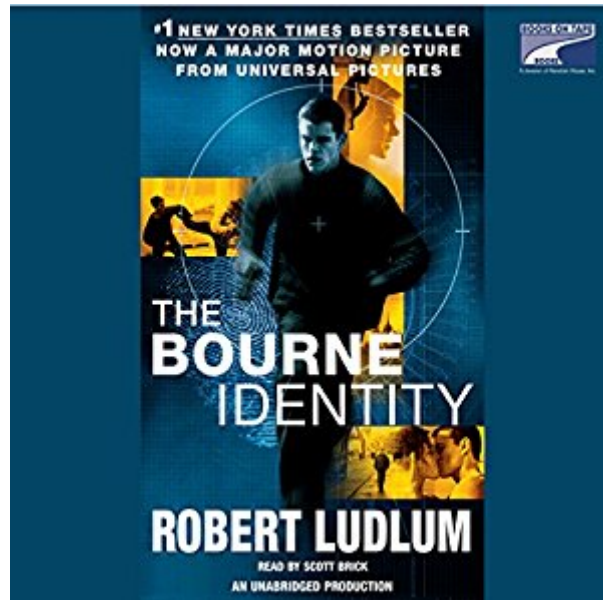


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The Bourne Identity



Synopsis

In this best-selling novel by Robert Ludlum, a man is shot, left for dead, later rescued from the sea. Surviving but with no memory, he is given a name: Jason Bourne. Physically and mentally agile, he retraces his past through a harrowing personal labyrinth. The discovery: He was a trained killer, and now in turn is being hunted by assassins. "His characters are complex and credible, his sleight of plot as cunning as any terrorist conspiracy. It is a Bourne from which no traveler returns unsatisfied." (Time) --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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#130 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Spies & Politics > Espionage
#716 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Fiction & Literature

Customer Reviews

I bought "The Bourne identity" mostly because I didn't want to lose the opportunity of reading Ludlum's book before the release of a film based on it. I really wasn't a fan of the author (and I am not one now), but I loved this book. To start with, the plot is remarkably good. "The Bourne identity" is the story of a man without a past, rescued from the Mediterranean Sea by some fishermen. He is very ill, and his body has suffered the impact of many bullets. The man is taken by the fishermen to a doctor in a nearby island, who helps him to recover physically and mentally. Our protagonist doesn't remember who he is, but with the help of the doctor he finds some clues he doesn't like too much. He only knows for certain some things, for instance that his face has been altered by plastic surgery, that he knows a lot about firearms and that he carried on him a microfilm that contains the code to an account of four million dollars. In the Swiss bank where the account is he also finds a name: Jason Bourne. But... is he Jason Bourne?. He cannot remember, and if it were for quite a few

people, he won't. From the moment he leaves the island onwards, our man without a past will be followed, and attacked. He doesn't understand why, but he reacts in order to stay alive. Add to this already interesting mixture a woman he takes as a hostage, Marie, a number of assassins (including the most famous assassin in the world, Carlos), and the possibility that he is, as a matter of fact, also an assassin, and you will understand why this book is so good. The main character will be hunted all throughout the book not only by the "bad guys", but also by the "good" ones (mainly agents from the USA Government).

Like many people I came to this book through the movies based on Robert Ludlum's Bourne novels. I read THE JANSON DIRECTIVE several years ago (blew through it on a 30-hour train ride between Kolkata and Chennai), and though it was entertaining enough to pass the time with, I felt like it was essentially literary packing foam. I wasn't looking for Les Miserables, mind you, but Ludlum's characters are pretty mechanical, operating basically to show off a hidden world of espionage, conspiracy, and cool gadgets. There's nothing essentially wrong with this kind of novel, but I prefer character-driven fiction, where I can see personalities of some complexity and depth grapple with challenges and come out changed somehow. As far as I can tell, Ludlum didn't write this kind of novel often. But THE BOURNE IDENTITY is an attempt at this kind of novel. The main character, so-called "Jason Bourne," is not struggling against assassins and CIA operatives for some political agenda or even merely to save his own life. He is trying to understand himself, to learn who he is. As one character states (as an almost shameless declaration of the "moral of the story"), "In a way, [Bourne is] a functioning microcosm of us all. I mean, we're all trying to find out who the hell we are, aren't we?" Such internal conflict, however, is handled quite clumsily in Ludlum's hands, which seem unaccustomed to dealing with emotional subtleties. Credit should go to the makers of the Bourne movies (Matt Damon and the rest of the cast prominent among them) for breathing life and depth into these characters.

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