



The Midnight Line

Lee Child

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Reacher takes a stroll through a small Wisconsin town and sees a class ring in a pawn shop window: West Point 2005. A tough year to graduate: Iraq, then Afghanistan. The ring is tiny, for a woman, and it has her initials engraved on the inside. Reacher wonders what unlucky circumstance made her give up something she earned over four hard years. He decides to find out. And find the woman. And return her ring. Why not?

So begins a harrowing journey that takes Reacher through the upper Midwest, from a lowlife bar on the sad side of small town to a dirt-blown crossroads in the middle of nowhere, encountering bikers, cops, crooks, muscle, and a missing persons PI who wears a suit and a tie in the Wyoming wilderness.

The deeper Reacher digs, and the more he learns, the more dangerous the terrain becomes. Turns out the ring was just a small link in a far darker chain. Powerful forces are guarding a vast criminal enterprise. Some lines should never be crossed. But then, neither should Reacher.

The Midnight Line Details

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Author : Lee Child

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From Reader Review The Midnight Line for online ebook

Paul Falk says

For the 22nd time, Lee Child's creation of Jack Reacher, came rip-roaring back to life onto the streets, alleyways and bars. Right at home. Although getting a little played out, I'm still captivated by the life of the fifty-something year-old wandering nomad - American Hero. The main draw of this popular character-driven narrative. At the drop of a hat, he went whenever and wherever the wind blew. Sounds like retirement. Although I can't say much for his choice of lifestyle. No suitcase, a toothbrush. Every few days an exchange of new clothes for old. Stays in hotels if convenient. Must be rolling in dough. This well-written installment could pass muster as a stand-alone. Essentially, he's an open book. It's all spelled out as the storyline progresses. Having read all the previous editions - same old, same old. Hooked for life.

Another romance gone bust. The place - Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Another woman fell victim to the Reacher curse. Couldn't wrap her head around his aimless, rambling lifestyle. Nothing new there. So he resorted to his usual standby. Headed out on the first bus to anywhere, USA. So long Milwaukee.

Destiny was about to march in. At a rest stop along the way, he got off to stretch his legs. He stumbled upon a pawn shop whereupon he spied a 2005 West Point ring. His alma mater. Engraved with the initials S.R.S. it was tiny. Most likely belonged to a woman. He knew from past experience she would have had to endure hell to graduate from the academy. Figured the ring would be one of the last things she'd ever sell. Intrigued, he bought it for forty bucks. Reacher wanted to find her. Just talk to her. The elementary plot is born.

When questioned, the pawn shop owner said the ring had been purchased from Jimmy Rat. Gotta love the name. Member of a local motorcycle gang. Predictably, it was time to pay Jimmy a visit. He and his buddies were at a bar. As expected, Reacher was not welcomed with open arms. It didn't take the aging Bone Crusher long to find some heads to crack. Seven total. All at the same time. Actually one right after another. Like factory work. Reacher walked away without a scratch. Miraculous. Just another walk in the park. For someone never looking for trouble, it surely seemed to find him frequently. The bus pulled away.

What first started off as idle curiosity as to the provenance of a ring, turned into a manhunt throughout the Midwest. The storyline collided with many twists and turns. It was a whole new ballgame now. The stakes had been raised. What Reacher discovered was much more than what he had bargained for. A deadly one. Never one to back down. Hope for the best - plan for the worst.

Brenda says

As a long time Reacher Creature, I went into this book blind. My only expectation was that Reacher would get himself into a situation, and he did. This is a good one. Very enjoyable.

Susan Johnson says

This is one of the best Jack Reacher books ever. It's not even in comparison to the last two so-so books. It is simply one of the best and has everything in it that has made us fall in love with Reacher and follow the 6'5",

250 pound former military policeman who ambles across America with no real destination or goal in mind. He travels lightly with only a toothbrush and buys his clothes at thrift stores rather than launder him. He has that American wanderlust that has led to the settlement of our country.

Reacher wanders by a pawn shop in a small town in Wisconsin and notices a West Point Academy ring. What stands out is how small it is. It is a woman's ring. Reacher knows what has gone into getting that ring and wonders what hard times have befallen a veteran that they would pawn a ring paid for in blood, sweat and tears. So he decides to find her and see if he can help. It's as simple and complex as that.

