



## The Shoulders of Giants

*Jim Cliff*

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## **The Shoulders of Giants** Jim Cliff

A missing girl. A ruthless killer. A rookie P.I.

Jake Abraham is a child of the 80s, brought up by Jim Rockford, Thomas Magnum and three beautiful girls who worked for a man named Charlie. He's loving his new job as a Private Investigator and already has his first client - a disgraced former police captain whose daughter has disappeared.

When the girl shows up dead, Jake is drawn into a dangerous world of organised crime, police corruption, infidelity and serial murder.

With a terrified city in the grip of a killer who's always one step ahead of the police, how can a raw young P.I. hope to make a difference?

The Shoulders of Giants is a fun, fast paced thriller in the mold of Raymond Chandler and Robert B. Parker.

Praise for The Shoulders of Giants:

"Plenty of intrigue with a heart stopping finale - it kept me guessing til the end"

"Jake is a truly engaging character with just the right amounts of nerd, geek and intelligence to make you care."

"The book has wit, suspense and is very well written - it was hard to put down and I was very sleepy today at the office!"

## **The Shoulders of Giants Details**

Date : Published April 5th 2012 by Antbear Books

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Author : Jim Cliff

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# From Reader Review *The Shoulders of Giants* for online ebook

## Hobart says

"I grew up watching The Rockford Files, Magnum P.I., Vega\$. Bogart films like The Maltese Falcon, and The Big Sleep, led me to books by Hammett and Chandler. Most of my formative years were spent in front of the TV or with my head in a book. I was realistic about it, though. I didn't think my life was going to be like some hard-boiled airport detective novel, but I was always good at solving problems, thinking laterally and logically, and it seemed like something I would enjoy."

This is how Jake Abraham describes his career choice. Jake describes a lot of us there -- but where I fantasized about becoming a mystery novelist, Jake wanted to live the novels.

This is where his career starts -- a disgraced former police captain hires Jake to find his missing daughter (not surprisingly, Capt. Patterson doesn't think his former pals in the Chicago Police Department are going to be overly sympathetic). Jake throws himself into this with every bit of gusto he can summon. Which is a lot - - thankfully, he's more than just enthusiasm. Jake's smart, educated, and (pretty) disciplined -- which serves him well.

The case gets pretty serious pretty quickly, and it's not long before a missing college girl sounds a lot better than what Jake has to deal with. While investigating her disappearance, the rookie P.I. comes across a few other criminal activities -- some of which he observes, some of which he helps the police with, and some of which happen to him. These keep the main story from being a simple series of rabbit trails and red herrings and also reveal a good amount about our hero. From a plot-standpoint, this isn't a great novel, but it's good enough to stick with.

Jake has a long friendship with a CPD detective who helps him (both purposefully and inadvertently) more than he should, which really helps Jake through some of the understandable stumbles he makes out of the gate. He also makes some really convenient new friends along the way that make it possible for Jake to make progress with some investigations, and even resolve a thing or two. Not the greatest supporting cast -- but largely interesting and people I wouldn't mind spending more time with.

Jake reminds me of Lee Goldberg's Harvey Mapes (from **The Man with the Iron-On Badge/Watch Me Die**) -- but Jake's got his act more together, even if he and Harvey are drawing inspiration from the same sources. I like Jake. I actually like him better than I like the book, but as long as you like the protagonist like that, you can keep reading a mediocre book (and this isn't mediocre, actually -- it's pretty good, just not as good as Cliff will be writing 4 books from now).

Jake has a nice dry wit, like many of the P.I.s he wants to emulate. Lines like

The third number produced nothing. I wasn't very surprised, sixty percent of Americans have unlisted numbers. There are a lot of paranoid people out there, and it just makes it harder for the rest of us to find out who they are, and where they live.

make sure that this is an enjoyable read.

A fun character off to a promising start. I look forward to reading the next in this series.

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## Charlie Kravetz says

This review is for the Kindle edition ebook.

A private investigator, a missing girl, a murder, all the elements of a great mystery.

A new private investigator takes on his first case. Little does he know, the twists and turns of this easy missing girl case could be deadly.

The story as written is very good. It leads the reader into the story nicely, makes you think they know where it is going, then takes enough twists and turns to keep you reading. A somewhat predictable chain of events brought me, the reader to the somewhat predictable conclusions. By the end of the book, I was still guessing what would happen next.

As a first novel, Jim Cliff did a great job on this story. It is an entertaining read for the mystery lover. If you like private eye stories, this might be the one for you.

