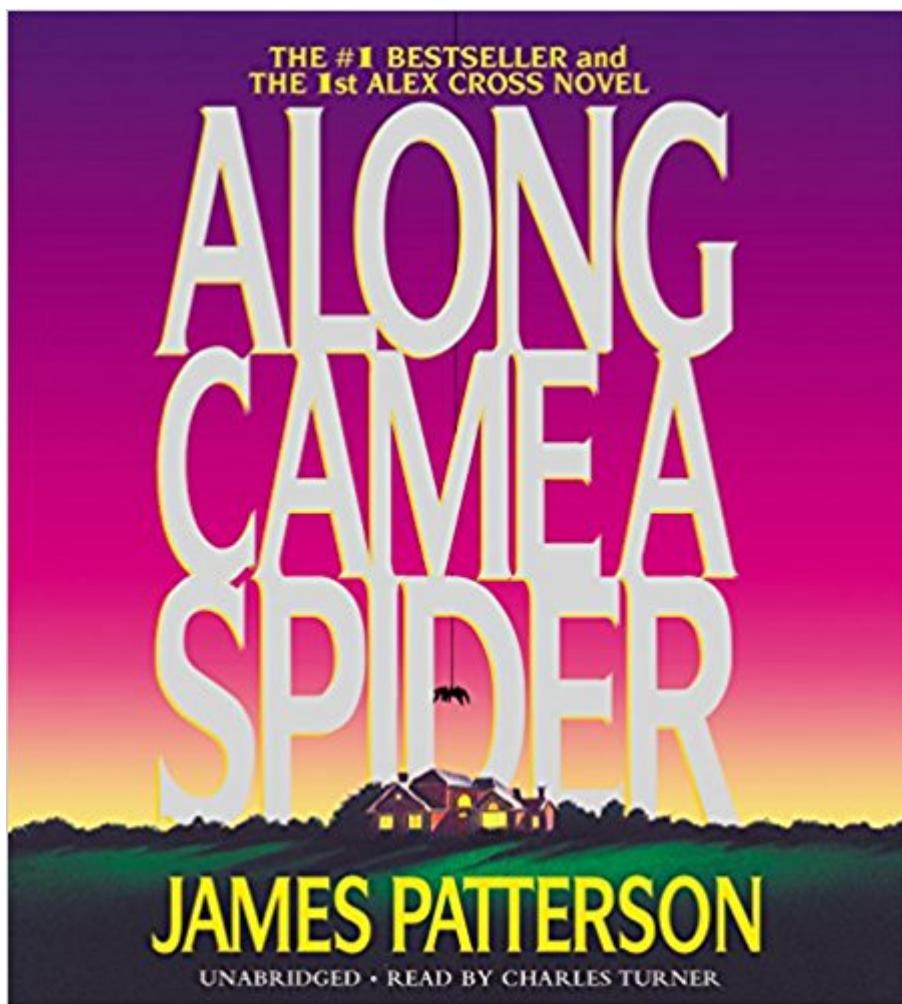


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Along Came A Spider (Alex Cross)



Synopsis

Along Came a Spider begins with the double kidnapping of the daughter of a famous Hollywood actress and the young son of the secretary of the Treasury. And that's only the beginning! Gary Soneji is a murderous serial kidnapper who wants to commit the crime of the century. Alex Cross is the brilliant homicide detective pitted against him. Jezzie Flanagan is the female supervisor of the Secret Service who completes one of the most unusual suspense triangles in any thriller you have ever read.

Book Information

Series: Alex Cross (Book 1)

Audio CD

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Customer Reviews

This second big winter thriller by a writer named Patterson (see Fiction Forecasts, Oct. 19) features a villain (a multiple-personality serial killer/kidnapper) whom the publisher hopes will remind readers of Thomas Harris's Hannibal Lecter, and a hero who is compared to those of Jonathan Kellerman. Unfortunately, the novel has few merits of its own to set against those authors' works. Hero Alex Cross is in fact a black senior detective in Washington, D.C., who is also a psychiatrist and has a facile but not entirely convincing line of sentimental-cynical patter. The villain is Gary Soneji/Murphy (read Hyde/Jekyll), who kills for recognition, and finally kidnaps the kids of prominent parents. Alex is soon on the case, more enraged by Gary's killing of poor ghetto blacks than by the Lindbergh-inspired kidnapping, and becomes involved with a gorgeous, motorcycle-riding Secret Service supervisor who is not what she seems. Soneji/Murphy is eventually captured--but can the bad part of him be proven guilty? There is even a hint at the end that he may survive for a sequel,

though the reader has virtually forgotten him by then. Spider reads fluently enough, but its action and characters seem to have come out of some movie-inspired never-never land. If a contemporary would-be nail-biter is to thrill as it should, it urgently needs stronger connections to reality than this book has. Come back, Thomas Harris! 150,000 first printing; Literary Guild main selection.

