



Extinction Machine

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The President of the United States vanishes from the White House.

A top-secret prototype stealth fighter is destroyed during a test flight. Witnesses on the ground say that it was shot down by a craft that immediately vanished at impossible speeds.

All over the world reports of UFOs are increasing at an alarming rate.

And in a remote fossil dig in China dinosaur hunters have found something that is definitely not of this earth. There are rumors of alien-human hybrids living among us.

Joe Ledger and the Department of Military Sciences rush headlong into the heat of the world's strangest and deadliest arms race, because the global race to recover and retro-engineer alien technologies has just hit a snag. Someone—or something--wants that technology back.

Extinction Machine Details

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From Reader Review Extinction Machine for online ebook

Jeffrey says

It's a good time to be a fan of super special agents (almost always an ubermale) novels. Mainstays David Baldacci, Lee Child, Brad Thor, and Vince Flynn, newcomers Brad Taylor and Ben Coes and to some extent Alec Berenson and Daniel Silva all deliver the goods. It may be time to add Jonathan Maberry to the list of cannot miss thrill authors.

Jonathan Maberry, the author of 4 previous Joe Ledger books, is out with the next novel, Extinction Machine, a densely written 430 page thriller, and although it is not without flaws, it's still a good read if you like a macho secret agent, violence, action, a diabolical killer, a vast conspiracy and enough gadgets to give Q apoplexy.

Joe Ledger is a specially trained agent, with all the requisite killer instincts and the usual heartache in his past from the death of a girlfriend. No surprise. He works for the Department of Military Science, a super secret government agency tasked with thwarting threats to the United States. Arrayed against the DMS is the Majestic 3, an evil shadow government, which is using the military industrial complex to try to produce secret weapons so they can take over the world.

This is all out of the bible of thriller books. Maberry, however, adds little green men and their flying saucers to the usual thriller ethos. Not literally, but the technology. Apparently there is an arms race going on in secret between the nations of the world, who have discovered that alien spaceships have crashed on Earth.

Harry Truman, appointed a core group to find the alien technology and use it against are enemies, but the core group, has been taken over from the inside by the Majestic 3, who want to use the alien technology to build advanced weaponry to take over the world. There are 10 specific pieces of alien technology that can be used to build an alien engine. The United States has 5 pieces. At the same time, China, France, England and Russia are also engaged in the secret arms race. The Chinese are testing an aircraft made from the alien technology, but the tech is unstable.

Now the President of the United States has been kidnapped right out of the White House. The US receives an odd ransom demand. The kidnappers want a copy of the "Black Book" or they will unleash a monstrous tidal wave that will wipe out the east coast of the United States and many countries in Africa and Europe. Billions of lives are at stake.

The Black Book is the mysterious compendium of all known knowledge about alien technology. Joe Ledger, his boss Mr. Church and the DMS must find the copy of the Black Book before the kidnappers unleash the Extinction Machine.

Meanwhile the Majestic 3 and their henchman Erasmus Tull have conceived of an ingenious plot to blame the President's disappearance and other terrorist incidents on DMS and Joe Ledger. Tull is a psychopath with no human impulses, who kills unmercifully anyone who even stumbles on his path.

From public speeches, the DMS learns of a Junie Flynn, who just that night revealed she knows the location of the Black Book. Joe Ledger must find Junie Flynn before the Majestic 3 can silence her, and while the East Coast is hours away from destruction, and the world teeters on the brink of all out war.

Maberry constantly ups the ante. Mysterious federal agents with advanced weapons and specially made body

armor are in the way. Drones, super advanced airplanes, gun fights, multiple shot taser weapons and microwave ray guns are only some of the weapons in the fight. Erasmus Tull goes after the leadership of the DMS.

Can Ledger get to Flynn before she is silenced? Who are the Majestic 3? Will he get by Erasmus Tull, a mean killer, who seems as gifted as Ledger in the art of death? Who has the Black Book, and can Ledger get the Black Book to the kidnappers? Who, in fact, are the kidnappers?

The only discordant note in this novel is the ultimate confrontation between Ledger, Tull and the Majestic 3. In an attempt to surprise, its just not realistic. But its a minor issue.

Read this pulse pounding action packed thriller with some science fiction elements to find out the answers to these questions.

Maberry delivers the goods.

Julie Davis says

"So, basically if we keep trying to save the country and maybe the world from a bunch of murderous assholes with outer space weapons, then we're the bad guys?"

"In a nutshell."

"Then, hey ... let's be bad guys."

Joe's back.

