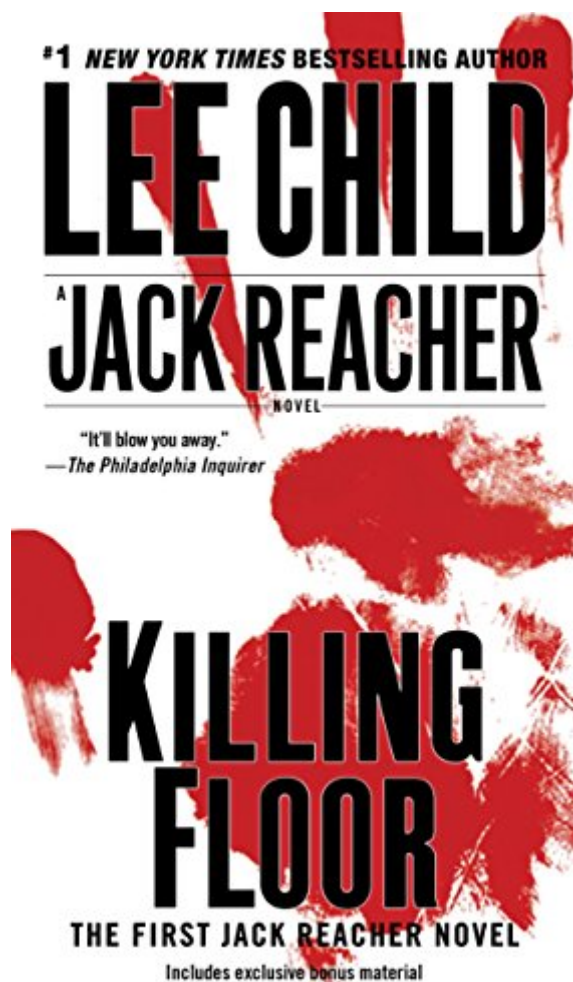


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Killing Floor (Jack Reacher, Book 1)



Synopsis

THE FIRST JACK REACHER NOVEL The bestselling novel featuring the “wonderfully epic hero” (People) who inspired the hit films Jack Reacher and Jack Reacher: Never Go Back. Ex-military policeman Jack Reacher is a drifter. He’s just passing through Margrave, Georgia, and in less than an hour, he’s arrested for murder. Not much of a welcome. All Reacher knows is that he didn’t kill anybody. At least not here. Not lately. But he doesn’t stand a chance of convincing anyone. Not in Margrave, Georgia. Not a chance in hell.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Considering that it’s been 20 years since Lee Child’s first Jack Reacher novel, “Killing Floor” was published I acknowledge I’m late to the party with this review. I’ve avoided this genre for years as there are a dozen guys out there writing this type of fiction. They all seem cut from the same cloth; a former military Spec Ops guy who suffers personal loss and is damaged drops off the

grid and drifts around getting embroiled in various subterfuge. He's big, bad, a master of special skills, and is just one rung down from having lineage traceable to the planet Krypton. They all seem the same and the stories contrived so they failed to appeal to me. Well, guess I've been wrong because "Killing Floor" grabbed me from the first page. Ex-Army Military Policeman Jack Reacher is 6 foot 6 inches of bad mamma-jama and yes he's damaged goods, wandering through Georgia when he's arrested in a diner for a murder which he's not committed. The story rockets along at a blistering pace with plenty of action, twists and turns, and excitement for 529 pages. I've already bought the next two in the 21 (and counting) book series. In the forward to this paperback edition Child tells the readers his objective when creating the Reacher character was to have someone who was pretty much indestructible- a guy who does not lose and vanquishes every bad guy he meets. He wanted someone different from the flawed and vulnerable heroes in other books and find themselves in mortal jeopardy at every turn and in Jack Reacher he succeeds. Knowing the hero isn't going to fail does not lessen the suspense and it's fun watching how Reacher takes down the scum. It's kind of like satisfaction you get watching a Jason Bourne movie.

I'm a big fan of the Reacher character. He's tough, hard-boiled and not some vulnerable wimp. Having read some of Child's later books, I went back to the beginning with this first book (i.e., the publishing chronology as opposed to the series chronology) and noticed a huge difference that a few books can make on the evolution of the writing craft! This first story is a bit choppy and Reacher sounds more British here than he does in later stories. That can be a tad annoying because it seems that Reacher is out of character. But if you remember that Child's writing develops as he goes on and you remove any bias on that end, this is a great story to read. The description of how he busts heads is also quite a pleasure.

I had seen the Jack Reacher movie and did enjoy it. Given the faithful pan of the movie I finally got around to reading the book thinking that these would be so much better. There was a foreword by the author describing how he became an author and how he developed the Jack Reacher character. He described how Jack is always a few steps ahead and doesn't ever really lose. I thought about some other characters that I have been hooked on over the years in literature and realized that was their main quality as well. These characters are the ones that pull you along

and keep you guessing. They are not the underdog and while they sometimes are at a disadvantage, they always prevail. Perhaps with his first novel, Mr. Child was still figuring out his art and his main character. The plot was cumbersome and seldom provided any surprises - the reader figures out the plots twists and turns long before Mr. Reacher does. In fact it makes the story drag as you wait for Jack to catch up. One character is so implausible that one immediately questions his role - he becomes a rather obvious villain very early on and yet Reacher doesn't catch on until the final pages. As other readers have described there are so many unlikely scenarios and predictable twists and turns that the novel becomes a chore to finish at the end. Jack Reacher faithful knocked the movie, but the film was far more enjoyable than this. I can only hope the novels improve (I bought several).

I was a little disappointed with the book. It was ok but I'd seen the movie and really expected the book to be a lot better. Maybe later books in the series are better but I'll read a lot of reviews before I try another one. Don't see the movie if you plan to read the books. The Jack Reacher that Tom Cruise plays in the movie is very different compared to the Jack Reacher in this book. That difference is one thing that I couldn't get past enough to enjoy the book. Another fear I have is if you read one of the books you basically have read them all. I say that because of the plot similarities of the movie, which is not based on this book, and the book.

Coming back to this novel after all these years is illuminating. The adventure/thriller genre has changed a bit, but Jack Reacher is still there on the top of the heap. What I have always enjoyed is the classic PI independent vibe, with a dash of military "breaking things and killing people." I started re-reading these novels after breaking my long standing policy of not watching movies based on novels I like. I got what I expected. Tom, your Jack Reacher is not bad for a movie character, but not big enough or tough enough to match the character as written. My advice to those who loved the movie "Jack Reacher" should go back to the source and meet the "real" lonesome Jack. Only trouble for me is now he looks like Tom Cruise instead of Fred Dryer. I guess I can get used to that.

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