



## Step on a Crack

*James Patterson , Michael Ledwidge*

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Patterson and Ledwidge introduce a new hero in an exciting thriller set in the heart of Manhattan. NYPD detective Michael Bennett is concentrating on getting his family through a particularly difficult Christmas: he and his 10 adopted children are facing the loss to cancer of his brave wife, Maeve. But a major crisis calls him away: the funeral of a former First Lady at St. Patrick's Cathedral goes horribly awry when men storm the church and take hundreds of attendees hostage. Michael is asked to try to reason with a sinister man named Jack. Jack releases all but the most famous people, and makes his demands: he wants several million dollars from each celebrity hostage, including the mayor, a popular comedic actor, a beloved talk show host, and a pop starlet. Once Jack starts killing, Michael realizes he's up against a truly diabolical foe. Patterson has a knack for creating genuinely likable heroes, and Michael fits the bill. As readers rapidly turn the pages to learn how the tense hostage drama plays out, they will also be sympathizing with Michael as he faces the agonizing loss of his wife. Totally gripping and downright impossible to put down, this is a promising start to a potential new series.

## Step on a Crack Details

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Author : James Patterson , Michael Ledwidge

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### Γι?ννης says

Ικανοποιητικ? Θρ?λερ με θ?μα μια ομηρ?α, αλλ? τ?ποτα περισσ?τερο. Στα θετικ? το ?τι οι δρ?στες δεν ?ταν μουσουλμ?νοι υποκινο?μενοι απ? Ρ?σους ?πως συμβα?νει συν?θως σε τ?τοιου ε?δους μυθιστορ?ματα γραμμ?να μετ? το 2001. Στα αρνητικ?, δεν λε?πει καν?να ?λλο απ? τα κλισ? του ε?δους.

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### Christine says

I found this book to be highly unbelievable. What busy detective is going to have ten adopted children!? How odd that the former first lady is murdered and at her funeral terrorists see this as an opportunity to strike. And at the same time his wife loses her battle with a deadly disease, leaving him with all the children and a high-profile case. This story is too cliché and predictable. We barely get into the depth of the characters and there seem to be plot holes.

The insanely short chapters made me feel like I was reading a play rather than a novel. It seems to me that the strain of producing so many books a year is causing Mr. Patterson to be lazy in his work. Simply churning out books for profit, rather than genuine storytelling.

I've not given up on James Patterson though, as I have been told his Experiment novels are much better than this crime dramas. Perhaps I will have better luck there, but I'm sure this is the last of his murder mysteries I will read. Die-hard Patterson fans will no doubt love this, but it's just not my cup of tea.

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### John says

Epic fail. The best thing that could be said about this book is that it could serve as an invaluable tool for writing teachers demonstrating to their students hot NOT to write a novel. It breaks every rule for good writing imaginable; not to mention that everything about Step on a Crack is shallow and unconvincing. The plot. The characters. The drama. The action. The romance. The comedic relief. Everything. How sad that Patterson gets paid by the boatload to pen such dreck. The story comes across as an ill-advised combination of Cheaper By the Dozen and Dog Day Afternoon, as written by a high school kid. Better to stick with Patterson's previous Ledwidge collaboration, The Quickie, which actually gets a few things right and is reasonably entertaining to boot. I give it two stars instead of one simply because at least a few of its 116 chapters were somewhat amusing, and it's a very quick read.

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### Nicole Alycia says

Great storyline. Great characters. Great book.  
This is, by far, my favorite James Patterson series.  
That is all.

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### **Brett Tompkins says**

For the first time with a Patterson novel, I had a difficult time getting into the story in the beginning. However, I eventually became engrossed with it and couldn't put it down. I read some reviews that said it was a typical Patterson and that they are all the same, however I would have to disagree with that. The story line was quite different in this book than the others of his I've read. Of course, if they are referring to it being a detective thriller, then yes it is like his others. I found that Patterson put a original twist on the played out bad guy/cops hostage negotiation story. By now we are all well versed in hostage negotiations via books and movies. Make contact with bad guy, try to calm him down, establish good rapport, try to get them to release some hostages in good faith, blah blah blah. Despite the cliche hostage foundation for this story, Patterson was able to make it original and put some good twists. Another good story from Patterson.