I can easily recommend this to mystery and thriller readers. I think it is a book they will enjoy. I would very much like to read the next mystery by this author.

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## Brenda says

3.5★s

Jake Abraham was a Private Investigator – his own business had only been opened for a short time and when he received the call from the ex-policeman; the one who had been acquitted of being a crooked cop – to say his daughter was missing, Jake had no idea his first case would be a life changer.

Chasing leads; interviewing friends of the missing girl – the sudden shock two days later when her body was found left Jake wondering if he should continue. The need to find the killer was great – he had a friend in the police department; surely Jake could work with them? But it seemed a serial killer was on the loose as more bodies turned up – all with one identifying feature...

As Jake dug deeper he found himself tangled up with underground crime, corruption and secrets. Would he break through the barrier? Or would he push his luck too far – his first case also being his last?

*The Shoulder of Giants* by Jim Cliff was a reasonably slow paced thriller until around two thirds of the way through – then the pace picked up, making the ending tense and gripping. I enjoyed the story of the fresh young PI making his way in a world of crime and murder – it would be a good series if the author continued with it. Recommended.

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## **Michelle Willms says**

The Shoulders of Giants by Jim Cliff

Gregory Patterson, first client of Jake Abraham, and former chief of police was only a year or so before accused of working with the mob Patterson wants Abraham to find his daughter.

One day into the case, Patterson is warned off by a couple of thugs who back their threats with knives and guns.

Soon Abraham's investigation is tied in with a police investigation; the police are searching for a serial killer. Abraham offers his help, but is politely turned away. As the body count rises, however, they are soon comparing notes and visiting crime scenes together. There is evidence of mob affiliation with some of the victims, but not others. As tension mounts, Abraham discovers that he is drawn to one of Susan's former lovers, Abby. Abby, an attorney, is stunning in every way. Abraham asks her out in spite of the possible conflict of interest, and also in spite of nagging questions he has about her complicity.

Cliff's writing style is impressively reminiscent of Jonathan Kellerman or Robert B. Parker with his rapid fire sentences and occasional unexpected sarcasm or offbeat humor. The chapters are of appropriate length and the book practically reads itself it is so compelling. Jim Cliff is to be commended on his fine ability to turn a phrase.

This novel was provided by the author in exchange for an honest review (participating in Goodreads Read for Review program).

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## **Kathy says**

The story centers around Jake Abrahams, a new PI, on his first cast to find the missing daughter of a disgraced police captain. As he gets further into the case, Jake discovers other issues that pertain to this and to other cases. Thought others try to dissuade him, he delves further and further into the situation, doggedly plodding along. What he discovers is a truly diabolical plot with many twists and turns. Jake is a young, very likable guy, even when he is doing things the reader doesn't really see as germane. The author has carefully plotted a story that evolves as time goes on. All the characters involved are believable and likeable. I see this as the beginning of a great series and hope to read more soon I received the book free from Library Thing to read and review..

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## **Sharon Stevenson says**

'The Shoulders of Giants' is the story of rookie P.I. Jake Abrahams as he investigates a disappearance that turns into a murder case.

I really enjoyed this book. It was an easy read with a dry sense of humour and believable characters. Jake was instantly likeable - I hope there will be more mysteries in future for this character!

The story was well paced and plotted. I was entertained from start to finish and left satisfied by the way the

story played out. I would definitely read more from this author and I hope there are plans for more books with Jake Abrahams.

Overall I would say this is a captivating page-turner, narrated brilliantly with just the right amount of dry humour. I very much look forward to Jim Cliff's next novel.

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### **Pam says**

I'm so glad I read this book, usually as soon as i see ( PI) in the description i don't bother, but this one caught my eye and is certainly well worth reading, I don't like giving away the story in my reviews, as i always think it spoils it for the next reader, but i will say that this was written with such humour, even though its a story about murder, i found myself almost laughing at times, and yet it also has you on the edge of your seat, its such a good read that i was at the nerve tingling end before i knew it, a really good who done it, and i was rooting for Jake Abraham all the way through.

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### **Kinsey\_m says**

Really entertaining. I wasn't so convinced during the first pages (too many references to "that was my first case/ my first client/ my first interview with a potential witness... ok, ok, we get it!) but after a couple of chapters the story really grabbed me. The book seems really well researched (I don't watch CSI, so some stuff may be obvious to other people)and the premise is quite original: instead of the tortured but wise PI, we get a naive one, although he seems to wise up pretty quickly.

