



A Promise to Kill

Erik Storey

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From the author dubbed by Jeffery Deaver “a born storyteller” whose first novel *Nothing Short of Dying* was hailed as “exceptional,” “a rollercoaster read,” and “adrenaline-fueled” by publications on both sides of the Atlantic, this is Erik Storey’s next entry into the Clyde Barr series, a locomotive-paced brawler that has its hero teaming with besieged members of a Native American reservation to thwart outlaw bikers who’re putting hundreds of thousands of lives at risk.

Clyde Barr, the drifter with lethal skills, is alone again, wandering the highways of the American West in search of something to believe in. As summer turns to autumn, he trades his car for a horse and heads for the mountains, planning to clear his head and regain his edge with some hunting. But when he runs across an elderly sick man—a Ute Indian from a nearby reservation—Clyde’s dream of solitude is quickly dashed.

On the reservation, Clyde finds the old man’s daughter, Lawana, and grandson, Taylor, as well as a group of menacing bikers called Reapers running wild in the economically depressed, half-abandoned village. Gripped by the desire to do good in a hard world, Clyde offers to stay on Lawana’s ranch to help out until her father is released from the hospital. He controls himself around the bikers, even when he sees them harass a few Native American women—but when the Reapers attack a local boy Clyde has to do something. As tensions rise between the locals and the Reapers, Clyde’s efforts to protect the reservation become a fight for his, Lawana’s, and Taylor’s lives. And then the stakes ratchet up even more.

In the remote Utah desert, surrounded by enemies, with no law enforcement presence, and with communication effectively cut off, Clyde must find a way to save his new friends, defeat the gang, and, hopefully, escape with his own skin intact. *The Uprising* is an edge-of-the-seat thriller, pushing its no-hold-barred hero to new levels of improvisation and bare-knuckled blunt force.

A Promise to Kill Details

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From Reader Review *A Promise to Kill* for online ebook

Tom Dooley says

If you haven't read any Clyde Barr your missing out. *Nothing Short of Dying* is #1 in the series and this is #2. Clyde thinks that he is going to be able to just mind his own business and do his own thing. But for Clyde as he knows that never works out. It all starts out by Clyde trying to help a man in distress and what happens next sets off a chain of events that he could have never foreseen. Next thing you know he's battling for a whole distressed community of people. Between *The Reapers* (bikers) and a money man and terrorist, Clyde has his hands full. On top of that he acquires a love interest and a teenage boy who looks up to him. So Clyde being Clyde all hell breaks loose! If you haven't read this series you REALLY NEED to start!

Janet Martin says

The second appearance of Clyde Barr once again finds him jumping to the assistance of underdogs and a damsel in distress. Wandering the Utah wilderness with his horse and a mule, Clyde doesn't anticipate that rescuing an elderly Ute from a heart attack along a rural road will dump him into the middle of a terrorist plot targeting millions of people in the western states. But he soon enlists some of the Ute "warriors" and foils Iranian mischief and a whole gang of violent bikers who have taken over a small town. Fine adventure, non-stop action, well-defined characters

Judy says

Clyde Barr is another drifter protagonist created by Erik Storey. This is the second book of the series which pits Barr against people and/or groups that take advantage of their the weak. For some reason, I didn't get into the first book, "*Nothing Short of Dying*," but I enjoyed this one. Even though Barr seeks solitude, he becomes involved with a Ute Indian, who needs his help. This leads to engagement with a biker group that is taking over the reservation. The action is sometimes bloody and intense but means exciting reading. I felt that Barr's character was developed into someone I cared about. I think I will try another of the series at some point

Larry H says

I'd rate this between 3.5 and 4 stars.

If you like your thrillers heavy on action and a little lighter on plot, check out *A Promise to Kill*, the second book in Erik Storey's series featuring mercenary-turned-drifter Clyde Barr. Storey knows how to write some great action scenes, and this book has lots of fighting, battles between good guys and bad, situations in which a female character saves the day (just like real life, more often than not), and even a little terrorism.

Clyde Barr is a solitary man, but one who understands the meaning of loyalty. It's not so much that he never shies away from a fight, it's just he is very committed to making sure that the little guy, such as it is, doesn't

get taken advantage of. It was the hallmark of his time as a mercenary of sorts in Africa, the Middle East, and South America, and he paid the price for it at one point, with a stint in a Mexican jail.