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### **Jennifer Wardrip says**

James Patterson introduces us to a new character with **STEP ON A CRACK**, NYPD Homicide Detective Michael Bennett. A former hostage negotiator, Bennett finds himself once again dealing with psychopaths when the celebrities attending former First Lady Caroline Hopkins' funeral are held hostage.

I have to say that the actual meat of the story, the hijacking of St. Patrick's church and its funeral-attending creme de la creme of society, was an intriguing storyline. What weighed the story down, at least for me, was that fact that Michael Bennett wasn't a character I could easily relate to.

It isn't the fact that his wife, Maeve, is dying of cancer, or even that they have ten adopted children. It's not Maeve's seemingly long-lost cousin, Mary Catherine, who shows up out of the blue to serve as the couple's au pair. It's not even Michael's grandfather, the crusty yet heart-of-gold Irish priest. No, the problem is that all of these characters, who could have made the story emotional and heartbreakin, seem to do nothing more than serve as filler.

The ten children are interchangeable. Mary Catherine could be nominated for the sainthood. And Seamus, the grandfather, could be any number of wise-cracking old codgers from one of today's sitcoms.

I'll read the next Bennett book when it comes out, mostly out of the hope that the secondary storyline will be as compelling as the main plot. We'll have to see. For fans of Patterson, this is one you'll want to read, but I'd advise checking it out from the library before plunking down the cold hard cash to purchase it in hardcover.

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### **Ms. Nikki says**

Meet Michael Bennett; father to 10, husband to a dying wife, hostage negotiator, and son to an ever smart-mouth Irish man.

The story: Definitely worth reading if you like Patterson's way of telling a story.

It was hard at first for me to get into Step on a Crack since I've been on an Alex Cross kick for a while now.

The Cast: Plenty of them.

The secondary characters were wonderful and I hope we learn more about them as they play a huge role in the Bennett household and in this book they were kind of like stand-ins, filling in voids until Michael would get home.

The Job: Stop mad men from killing the elite.

I have to admit Michael didn't seem to be very good at his job even though he was called in on this one. At one point earlier in the story Michael even said there had to be someone on the outside. I thought "we're finally getting somewhere" and then he never followed through only to say the exact same thing later in the book and then it finally hits home and the search is on.

Will try book two.

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### **Charlotte Smith says**

What a book, never in a million years the kidnappers were who they were. It also had me in tears on the sad side hope Mike gets done good luck in the books.

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### **Lee Kyle says**

The first of the series pertaining to top Nypd detective Michael Bennett. I had read Tick Tock prior to this and found out whilst reading the inner book cover that it was the latest in a series featuring Bennett. I'm so glad i took a chance with purchasing my first Patterson novel 'Toys' as this guy is now in my list of top fave authors. I wonder in amazement how this guy can bang out as many books as he does and they are all so freakin good? Step On A Crack is no different as i was on the edge of my seat throughout this very intriguing page turner. Top Nypd detective Michael Bennett is introduced here along with his ailing wife Maeve who is hospitalized due to termanal cancer and their 10 adopted children from various nationalities. The Christmas hilidays are here and as all the citizens of N.Y. rush home with their gifts and prepare for their individual festivities, the Bennetts are struggling to keep happy faces as their mother is in hospital with not very much time to live. Michael whilst dealing with this personal trauma gets pulled into a hijacking/hostage scenerio as some very bad individuals during the first lady's funeral take over St Patrick's Cathedral that is packed with the whose who of the weathiest of people from all forms of employment. Actors, politicians and various other wealthy individuals. We watch as Bennett who has been name the chief negotiator to this case can balance all this and his home life without blowing everything.

A great page turner that i accomplished in no less then 3 days as i usually do with all of Patterson's reads. Even though his works are immense i am now working my way rapidly through the collection and cannot wait till the next read.>>>

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## **Michelle says**

This was pretty far fetched... I usually like Patterson's books a lot, and I am not going to say this wasn't entertaining. It was. However, for the same New York homicide cop to do everything for such a high profile case didn't seem remotely plausible. He did all the hostage negotiations, he was in the group that tried to break in and stop the kidnapping, he was the one to run out and see the bodies when the kidnappers threw them out of the church, he was in the helicopter following the get away cars, and he was the one in the water helping save the victims? Really? All of course in his wife's last few days on earth as she died of cancer.

