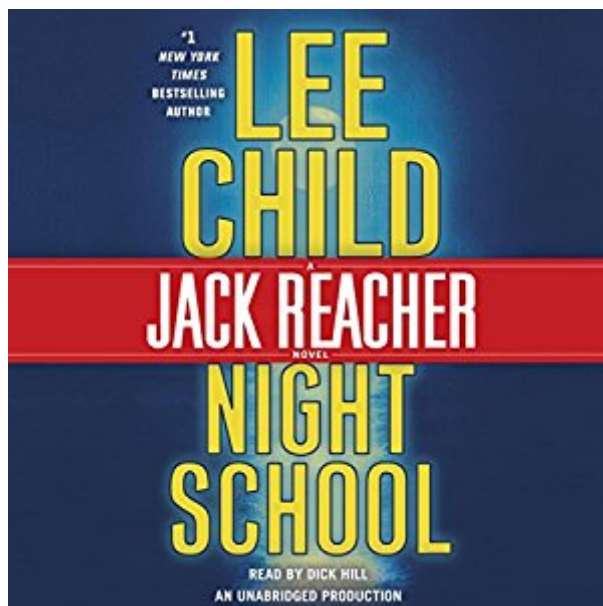


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Night School: A Jack Reacher Novel, Book 21



Synopsis

Discover the thriller series that The New York Times calls "utterly addictive". After 11 straight global number one best sellers, Lee Child sends listeners back to school with the most explosive Jack Reacher novel yet. It's 1996, and Reacher is still in the army. In the morning they give him a medal, and in the afternoon they send him back to school. That night he's off the grid. Out of sight, out of mind. Two other men are in the classroom - an FBI agent and a CIA analyst. Each is a first-rate operator, each is fresh off a big win, and each is wondering what the hell they are doing there. Then they find out: A jihadist sleeper cell in Hamburg, Germany, has received an unexpected visitor - a Saudi courier seeking safe haven while waiting to rendezvous with persons unknown. A CIA asset undercover inside the cell has overheard the courier whisper a chilling message: "The American wants a hundred million dollars." For what? And who from? Reacher and his two new friends are told to find the American. Reacher recruits the best soldier he has ever worked with: Sergeant Frances Neagley. Their mission heats up in more ways than one, while always keeping their eyes on the prize: If they don't get their man, the world will suffer an epic act of terrorism. From Langley to Hamburg, Jalalabad to Kiev, Night School moves like a bullet through a treacherous landscape of double crosses, faked identities, and new and terrible enemies as Reacher maneuvers inside the game and outside the law.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've read all 20 Jack Reacher novels, written by Lee Child. I jumped at the chance to

evaluate copy of his newest book. You don't read 20 of anything unless you really like the characters, and "Night School" is no different. Taking place back in the mid-90's Military Police Major Jack Reacher is reassigned to go back to school "but it isn't what anyone thinks. It's really just a cover to investigate a possible act of treason and terrorism. Reacher teams up with his old colleague Sgt. Frances Neagley and a group of new folks representing the FBI, CIA and the national Security Council to find out what is happening and how to stop it. The best part of a mystery is finding out what happens, so I won't spoil anything, but Jack Reacher does his usual thing and in the end prevails in the usual Reacher fashion. The interaction between Neagley and Reacher, along with the other team members is entertaining. That's the good part, now the part that isn't quite as good. I like Reacher novels because over the years he has been consistent - Jack Reacher is a really interesting character " keeps a clock in his head " always know exactly what time it is. Calculates the physics of a punch before he throws it, etc. In this book, Reacher is a bit more superficial. There is a lot less of Reacher's thought process in this book and I felt it made the book a bit less fun to read. In fact, I can only give it "4 Stars" because it's good " very good, in fact| but it lacks a bit of what makes Reacher novels so enjoyable. Reacher fans will love it. Folks new to the series will enjoy it, as well. I enjoyed it. I just wish Lee Child done a bit more to keep Reacher's character as unique and entertaining as he has done in the past.

I've been a Lee Child fan since reading my first Jack Reacher novel, so you can imagine my disappointment when I began Night School and discovered it wasn't the old ex-Army Reacher. Night School is set in the era before Reacher left the Army. The story itself is okay, good even, but not the independent Reacher we've come to know. To be sure, some of the elements are there such as his impeccable logic, but it just doesn't have the same Reacher feel. Does my disappointment mean I'll stop buying Child's novels? No, it just means I'll scrutinize them much closer and won't buy them on a pre-release basis.

I love Reacher novels, and own them all, but this one was flat-out boring. Normally I can't stop reading and end up losing sleep because I have to know what happens next. With "Night School" I had to force myself to keep going. I'd suggest skipping this one, or waiting till later once the price has dropped.

Lee Child, in "Night School," takes us back to 1996, when Jack Reacher was a thirty-five year old army major who had served his country for twelve years. His superior officer, General Garber, orders him to report to the Pentagon, where he is supposed to take a continuing education course. However, this is merely a ruse to keep anyone from knowing that the President of the United States wants Jack and a select group of agents from the CIA and FBI to prevent a catastrophe. Alfred Ratcliffe, the National Security Adviser, and Ratcliffe's deputy, Dr. Marion Sinclair, inform Reacher and his colleagues that an Iranian spy working for the CIA in Hamburg, Germany, has learned that Middle-Eastern extremists are about to make a major purchase from an unidentified American. We are off to the races, and fortunately, Reacher is on our side. In addition to his prowess in hand-to-hand combat (he is six feet five and two hundred and fifty pounds of muscle), Jack is a thinker who analyzes data, makes critical decisions, deploys resources as needed, and uses his uncanny instincts to excellent advantage. He recruits the intelligent and competent Sergeant Frances Neagley to assist him. Jack and company face a daunting challenge: They must identify the key players in this proposed exchange; find out where and when the sale is supposed to take place; and stop it from happening. All of this must be accomplished without alerting the public. Reacher ignores orders and sidesteps the law when it suits him. He knows that if he succeeds, he will be forgiven, but if he fails, he will be blamed and perhaps face prosecution. "Night School" is a diverting throwback to the days before 9/11. The Internet and supercomputers had not yet changed the world. In addition to Reacher, a man who makes every word and deed count, the cast includes a German chief of detectives who has good reason to help Jack; a band of Aryan racists eager to pursue their own nefarious agenda; and the shadowy American who intends to enrich himself at the expense of countless innocent lives. This plot-driven story has the usual clichés (a race against time, highly-charged romantic encounters between Jack and his sexy lover, and a final violent confrontation), and the author makes no attempt to delineate his characters with any degree of subtlety. "Night School" may not be great literature, but Child doesn't pretend to be Tolstoy. He delivers a fast-paced novel of action-adventure that has enough thrills to entertain fans of this long-running series.

As a big fan of the Jack Reacher series I was very much looking forward to this book when I found out it was a prequel. I thought it would be sort of an origination story, telling the how and why of Jack Reacher. Unfortunately this was not the case. I always marveled at Mr. Child's economy of words and fascinating stories, though similar to each other, different enough to be definitely worth reading. In this book the plot moves ponderously with way too many words getting in the way of it.

Likewise, the amazing number of "wild guesses" that prove to be incredibly accurate, enabling our hero to once again defeat a terrible enemy were just too good to be true and burst the bubble of artificial reality a great author like Mr. Child creates. I was brought back to reality time and again by the number of these remarkable deductions. Though I will continue to read the series, until convinced Mr. Child has "lost it", I cannot recommend this book.

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