He follows the ring through South Dakota and into the wilderness of Wyoming. He comes to a bump in the road called Mules Crossing that consists of a fireworks store and a flea market. Houses are 5-10 miles apart and people are isolated. They think nothing of driving an hour to get groceries. What really surprised me is that Child is an Englishman who now lives in NYC and yet he so perfectly captures that isolated life and geography of rural Wyoming that you would think he grew up there.

There are stories of veterans who return home from the Wars and how they are treated that would break your heart. Used and discarded to live a life of pain with little or no support, they struggle to maintain. They often feel like outsiders and end up in places so far off the map that it's hard to find them. As Reacher is a vet, he understands the struggle and sets off on his mission- to find the owner of that ring who was desperate as to pawn her West Point ring.

This was really a touching book that just reminded me why I got hooked on this series in the first place. I read it in two days as I couldn't put it down. This is a must read for fans and a book that can get you hooked if you haven't read him before.

Phrynn says

I really enjoyed this twenty second outing with Jack Reacher. It started out smart and funny and developed into an excellent story.

Of course Jack's latest girlfriend from the last book disappeared instantly. Not surprising really since he doesn't own a suitcase let alone a house. Not good relationship material. Good story material though which of course is why we all keep reading him:)

Basically a brilliant way of passing a few hours without overtaxing the brain. One star off for a poor ending. A clothes dryer, seriously?

Ace says

Jack Reacher. You could call him Bigfoot. You could call him The Hulk. But you could never call him Tom Cruise.

Paula Kalin says

The Midnight Line is all about honor. Jack Reacher comes upon a West Point ring in a pawn shop and wants to return it to its owner. The book is set in the wide open Midwest and Lee Child makes you feel as if you are there. The dialogue is smart and very entertaining. Terrific repertoire.

The series usually has one intelligent woman involved in Reacher's story, but this time there are three: a wounded West Point grad, her sister, and a local detective.

I read all the Reacher books and love them all. I really enjoy how Reacher values intelligent women and treats them so well.

Highly recommend.

4.5 out of 5 stars

Dorie says

Before I get any fans upset about my review, a three star from me denotes a good book. So that stated I will say I know this series has millions of fans who would probably read a grocery list written by Mr. Child. My husband is a fan and we thought we'd have a little buddy read. He has read all of the Jack Reacher books so he filled me in on the background of the character as I didn't think there would be much in this book describing Jack since it's the 22nd book (that's just crazy) in the series. I went into this just looking for a fun entertaining read.

As you all know from the blurb Jack finds a female sized West Point ring in a pawn shop window and is interested. He is a graduate and knows what anyone has to go through to be able to wear that ring. What could make this woman so desperate that she would pawn her ring? How and from whom does the owner of this pawn shop get his goods? He finally gives Reacher a name, Jimmy Rat and he starts his new quest.

The first third of the book was so slow moving I nearly gave up reading it, but I was becoming interested to find out who the owner of the ring was. There is so much dialogue devoted to an altercation with bikers in a small midwestern town that it actually made me laugh. I counted fifteen pages as he knocked all seven of them out, one by one, example "He waited until they were five feet away and then he launched hard and smashed through the line with a horizontal elbow in his first target's face and then he turned immediately and launched again, no delay at all, stamping his foot to kill the old momentum and get some new, scything his elbow at the guy to the right of the sudden new gap, who turned straight into it, facing front with all kinds of urgency, meeting the blow like a head-on wreck on the highway. Two down." I won't go through the rest of the five.

Once Jack finds what he thinks is the beginning of the supply line for the pawn shop we are introduced to Gloria Nakamura, a detective in the Rapid City Crimes Against Property unit. She has been on the trail of Arthur Scorpio whom she believes is smuggling stolen narcotics, mainly Oxycodone and Fentanyl patches, pharmaceutical grade and usually hard to get as it is closely monitored. Reacher also finds Gloria and they strike up a friendship with a give and take decision on information found on Mr. Scorpio and the smuggling line of supply.

Jack's quest will lead him finally to Mule Crossing Wyoming, a barely existent town where lots has been going on and not legally. We find the owner of the ring and her character is very interesting and extremely sad. Five tours of duty in Iraq, honorably discharged with a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. From the Purple Heart Jack is quite sure that she was seriously injured in the war. Her story is tragic and it is this part of the book that I found eye opening and pertinent to our times. I know that veterans in this country often don't get a fair deal, they aren't truly compensated for what they did and those that are emotionally and physically wounded often are left with little or no support. Many times left to turn to alcohol and drugs in an attempt to heal themselves.

