybe we gave him his life. We have engaged him. He is back among the living, and he's got himself a war to fight, and all his skills and talents may be fully deployed. That's the terrible thing, the longer this goes on, the more he enjoys it, the stronger he gets. And he'll love it. He should pay us for it. We're giving him more fun than he's had since the war."

Yes, a lot of people are killed in this book but the plot requires it i.e. it is not gratuitous. After all, Swagger is not a policeman but a sniper and it is one man, well actually two as along the way he has found an ally in an FBI Agent Nick Memphis, against an army.

The plot also allows the author to make terrible fun of what used to be called East Coast liberals and their institutions such as Washington Post, New York Times and even Tom Brokaw. Swagger's apparent guilt allows them to pontificate about Swagger having been born and schooled in violence etc. An example: ""Swagger's Navy Cross bespeaks his aggressive nature and his reckless will to kill and prefigures the tragic events of March 1," Time said.

It was the second highest award his country could give him; and he'd saved a hundred lives those two days in the An Loc Valley. They made it seem like a crime."

The author is also able to make fun about the prejudices that exist about Southerners and gun aficionados:

"The room was large. The man who owned it had at one time or other killed every creature large and dangerous that walked upon the earth, and now the heads of his victims looked down upon their slayer, who was a plump man in his seventies sitting in an Eames chair reading a copy of -- Nick blinked, double-checked to make sure, but, yes -- The New York Review of Books. He didn't rise. The beasts stared from the walls. Most of the furniture was wooden and sleek and expensive, and Indian blankets and pottery were all

over the place. And so were books, hundreds and hundreds of books. And rifles. Nick had never seen so many rifles and so many books in one place before... "It sounds like a piece I'd be interested in. Lord knows, I've spent lots of foolish money on interesting rifles. If I didn't have so many damn oil wells, I might not be such a spendthrift, but I'm too old for women and I tired of killing some years back, so interesting rifles and the folly of New York intellectuals are my last remaining vices. And what would the price be?"'"

And:

"And I'll bet you that old country boy Bob Lee Swagger has some sly left up his sleeve. I'll tell you this, Nick, I'm from the South and I've known men like that my whole life. They're not much damn good at anything except dying in wars and shooting helpless animals, Lord knows why, and outsmarting the law. They're sly, that's their talent. And I never met anybody who could outsmart a sly old country boy and from what I've heard of Bob Lee Swagger, he's the slyest of them all. There's just no way a carpetbagging yankee like Howdy Duty or an old ghost like Hugh Meachum could bring it off. Nick, you've just got to believe in Bob Lee, do you hear me?"

I only have a few quibbles with this book and one of them concerns the ending. Knowing Swagger's personality and a hint given earlier in the book, the ending could not have been different. Still, it is too ingenious and difficult to believe. I have to admit though it is a really fun ending.

I know that this is the first book of what became a series. Normally, I would rush to read the second book but not just now because this book is so complete in itself.

I have to note that this novel in a strange way would be perfect for fantasy readers, especially fans like me of David Gemmell, because Swagger is a force of nature with honour. Don't get me wrong, there are no fantasy elements in this book. It is just that he is a hero with an epic quality. I hope this observation does not cause those readers of thrillers who abhor fantasy to not pick up this book. That would be rather unfortunate. Did I forget to mention that it is so well written and funny that I could keep on quoting?

""Do you shoot, young man?"

"Now and then," said Bob.

"It's not as simple as point and pull the trigger, you know?"

"So I hear," said Bob."

To sum up:

""Now that old Bob the Nailer, he's another interesting case. Can't figure how a boy like that would go so wrong."

"Maybe he was used by bad people."

"Well, I'd like to believe that. Hate to see a hero brought low. Ever read Othello, gentlemen?"

"Don't read plays," said Bob.

"I read it in high school," Nick added lamely.