Pulled off vacation, Joe Ledger and Echo Team are knocking on research lab doors, looking into cyber-attacks so clever they can't be tracked back to anyone. But no one's answering, even though all the lights are on. Until a couple of strangely inhuman Men In Black step onto the loading dock.

Mayhem ensues.

Of course, anyone who is this far into the Joe Ledger series knows that whenever Joe is called in mayhem always ensues, all to save the good ol' U. S. of A. Jonathan Maberry has tackled zombies, vampires, the seven plagues of Egypt and more, but this is the first time he's gone beyond so-called supernatural creatures. Crop circles, space ships, and aliens are the topic of investigation.

And I (mostly) loved it for all the reasons I have enjoyed the entire series. These are adrenaline rides with Joe getting into and out of increasingly impossible, perilous situations while the reader hangs on by their fingernails wondering just how he can possibly escape. Meanwhile, Maberry weaves intriguing mysteries which may not keep us guessing, since he enjoys giving us both sides' points of view, but they do keep us wondering if Joe can stop the bad guys.

What kept me from completely loving this book?

I am as ready for a good invading aliens story as the next person, but at one point the action came to a grinding halt as Maberry wove together two story lines in a gigantic "aliens among us" info-dump. Indeed, this went on for so long and contained enough duplicate information that I began to wonder if the author had fallen into "true believer" status and wanted to be sure we came away converted. Whether that was his motive or it was simply imperfect editing, I wearied of the information long before it ceased flowing.

On the other hand, Maberry is going to have to work hard to top Joe's accomplishment in the light house. I won't say more because I don't want spoil it for anyone but I was literally laughing with delight as I heard what was happening. Adrenaline rush achieved!

Speaking of listening, Ray Porter does his usual excellent narration and is the reason I wait for the audio books rather than pick up print copies. As I've said before Ray Porter IS Joe Ledger. So let me say it again — Porter's direct, blunt delivery can go from sarcastic to heart-felt to outraged in 60 seconds. Believably. That's good because sometimes that's the way Joe's day goes.

Complaints aside, this book is great fun. Definitely recommended.

(Review copy from Audible, via SFFaudio, where this review first appeared.)

J. J. Tabor says

Best series there is right now. I like Jack Reacher and Repairman Jack, love Harry Dresden, Sandman Slim and Special Agent Pendergast, and I even like Sookie(in small doses). Monster Hunter International is another good series. In my opinion none of them are nowhere near Captain Joseph Edwin Ledger of the DMS. When each book comes out I immediately stop what I'm reading and start on it. And for those of you that have never heard Ray Porter's audiobook reading of the series you are missing a treat. This installment has Ledger deep into shadow governments, men in black and UFOs. Like always Maberry keeps the suspense up and the wisecracks flowing. If you are new to the series start with Patient Zero but this is definitely a great addition to the series.

Robin Edman says

Oh. My. God. Too much exposition!

Bogdan says

Nice addition in this series of books about a secret american agency that fights the most extreme threats for world security.

This time the plot follows the unauthorized exploit of some secret alien technology.

Nothing so wow, standard action/thriller stuff, with a little supranatural feeling to it, but the characters are

well made, the story flows fast and I really enjoy these books of Maberry.

Ron says

Joe Ledger and the DMS team keep getting thrown new curve-balls that they have to hit out of the park to save the world. This time, it is to find the MJ3 Black Book to get the kidnapped President of the USA back. The DMS team has to deal with UFOs, evil industrialists, and an obstructionist acting President who hates DMS. With the timely help of a beautiful blonde and a fore mentioned UFOs, evil is thwarted and peace of a sort is restored, at least until the next book. Neat device, the microwave pistol!

Chris says

Fifth book in the series featuring Joe Ledger of DMS (Department of Military Sciences), a shadowy and covert agency tasked with fighting global threats of the most dangerous and bizarre. Think Jack Bauer meets 007 mixed with a little Tom Clancy and you might get close...but make no mistake, author Jonathan Maberry has crafted a thrilling and original series that only gets better with each subsequent novel.

The President has been abducted from the White House, vanishing without a trace, except for a disturbing burn pattern on the lawn outside, which bears a strange resemblance to a crop circle...and the VP wants to shut down DMS, and have Ledger charged as a terrorist (grudge from a previous novel). Ledger and Echo Team has been put on the trail of deadly killers with impossible, almost inhuman strength, and unbelievably deadly weapons. And if that wasn't weird enough, Ledger learns of a mysterious Majestic Black Book, which holds secrets of crashed and reengineered alien technology, and the horrifying true nature of the President's kidnapping. Aided by a woman who knows the location of the Majestic Black Book, and trying to thwart a decades-old secret organization bent on winning the ultimate arms race, this novel rockets along at (pardon the pun) warp speed. Highly enjoyable to read and one of my favorites in the Ledger series. Highly recommended!