There are some interesting characters in this book. Terrence Bramall a very likable PI who is very invested in finding his client's missing twin sister. I would have liked to have known more about him. MacKenzie is Rose Sanderson's (the owner of the ring) sister and hasn't heard from Rose in about a year and is very concerned about her welfare. Further into the story she flies into town and joins the others in their search for the narcotics smugglers.

When my Kindle hit 73% the action started happening and I was in a happier place. By then I knew the plot, the characters and the plan. I enjoyed the last quarter of the book. Had the rest of the book been as interesting this could easily have been a 4 or 5 star read. There was just too much time wasted on all of the conversations while hitchhiking and all of the pages of descriptive fighting. I know now why people like the series because every "quest" is different and addresses different issues. Reacher is a kind of adult super hero traveling with just his toothbrush on the lookout for injustice.

I received an ARC of this book from the publisher and NetGalley.

Bibi says

The year is 1997, Heathrow terminal 4, and by some luck I bought, *Killing Floor*, the riveting and action-packed start to the JR series and now, 20 years and 22 books on with the latest being *The Midnight Line*, I mourn the loss of the real and enigmatic JR.

In all honesty, I think I've outgrown this character or perhaps the central premise of a nomad-like hero who lives free from any and all encumbrance seems implausible in this digital era amid a growing security and terrorism war.

The *Midnight Line* starts off with Reacher walking down a random street, window watching for nothing in particular until his eye caught on a West Point class ring-- in a pawn shop--that seems incongruous to the setting: How did it get there and to whom does it belong? Reacher automatically and rightly assumes something sinister is afoot and we are then taken on a journey for the discovery of the owner of this petite-sized ring.

You know the most infuriating thing isn't the deus ex machina plot premise, no. What I found tough to take was the blatant manipulation of the characters as well as the plot arc in order to fit the message into context. I won't go into details as not to spoil but I will acknowledge that yes, the underpinning message of this narrative is important and yes, increased awareness is vital, but, the rather oblique manner of getting to it was flagrant and a bit manipulative. It didn't help that I kept envisioning Clint Eastwood as Reacher, seeing as how Reacher must be a 100 years old or something of such.

All in all, a book to never read again, unlike the other serials in this series some of which I've read often enough to render dog-eared (here's looking at you Bad Luck and Trouble)

Matt says

Lee Child is back with the twenty-second high-impact Jack Reacher novel that pulls on various aspects of current affairs, while addressing some large tears in the military fabric of the United States. While strolling through a Wisconsin town, Reacher comes across a petite West Point ring from the graduating class of 2005. With little on his plate and nothing to lose, Reacher begins asking questions, in hopes of returning the ring to its rightful owner. Reacher discovers that there is a fencing operation going on that traces back to South Dakota and so a mid-length bus ride takes Reacher to the heart of the matter. In South Dakota, Reacher makes quite the impression with the local law enforcement community, but learns that there are larger fish to fry in the vast western expanse. Like the dedicated Army MP he was, Reacher follows the trail to Wyoming, where he begins a search for Serena Rose Sanderson, the rightful owner of the ring. It is there that Reacher discovers that the fencing was only a cover for a much-more lucrative trade, one in which people will get rid of whatever they can to procure something even more valuable, especially to a wounded veteran with little hope of a constructive future. A former FBI agent temporarily clashes with Reacher, sent by Sanderson's twin sister to locate her, and the case takes a definite turn for the worse. After the dust settles, the additional news gives Reacher a chance to make some fundamental suppositions, which bring light to the larger issue at hand. Finding Sanderson is only the first step in a larger operation that was unveiled when Reacher started feeding his curiosity. Now that he's hip-deep, he'll have to see it through, before moseying on to his next personal port of call! Child is back, adding another chronologically-sound novel to the series and keeping Reacher fans pleased with the outcome. Perfect for dedicated series fans and those who like a slightly off-kilter thriller.

