



A Wanted Man

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Four people in a car, hoping to make Chicago by morning. One man driving, another telling stories that don't add up. A woman in the back, silent and worried. And a hitchhiker with a broken nose. An hour behind them, the FBI descends on an old pumping station where a man was stabbed to death—the knife work professional, the killers nowhere to be seen.

All Jack Reacher wanted was a ride to Virginia. All he did was stick out his thumb. But he soon discovers he has hitched more than a ride. He has tied himself to a massive conspiracy, in which nothing is what it seems, and nobody is telling the truth.

A Wanted Man Details

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From Reader Review A Wanted Man for online ebook

James Thane says

Late one night in the middle of winter, Jack Reacher is standing by the road on an Interstate highway cloverleaf in the middle of nowhere, Nebraska. It's cold, there's very little traffic, and he's trying to hitch a ride that will get him to Chicago, from where he can make his way by bus or train to Virginia, which is his ultimate destination.

Catching a ride under these circumstances could be difficult in the best of times, but Reacher is a huge guy (much, much bigger than Tiny Tom Cruise), and he's sporting a recently broken nose that makes him look even more intimidating. Most reasonably normal travelers aren't going to take a chance on a guy who looks like this, especially at this time of night, and fifty-odd cars pass by without stopping. Finally, ninety-three minutes after Reacher first stuck out his thumb, a car finally stops.

The car is carrying two men and one woman who are wearing matching shirts and whom Reacher initially decides are on some sort of corporate team-building exercise. He accepts their offered ride and they speed off into the night. But as Reacher listens to them talk and watches their body language, he realizes that something is clearly off-norm here.

Meanwhile, back up the road, a man has been stabbed to death in an old pumping station by what would clearly appear to be a professional killer. Two men were seen leaving the scene and the local sheriff puts out an APB. Almost immediately, though, the FBI swoops onto the scene along with some other very secretive government types. Clearly, this is more than your average, run-of-the-mill homicide.

Thus begins another action-packed page turner from Lee Child. Reacher is on top of his game, broken nose or not, and there are two very interesting female characters along with an assortment of bad guys and government bureaucrats who, as we all know, should simply get the hell out of the way and let Reacher get the job done right.

I really enjoyed the first three-quarters of the book, but this is three stars for me, rather than four, because the last quarter of the book didn't measure up to the setup. I don't want to give anything away, and so I'll simply note that the payoff seemed a bit drawn out and even a little tedious.

One always has to suspend a great deal of disbelief when reading a book like this, and I have no problem doing so. But the end of the book seemed a little over the top even for a Reacher novel and not nearly as inventive or as interesting as the climaxes of most of the other books in this series. Still a fun read, but the first sixteen Reacher novels have perhaps set my expectations a bit too high for this one.

Harry Hemstreet says

Not one of his best, but still satisfying for us Reacher fans. Cannot visualize pipsqueak Tom Cruise as Jack Reacher.

Kashmir White says

I really did not want to read the reviews for this book. So I waited a long time before finally adding it to my "read" list and then looking to see how many stars it got. I was right to wait, because as I predicted the 3 star reviews are starting to get on my nerves. Maybe there's just no pleasing people anymore. I had the greatest time reading this book. 5 stars all the way from me. I didn't hate Worth Dying For, but I could understand why some readers didn't like it; it wasn't one of the best Reacher books. But this one felt like it made up for that one and more. Even as a stand alone book this was great. The publisher description says, "no one is what they seem," and "readers will be gasping," etc. That's usually just bs, but in this case it's actually true. The plot is full of twists and turns -- no, really! -- and I actually did gasp, I think more than once. I laughed a lot, too. The great thing about Reacher is his ironic humor. People complain about numbers and statistics quotes. Part of the charm of the series is knowing how Reacher thinks, why he can pull off stuff that you or I can't. He's ex-military but his brain works just like it did when he was still in the army. If he didn't think like that people would complain about his super powers. I'm surprised but not surprised by the negative reviews. And disappointed in the 3 star reviews. A couple of these reviews referred to other people's reviews as a reason for their own 3 star reviews! Come on, people. This is fiction. It's a thriller. It's not the Bible. Can't a book just be fun to read? And that's not a concession to the negative reviews - not only is this book fun but it's written well, the plot is excellent, the characters are well-crafted yada yada yada. All that good critique of literature stuff. Bottom line, if you like the Reacher series, this one is excellent and you won't be disappointed. If you're new to Reacher, I recommend it. I think 61 Hours is my favorite Reacher novel, but this one is definitely in the top 5.

