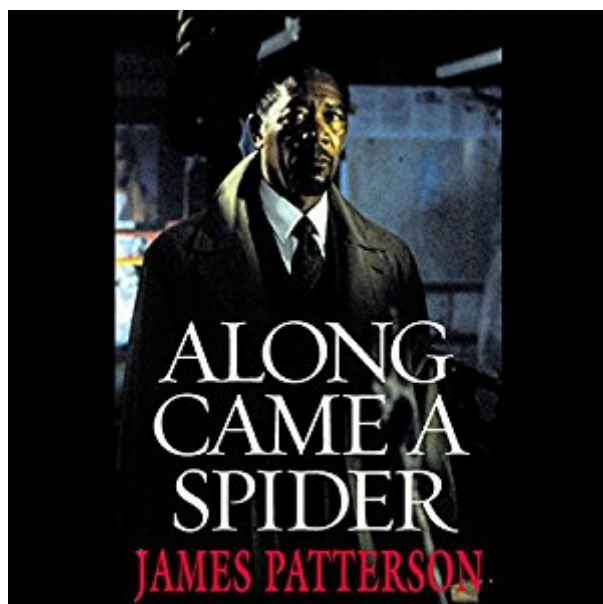


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# Along Came A Spider



## Synopsis

ALONG CAME A SPIDER begins with a double kidnapping: the daughter of a famous Hollywood actress and the young son of the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. Gary Soneji is a murderous serial kidnapper who wants to commit the crime of the century; Alex Cross, the brilliant homicide detective pitted against him; Jezzie Flanagan, the female supervisor of the Secret Service; all of them thrown together in one of the most unusual suspense triangles ever. Simply and powerfully written, this is the first in the Alex Cross series. Full of thrills and suspense, Patterson brilliantly explores the dark crevices of an aberrant mind in one of the most popular mysteries of the past decade. "James Patterson does everything but stick our finger in a light socket to give us a buzz in ALONG CAME A SPIDER." (New York Times Book Review) --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book flies. I had just read a couple of books that I thought were pretty lame and needed something fast and exciting. A woman I work with recommended James Patterson to me. I did a little research and found that this book is the first in a series for fictional detective Alex Cross. (I hate to read a series out of order, even if the stories are independent and don't continue from book to book.) Along Came A Spider is a perfect "fun" read. It moves at a very rapid pace. (The chapters are usually just a few pages.) It has pretty well developed characters considering its quick pace and more plot twists than you'll ever anticipate. Just when the romance element in the book started to bore me Patterson turns it on its ear. Another thing that makes this book so good is that despite the surprising plot twists everything is fairly believable within the context of the story. I read a lot of

mystery/suspense and one of my biggest complaints is that I'll get really into a book and the climax will be totally ridiculous. You know, the killer will turn out to be the sister of the girl that was accidentally drown in the rich family's pool the night of the prom thirty-five years before but nobody recognizes her because she's a master of disguise or whatever! Along Came A Spider has none of that. It's consistent, quick and exciting! Read it!

Having read everything by Michael Connelly and Jeffrey Deaver, I was looking for a master of suspense with an imaginative and intellectual lead character. I found both with James Patterson's Along Came A Spider and Dr. Alex Cross. Alex Cross is a lead detective with the Washington Police Department. He is also a very able licensed psychologist. While investigating a series of murders he is called out to take the lead in the investigation of the kidnapping of a politician's son and a movie star's daughter (Maggie Rose). It isn't long before he finds out the murderer and the kidnapper are one in the same. The manhunt for Gary Sonjei and the search for little lost Maggie Rose have Cross teamed up with the FBI and the Secret Service. Sonjei proves to be evil incarnate with a master plan and a high I.Q. The plot thickens and surprises abound, keeping interest at a high level throughout the book. Patterson delivers what every suspense reader wants.... a vulnerable and loveable good guy along with a bad guy that has you afraid to turn out the lights at night. Just when you think you have it all figured out he kicks up the intensity another notch. The book is a smooth read. There are little to no dull spots. You will finish this book wanting to read another Alex Cross novel. I know I did. FIVE STAR THRILLER !!

This is James Patterson's first novel starring his well rounded hero Alex Cross. A brilliant African American detective with a higher moral agenda than your average suspense novel protagonist. In Along Came a Spider we are introduced to Patterson's seamless blending of first and third person narrative that works so well with a many faceted character such as Alex Cross. This book succeeds on many levels: as the villain Gary Soneji is truly vile but not unbelievably so, the supporting characters such as Alex's family are made interesting and relevant to the story, and it progresses quickly with twists and turns that lead to a surprisingly emotional ending. Along Came a Spider has a little of everything: criminal psychology, courtroom drama, love, murder, kidnapping, insightful family interaction, and the kitchen sink! This is a smartly written, superior book!

This has not been the first time I've read a James Patterson piece. His amazing piece, Cat & Mouse was one of the quickest and most enjoyable reads I have ever had. Because of this, my

expectations for this book were extremely high. However, Patterson exceeded my expectations in an unbelievable way. This is a true tale of good versus evil, pitting a Washington detective (Cross) against an abused and intelligent psychopath (Soneji). However, this story is not nearly as straight forward as one might expect, as it is filled with plot twists. Many of these revelations left me in complete shock only as James Patterson can. And although 500 pages may seem never-ending, the pace makes it quite the contrary. It is a must read for anyone who enjoys the suspense/mystery genre of writing, and a high recommendation for anyone else.

I read this book in the wrong order because I first read *Cat and Mouse* which is an unbelievably enjoyable novel (Read my review) so I already had a small idea of what happened in *Along Came a Spider*. I will just say that this novel was like reading two different novels. One was a very intelligent suspenseful mystery about a kidnapping carried out to go right where the Lindbergh kidnapping went wrong. The scenes of Alex Cross trying to find Gary Soneji, the court scenes, and the conversations between Cross and Gary Murphy are wonderful. This part of the novel gets 5 stars. However, I subtract two stars for the unbelievably boring and uninspired romantic twist to the story, there was a point where I just decided to skip whole chapters that didn't add anything to the story. I got through the first three hundred pages faster than I did the last two hundred. It was just mesmerizing to think that the same brilliant mind that came up with the suspenseful mystery came up with the other garbage. Don't get me wrong I do enjoy romance in a mystery novel, in fact I think it's an important part but Patterson should ask Jeffery Deaver, who writes so well about the relationship between Lincoln Rhyme and Amelia Sachs, or maybe ask Ridley Pearson, who does so well with Lou Boldt and Daphne Mathews, to give him a few tips on mixing romance with suspense. My recommendation is read this novel but if the mood starts getting romantic don't waste your time, at least not until the end where the romantic scene is important. Alex Cross is a great character and Gary Soneji is the perfect nemesis, I just feel that Patterson did a better job of mixing his romantic chapters with the story in *Cat and Mouse* than what he was able to accomplish in this novel.

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