"Well, old Bob reminds me of Othello. A great soldier, a good man. Twisted, played with, used by an Iago for some dreadful purpose. That play was a tragedy, one of Mr. Shakespeare's finest. Just like poor Bob's life -- an American tragedy."

"Well," said Bob, "don't believe Mr. Shakespeare had much use for happy endings, but the Bob Lee Swagger I knew all those years back, he may have been as stubborn as a goddamned mule, but he wasn't a fool either. So maybe somehow it'll work out for him. Good-bye, Colonel."

"Well, I hope so, boys," said the colonel, with just a hint of glee in his voice. "Because I'm too old for tragedy. I like a nice happy ending too."'"

Jane Stewart says

4 1/2 stars. Last half is good action suspense.

For the first 240 pages (42%) I was depressed and stressed. I had trouble sleeping at night. It was too much hopeless helpless victim feel because innocent man Bob Lee was framed for murder and on the run. THEN it changed and the rest of the book was exciting and hard to put down. Bob Lee was on a mission of retribution -- revenge. The bad guys were worried. There was a happy ending for the good guys which I liked. But I did not like one thing at the end. I did not understand why someone destroyed evidence.

There are a lot of technical details about rifles and guns. Some readers will like that, others won't. I don't know anything about guns but it sounded good to me.

Someone compared Bob Lee to Jack Reacher. The Bob Lee story was more realistic. Reacher requires more suspending disbelief. Also Reacher doesn't have the depressing and stressful effect that caused me to feel bad for a couple days.

Bob Lee Swagger was a top sniper in the Vietnam war. This story begins twenty years later. Bob lives with his dog in the Arkansas mountains. The second hero/good guy is Nick an FBI agent whose boss Howard cares about appearances instead of substance. Howard is like systemic poison.

DATA:

Narrative mode: 3rd person. Story length: 569 pages. Swearing language: strong including religious swear words but not often used. Sexual language: none to mild. Number of sex scenes: 3 briefly referred to. Setting: around 1992 various U.S. locations. Copyright: 1993. Genre: suspense thriller.

Mike French says

3 Things not to do:

Tug on Superman's cape
Spit into the wind
Mess with Bob Lee Swagger

A wild ride from start to finish. Make sure your seatbelts are fastened and your hands are inside the vehicle at all times! I thought J Carson Black's Cyril Landry was tough, but he is a wimp compared to Bob Lee! A must read for fans of Thrillers!

Asghar Abbas says

This is one of the THE best thrillers ever. A real one. Joyous to read from start to finish
It's an absolute shame that it is not more well known.
Character of Swagger is A celebration of Hunter's skills.

Benjamin Thomas says

I had read the novel *Hot Springs* by Stephen Hunter several years ago and had been pleasantly surprised by the quality of the work. And then, about a year later I saw the movie, "Shooter" starring Mark Wahlberg and once again, came away pleasantly surprised. I realized that the movie was based on the novel, "Point of Impact" also by Stephen Hunter but beyond that I discovered the two were related in a unique way. The main character in "Hot Springs" was Earl Swagger (with at least three books in that series) while the protagonist of "Point of Impact" is his son, Bob Lee Swagger, the lead character in a separate series. That mix got me interested in pursuing other novels in both series to discover what happened between the two separate time frames.

I've got to tell you...as much as I enjoyed the movie, *Shooter*, I was absolutely blown away (no pun intended) by the novel that it was based on. This book is a major tour de force, as they say, combining the best elements of action, hi-stakes crime, great settings, and noble and slimy characters alike. This is the first of the Bob Lee Swagger novels and what a character! Trained by the marines to be the soldier's soldier, and refined to be one of the best snipers in the world, his past almost becomes a character in itself as he is forced to deal with events beyond his control. This is a high-energy, well-plotted story that isn't always headed where you think it is; definitely one to keep you turning the pages into the wee hours of the morning.

I'm so glad there are quite a few books left in this series (and at least two more in Earl's series as well) for me to sink my teeth into.

Nu-Jahat-Jabin says

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