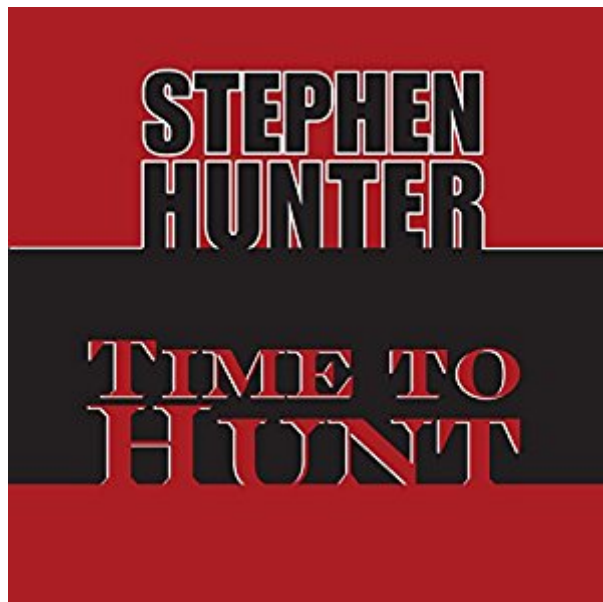


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Time To Hunt



Synopsis

He is the most dangerous man alive. He only wants to live in peace with his family and forget the war that nearly killed him.... It's not going to happen. Stephen Hunter's epic national best sellers Point of Impact and Black Light introduced millions to Bob Lee Swagger, called "Bob the Nailer", a heroic but flawed Vietnam War veteran forced twice to use his skills as a master sniper to defend his life and his honor. Now, in his grandest, most intensely thrilling adventure yet, Bob the Nailer must face his deadliest foe from Vietnam - and his own demons - to save his wife and daughter. During the latter days of the Vietnam War, deep in-country, a young idealistic marine named Donny Fenn was cut down by a sniper's bullet as he set out on patrol with Swagger, who himself received a grievous wound. Years later Swagger married Donny's widow, Julie, and together they raised their daughter, Nikki, on a ranch in the isolated Sawtooth Mountains in Idaho. Although he struggles with the painful legacy of Vietnam, Swagger's greatest wish - to leave his violent past behind and live quietly with his family - seems to have come true. Then one idyllic day, a man, a woman, and a girl set out from the ranch on horseback. High on a ridge above a mountain pass, a thousand yards distant, a calm, cold-eyed shooter, one of the world's greatest marksmen, peers through a telescopic sight at the three approaching figures. Out of his tortured past, a mortal enemy has once again found Bob the Nailer. Time to Hunt proves anew why so many consider Stephen Hunter to be our best living thriller writer. With a plot that sweeps from the killing fields of Vietnam to the corridors of power in Washington to the shadowy plots of the new world order, Hunter delivers all the complex, stay-up-all-night action his fans demand in a masterful tale of family heartbreak and international intrigue - and shows why, for Bob Lee Swagger, it's once again time to hunt.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is one of the best, if not the best of all his books. Even, if you are not from that era, you can see the imagery of the 60s, 70s, 80s, you can be there, and feel the humidity, and the torrential rain of a tropical weather, you will know what is to hold a 700 in your hands, look through the scope, see the mil-dots on the target, breath, hold and gently pull the trigger. What a rush of emotions the author takes you through as you turn the pages, and page after page you can see the full imagery that author conveys to you. The author conveys a lot of technical information richly blended with historical factoids that gives the book a sense of reality. And easy sense of reality, something that says, that could have had happened to me. This is a very good book; I wish someone would have the sense to turn into a movie.

