



Make Me

By Lee Child

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#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY LOS ANGELES TIMES, THE GUARDIAN, AND SUSPENSE MAGAZINE • Stephen King calls Jack Reacher “the coolest continuing series character”—and now he’s back in this masterly new thriller from Lee Child.

“*Why is this town called Mother’s Rest?*” That’s all Reacher wants to know. But no one will tell him. It’s a tiny place hidden in a thousand square miles of wheat fields, with a railroad stop, and sullen and watchful people, and a worried woman named Michelle Chang, who mistakes him for someone else: her missing partner in a private investigation she thinks must have started small and then turned lethal.

Reacher has no particular place to go, and all the time in the world to get there, and there’s something about Chang . . . so he teams up with her and starts to ask around. He thinks: How bad can this thing be? But before long he’s plunged into a desperate race through LA, Chicago, Phoenix, and San Francisco, and through the hidden parts of the internet, up against thugs and assassins every step of the way—right back to where he started, in Mother’s Rest, where he must confront the worst nightmare he could imagine.

Walking away would have been easier. But as always, Reacher’s rule is: If you want me to stop, you’re going to have to make me.

Praise for *Make Me*

“Child’s Reacher series has hit Book No. 20 with a resounding peal of wisecracking glee. Everything about it, starting with Reacher’s nose for bad news, is as strong as ever. . . . The big guy’s definitely on the upswing. The guy who writes about him is too.”—**Janet Maslin, *The New York Times***

“Another winner . . . There’s a reason why Child is considered the best of the best in the thriller genre: He can take all these strange elements and clichés and make them compelling and original.”—**Associated Press**

“A superb thriller.”—**New York Daily News**

“Child’s complete command of the story makes this thriller work brilliantly.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

“I’ve read all twenty of Lee Child’s novels. Maybe there’s something wrong with me. But I can’t wait for the twenty-first.”—**Malcolm Gladwell**, *The New Yorker*

“[The Reacher series] is the current gold standard in the genre. . . . In *Make Me* Lee Child delivers another Jack Reacher specialty; the total knockout.”—*Dayton Daily News*

“Child serves up wingding plots, pithy dialogue, extraordinary background on intriguing topics, and cunningly constructed suspense. But what keeps us coming back—by the millions—is the chance to walk around in the skin of that big guy in the middle of everything.”—*The Oregonian*

“A dark thriller . . . Lee Child’s *Make Me*, the twentieth in his wildly popular Jack Reacher series, delivers exactly what readers have come to expect from the perennial bestselling author: interesting characters, tight plots and page-turning action. . . . Readers won’t be disappointed.”—*Minneapolis Star Tribune*

“Jack Reacher is back. . . . Readers new to this series will find this book a good starting point, and fans will be pleased to see Jack again.”—*LibraryReads* (Top Ten Pick)

“The reigning champ ups the ante.”—*Booklist* (starred review)

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Make Me By Lee Child Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Review

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“The reigning champ ups the ante. . . . Yes, there’s breakneck action, but what gives this one its zing is the multilayered plot. . . . The beguiling Chang offers a new treat for series fans as well, and a surprise at the end will keep readers short of breath until the next installment begins.”—**Booklist (starred review)**

“This series remains as compulsively readable as ever. Child is a master of pacing, stretching out the mystery through short chapters that give rise to bursts of well-choreographed violence. . . . Of course, the biggest strength is Reacher himself: impassive, analytical, secretly romantic, and relentlessly honorable. It’s impossible not to root for him. . . . Reacher is still going strong. Will satisfy fans—and newcomers, too.”—**Kirkus Reviews**

About the Author

Lee Child is the author of twenty *New York Times* bestselling Jack Reacher thrillers, eleven of which have reached the #1 position. All have been optioned for major motion pictures; the first, *Jack Reacher*, was based on *One Shot*. Foreign rights in the Reacher series have sold in almost a hundred territories. A native of

England and a former television director, Lee Child lives in New York City.

From the Hardcover edition.

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Chapter 1

Moving a guy as big as Keever wasn't easy. It was like trying to wrestle a king-size mattress off a waterbed. So they buried him close to the house. Which made sense anyway. The harvest was still a month away, and a disturbance in a field would show up from the air. And they would use the air, for a guy like Keever. They would use search planes, and helicopters, and maybe even drones.

They started at midnight, which they thought was safe enough. They were in the middle of ten thousand acres of nothingness, and the only man-made structure their side of any horizon was the railroad track to the east, but midnight was five hours after the evening train and seven hours before the morning train. Therefore, no prying eyes. Their backhoe had four spotlights on a bar above the cab, the same way kids pimped their pick-up trucks, and together the four beams made a wide pool of halogen brightness. Therefore, visibility was not a problem either. They started the hole in the hog pen, which was a permanent disturbance all by itself. Each hog weighed two hundred pounds, and each hog had four feet. The dirt was always chewed up. Nothing to see from the air, not even with a thermal camera. The picture would white out instantly, from the steaming animals themselves, and their steaming piles and pools of waste.

Safe enough.

Hogs were rooting animals, so they made sure the hole was deep. Which was not a problem either. Their backhoe's arm was long, and it bit rhythmically, in fluent articulated seven-foot scoops, the hydraulic rams glinting in the electric light, the engine straining and roaring and pausing, the cab falling and rising, as each bucket-load was dumped aside. When the hole was done they backed the machine up and turned it around and used the front bucket to push Keever into his grave, scraping him, rolling him, covering his body with dirt, until finally it fell over the lip and thumped down into the electric shadows.

Only one thing went wrong, and it happened right then.