Nickolas says

Eek! It's Joe Ledger time! Please allow me a moment to geek out...Thanks, I needed that. Here we have EXTINCTION MACHINE, the fifth Joe Ledger Novel by Jonathan Maberry. I'll admit, I was a little panicked going into EXTINCTION MACHINE because I saw some rumor online declaring it the last Joe Ledger Novel. The good news is: this rumor was pure speculation, there is a sixth book in the works. The great news is: it will be called CODE Z, and it is a direct sequel to the debut Joe Ledger Novel - PATIENT ZERO. So with that dreary cloud of depression safely behind us, let's get on with the show!

Joe Ledger and the Department of Military Sciences have faced everything from zombies to transgenic monsters, from the Ten Plagues of Egypt to vampires. Now they find themselves contending with UFO's, crop circles, reverse engineered alien technology, Men in Black, government cover-ups, and secret cabals.

The President of the United States of America has been abducted by persons unknown and the fate of the world once again rests in the calloused hands of Echo Team.

"We could easily see a new age of empire that would reshape every map on Earth."

"With alien technology?"

"With alien technology."

With Jonathan Maberry's Joe Ledger Novels you can always expect the unexpected. But aliens? Aliens?! I'll tell you what, that really came out of left field. To be fair, I never expected Ledger and Echo Team to face off against vampires either but I consider ASSASSIN'S CODE to be Maberry's best novel to date. In a lot of ways Maberry is the inverse to Larry Correia. Both are phenomenal authors that write high-octane thrillers but Maberry pens speculative science techno-thrillers where Correia is the master of urban fantasy. Before going into EXTINCTION MACHINE I figured that if Maberry could convincingly write plausible zombies, monsters, and vampires then he could manage to do the same with UFO's. And you know what? Sometimes it pays to bet on the House.

EXTINCTION MACHINE kicks off with a bang, raising the stakes right out of the gate. Joe and Echo Team get their butts handed to them, quite an uncommon occurrence. The President gets taken from the White House right under the noses of the Secret Service, the abductors leaving only a crop circle in their wake. As we go further down the rabbit hole we learn that maybe those conspiracy theory whackos aren't so crazy after all. Maberry treats the concept with respect and so it never seems silly or over-the-top. EXTINCTION MACHINE is never dull, and frequently had me going to my laptop for research. I consider it an accomplishment when I get so invested in a book that I need to know if some of the material is based in fact. I don't think that Dan Brown's THE DA VINCI CODE is a masterpiece of literature but it had a similar effect on me. I believe that aliens exist somewhere out there in the universe, though I've never put much faith in alien visitation of Earth or UFO's. It could be that EXTINCTION MACHINE has shifted my mindset slightly - but that's beside the point.

The point is that this is a door-breaching, flashbang-banging, helluva good time. Those of you who have been following this series know the score by now. Joe Ledger is the Jack Bauer of mad science threats to the United States (and the world). He has rage issues developed by childhood trauma and a fractured psyche. He juggles three personalities - the ever diminishing, idealistic Modern Man, the patient and inquisitive Detective, and the bloodthirsty Warrior. When the Warrior persona is triggered, Joe Ledger becomes a human WMD. Having faced all manner of weird and terrifying foes in the past, Joe displays what I would consider to be the proper amount of skepticism for UFO's and reverse-engineered alien technology in EXTINCTION MACHINE. Obviously being tossed head first into a world of aluminum foil hats and little green men would be a shock for one as cynical and battle hardened as Joe, but his reluctance does not transform into full blown, obtuse ignorance.

The rest of the Department of Military Sciences is back in form. As always, Mr. Church is mysterious and intimidating in equal measure (seriously, when is this guy going to get a spinoff novel about his time in the field? Make it happen Mr. Maberry). Top Sims and Bunny are training the new batch of cannon fodder -- I mean, the new members of Echo Team. Rudy Sanchez, the Jar Jar Binks of the Joe Ledger Novels, is getting married to Circe O'Tree. Fortunately for all, Rudy's involvement in EXTINCTION MACHINE is minimal. Dios Mio! Best of all, Joe's combat dog Ghost is back. It's funny but Ghost has more character than most of the human cast. He's a lovable companion and a fierce asset in the war on strange evil.