This was one great read. Starts out in Idaho where Bob's wife and daughter are riding in the high country. One of their neighbors rides up and they stop to talk. The neighbor is blown out of his saddle and Julie and Nikki ride like hell for cover. Julie is shot in the collar bone and Nikki gets away. Bob Lee Swagger and the authorities find the nest the sniper used. A nest that's a decoy. Swagger finds the real nest quite a ways away. He realizes the guy made one hell of a shot to hit Julie. The neighbor, not so much as he was just sitting there on his horse. Julie was riding hell for leather to get away. The shooter is a pro. Swagger just knows the shooter was the Russian who had tagged him and killed Donnie Fenn in 1971. He was that kind of pro. A pro who has wounded Julie. A pro who is now on Swagger's hit list. So begins one great read. A read that goes back and forth from 1971 to the present. Of course 1971 takes Bob Lee Swagger and his spotter Donnie Fenn back to Nam. Back to a time when the two of them held off a battalion of VC and Cong on their way to Dodge City a US military base. On their way to destroy the camp using monsoon rains as cover. A time when Swagger was badly wounded and Fenn was killed on his last day in Nam. 1971 also takes us back to a conspiracy. A conspiracy involving Fenn, his girlfriend, later his wife, Julie, Trig a charismatic peace movement leader and deaths. Three deaths to be exact. One death was viewed as bad luck. Wrong place. Wrong time. One death was seen as a simple murder when the victim was discovered months later. One death was seen as a martyr for his cause. How wrong those suppositions turned out to be. Thirty years later Bob Lee Swagger finally figures it all out and exacts revenge. Revenge the Swagger way. Yup. One hell of a read and worth way more than five stars.

Swagger is a great character, strong, self-reliant, flawed - the American archetype from Hawkeye to Reacher. Hunter does a great job weaving together disparate threads to form a whole cloth that spans two decades from 1971 to the early 90s. Protestors, the Marines, the CIA, the KGB, GRU, FBI move in and out of Swagger's so-called life. It is a ripping tale and the attention to detail is great...well sort of great because Hunter needs a more forceful editor. Each physical or emotional (often both) action requires seemingly endless description and explication. The tension and action are milked from some great scenes because of over-long ruminations or detailed descriptions that serve only to boost the word total. So ironically, an action novel is drained of its most precious attribute - action. Think Jack Reacher written by Thomas Hardy. Too bad because Swagger is a great character surrounded by some great characters. The plot is original - with certain noteworthy exceptions e.g. we know exactly what will happen to Donny about a page after he is introduced. Hunter would do well to put down the Hardy read some Hemingway. Try "Point of Impact" first. Much tighter. Also, the film, "Shooter" with Mark Wahlberg is a well-made thriller that incorporates some elements of other Hunter Swagger books.

Let me start by stating that I can't get enough of Bob the Nailer. I read my first Stephen Hunter book because I think the movie "Shooter" is on my top ten list of favorite movies. I wanted to read the book. That started me on Hunter novels. There are just enough hints in this book to give me some idea of what is coming but I keep reading because I want to know if I have figured it out and if so, how he pulls it off. The entire package comes together in ways that you know will happen but sometimes don't expect. One part that bothers me is that Hunter made this major buildup to why the M1D was used but I never really got the answer. Why leave that hanging? Did I miss something in the reading? I guess I'll have to read it again to find out. Bob Swagger is way bigger than life. Is anyone really so immortal that they can have surgery on their leg, HALO from an airplane into a blizzard, crash land in the snow, get shot, and still survive to save the day? "Daddy's home!" I laughed because it was just so cool but so unlikely. I loved it! The way he did it in spite of how impossible and not real life it comes across is what good fiction is all about. If I wanted real life I'd read non-fiction. I want to be entertained and enjoy what I'm reading and Hunter and Bob Lee do it for me.

Stephen Hunter is called a master of building a suspense thriller and I suppose you can see that by the time you finish. However, I found myself skimming whole parts of this story simply to move

around all the unnecessary detail and to be able to stay mentally on track with the plot. I've enjoyed what other of his books I've read, but this one just seemed to drag in too many places. I gave it four stars because I am glad I read the story to the end and think the almost never-ending plot was very well crafted, just the fill in was often unnecessary.

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