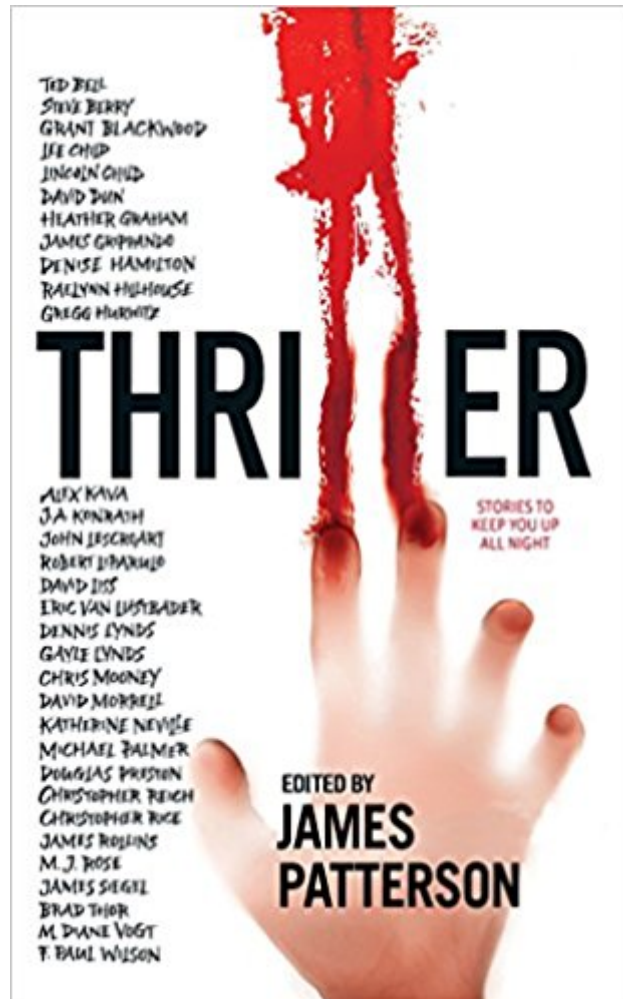


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Thriller: Stories To Keep You Up All Night



Synopsis

Featuring North America's foremost thriller authors, Thriller is the first collection of pure thriller stories ever published. Offering up heart-pumping tales of suspense in all its guises are thirty-two of the most critically acclaimed and award-winning names in the business. From the signature characters that made such authors as David Morrell and John Lescroart famous to four of the hottest new voices in the genre, this blockbuster will tantalize and terrify. LOCK THE DOORS, DRAW THE SHADES, PULL UP THE COVERS AND BE PREPARED FOR THRILLER TO KEEP YOU UP ALL NIGHT.

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Customer Reviews

THRILLER, an anthology of short fiction --- where all contributions are from members of the International Thriller Writers Organization --- is, if you will, a literary annual report, a statement of where the thriller genre is at the present time and where it is going. In concept and execution, it's nothing less than perfect: 30 stories from 32 authors, the majority of which has never seen publication before. Together, they create an exhaustive compendium of the breadth and range of the subject matter and the depth of literary talent with which the genre is presently blessed. When I think of the thriller genre, I generally think of works like David Morrell's FIRST BLOOD, Douglas Preston and Lincoln Child's THE RELIC, or literally anything Robert Ludlum ever wrote. The genre does not immediately or easily lend itself to shorter fiction. Yet each and every offering here illustrates what makes a thriller a thriller. The stories themselves simultaneously serve as an introduction to new readers while providing additional exploits to the canons of familiar

characters. Lee Child's "James Penney's New Identity" is an excellent example of this. Heretofore published with only very limited distribution, it includes a brief but pivotal appearance by Child's Jack Reacher. Readers unfamiliar with Reacher will find their appetites whetted for more, while fans of the enigmatic wanderer will enjoy the novelty of a story in which their protagonist is relegated to a supporting role. J. A. Konrath, on the other hand, uses "Epitaph" as a vehicle for Phin Troutt, a secondary character in his fine Jack Daniels series, not only shifting primary characters but also mood in this dark tale of double-barreled revenge.

Thriller, edited by the ubiquitous James Patterson, is the first publication of the recently formed International Thriller Writers Inc. To publicise (and help fund) the ITW, Patterson has compiled a collection of thirty stories donated by well-known thriller writers, all using "a familiar character or plotline" from their novels. Unsurprisingly, the result is something of a mixed bag. Not all novelists are masters of the short story form, and many of these writers seem uncomfortable within its confines. Some of the stories skimp on characterization, and some on plot; some work well as stand-alones, but others rely too much on the readers' knowledge of characters and organizations from the writers' novels. That said, there are some gems inside. Patterson leads with one of the strongest stories: 'James Penney's New Identity', by Lee Child. Penney, a Vietnam vet, suffers from post-traumatic syndrome, and has been retrenched after seventeen years in the same job because of a poor attendance record. Going slightly crazy, he sets fire to his house before fleeing in his prized Firebird, but the fire spreads. Soon he's wanted for arson - and then, he encounters military cop Jack Reacher. It's a neat little tale, and all you need to know about Reacher for it to work is his idea of honour. J. A. Konrath's 'Epitaph' is less surprising, but it's a well-written and punchy story involving Phin Trout, one of the colourful sidekicks of Whiskey Sour's heroine "Jack" Daniels. In James Rollins's amusing and fast-paced 'Kowalski's in Love', Sigma Force's heroic but less-than-brilliant Joe Kowalski has to fight his way past booby traps and rabid baboons to loot a mad scientist's island laboratory before the Brazilian government fire-bombs the place. In F.

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