As far as new characters go I took an immediate liking to Junie Flynn though I have a complaint to make. Is it possible to introduce a female character without her ending up as someone's romantic interest (specifically

Joe's)? I'm not a feminist or anything. I don't jump every time I see women misrepresented in fiction because frankly, I see people of all types misrepresented. But when it comes to Joe Ledger romances I'm automatically put-off. The relationship with Grace Courtland felt forced and instead of giving it time to develop it was cut off quickly, leaving Joe to mope around like a teenager. It was traumatic, I'll admit, but readers were given no time to warm to the relationship to even care. I feared early on in *THE KING OF PLAGUES* that Circe O'Tree would wind up as Joe's next conquest. That didn't turn out to be the case but she did wind up with Jar Jar. With *ASSASSIN'S CODE* it was clear that the obligatory mourning period was over and a new romantic interest would be introduced to the plot. And now with *EXTINCTION MACHINE* we get Junie Flynn. I apologize if this smacks of ranting but poorly written romances don't sit well with me.

The villains of *EXTINCTION MACHINE* tread the line between campy Bond ne'er-do-wells and frightening sociopaths. They aren't as memorable as past villains. At one point Howard Shelton commits that ultimate unforgivable sin of super-villainy - he fails to kill Ledger when he has the opportunity and instead chooses to monologue his evil scheme. I will say this, at least Shelton has somewhat good intentions, but he does fall lean more heavily on the "Bond ne'er-do-well" side of the line.

During the first half, *EXTINCTION MACHINE* feels slightly scattered. Joe's First Person POV falls by the wayside and much of the story is told from the Third Person perspective of secondary characters and villains. This method has pros and cons. On the plus side, readers get a broad view of the picture. There are many moving pieces and this helps readers find their bearing. On the minus side, the pacing flags. Don't get me wrong, it's still relentless, but Joe's arc suffers from the disrupted flow of the narrative. Maberry deftly wields short chapters and pseudo-cliffhangers to keep readers going, "I'll put the book down and feed the kids honey I swear! Just one more chapter..." It's a wise format that may result in your untimely divorce - also very Dan Brown'esque in its execution.

EXTINCTION MACHINE is a Joe Ledger Novel through and through. It stays true to form, offering readers bone-crunching action, snarky dialogue, and twisted revelations. This entry in the series shares much in common with *Men in Black*, *X-Files*, *Fringe*, and even the video game *Crysis*. On a scale of my favorite Joe Ledger novels this falls right after *ASSASSIN'S CODE*. If you haven't yet picked up the series, now would be the time to do so.

Age Recommendation: 16+

Language: Tons.

Sex: Some nudity, some sex, but it's not *Fifty Shades of Joe Ledger*.

Violence: Joe Ledger is even more deadly at hand-to-hand combat than he is with a gun. It can get messy.

Want them? Buy them all!

PATIENT ZERO, the first features zombies!

THE DRAGON FACTORY, the second features Nazi clones and genetically spliced creatures!

THE KING OF PLAGUES, the third features a weaponized version of the Ten Plagues of Egypt!

ASSASSIN'S CODE, the fourth and best features vampires!

EXTINCTION MACHINE, the fifth features UFO's!

Sara says

Extinction Machine is the fifth Joe Ledger book out from Jonathan Maberry and all I can say is, wow. It's astonishing to me how he manages to raise the stakes every time without tipping over into absurdity. Every hit Joe and his team take in this book is as emotionally wrenching for the reader as the very first one in Patient Zero. Every success feels personal. I found myself bobbing and weaving in my chair during fight scenes and clutching my dog during heartbreaking moments. I'm in. I am absolutely on Joe's side. I want him to win. I want him to be happy. And I want horrible things to happen to his enemies.

Shadow organizations around the world have been playing with toys that aren't their own. Disasters usually follows these little experiments, things like devastating earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions. But whoever figures out the puzzle first will put an end to the arms race, by winning it. Joe and Echo team get brought in with the rest of the DMS when the President goes missing. From his bedroom. In the White House. With no evidence left behind except a crop circle in the rose garden. The aliens want their toys back and Earth has a very limited window to respond or it's good-bye to most of the western hemisphere. Of course, the DMS's hands are tied with Acting President William Collins in the oval office because the only thing he hates more than the DMS is Joe Ledger himself.

Michele says

I still think that Assassin's Code (four) was the strongest Joe Ledger story I have read so far. As the fifth book in the series, I thought that Extinction Machine was a weak follow up after a superb action-packed book four. I am rather surprised, but I felt as though the driving force – technology for this book – was not handled as competently by Maberry as he has with the other specialties in his past books. Overall, I thought the pacing was slower through most of the book and only in the last 50 – 60 pages, did the action ramp up to a fever pitch.

John Patrick says

I got into this series when I received a free copy of the second book The Dragon Factory as a giveaway from a book convention at my work and I have been hooked ever since.