(P.S.: I'm not casting aspersions on Barr's character. I just love this line.)

Barr is wandering in the Utah desert, alone with a horse and a mule, planning to clear his mind and do some hunting. He runs into an elderly Native American man from the nearby Ute reservation who is in the throes of a medical emergency and rushes him to the hospital, despite the man's reluctance to be off the rez. At the hospital, he meets the old man's daughter, Lawana, a doctor at the reservation's clinic, and his grandson Taylor. Seeing that they're in need of help at the family's ranch, Barr agrees to stay on to help until the man is on his feet again. Although Lawana doesn't quite trust him, she is in desperate need of help.

It isn't long before Barr notices the reservation is in some trouble: a group of bikers has overrun the place, filling the community with fear and violence. The one tribal policeman can't do anything about it because he can't arrest white men, and the government won't get involved in cases like these. Despite his instincts to try and solve the crisis and send the bikers on their way, Barr tries to lay low and focus on working the ranch, but it isn't long before the bikers attack a local boy, and send Barr's temper skyrocketing. Lawana warns him not to make trouble, but avoiding trouble isn't what makes him tick.

As Barr and some local tribe members prepare to do battle, he discovers that the reason the bikers have taken over the reservation and refuse to stay isn't just a penchant for violence and a need for power: there are more nefarious elements involved, and the threat actually ranges far beyond the reservation itself. When his actions put Lawana and Taylor in danger, Barr knows he must act and act quickly, but is this an enemy he can beat? Can one man really protect an entire town? Will the members of the tribe rally around an outsider?

I really enjoyed this book and read the entire thing in one sitting on a plane ride. The action sequences really kept the story rolling along to its conclusion, and while I wasn't surprised by much of what happened (and wondered if one whole plot element was even necessary), I was pretty hooked anyway. Storey writes really good thrillers, also evidenced by the first book in his Barr series, *Nothing Short of Dying* (see my original review).

As I mentioned earlier, the book doesn't spend a lot of time in backstory, which suits this book well. This is one you can pick up even if you didn't read Storey's first book in the series. This type of drifter-ish character, like a Lee Reacher, is always fascinating, and Storey has definitely created a memorable member of that group. If you like this genre, check this guy out.

NetGalley and Scribner provided me an advance copy of the book in exchange for an unbiased review. Thanks for making this available!

See all of my reviews at <http://itseithersadnessoreuphoria.blo...>

Judy Collins says

Erik Storey returns following his debut hit, *Nothing Short of Dying* (2016)—where the talented new

author introduced readers and new fans to the unlikely hero, Clyde Barr.

In this highly anticipated follow-up, **A PROMISE TO KILL**, Barr returns, better than ever!

An action-packed, intense, adventure where life is anything but simple for Barr. Trouble seems to find Barr no matter how many times life attempts to pull him down. *He comes up swinging.*

Storey has created an edgy tough main character with strong morals and honor . . . and a heart of gold.

Men and women readers alike will be drawn to the setting and this strong and intriguing character. I actually like him better than Lee Child's Jack Reacher.

As we pick up from the last book (can be read as a standalone); however, would recommend reading the first book to get the proper intro into this complex character. However, we do learn a bit more about *Clyde in this installment.*

Traveling across Utah, with a new mare and a reluctant mule named Bob, Barr spots an old man's truck in the ditch. He of course stops to assist. His heart. His cell is dead. *He needs to get him to a hospital.*

He hops into the truck and takes him to the hospital. An old Ute from the nearby Uintah and Ouray Indian Reservation. They connect. Heart problems. Myocardial infarction. *He would be dead without Clyde Barr.*

Lawana and her son. The three of them – grandfather, daughter, Lawana and grandson, fifteen-year-old-Taylor all lived at the family ranch. They needed Barr's help. He offered.

He had worked on a lot of ranches and he, of course, did not tell them all the work and places he had been. *Clyde likes this woman and family.*

Barr settles into a routine on the ranch. . . until the Reapers. An outlaw bikers club. All white.