Book Addict Shaun says

Another enjoyable adventure with Jack Reacher. He just cannot seem to make it to Virginia without continually getting caught up in some kind of drama in the arse end of nowhere... I enjoyed this story a lot (though haven't really disliked any of these books so far) and it held my interest throughout. The ending was great and as Reacher has now finally made it to Virginia I'm excited to see what awaits him on his arrival.

Fred Forbes says

The first book in my original kindle from years back is a Jack Reacher novel and I have long been a fan. But looking at the polarity of reviews on this one, I almost passed but felt I owed it a read. The criticisms are just - the book has long boring stretches, the number games get old real fast, and it is repetitive in places. (Are there really that many folks that know the area code, population, size in square miles and ranking in GDP of most major metro areas?) The story gets a bit convoluted in places and it did not seem the ending jelled properly, but there are the moments that Reacher is known for that made it worth reading, so I'm, coming down in the middle with a 3 star rating.

Krycek says

If a six-foot-five, two-hundred and fifty pound hobo with a busted nose manages to hitch a ride with strangers at night you can probably make a safe bet that something is amiss. Turns out there is more to his new traveling companions than meets the eye and Jack Reacher finds himself on a car ride through the midwest that's as thrilling as...well, a car ride through the midwest.

I'm a fan of the Reacher series. While these novels might not be masterpieces of the genre, they are fun and reliable. You pretty much know what you're going to get. Actually, they make me happy. The way a pizza makes me happy. Or a cheeseburger and fries. This one did not make me happy. This was a pizza with pineapple on it. A cheeseburger and fries left to harden in its own fat. I'll still eat it, but it's a little sad.

I don't know if Child is getting tired of writing for Reacher or what, but he was clearly not in good form this time. I honestly think that Child's writing at times approaches the sublime in its clunkiness. He's not trying to be literary. His prose is as subtle as walking into a door, but it is appropriate for the stories he tells and I find his disdain for pretense refreshing. But this time I think Lee Child was phoning it in.

Sure, we get the usual Reacherisms. We get the usual taciturnity, the geeky obsession with trivia and numbers, the smart mouth to the bad guys and the requisite ultraviolent retribution at the end. Reacher goes shopping for new clothes at the dollar store like in every other book. He sees injustice, like in every other book, and a mystery and to sate his curiosity takes extreme and unauthorized measures to set things right. This book has the required elements. But ultimately it was soulless. It was checking the box. Going through the motions. Most of the dialogue was basically Reacher thinking aloud with others about what might be going on. And driving. A lot of driving. Here and there, back and forth. Check on this, check on that, drive drive drive.

The conclusion was appropriately violent with Reacher taking on the enemy against all odds, but so what? (view spoiler) By the time it got to that point I just wanted to end it already.

Really, I don't know what Child was thinking. Maybe he thought he could coast a little, what with a movie coming out and Tom Cruise playing Jack Reacher. I can't blame Child for letting Tom Cruise play Reacher. If Cruise is in a movie it for sure is going to get made. The road to hell is paved with movies that were sold but never made. So in that sense Child's decision is as practical as his prose and probably a good one.

But still (and this makes no logical sense) I can't help but feel that if Dolph Lundgren was playing Jack Reacher this novel may have been better. Lundgren is physically perfect for the role. He's actually not a bad actor, but he's not as popular as Cruise. I get the feeling that if this were the case then maybe Child would not have set the "Cruise" control on this novel. Maybe he would have felt more of a hunger to make this Reacher novel, you know, kinda good.

But, Reacher and Mr. Child, I have not given up on you. I know they cannot all be gems. I am understanding. Considering the countless hours of mindless escapist enjoyment you have provided me I am still, indeed, in your debt. I am still a "Reacher Creature."

But don't let it happen again. Reacher spoke of a motto in one of the books: *Never forgive. Never forget.*

Just sayin'.

Jim A says

On the positive side, it's a Reacher book.

On the negative side, it's not the same Reacher I have grown to enjoy reading.