I have come to love seeing the announcement that a new Jack Reacher novel is coming off the presses. While Lee Child has had to struggle with some less than stellar novels, he redeems himself here. Reacher is that ever-loved vagabond who finds something to pique his interest in the oddest of places. Child's constant evolution of the Reacher character is what makes the reader more drawn to the protagonist, pulling on an eclectic past and adding a significant amount of his unique style. Reacher wants nothing more than to let the world lead him, but when he's found something of interest, nothing can dissuade him from wanting to get to the root of it. The cast of secondary characters are always complementary to Reacher and the story's twists. The ever-changing group allows novels to remain unique and unpredictable. Turning to the story itself, what seemed like a simple ring return became quite the issue below the surface. Child is able to pull pieces from the news and integrate them into his novels, addressing concerns or perspectives that might force the reader to think a little more. Reacher is usually open-minded, so there is less a soapbox aspect to things than a synthesising of sentiments. Of course, when the US Military plays a role, Reacher has a strong opinion and does not hold back. This is an interesting aspect of the character and Child's story presentation. Military veterans play a strong theme in many Reacher novels, particularly how they are treated. While I am not well-versed in this area, I can respect much of what Child, through Reacher, has to say about them and how the central plot of this book draws notice to the issue that has been exacerbated by post-tour abandonment of soldiers in some regards. Forcing the reader to think and process makes for a wonderful novel and creates much discussion, which I always enjoy.

Kudos, Mr. Child, for this lovely addition to the series. Jack Reacher lives on, strong and dedicated to the final sentence.

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<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

A Book for All Seasons, a different sort of Book Challenge: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/...>

Andrew Smith says

I'd taken a brief sojourn from the Reacher books. For a while they'd felt samey and contrived. The big man was also starting to feel way too predictable with his habits, his and his incessant coffee drinking and the like. And not only that, the stories were now clearly formulaic and, frankly, dull. But then a friend lent me this book and I was glad to have it, pleased to be meeting up with the modern day knight errant again.

This time he's in Wyoming, a state bigger than the United Kingdom but with a population less than 1% of that in the UK. Yes, there are lots of wide open spaces and empty roads here. Reacher has found a class ring in a pawn shop window, it's a West Point ring – an establishment he'd also attended. The ring has initials engraved on it and it's dated: 2005. He now knows that his next mission will be to track down the original owner of the ring, for surely she (it's a small ring, definitely a woman) must have fallen on hard times to have disposed of such an item.

The setting lends itself perfectly to the type of story Lee Child likes to tell. There are not many people about, so he can keep the cast small, and the geography is simple – the empty roads, a small town and not much else – and this means he can allow Reacher free rein with little interference into his movements or his actions.

The characters we are introduced to are a mixed and interesting bunch and the story does have the compelling draw that such a crusade can have on me (a bit like a reading a Dan Brown novel but without the hyperbole). Is it all wrapped up a little too neatly in the end? Perhaps. But I confess I enjoyed it and was a little sad when it ended. I'd missed Jack Reacher. It was good to have him back.

Bibi says

The year is 1997, Heathrow terminal 4, and by some luck I bought, **Killing Floor, the riveting and action-packed start to the JR series** and now, 20 years and 22 books on with the latest being *The Midnight Line*, I mourn the loss of the real and enigmatic JR.

In all honesty, I think I've outgrown this character or perhaps the central premise of a nomad-like hero who lives free from any and all encumbrance seems implausible in this digital era amid a growing security and terrorism war.

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tough to take was the blatant manipulation of the characters as well as the plot arc in order to fit the message into context. I won't go into details as not to spoil but I will acknowledge that yes, the underpinning message of this narrative is important and yes, increased awareness is vital, but the rather oblique manner of getting to it was flagrant and a bit manipulative. It didn't help that I kept envisioning Clint Eastwood as Reacher, seeing as how Reacher must be a 100 years old or something of such.

All in all, a book to never read again, unlike the other serials in this series some of which I've read often enough to render dog-eared (here's looking at you Bad Luck and Trouble)

Jim says

I would like to start off by indicating that 3 stars means that I liked the book. I have read all of the books in this series so when I saw there was a new Jack Reacher book being released I wanted to read it. I am not sure how old Reacher is supposed to be but he is still hitchhiking and taking the bus carrying only a toothbrush. I cannot remember the last time I saw a hitchhiker. Where Lee Child really gets ridiculous is in describing Reacher as having hands the size of a supermarket chicken and like Bigfoot or The Incredible Hulk. Of course he still gets into fights and can beat up six guys without anybody laying a hand on him. About the only thing more ridiculous would be casting Tom Cruise to play the part of Jack Reacher.

What I found compelling and what set this apart was it was a story of the servicemen and women who have come home with life changing wounds. Too often they do not get the support they need and develop dependency on drugs or alcohol. I am sure the Veterans Administration does the best it can and that it does help many veterans but there are too many walking wounded. In this story veteran Reacher tracks down a missing servicewoman who served five tours.