These men were full of menace. The Reapers called him a "bumpkin" and told him to go play with the Indians. He was threatened and warned. *Thousands of lives were at risk.*

Taylor's dad had died in Afghanistan, as an army captain. He was going to help run the ranch while his mom ran the local clinic. He died trying to save his men. Soon Taylor had confidence in him. He looked up to Barr. *However, Barr had some proving to do to earn his mother's trust.*

He wants to protect the reservation and fight for those he cares about.

Barr soon learns that the family name was a corruption of the name of their great war chief ancestor, Nicaagat. He'd let his warriors in one of the last actions against the US government, right before his people were forced out of the mountains of Colorado and into the alkali desert of Utah.

The memories surface. His rough childhood, the wars he had fought in the third world, and his time behind bars because of a mix-up between the Mexican government and the cartels, and the people he loved and lost along the way. *One who was especially important.*

He thought he had left all the chaos behind when he came back to the States more than a year ago. But apparently, *he was mistaken.*

Whatever tranquility he had felt when he first entered town had entirely disappeared. This was the kind of thing Barr had tried to avoid since coming back, after being released from prison. However, his strong sense of protecting the underdog had a way of bringing him to the *center of trouble*.

Will Clyde ever go back to normal or will he be broken? Will the boy, the grandfather and the daughter want to him to stay around? Would he ever belong? He wasn't Ute. *He was an outsider*.

Barr liked to live on the edge. He missed it. He loved it here. Like a wild animal. The most beautiful, smartest, and the toughest woman he had ever met. He liked this family. *Was it time for him to move on?*

. . . Does Lawana deserve more than he can offer? *Does Barr need to be out there in the wilderness?*

. . . "Somewhere along the way, the empty spaces became part of who I am. It's where I'm at my best."

WOW, a powerful story. Well written with in-depth research, Storey knows the great outdoors and the wilderness, reflective throughout the novel. His style strongly reminds me of Charles Martin (another favorite author), *The Mountain Between Us* and *Water from My Heart*. Martin (not a crime writer); however, both talented authors possess their own unique individual style; however, they both write stories about the rugged great outdoors and strong tough characters (men) who connect with equally strong dynamic women and children.

There is always a memorable story which creates a nice balance. A fated encounter, strong bonds, connection, a tug and pull, heartstrings, choices, and consequences.

Also for fans of *John Hart* (another favorite), *C.J. Box*, *Lee Child*, *Ace Atkins*, *David Joy*, *William Kent Krueger*, and *Craig Johnson*.

Highly recommend this gripping and suspenseful series and this gifted newfound master storyteller. Can't wait to see what's next for Clyde.

A special thank you to Scribner, NetGalley and the author for an early reading copy. I also purchased the audiobook, narrated by *Pete Simonelli* for an entertaining performance. Move **A PROMISE TO KILL** to the top of your list. *Movie-worthy!*

JDCMustReadBooks

Interview with the Author

Nick Brett says

Very much one for Reacher fans and obviously endorsed by Lee Child who will endorse anything! Second in the Clyde Barr series about a talented drifter trying to forget his past but is unable to ignore those in trouble. In this he is in Utah and stops to help out a woman and her son who are both from the local Ute tribe. He discovers that their town has been taken over by bikers who are terrorising the locals while they wait for "something". Of course Barr stands up to them and the chain of events will lead to much violence and many deaths. The "something" and the ability to either contact the authorities or get help is pretty far fetched but Barr is quite engaging in this very Reacher like scenario.

Eric says

This is the second novel by Erik Storey involving the Nomadic character Clyde Barr. Barr has roamed westward and finds himself coming across a fallen ill, elderly Ute Native. The new adventure starts as Barr tries to do the right thing and get the elderly man to medical help. Trouble soon starts when Barr encounters the Reapers, a violent motorcycle gang that has seemed to take over the area for a yet unknown reason.

To find the help the man needs, Barr postpones a confrontation with the Reapers and moves along, soon to meet the family of the Ute native. Barr then agrees to help the family while the man recuperates and slowly erodes their skepticism over Barr's good nature.

Barr further gains the attention of the Reapers after interceding when a Native youth becomes one of their victims. This then starts Barr's journey toward confrontation while trying to find out why a motorcycle gang would settle down in a barren land of few resources and even less law and order.