The story was good, you didn't know what was coming next, and the 'bad guys' were not obvious to figure out. It would have been a much better read if it had been grounded a bit more in reality for the main character.

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## **João Carlos says**

Interior da Catedral de St. Patrick (Nova Iorque)

O Natal está próximo.

Mike Bennett é um detective da polícia de Nova Iorque que tem a sua amada mulher Maeve num hospital a lutar contra um cancro em fase terminal.

Bennett tem que cuidar dos seus dez filhos adoptivos e de Socky "uma gata branca e cinzenta, arisca que Maeve recolhera do caixote do lixo ao lado do nosso prédio na Avenida West End. A minha mulher tinha obviamente um fraquinho por desgraçados e vadios. O facto de ter casado comigo provou-o há muito tempo."

Um acontecimento inesperado – a morte da ex-Primeira-Dama – por envenenamento?

A missa fúnebre decorre na sumptuosa Catedral de St. Patrick, Nova Iorque e estão presentes metade de Hollywood, Wall Street e Washington; mas o "Impecável", "Jack" e uma dúzia de homens com coletes à prova de bala, pistolas Smith & Wesson de 9 mm, armas paralisantes e espingardas de motim, envergando fatos de monge, com capuzes e máscaras, têm outras intenções – um sequestro de proporções inimagináveis. Bennett é chamado para liderar a equipa de investigação - mas há muitas questões sem resposta: Quem o teria feito? Quem era capaz de tanta genialidade e brutalidade? Homens com muita determinação, para começar, deduzir; e homens sem medo de recorrer a uma violência extrema como meio para um fim egoísta." (Pág. 238) ou "Como é que os sequestradores percebiam tanto de tácticas de cerco? E como é que pareciam saber o que nós íamos fazer a seguir?" (Pág. 241)

A dupla James Patterson e Michael Ledwidge escreve um excelente policial com o detective Bennett, que tem que enfrentar dois inimigos implacáveis – a inevitabilidade da perda da sua amada mulher Maeve e Jack, o líder dos sequestradores – num enredo credível, com capítulos curtos, entre uma e três páginas, com excelentes personagens, com diálogos simples e directos, doseando exemplarmente o choque e a crueldade de alguma sequências, o que acaba por conferir uma autenticidade suplementar à narrativa e ao suspense.

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## **Carol says**

This is James Patterson's and Michael Ledwidge's first book in the Michael Bennett Series. I'm famous for

getting books out of order as my library rarely has them in order. This is a very touching book, and a tough one as the case he is working on is a very hard one, and his wife Maeve is dying of cancer. SNIFF SNIFF.

So as Bennett is pursuing his most diabolical criminal ever to terrify New York City. During a State funeral for a former First Lady in New York City's largest cathedral, the unthinkable occurs. Armed men disguised as monks seize the church and seal themselves inside, along with over one hundred of the most powerful people in America. The captives include world leaders, actors, TV stars, athletes, and politicians. The kidnappers are armed with enough explosives to blow a crater in the middle of Manhattan. NYPD officer Michael Bennett is pulled into the standoff as lead negotiator. Despite the escalating danger, Michael faces an even more terrifying crisis at home.

I think this book touched me extra hard, as Maeve dies, and Mike and their 10 kids, his grandfather Shamus, and their new oppare (sp) Mary Catherine from Ireland, I also put my cat down a couple days ago. So I'm sitting here bawling and bawling as I am touched by both stories and experiences so much.

This is a very good way to start this series. I'm hooked and highly recommend.

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### **Kelli says**

Well, once again another James Patterson book, but not belonging to any series. Amazing how a detective in downtown NYC can still solve a major mystery involving a hostage situation over Christmas, with a dying wife and 10 kids can hold it together. I'd like to get some advice from this character, since I feel like I can barely handle my stay at home life with four kids.....