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Alex Cross, a black Washington, D.C., police detective with a Ph.D. in psychology, and Jezzie Flanagan, a white motorcycling Secret Service agent, become lovers as they work together to apprehend a chilling psychopath who has kidnapped two children from a posh private school. The psychotic villain, who aspires to become more notorious than Lindbergh baby kidnapper Bruno Hauptmann, is effectively nightmarish. Atypical characters, sex, sometimes shocking violence, and several surprising plot twists are all attention-grabbing, while short chapters with a shifting viewpoint add brisk pacing and genuine suspense. Patterson's storytelling talent is in top form in this grisly escapist yarn. Highly recommended for public libraries. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 11/1/92.- Will Hepfer, SUNY at Buffalo Libs.Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.

I found that James Patterson's #1 book "Along Came a Spider" is a very interesting read. It is not too often that I can find a psychological mystery to be this exceptional. The Gary Soneji/Murphy outsmarting the police with being a psychopath, potential Multiple personality disorder/ personality fatigue, and being the actor with having homicidal "1 year/5 year/lifetime plans" to be famous like he feels he should be is very interesting. From what I heard (without reading any other Alex Cross books), this book will set up for some storylines in the next few books allowing for some interesting storylines for the book now. This book series is the Law and Order: Criminal Intent series of James Patterson. While the story revolves around the crime and solving the crime, there is a huge element to the psychological, motives and the "criminal intent". It involves the "ticking" of the criminal to why they would do the things they would do. It can range from money to famous to just being a pure psychological evil driven madman. All in all an A+. In this book by itself, there is one drawback. It can be really slow sometimes. After Soneji's trial and conviction (about half way through) starting with part 4, it starts dragging while Alex Cross continues the case. But it does lead up to a very interesting ending (the last few chapters), in which I will be willing to give it a pass. Like I said, an A+ and an A+ book!!!

I have read all of the Alex Cross books except for two, well now one. The reason I waited so long

was because the first two were movies.. I have seen both movies and enjoyed them! I figured the books would be the same as the movies... I thought WRONG "Along Came a Spider" was completely different than the movie with minimal similarities! The book was excellent, wish I never waited to read it!!! Can't wait to read "Kiss The Girls!"

James Patterson, the master of the psychological thriller, has created a brilliant Washington, D.C. detective who can psycho-analyze AND catch the bad guy--or girl, while being a loving father to his two children and devoted grandson to his Nana Mama. Alex Cross is the "real deal" whom you soon feel you have known and adored as a family friend for your entire life. This ranks right up there with the best of the thrillers!

Any James Patterson/Alex Cross fans will fondly remember this book as the start for both men's careers. However, the movie simply deviates too much from its source material to truly merit the description of "adaptation". While the plot of the movie was good and its cast was superb (isn't Morgan Freeman always?), this film might have done better in my eyes had it not been adapted from the novel of the same name to begin with. Ultimately, they don't share much apart from the character names and a few plot details. I do understand that a movie must take certain liberties with its source material, especially a novel, as there are time constraints. But so much that made this novel great was cut out and, in many cases, replaced by plot devices which probably did not take up more or less time than the original. Perhaps this was a book that would have been best served by a movie split into two parts (i.e. like the 7th Harry Potter book.) As a general crime thriller, I say it's far above average mostly thanks to its casting choices, but I feel so much more could have been done with it even if it weren't an adaptation. As for my recommendation, I do recommend it to anyone who's a fan of crime thrillers with a decent plot and a great cast. For all the James Patterson/Alex Cross fans out there, I'll leave it up to you. Enjoy.

love this series delighted when the bluray versions came out. Stands alone even if you didn't see the first one, "Kiss the Girls" though I must admit I like that one better. As always Morgan Freeman delivers, always believable no matter what the role.

The problem is, it's not the book version!! Gone are Nana and the kids, gone is Sampson, and there is no torrid affair with Jezzie Flanagan. No offense to Morgan, but he was too old for this role to begin with yet they went with him because of his name and acting chops. And, while he does bring

to life Alex Cross quite well, he's no Alex for real... at least not what the book fans are looking for. Maggie is now Meghan and she is the daughter of a no-name Senator instead of the beautiful actress. Shrimpie Goldberg is non-existent and D'mitri is the object of Meghan's affections??? Gone is the cellar in the barn and somehow there is a boat... And, Soneji/Murphy is now dead and therefore cannot come back in a later installment! Truly disappointing, hence the four stars. Kyle Craig does show up and there is an anonymous ransom drop that the doers get away with that is actually a little more creative than the book... The complexity of Soneji was played well, but without the background and his family its kind of lost if you don't know what his character was all about in the first place. Yet, somehow this theatrical version seems to pull it off without the sex and entanglements, something more movies could benefit from. So, for what it is, this is a GREAT movie, just don't expect a true book version... "cool beans" ~ Gary Soneji

Patterson's books are difficult to review. I have a love/hate relationship with them. I love them because they are so easy and absorbing to read, and truly are thrillers. I 'hate' them because they are so dark and gritty that I come away feeling like I need some fresh air. I need to be in a certain frame of mind to even start one of his books, because sometimes I just look at the cover and want to turn away. I guess it shows he's a powerful writer. This book is a good example of all of that. If you like a dark, gritty page-turner that's a very quick read, this book is for you.

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