First, it starts where Worth Dying For ended. The problem with that is there was a prequel in between and I have very little recollection of the plot of WDF, which itself was a continuation of 61 Hours. Needless to say, I had no idea how Reacher's nose became broken by the guy with the shotgun. Then comes the endless thoughts of Reacher during the car trip. A lot of it comes together later in the book, but jeez, it was boring reading. It was almost like Child was padding the word count with information that may or may not prove useful later. Example: Page 15 "There were plenty of buses in Chicago. Plenty of morning departures. South through Illinois, east through Kentucky, and then Virginia was right there." Okay, normal thought for a hitchhiker just told the car was going to Chicago. But then on page 36 is the exact same thought, in the exact same wording.

With the switching back and forth between characters, Reacher, the FBI agent, the sheriff, the thought came to me that maybe Child wasn't the sole author of this and he shared the project with his brother, also an author. As I said, it was just a thought.

Bottom line: Although it was a Reacher novel, I was happier when I turned the last page than I was while reading the novel. That is not a good thing. I much prefer to end a novel feeling like I had a good time and can't wait until we once again can share a couple of days, instead of 'jeez, I'm glad that visit is over'.

Michael says

Simply delicious. Jack Reacher doing what he does best. Despite a choice to live a simple life of traveling with no possessions or personal involvements, this ex-military policeman finds himself getting drawn into the plight of strangers in trouble, solves a mystery in a slow inexorable fashion from the most limited clues, and gets forced into a situation where extreme, righteous violence gets unleashed to resolve the problem. Though it sounds like a boring formula (similar to the 70's TV series "Kung Fu" with David Carradine), Child plays it out like a jazz master.

Here Reacher is hitchhiking through Nebraska and gets picked up by two men and a woman, claiming to be software salesmen on the way to Chicago. From tiny clues in conversation and actions, Reacher figures out that there is a hidden agenda. The reader has access early on the mind of an old sheriff and an ambitious female FBI agent working on a murder at an old water pumping station on the prairie near the town where Reacher is picked up. The reader's curiosity is also stimulated early on by the interest in the case by counter-terrorist agents and by the State Department.

As usual, Child uses short declarative sentences with almost no adjectives, making the language disappear and leaving you with a stream of concrete perceptions, dialogue, and problem solving thoughts. Reacher's pragmatic, skeptical approach to all he encounters makes him an "everyman" you can identify with. Just a

thoughtful guy who honors a good cup of coffee as a sacred pleasure. His skills at reading people and making inferences cast the illusion that you could do so as well if you tried. But when backed into a corner, his ability to take immediate effective action brings his special military capabilities into play. And when really pressed, he can become a one-man army. But without the Bruce Willis-style "Die Hard" macho and humor. Just a matter-of-fact killing machine with a good heart underneath. Got to love the guy. Why else would I still be satisfied with completing this the 17th in the series.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

A Wanted Man (Jack Reacher, #17), Lee Child

Carolyn says

This book felt sloppy and tired. Certainly the weakest in the series. Not enough cool fights, not enough female action. Just a quickie.

Jennifer says

This book was so bad that it made me crabby to read it. I am such a fan of the Reacher series that I can't believe how awful and painful of a read this was. The story is painfully slow ... and boring. No exaggeration, Reacher is in a car on the world's most boring car ride for the first 30 chapters of the book. 30 chapters. 5 hours. That is how long the first 30 chapters are in audio book. 5 hours. 300 minutes. 18,000 seconds. In a car. Doing nothing.

Here is a conundrum. What is worse than reading the most boring Reacher book ever written? It is listening to the most boring Reacher story ever written while Reacher simultaneously has a broken nose throughout the book. You know, someone who would sound like this "my node id tuffy" instead of "my nose is stuffy". Imagine Reacher speaking with a tuffy node. For 14+ hours. 840 minutes. 50,400 seconds. A tuffy node. Just try talking aloud as if you had one, even for 1 minute. 60 seconds. Trust me, you will find the sound so annoying that you will take a vow of silence the next time you truly do have a tuffy node.

The story is boring, the characters (including my beloved Jack) are boring, and the unnecessary repetition of the most mundane detail make me question whether Lee Child is now paid by the number of words in a book rather than for any measure of quality.