When the latest women in his life, Michelle Chang, leaves him Reacher does what he always does. Climbs on the first bus leaving. It doesn't matter where it is going. His rule is it is the first bus leaving. In this case the bus is heading to Wisconsin. At a rest stop Reacher is taking a walk when he comes to a pawn shop and pauses to look in the window. There he sees a class ring. A West Point 2005 class ring. A woman's ring. He wonders how and why this ring was pawned. The owner would have worked hard for four years to earn that ring. What circumstances would make her give it up. He decides to find out.

His investigation leads him from Wisconsin to South Dakota to Wyoming. And he discovers a multi state criminal enterprise that feeds on desperate people with a dependency so deep that they will give up anything and everything. At times depressing and full of despair. Thankfully Reacher comes to the rescue.

Lee Child may be turning Jack Reacher into a comic book character but there is an important message in this story. Overall a good thriller novel. Hopefully if there is another Jack Reacher novel Lee Child will not include descriptions like "hands the size of a supermarket chicken".

Tim says

There once was a character named Reacher

Who whupped on bad dudes like a creature
Now Reacher's a shell of his once former self
With writing so lame, so timid, so tame
Jack's damn near a pacifist preacher.

Child loves to bore us with lists
And gives Reacher chickens for fists
His glory days are done
Reacher's no longer fun
He should just amble off in the mist. (Teri Pre)

I read what you wrote it was good
Compact and concise, understood
Too bad Child cannot see
Jack stumble so miserably
He'd write better if only he could.

0 of 10 stars

Lisa says

The Midnight Line
Jack Reacher #22
Lee Child

An immensely satisfying and emotional journey with America's giant hero, Jack Reacher and his tooth brush.

?????????

SUMMARY

Reacher is off to another unknown destination when sees a 2005 West Point class ring in the window of a pawnshop in a small town in Wisconsin. It's a small ring, made for a woman and has a black stone in the middle. Some initials are engraved inside the ring. Reacher ponders what circumstances could possible make a West Pointer give up a ring they had worked so hard for. The year 2005 was a tough one for graduates: Iraq and then Afghanistan. Reacher wants to know the story and decides to find the woman and return her ring. Reacher's journey takes him through the upper Midwest where he encounters bikers, cops, crooks, muscle and a private investigator. The further Reacher digs and the more he learns, the more dangerous the journey becomes.

“We have to make decisions fast here. We can't let perfect be the enemy of the good.”

“The Incredible Hulk? I thought I was Big Foot. These guys need to make up their minds.”

REVIEW

I have been a huge Jack no middle name Reacher fan since he got off the bus and walked into Margrave, Georgia. The thing I like most about Reacher is his uncanny strategic capability, always thinking of all

possible options and outcomes. He is three steps ahead of everyone. It must be his West Point training. His adventures are always entertaining and intense and THE MIDNIGHT LINE is no different. It is another first rate journey with Big Foot, er, I mean Reacher. LEE CHILD's writing is wonderfully descriptive and the dialog is amusing. And of course six-foot-five Reacher, gets into a fight or two...he has to do something with those "chicken-sized" fists. What is different about this book is the emotional pull of finding the woman who gave up her ring. Reacher's journey takes us from Wisconsin to a laundromat in South Dakota to the remote corner of Wyoming. It's a good place to be if you don't want any neighbors close by. Overall, it's a perfect blend of characters, setting and story. I listened to the Audible version, and it's good, but I am not a huge fan of Dick Hill's voice for Jack Reacher. It's like the Tom Cruise thing, I just don't hear him like that.

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Narrator Dick Hill

"This is Wyoming. They drive epic distances for a loaf of bread. For a girlfriend, two hours, maybe a hundred miles."

www.bluestockingreviews.com

Brenda says

When the bus made a rest stop, Reacher stretched his legs for a time. The stroll past the pawn shop would change his destination and change his future. Because the small, delicate ring in the window was an engraved West Point class ring from 2005 and Reacher knew no one who worked that hard would give it up. So he would take the ring and follow the trail back to its owner...

Reacher found himself following criminals – from one step to another. But would it lead him to the woman? And was she alright? Or not? His determination to find her one way or another kept him going right through to Wyoming. Was that where he'd find answers?

The Midnight Line is the 22nd in the Jack Reacher series by Lee Child, and another fast paced, gritty thriller which I thoroughly enjoyed. I love this series and look forward to each one as it's released. Looking forward to #23 now ?
