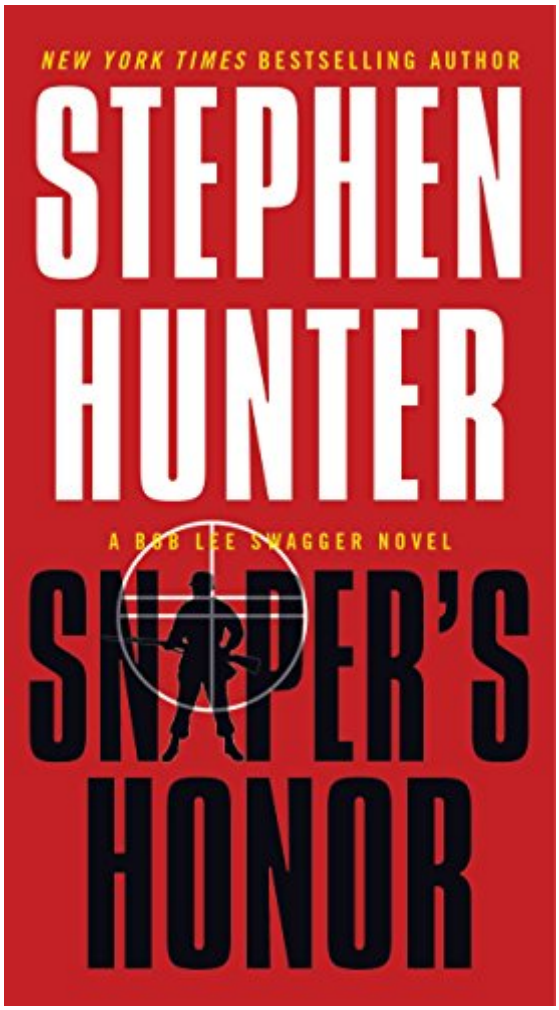
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Sniper's Honor: A Bob Lee Swagger Novel (Bob Lee Swagger Novels Book 9)



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Synopsis

In this tour de forceÃ¢â ¬â •part historical thriller, part modern adventureÃ¢â ¬â •from the New York Times bestselling author of I, Sniper, Bob Lee Swagger uncovers why World War IIÃ¢â ¬â„¢s greatest sniper was erased from historyÃ¢â ¬Â|and why her disappearance still matters today.Ludmilla Ã¢â ¬Å“MiliÃ¢â ¬Â• Petrova was once the most hunted woman on earth, having raised the fury of two of the most powerful leaders on either side of World War II: Joseph Stalin and Adolf Hitler. But Kathy Reilly of The Washington Post doesnÃ¢â ¬â„¢t know any of that when she encounters a brief mention of Mili in an old Russian propaganda magazine, and becomes interested in the story of a legendary, beautiful female sniper who seems to have vanished from history. Reilly enlists former marine sniper Bob Lee Swagger to parse out the scarce details of MiliÃ¢â ¬â„¢s military service. The more Swagger learns about MiliÃ¢â ¬â„¢s last mission, the more heÃ¢â ¬â„¢s convinced her disappearance was no accidentÃ¢â ¬â •but why would the Russian government go to such lengths to erase the existence of one of their own decorated soldiers? And why, when Swagger joins Kathy Reilly on a research trip, is someone trying to kill them before they can find out? As Bob Lee Swagger, Ã¢â ¬Å“one of the finest series characters ever to grace the thriller genre, now and foreverÃ¢â ¬Â• (Providence Journal-Bulletin), races to put the pieces together, SniperÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Honor takes readers across oceans and time in an action-packed, compulsive read.

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Customer Reviews

A quick note: I'm writing this review from the perspective of a Stephen Hunter fan and someone who has read all the books in the Bob Lee Swagger series.For readers already familiar with Bob Lee Swagger's violent gun world I'd rate this book on par with I, SNIPER or THE THIRD BULLET, far better than NIGHT OF THUNDER or THE 47th SAMURAI, but not as good as the old classics POINT OF IMPACT or TIME TO HUNT.In other words, among Hunter's recent books it's a very good read. If you've never read a Bob Lee Swagger book that's okay - there's no need for having done so in order to enjoy this book.About the plot: Swagger is bored and grumpy, as usual, prompting his wife to suggest he needs to "find a new war" to fight. And of course he does just that after receiving an email from Kathy Reilly, an American reporter in Russia who teamed up with Swagger in an earlier adventure in Russia. Reilly is writing a story about a Russian female sniper whose legendary war record against the Germans has mysteriously been erased from seemingly all official accounting of World War II.Swagger flies to Russia and begins assisting Reilly in her research, and soon enough everything "goes to guns" as he is fond of saying ... but that's okay, because we all know Swagger lives for these moments.So here's what I really liked about this book:MILI PETROVA - she's the sniper, and her character is written beautifully. The book weaves the story of her final wartime mission in 1944 with Swagger's dogged present-day pursuit to find out what happened to her. I kept turning the pages because I was immersed in her story and wanted to find out what happened to her.THE TEACHER, PEASANT and VON DREHLE - one Russian, one Ukrainian and one German ... Swagger laments the lack of heroes in his search for the truth about Petrova, but ultimately we find that heroes abound and they come in the form of three superbly nuanced characters whose varied perspectives adds immeasurable depth to the story.THE PACING - it's a fast read, with events racing seamlessly from the past to the present; and as the story progresses we meet an enigmatic Mossad analyst in Israel and a soon-to-be appointed trade minister in Russia whose stories bring into focus how events in the past still have repercussions in the present.THE THEME - yes, it actually has one beyond seeing how many guys Swagger can outsmart and gun down ... or at least I think it does. It's actually a ... love story. No kidding. Swagger's in love with this female sniper from the past, but really that's a pretext for showing the