There weren't too many gorey details, which I dislike, it was more like an episode of Columbo or Murder she wrote: light and enjoyable. If you are looking for a fun, fast-paced read I'd definitely recommend it.

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### **Patricia Mccammon says**

Entertaining. As a new PI. Jeff gets involved in what appears to be a serial killing. Learning how to be a PI can get you killed.

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### **George Lichman says**

The Shoulders of Giants is a great first novel by Jim Cliff. Set in Chicago, it is told in the first person from the point of view of the very green private investigator Jake Abraham. Jake, a lover of mystery fiction himself, takes his first case looking for the daughter of a disgraced Chicago police captain. When she is found dead, Jake stays on the case.

Cliff's jumped right into the story without much buildup. While at first this worried me, giving reason to believe he would be incapable of any character development or deeper story telling, it worked very well. The story was complex, moved quickly, and had lots of red herrings to keep readers guessing. I could be in the minority in this, but I liked that Jake seemed to play by the rules, cooperated with police, even worked with them and shared ideas, instead of going rogue as so many other detectives in the genre. That, and more, kept

him much more real to me.

Although I enjoyed the book, it was not perfect. Foremost was the use of British slang-takeaway not take out, for example. Perhaps it's only noticeable to American readers, but since the novel is set in Chicago and from the first person point of view of an American, I wouldn't have expected a more American way about the writing. Another thing that bothered me mildly was discounting the bright light emitted by a gun fired in a dark room. This would have had a small impact during one seen in the book.

Overall, the likeable and real characters, great plot, and Cliff's writing ability make *The Shoulders of Giants* an excellent novel. Considering it is his first effort, I look forward to great things to come from Jim Cliff.

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### **Elli says**

*The Shoulders of Giants* by Jim Cliff. It kept my interest going. It's the PI's first job in his own business and he cooperates fully and welcome for the killer and they are both pretty open about. It particularly pleased me that the gruesome details concerning the ending didn't really begin until 90%. Kindle addition so it was not drawn out in grave detail! Horror has it's own genre and depending who and what, I don't read it unless I'm pretty sure of the who and what are said in the most concise language and are a strong part of the story, not merely a detailed horror group of incidences almost separate from the rest of the book. I forgot the exact title but an older book that I read on Bartoldy could have been classified as a horror, but the descriptions of the era, punishments, even of the royal children, rose above that. And the one person she did want to communicate with was her favorite grandson. She was given a life sentence in a bricked up tower, and her peasants were estatic! But her servants all died horrible deaths, or were left to live in pain and mutilation....

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### **Trula Rae says**

I was surprised to find out this author is from Hertfordshire, England, since he wrote so authoritatively about Chicago, the setting of the story where “*The Shoulders of Giants (A Jake Abraham Mystery)*” took place. I am not surprise to find out that this is the first book in a series.

I really enjoyed the escapades of this gumshoe , Jake Abraham, as he sets out on the first case, for his first client, of his private investigating career. The perfect mixture of humor and suspense cooked up a fast paced mystery including missing person's, murder, and romance. A very enjoyable/entertaining read. I will be looking for more of Jim Cliff's work. I like his writing voice, and his writing skills are kind to the reader. I am anxiously waiting for the second in the “*A Jake Abraham Mystery*” Series. Get to work Mr. Cliff!

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### **Randy Grossman says**

Some of the book was interesting regarding detective and forensic work. A little overboard with characters and at times was a bit confusing. Author seemed to have an agenda regarding some of his character's life decisions. It was okay, but not good enuff to continue the series.

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## **Craig says**

### **Great start to a series**

Really enjoyed this book, looking forward to the next one. Well written and plotted. Relatable characters and a nice TV detective vibe.

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## **Marybeth says**

All of the other positive reviews have pretty much said what I would say, which is that I really enjoyed the plot, pacing, and especially Jake. The ending had enough of a twist to keep me guessing, and the storyline was believable, although I was a bit concerned by the high final body count. The fact that we're never told how Jake looks allowed me to construct him in my own mind, which I liked. My only complaint is the frequent reminders that this is a British author writing an American novel. I don't know any Americans who eat eggs, bacon, toast and BEANS for breakfast. We don't have "yoghurt pots" and we don't go anywhere on "the Friday." Every one of them jarred just a bit, and toward the end the jarring became more frequent. It made me wish that this had been set in the UK so that the Britishisms wouldn't take away from the story itself. I understand why it was set in Chicago, though. I would just suggest that the author find someone who is sensitive to this type of linguistic difference to help edit his next book. Because I do hope there's a next one. I was really disappointed to find that there's nothing more to read from this author.

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