The evening train came through five hours late. The next morning they heard on the AM station that a broken locomotive had caused a jam a hundred miles south. But they didn't know that at the time. All they heard was the mournful whistle at the distant crossing, and then all they could do was turn and stare, at the long lit cars rumbling past in the middle distance, one after the other, like a vision in a dream, seemingly forever. But eventually the train was gone, and the rails sang for a minute more, and then the tail light was swallowed by the midnight darkness, and they turned back to their task.

Twenty miles north the train slowed, and slowed, and then eased to a hissing stop, and the doors sucked open, and Jack Reacher stepped down to a concrete ramp in front of a grain elevator as big as an apartment house. To his left were four more elevators, all of them bigger than the first, and to his right was an enormous metal shed the size of an airplane hangar. There were vapor lights on poles, set at regular intervals, and they cut cones of yellow in the darkness. There was mist in the nighttime air, like a note on a calendar. The end of summer was coming. Fall was on its way.

Reacher stood still and behind him the train moved away without him, straining, grinding, settling to a slow

rat-a-tat rhythm, and then accelerating, its building slipstream pulling at his clothes. He was the only passenger who had gotten out. Which was not surprising. The place was no kind of a commuter hub. It was all agricultural. What token passenger facilities it had were wedged between the last elevator and the huge shed, and were limited to a compact building, which seemed to have both a ticket window and benches for waiting. It was built in a traditional railroad style, and it looked like a child's toy, temporarily set down between two shiny oil drums.

But on a sign board running its whole length was written the reason Reacher was there: Mother's Rest. Which he had seen on a map, and which he thought was a great name for a railroad stop. He figured the line must cross an ancient wagon train trail, right there, where something had happened long ago. Maybe a young pregnant woman went into labor. The jostling could not have helped. Maybe the wagon train stopped for a couple of weeks. Or a month. Maybe someone remembered the place years later. A descendant, perhaps. A family legend. Maybe there was a one-room museum.

Or perhaps there was a sadder interpretation. Maybe they had buried a woman there. Too old to make it. In which case there would be a commemorative stone.

Either way Reacher figured he might as well find out. He had no place to go, and all the time in the world to get there, so detours cost him nothing. Which is why he got out of the train. To a sense of disappointment, initially. His expectations had been way off base. He had pictured a couple of dusty houses, and a lonely one-horse corral. And the one-room museum, maybe run part-time and volunteer by an old guy from one of the houses. Or the headstone, maybe marble, behind a square wrought-iron fence.

He had not expected the immense agricultural infrastructure. He should have, he supposed. Grain, meet the railroad. It had to be loaded somewhere. Billions of bushels and millions of tons each year. He stepped left and looked through a gap between structures. The view was dark, but he could sense a rough semicircle of habitation. Houses, obviously, for the depot workers. He could see lights, which he hoped were a motel, or a diner, or both.

He walked to the exit, skirting the pools of vapor light purely out of habit, but he saw that the last lamp was unavoidable, because it was set directly above the exit gate. So he saved himself a further perimeter diversion by walking through the next-to-last pool of light, too.

At which point a woman stepped out of the shadows.

She came toward him with a distinctive burst of energy, two fast paces, eager, like she was pleased to see him. Her body language was all about relief.

Then it wasn't. Then it was all about disappointment. She stopped dead, and she said, "Oh."

She was Asian. But not petite. Five-nine, maybe, or even five-ten. And built to match. Not a bone in sight. No kind of a willowy waif. She was about forty, Reacher guessed, with black hair worn long, jeans and a T-shirt under a short cotton coat. She had lace-up shoes on her feet.

He said, "Good evening, ma'am."

She was looking past his shoulder.

He said, "I'm the only passenger."

She looked him in the eye.

He said, "No one else got out of the train. So I guess your friend isn't coming."

"My friend?" she said. A neutral kind of accent. Regular American. The kind he heard everywhere.

He said, "Why else would a person be here, except to meet the train? No point in coming otherwise. I guess normally there would be nothing to see at midnight."

She didn't answer.

He said, "Don't tell me you've been waiting here since seven o'clock."

"I didn't know the train was late," she said. "There's no cell signal here. And no one from the railroad, to tell you anything. And I guess the Pony Express is out sick today."

"He wasn't in my car. Or the next two, either."

"Who wasn't?"

"Your friend."

"You don't know what he looks like."

"He's a big guy," Reacher said. "That's why you jumped out when you saw me. You thought I was him. For a second, anyway. And there were no big guys in my car. Or the next two."

"When is the next train?"

"Seven in the morning."

She said, "Who are you and why have you come here?"

"I'm just a guy passing through."

"The train passed through. Not you. You got out."

"You know anything about this place?"

"Not a thing."

"Have you seen a museum or a gravestone?"

"Why are you here?"

"Who's asking?"

She paused a beat, and said, "Nobody."

Reacher said, "Is there a motel in town?"

"I'm staying there."

"How is it?"

"It's a motel."

"Works for me," Reacher said. "Does it have vacancies?"

"I'd be amazed if it didn't."

"OK, you can show me the way. Don't wait here all night. I'll be up by first light. I'll knock on your door as I leave. Hopefully your friend will be here in the morning."

The woman said nothing. She just glanced at the silent rails one more time, and then turned around and led the way through the exit gate.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Clarence Guyer:

In this 21st millennium, people become competitive in every single way. By being competitive today, people have to do something to make these individuals survive, being in the middle of the particular crowded place and notice by surrounding. One thing that often many people have underestimated the idea for a while is reading. Yes, by reading a publication your ability to survive rises then having a chance to remain than other is high. For you who want to start reading a new book, we give you this kind of Make Me book as a beginner and daily reading guide. Why, because this book is more than just a book.

Earl Quintana:

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Mary Ruch:

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Rita Ferguson:

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