bond between soldiers past, present and future. You see the Sniper's Honor (now I understand why the original She, Sniper title was changed...) is Petrova's commitment to serving her country regardless of the corrupt officials running it; it's her commitment to her fellow soldier's she's defending; it's the way she honors the memory of her family by her perseverance; and it's her willingness to complete a mission even after she's been betrayed, sent to die, and left with no hope for a future even if she's successful; but beyond all that, it's Swagger's own perseverance to honor this heroic female sniper by assuring her story is never completely erased.A few things that might annoy some readers:Look, it's fiction - we all need to check our disbelief at the door and just accept that Swagger is one bad dude and really is capable of deducing what happened in a gun battle seventy years in the past by noticing the color of present-day tree branches on a hillside in the Carpathian mountains ... and if you're not good at suspending disbelief, then my guess is you'd have a hard time enjoying this or similar books in this genre.However ... (trying not to write any spoilers here) there are two specific incidents of this where I believe the author really took a risk that might distract some readers to the point of irritation.The first is the idea that Petrova was betrayed yet somehow she's the only person outside of the bad guys who is capable of deducing not only that she was betrayed but also who it was that betrayed her. That really just doesn't make sense - especially when Swagger can figure it out in one afternoon without any of the knowledge the Russians had seventy years ago; and when the motive for the betrayal is discovered by Swagger, it's something that absolutely there's no way the Russian spymasters would have missed in 1944. The reason this is so annoying is that protecting the person who betrayed Petrova is a critical link from the past events to the attempts on Swagger's and Reilly's lives in the present day.The second is probably worse ... and that's when you find out who it is trying to kill Swagger. Won't write a spoiler, but I honestly felt the story would have been much better if Hunter had just gone with the most obvious group rather than trying to stun and surprise the readers with the big reveal that's followed by an impassioned speech about duty and honor by Swagger that pretty much falls flat because of who it is he's talking with.I don't know ... I still enjoyed the book very much.There are some very poignant moments during the war scenes - in particular, when Swagger describes the violence by writing "the war was hungry." In a lot of ways, I felt Hunter was crafting the story as he did with the intent of honoring soldier's past and present - be it intentional or not, he certainly succeeded.My overall rating is 4 out of 5 stars, again that's coming from someone who has very high expectations when reading Stephen Hunter - and especially when it's a new Bob Lee Swagger novel.

Having read every one of Stephen Hunter's novels - and being a HUGE fan of Bob Lee Swagger - Mr. Hunter's novels just seem to get better and better. And while each has their own flavor & flair, they all possess a quality that only Stephen Hunter can impart. Bob Lee Swagger will indeed go down as a hero for the ages - and Stephen Hunter's unceasing knowledge of firearms and shooting, and the history and mystique therein is beyond reproach. Of course, being on good terms with many of the finest shooters - and firearms media types - on the planet doesn't hurt either. Nor does having a genuine love of the history, tradition & pursuit of the shooting sports - or being a pretty good man with a gun himself. It was said that Hunter's previous novel would be his last regarding Bob Lee Swagger - a thought which left me both speechless and saddened for days. But I'm overjoyed to see that wasn't the case, Swagger is in fine, if somewhat muted form, this time out. I'm just not sure the world is ready to do without the likes of Bob Lee and all that he represents to so many is us out here in the hinterlands. And while I realize it must be tough for an aging Bob Lee to continue to find interesting adventures to tell, I truly hope Stephen Hunter finds a way to do so. And for those of us who've made our living looking through a scope on over watch in some foreign land, Bob Lee reminds us what it's like as we age and our talent & knowledge require constant updating - even as we too wonder if it was all worth laying it all on the line for a system and a nation that increasingly seems as if it couldn't care less - even as we continue to practice our craft in ways big & small in the name of justice. You taught us well Gunny Swagger. And to Stephen Hunter, God bless you for bringing him to us.

Bob Lee Swagger is at it again. Starts out slow, but he gets involved, and, at last, I get some more gun education.One thing I like about Stephen Hunter is that he takes me to places I haven't been to (I don't travel so much as I used to), and I get an interesting tour of those places, from the point of view of someone who is probably going to start shooting things.The World War II Russian/Ukrainian/German strife info was riveting, in that, as with probably most Americans, particularly those of us who were born after World War II, I really had very little idea about what went on over there.Add to that the "girl hero", and I was in bliss.

Save your greenbacks: get this one from a library. I own every Bob Lee Swagger book, but in this one, we hardly see him. When we do, he's a wooden sounding board for a reporter. Except for a mawkish speech on a bridge and a protracted, pointless shootout, he's in the reporter's shadow. Most of the book focuses on a female Russian sniper and a German paratrooper, along with too much ornate arcana about WW2 transport vehicles. (He's the Nailer, not the Mechanic!) Add to that

an unconvincing modern-day plot barely holding together under the strain of historical realism, enological inventories, and garrulous self-reflection, and Bob becomes a sub-plot. All of which might have been okay, except that I was extremely uneasy with the affection Hunter shows for his German commandos. This is not a genre in which nuanced moral distinctions can be drawn between abhorrent Nazi Einsatzgruppen and mixed-motive combat troops whose actions supported the Reich, no matter how "desultory" their Nazi salutes. As a famous film critic, Mr. Hunter should know how poorly East Germany's DEFA handled that. Still, some Bob Lee is better than none. Let's hope the next one is a lot more Swagger and a lot less swastika.

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