Storey has created a good series for summer reading peppered with interesting characters and story lines.

Todd Simpson says

Excellent Story, I loved it. I really enjoyed Erik Storey's first book in this series 'Nothing Short of Dying', and this one is just as good. There's a lot to like about the main character 'Clyde Barr'. He's smart, strong and incredibly versatile. The action and suspense are non-stop throughout the book, and I certainly found it interesting and entertaining. I'm really hoping that the Author continues with this series, and that we see book 3 in the future.

There is no way Clyde Barr was going to let the old Indian man have a heart attack and die in front of him. Helping Bud was just in his nature, so taking a trip to the hospital was the least Clyde could do. It didn't take long to see that Bud's family of three could use some help around the horse ranch, while Bud was recovering. Especially since Clyde didn't have anything else on his agenda. Besides, he had picked up enough skills around the world to be quite useful in many situations. Luckily for Clyde, fighting was one of those skills that he had plenty of practice with, as a large group of Bikers had descended on the town, and they were causing a lot of trouble. Of course, when the violence escalates into kidnapping, Clyde jumps into help, and he's certainly not one from backing away from a fight. I highly recommend this story and the first one in the series. They are both fabulous books.

Steph Post says

Another action-packed, off-the-rails ride from Erik Storey. Like Nothing Short of Dying, which introduces Clyde Barr, A Promise to Kill is a fast-paced, quick read for fans of thrillers with an edge.

Tad says

A Promise to Kill is the second Clyde Barr novel by Erik Storey and is turning into one of the best new thriller series of the last few years. Clyde Barr is a low-tech loner whose skills have been honed in hotspots around the world, from Africa to South America to Mexican prisons. He finds himself drifting across the mountains and remote areas of the Western United States when he stumbles across an old man, Bud Nicholas, who has had a heart attack in a remote area of the Ute reservation in Utah. Driving into town and seeking help, he encounters a bar full of Reapers; an outlaw biker gang that is menacing the town and not looking to help anyone.

Clyde eventually manages to get the old man help, befriend his grandson and daughter Lawana-a local doctor-in the process. Clyde offers to help out on Bud's ranch until he's back on his feet. He can't help but wonder what the Reapers are doing hanging around such a remote area. The native Utes have little faith that authorities will help them with their Reaper problem so are doing their best to wait it out. Clyde tries to respect their wishes, but when the Reapers go too far, he takes action. In the process, Clyde discovers the real reason the Reapers are hanging around. The gang represents a danger to the entire town, and perhaps far beyond.

A Promise to Kill has the feel of an old-fashioned western brought into the 21st century. Clyde Barr is the drifter passing through, gets caught up in the troubles of the locals and stands with them against the bad guys. The remote setting on the Ute reservation lends to the sense of isolation and danger. The native Utes history with local and federal law enforcement lends credibility to the ethos that they have no one to count on but themselves. The plot that the Reapers have hatched raises the stakes even further making Clyde's success truly a matter of life and death.

Clyde Barr is a great character whose development in this second novel raises him even higher in the pantheon of great action characters. The surrounding cast is what elevates this book and makes it one of the best thrillers of the year. Lawana is strong-willed and accomplished, her teenage son is earnest and endearing, and the members of the small town of Wakara are varied and believable. The Reapers are truly menacing. They are three-dimensional characters who act mostly intelligently, which makes them a worthy foil for Barr.

Storey paints a vivid picture of the modern American West, fills it with both great and menacing characters and adds a plot that moves like a lit fuse heading toward dynamite. Get in on the ground floor of this great series. Highly recommended.

I was assured by Erik Storey that narrator Pete Simonelli absolutely nailed it with this book and he was right. Simonelli captures the quiet confidence of Clyde Barr and the absolute menace of members of the Reapers. His pacing is perfect and his reverence for the description of the setting absolutely gives you a sense of place. Storey's words and Simonelli's voice are a perfect pairing and I hope to see them together again for the next book-and you should too. This is a great book to experience on audio.

I was fortunate to be provided a copy of this audiobook by the publisher.