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### **Miriam Smith says**

"Step On A Crack" is the first in the Michael Bennett series by James Patterson. Unfortunately for me I have read some of these out of order and wish I had read this one first as it covers Michael's wife and her death, which features strongly emotionally in the future books, and the introduction of Mary Catherine. I do find the many children rather irritating, but this story is very strong, sometimes violent but with a good plot and a twist I didn't see coming. Michael's private life was very emotional and I felt it was handled very sympathetically. I find the quick paced, short chapters easy to read and you end up flying through the story.

I do prefer the Alex Cross series and the standalone thrillers written with co-writers but I will continue to read this series and would highly recommend this book.

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### **Moray Barclay says**

Hmmmmmm. Where to begin? The shallow character descriptions? Early on we are introduced to "The Neat Man", but then we find no reason for his nickname other than an obsession for baby wipes. How did he get that way, I wondered in my naivety? The answer was deemed irrelevant so not let's dwell on it. In fact best not to dwell on anything too long, after all the author didn't. A measly 70,000 words or so and a whopping one hundred and sixteen chapters. The sparsity was generously spread around. Following a standard cops and kidnappers escapade, there is an impossible escape scene in Chapter 97, which is described in 600

words. A secondary kidnap scene is instigated, and then resolved, in Chapter 112 and takes 650 words - the resolution is initiated "when something completely unexpected happened" - oh really? In the next chapter "it turned out" (yes those exact words were used) that two of the baddies had done something else implausible. And finally, just when I thought that things couldn't be explained in a more dismissive manner, in Chapter 116 we learn that "we still needed to figure out exactly how they stored [something..] in the [somewhere..], not that it really mattered." Yes, once again those were the exact words: not that it really mattered. Certainly it doesn't matter to me - I won't be reading any more tosh like this again.

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### **?Susan? says**

This was a fast moving crime thriller with a tender backstory. A large group of VIP's are taken hostage during the funeral of an ex president's wife. Mike is a police negotiator who's wife is seriously ill and in the hospital with Cancer. When no one else is available he is ordered by his superior to handle the kidnappers demands. Each of the hostages are terrorized into revealing all of their financial information. Millions are to be transferred to an account that can't be followed, but Mike's big question is, why they think there is any possibility of escape.

An interesting premiss with very relatable characters and solid, smart writing. John Slattery and Reg Rogers do an excellent job narrating. Both of their voices were perfect for the characters. A great Daily Deal.

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### **Mahoghani 23 says**

There's nothing more upsetting than realizing the people committing the crime may be someone you know very well. This story was heart wrenching because Detective Bennett had a major personal life crisis going on at home but had to deal with a hostage situation at his job.

Michael Bennett is a warm, charismatic, down-to-earth guy who is also a detective for the NYPD and very good at his job. At home he's the father of 10 kids and a loving husband and let's not forget his Irish brogue grandfather, Shamus.

The plot thickens each time you turn the page. The cynical but witty communication between Detective Bennett and the kidnapper is composed excellently. The skills to show him as a tough cop as well as a loving husband and father was well scripted. Putting the pieces of the puzzle together slowly is what pulls the reader into the story and exceptionally inputting the kidnappers into the story never revealing anything about them until near the end of the story; amazed and flabbergasted.

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### **Rebecca McNutt says**

I normally don't like anything by James Patterson. He's one of those who seem to write more for finance and fame than innovation and imagination. That being said, *Step On A Crack* is very likable and intriguing, with a multitude of good characters.

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### **Suzanne says**

Loved it! So glad to have started this series. The story was so intriguing. I couldn't not have been more thrilled with the opening book to this series. I loved the characters, the plots were entertaining, and the emotional ramifications of Michael and Maeve were beautifully devastating.

My quick and simple overall: stayed up until after 3 am to finish it in one sitting because it was so good!

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### **Phryinne says**

James Patterson writes good books and he writes very good books and this is one of the latter. I really enjoyed meeting Michael Bennett and his large family and was very happy indeed to find that this is the first in quite a long series! Many people criticise the author for his short chapters but I find that they bring a sense of urgency to the book which is quite in keeping with the genre. I also feel that short, choppy chapters make reading easy and speedy. Step on a Crack is written as a police procedural and I like the way everyone, including the main character, does their job in the proper way and no one rushes blindly into a dangerous situation. Very enjoyable indeed and I will be working my way through the the whole series in due course?

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