I awaited the arrival of this book with barely a measure of patience. I started trying to purchase at 11PM CDT on Sep. 10 thinking it might be available since it was then Sep. 11 in EDT (FYI, it didn't work and I had to wait until after midnight, which I did). I believe I finalized my purchase via iTunes at about 12:08 a.m. I couldn't wait to get my Reacher on. Not only will I now never, ever pay for another Reacher book (though I might check it out from the library), but I am tempted to write Lee Child and ask for my money back. THAT is how awful I find this book.

I have read every Reacher book, many more than once, and many repurchased in audio so that I could get my Reacher fix while waiting for the next installment. I am willing to suspend reality in favor of a good read. I am even willing to read/listen to some less than stellar books for the sake of an overall decent or entertaining story. I found the last couple of installments to be a bit disappointing but still held out hope that "the next one would be better". Sadly, it seems that is simply not going to happen.

For any true Reacher fans, I suspect you will need to read it for yourself in order to believe just how bad it is. At least save yourself the wasted money and get it from the library. It's a real pisser to spend so much money on a beloved series only to end up with such a stinker of a story.

For anyone new to Reacher, run fast and far far away from #17 and in fact maybe just stop before you get to #15. I promise if you read this one first it is unlikely that you will want to read any of the others. I know I wouldn't.

Bella South says

I don't understand the bad reviews for A Wanted Man. I enjoyed the "boring" parts - found them atmospheric and suspenseful. This latest installment may have lacked the usual amount of action, but it still had that Reacher-Is-The-Man magic. I must agree with another reviewer though - Child didn't segue between the previous novel and this one correctly. I mean, didn't he get a broken nose in that bunker? And now he had nothing to do with what happened in the bunker? Did I miss something? That's okay though. The worst moments reading Reacher are better than the best moments working, right?

Kwoomac says

Ok, I like Jack Reacher novels. They're formulaic, completely predictable, and the action scenes are fun, in a shoot-em-up kind of way. I do continue to have a slight problem with his juvenile taunting, which often deteriorates into "yo mamma" territory, but maybe that's just me.

What I really need to talk about is the upcoming movie "Jack Reacher" based on the first book One Shot. Tom Cruise is playing Jack Reacher! Nothing against Tom Cruise (as an actor) but seriously?

Here's a description of JR from this latest book: *He was one of the largest men she had ever seen outside of the NFL. He was extremely tall, and extremely broad, and long-armed and long-legged. The lawn chair was regular size, but it looked tiny under him. It was bent and crushed out of shape. His knuckles were nearly touching the ground. His neck was thick and his hands were the size of dinner plates.* Does that sound anything like Tom Cruise? He is not a big man. He's not even an average size man. I'm taller than him! I don't get it. Some authors don't go into a lot of detail about what their hero looks like, but Lee Child does. In every book. There is always something about how freakishly big he is. Tom Cruise is no Jack Reacher. I am very disappointed.

Runonbrisbane says

Just finished. Worst Reacher book ever. Why ? 1. He throws his first punch on page 327. 2. Has Lee Child accepted payment from McDonalds for product placement ? (count the number of times he mentions it in this book. Compare it to all his other books combined) 3. He throws his second punch on page 376.. 4. 51 pages later the book ends with plot holes that I won't go into in case you still want to read it. I'm sorry Lee but if you're mellowing with age and looking after your retirement income then stop writing the books and just leave it to Tom Cruise to ruin the rest for us.

I know a lack of violence is not a sign of a bad book, but it was like reading a bad detective novel with a predictably theatrical ending. Poorly crafted. Lazy ending. Not consistent with the author's earlier style. Cynically I might say this was ideally written for Cruise to be able to fill the role in a future movie as the first priority, possibly leading to more dollars heading the author's way .. after McDonalds seemingly has boosted his coffers as well.

Insipid at best.

Alexa ❤? says

5 Stars

Reacher is as badass as ever! especially with his broken nose.

A Wanted Man had so many twists and turns it was hard to know what was real, who was actually who they said they were and what was the bad guys actual motive. It kept me guessing until I devoured the last page.

Sorenson, Delfuenso and McQueen were all interesting side characters.

Overall brilliant action packed with more plot twists than an enigma wrapped up in a conundrum inside a puzzle