Jeffrey says

How many times can a single character get knocked out in a 270 page novel? Apparently in an Erik Storey novel it can happen a lot. The main character Clyde Barr was knocked unconscious at least five times in *A Promise to Kill*, but I may have lost count. This dude definitely has a traumatic brain injury by the end of the novel.

Storey's first Clyde Barr novel was a fun ride. This one is not nearly as well developed. I honestly found it a little boring, and there was virtually no character development for the villains. I will probably try a third novel in the series because of the first one, but maybe not.

Kathy says

A Promise to Kill is the second Clyde Barr novel by Erik Storey. Erik Storey has created a fascinating character in Clyde Barr who is a little like my favorite hero Jack Reacher.

Clyde Barr is a rough and tough outdoorsman who has been around the block a few times. A former mercenary who worked all over Africa and Latin America, Clyde just wants to live off the land and have a peaceful life but trouble keeps finding him. Clyde is working on a ranch in a Ute community in desolate area of the Four Corners. The Reapers motorcycle club has ridden into town and are terrorizing the community. Is this just a simple case of a restless rogue motorcycle club or is something more sinister going on...

Lots of action and twists and turns in this action filled thriller. I enjoyed it immensely. We got to know Clyde a lot better in this book and understand him better. He is a fighter of justice. And a lone wolf who is sometimes ruled by his heart.

Great tale. Already looking forward to the next book in the series. Highly recommend *A Promise to Kill*.

Paromjit says

This is the first one that I have read of this series, but it is fine as a standalone as the backstory to Clyde Barr is provided. This is an adrenaline fuelled book with Clyde in the Jack Reacher tradition of the loner, with a traumatic backstory, unable to settle, full of empty spaces that have him restless in search of remote landscapes, and driven by the need to keep moving. Here he is in the Utah desert, finding an elderly native man in need of urgent medical help. Clyde takes him to a clinic, meeting his daughter, Lawana, a committed medic for her community, and her son, Taylor. They are in dire need of a hand on their ranch and despite misgivings, accept Clyde's help.

Clyde settles into his job easily, but unsettled when he sees that a biker gang, The Reapers, is abusing the reservation and its people. He takes a backseat until he sees a boy being violently assaulted. The reservation cop is unable to intervene and has no powers to arrest white people who commit criminal acts. With outside agencies reluctant to get involved, the community are forced to tolerate the gang's infractions. Things escalate once two native girls are taken by the gang, Clyde is not going to leave well alone, and organises their freedom with the help of locals like Colorow. However, Clyde becomes aware that there is a much darker reason for the presence of the brutal and murderous biker gang. In a story that sees rising tensions, the

local community held hostage, a rising number of dead bodies, Clyde finds himself at the centre of efforts to ward off devastating consequences with the help of a rag tag group of men that include a Brit.

This is a fast paced, action packed, suspense driven thriller. It is a battle for good and evil with all guns blazing, requiring heroics amidst a background of a defenceless isolated community. Clyde provides the kind of hero who will do anything to protect and save people. There is not the nuanced characterisation in this book, but that is not the aim. We are given a well plotted, tense, suspenseful, and harrowing thrill ride. This is for those who enjoy a light hearted and entertaining quick read thriller. Many thanks to Scribner for an ARC.

Kathleen Gray says

Be warned up front that this is more graphically violent than the Jack Reacher novels, although it is written with the same spirit and thoughts. Barr takes on a lot in this installment in the series- but you can't expect him not to. I liked the setting, I liked Lawana, thought the bikers and terrorists were entirely plausible, and generally found it to be a fast, action packed read. This, like the first book, would make a good movie. The characters are well if briefly drawn, there are some surprises, and Barr, while occasionally a bit over the top, can be relied on to come through for the good guys. Thanks to edelweiss for the ARC.

William says

Did not finish. Lots of action without much plot in the first 1/3, followed by silly plotting and pointless dialogue. Shallow, clichéd characters. Ugh.

Notes:

31.0% "... Not really what I'm looking for.... "Gung-Ho" comes to mind. The prose is easy and familiar, without too much cliché."

39.0% "... or, they could easily wreck what's in the big truck; end of story."

54.0% "... lots of blather and pointless dialogue to fill pages. And I don't care about any of the characters. Im done."
