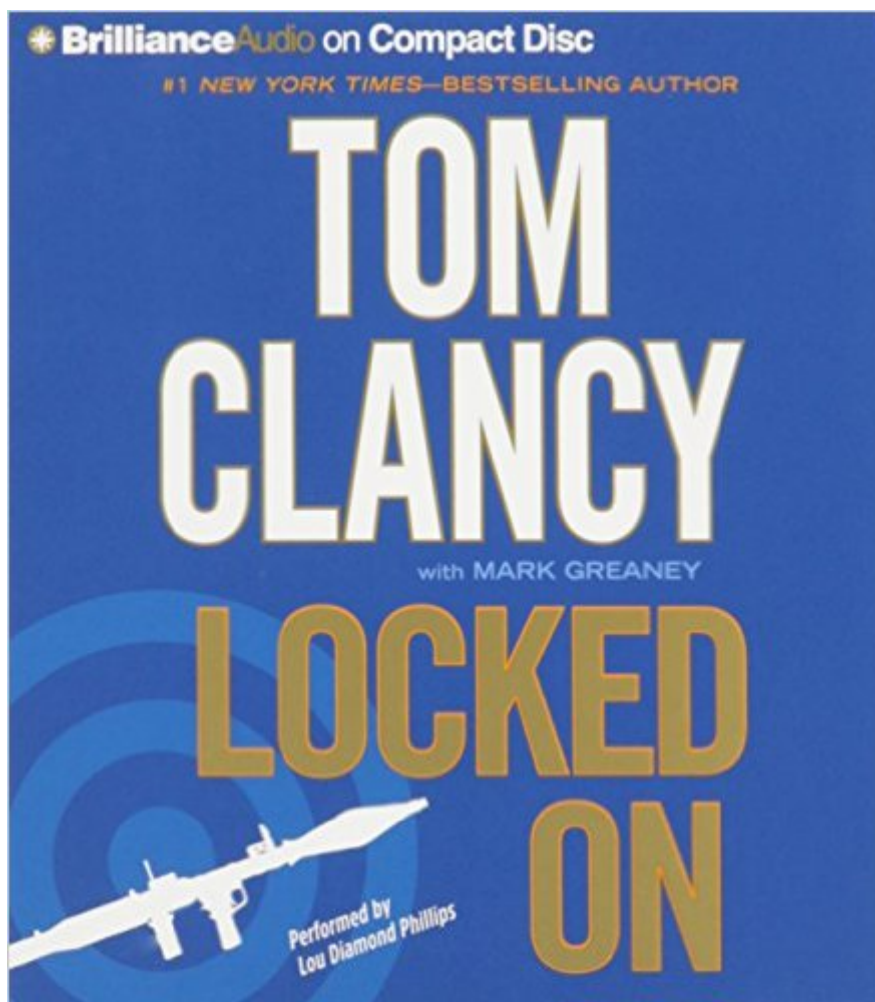


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Locked On



Synopsis

Although his father had been reluctant to become a field operative, Jack Ryan Jr. wants nothing more. Privately training with a seasoned Special Forces drill instructor, he's honing his skills to transition his work within The Campus from intelligence analysis to hunting down and eliminating terrorists wherever he can—even as Jack Ryan Sr. campaigns for re-election as President of the United States. But what neither father nor son knows is that the political and the personal have just become equally dangerous. A devout enemy of Jack Sr. launches a privately funded vendetta to discredit him by connecting the presidential candidate to a mysterious killing in the past by John Clark, his longtime ally. A shadowy mercenary team is dispatched to capture the former Navy SEAL. With Clark on the run, it's up to Jack Ryan Jr., along with Ding Chavez, Dominic Caruso, and the rest of the Campus team, to stop a threat emerging in the Middle East: A corrupt Pakistani general has entered into a deadly pact with a fanatical terrorist to procure nuclear warheads, which can be used to blackmail any world power into submission. With the breakneck speed and military action scenes that have made him the premier thriller writer of our time, Tom Clancy delivers a novel of high-tech warfare in which the enemy within may be even more devastating than the enemy without.

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Customer Reviews

There are no plot spoilers in this review. I started with Tom Clancy 15 years ago, and he's been my favorite author since then. I appreciate his style of writing, technical accuracy, his character building, and his art of story telling. I am not as fond of the co-authored novels or the other series that bear his name. While generally better than most of the genre, they are not up to par with the Clancy of

the early Jack Ryan and John Clark novels. I approached this book with a bit of caution, because with "Dead or Alive", I walked away with the feeling that Clancy just didn't care about the quality of his work anymore. I was encouraged that this was a book with Ryan Sr. in a prominent role, but discouraged by it being co-authored. Overall, I like this novel. The story telling, while not historical Clancy quality, is good. It draws you in, keeps you turning the page, and gets your blood pumping at times. Those who know Clancy's style of writing and his attention to detail will certainly appreciate many parts of this story. I found myself with a smirk several times thinking "typical Clancy" or "that's ingenious". The last Clancy novel I read where I had similarly good thoughts was "The Bear and The Dragon". As far as Ryan/Clark co-authored novels go, this is better than the others but far from being great. It was a very low bar that the Clancy/Greaney duo had to rise above. While it is "good", I have an expectation for anything with Clancy's name to be "great". So many of Clancy's earlier works fall into this "great" category for me: Red Storm Rising, Hunt for Red October, Without Remorse, Executive Orders, Rainbow Six. This doesn't fit into the same category.

Fair warning: this review has a spoiler at the end. It's marked by ***SPOILER*** tag. I've always enjoyed Tom Clancy's books. Red Storm Rising was my first exposure. Cardinal was next and it set the high watermark for his subsequent books. Hunt for Red October came closest along with Without Remorse, but his other books were never less than solid. This book however is hard to like. It feels as if it was never edited, for flow, for clarity, for readability. It makes for a disjointed, jarring read. I understand that this was ghostwritten but even then, you'd think a competent editor would be able to shape up the writing up to Clancy's standard. It's a shame because the book does tell an interesting story. It just needs to be cleaned up. But by far my biggest gripe of this book is the way the story is needlessly politicized. I can probably guess where Tom Clancy leans politically. I have no issue with it and I share a good portion of it. But his books never were bully pulpit from which to preach his politics. Even a powder keg issue like abortion, Clancy was careful to balance Jack Ryan's principled stance against it with his wife's feminist beliefs. All that went completely out the window with this book. What results is cliched and shrill depictions of domestic opposition that frankly detract from the story. I'm sure there are segments of readers who will nod as they read along, completely agreeing with one-dimensional and polarizing representations. For them, I'm sure this would appear to be a great book. There will be others too who would find that distracting and unnecessary. As for me, I just find it lazy.

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