This series follows Joe Ledger a former Army Ranger and FBI agent and Captain of the Department of Military Sciences. The DMS is a nominal government agency, run by the enigmatic Mr. Church (Ya it sounds corny but read the books, seriously this guys is a bigger implied bad-ass than Gandalf and a mystery to everyone), that is responsible for dealing with threats that fall into the realm of Fringe Science. Zombie plague bio-weapons, genetically engineered super-soldiers, mutant human vampires, the DMS are the guys you call. In this book we find Joe Ledger and the DMS working with the Department of Homeland Security on a string of cyber-terror attacks that have targeted several defense contractors. When they encounter two fake federal agents, armed with weapons beyond even the tech the DMS has seen, and leaving the scene of a massacre, Joe and Echo team are plunged into a secret arms race. A race that began after a fateful crash in the Arizona Desert back in the 1940's.

The Extinction Machine is an action packed read that you won't want to put down until the end and then leave you begging for the next installment. Jonathan Maberry does a great job of skirting the line between Fringe Science and Science Fiction. This book falls a little closer to sci-fi than other books but he keeps the facts solid and the premise almost believable. The plot is interesting and not over the readers head. Plus there

is enough humor, sarcasm, and liberal pop culture wit to keep things from getting too dark and heavy. This was a great read and I can't wait for the next installment.

Shelby says

The reason that I come to the goodreads site is that I feel like those of us who review books here are actual readers. Not the psuedo reviewers of Amazon or Barnes and Noble or friends of the author or editor. That being said, I must have gotten a different version of this book than everyone else because I could not stand this book (BORING). I had to force myself to finish this one. I LOVE J.Maberry's books. I am a huge fan but this book felt rushed and underdeveloped. There was no imagination or story development. It felt like a cookie cutter novel that was way to short. If and when he writes another one I will read it with the hopes that he will return to his gripping and most times scary stories. For those of you who have not experienced the Joe Ledger novels, read them. For those of you who are loyal fans, just push through this one with the hopes of better things to come. To J.Maberry I miss your complex characters and story lines and I hope you will bring them back. I gave you two stars because of your previous books. This should be a one.

Darcy says

The start of this one drew me in right away, however in the middle it started to drag for me. There was too much explanation going on, and I had a hard time buying into what was happening, which is saying something considering what all Joe has gone through.

What I really like about these books are the relationships between Joe and those in DMS, they are a very dysfunctional family, but they work. They took some hard hits, but when one was bogged down, there was someone there to talk them back.

Because of what happened in this book it will be interesting what Church does next, I have a feeling that he will have more of an open checkbook than ever.

Medieval says

I adore Joe Ledger - but I found this book to be very disappointing.

C_sciadvisor says

Formulaic (genetics making super-people again - which even he recognizes as a trope for this series), repeated material from previous as well as within this work (with some verbatim copying), covering back history which the reader knows (just like in the previous books), and the most critical of flaws - the title is not in the book! How can people claim to have read this, and missed that little fact? There is an engine, but there is *never* any threat of extinction. There are other lacks of continuity, like the super-thin power armour loses all significance after the first encounter, yet it should have meant that the 'Closers' were more than a match for Ledger, or the fact that they had the ability to take him out with a helicopter MPC

(microwave pulse cannon), but chose less effective means for no logical reason.

In this book, the science fantasy is mostly left to the imagination, which is a good thing, considering how badly the author does with science. Sure he gets some of the terms right, but it is when he just plugs them together like they are lego, that it starts to fail. The concept of a small device that can project the thermal signature of a human believably is laughable. Since microwaves bounce off of metal, the MPPs in the book are equally horrible weapons at their power rating. One missed shot, and your own head explodes. Yet in the book they are equally good at taking out anything.

This book does have some quality parts, but when taken as a whole with the series it falls far short.

Basically book 1&4 were good, book 3 was mediocre and book 2&5 were bad. They all start off with a little action, then meander about with a lot of micro-bursts of action inter-spaced with backstory (some of it personal about material already in previous books, which has little relevance to the current story) or everyone saying "this cannot be happening/real, can it?". There is also a heavy dose of auto-repeat, where multiple groups all simultaneously discover highly secretive material, wasting a lot of time as the reader is forced to re-read what they just read a chapter ago. Then near the end of the book it finally moves on to actual development, getting to the large battle which the good guys win.

Maberry needs to find a better editor, who will sit down and cut out all the repeated material, as well as help him take his writing from random, to reliable. Not a formulaic, by-the-numbers like the one he is using, but something more random and far more engaging. He also needs to start developing the team and the DMS. There is no advancement between books, even though they are constantly uncovering new technologies that would help explain how they survive the next book (if any).
