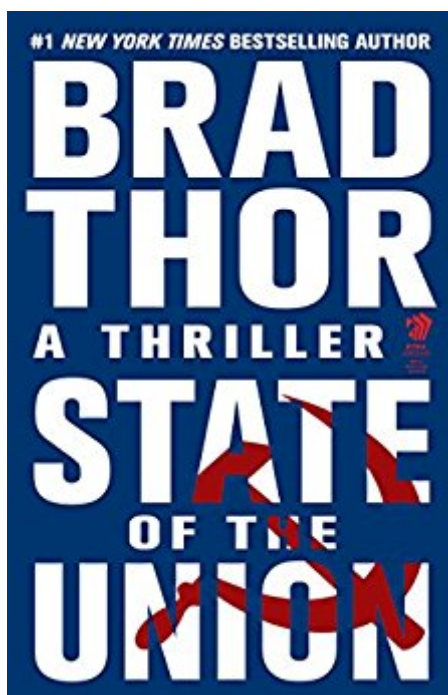


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State Of The Union: A Thriller (The Scot Harvath Series Book 3)



Synopsis

From the national bestselling author of *The Lions of Lucerne* and *Path of the Assassin* comes another electrifying international thriller featuring all-American hero Scot Harvath, as he plunges into the frigid heart of the Russian tundra to save the fragile state of the union. On a cold January morning, the United States awakes to discover that an old enemy, one long believed dead and buried, has crawled out of its grave to lay siege to the world's only superpower. With the stunning discovery that enhanced Soviet-made suitcase nukes have been secreted in America's major cities, President Jack Rutledge gathers his National Security Council to weigh the feasibility of a first strike against the Russian Federation. There's only one problem. For over two decades, the Russians have been funneling international aid money into a top secret air defense system, which has just been brought on-line and which will render any conventional attack upon their country utterly ineffective. After exhausting all of his other options, and with Soviet sleeper agents preparing to detonate their deadly payloads across the United States, the president turns to the nation's final hope, ex-Navy SEAL and Secret Service Agent Scot Harvath. Assigned to a covert section of the Department of Homeland Security and charged with defending the nation against all foreign aggressors by any means necessary, Harvath finds himself hand-picked by the president to unravel a brilliantly orchestrated, fiendishly timed conspiracy that has already shattered the fragile peace between the world's nations and which, if successful, will leave the United States in smoldering ruins. With family friend and former Deputy FBI Director Gary Lawlor nowhere to be found and suspected of betraying his country, Harvath embarks on an adventure that will test the bonds of loyalty and reveal a nation's deepest secrets. As high-voltage and timely as they come, *State of the Union* is a frighteningly real, headline-ripping tale of espionage and intrigue that will keep readers guessing until the last tantalizing piece of the puzzle locks into place. With exotic international locales, hair-raising suspense, and scenes of pulse-pounding action, Brad Thor has once again reaffirmed his position as the thriller writer readers and critics alike have hailed as Clancy, Cussler, and Ludlum all rolled into one.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In his third offering of the Scot Harvath saga, Brad Thor finally gets around to placing Harvath in his element: counter-terrorism. In the first offering, "The Lions of Lucerne," the former Navy Seal is featured in his role of Secret Service agent. In "Path of the Assassin," he ties up loose ends from book one and transitions away from Secret Service work and into the field he was so obviously made for. Harvath has to be one of the most highly trained individuals in history, and in "State of the Union," he will need every bit to make it out alive and save millions of innocent lives. The story really starts in the early 1980's when the Cold War was at its peak. Both the Soviets and Americans had placed sleeper agents with suitcase nukes in position to detonate them in major cities. However, mutually assured destruction (MAD) was keeping both countries at bay. Fast forward 20 years to the present (this book was published in 2004) and we meet General Sergei Stavropol. The General has waited patiently for his plan to come together, and with the completion of the Soviet missile defense system, the concept of mutually assured destruction no longer applies. The first thing Stavropol does is try to eliminate the US sleeper agents with their suitcase nukes. Almost all are killed and Gary Lawlor, formerly of the FBI and currently Scot's boss at the Office of International Investigative Assistance (OIIA), the counter-terrorism branch of the government, has gone missing. Stavropol, operating from a position of dominance, holds the US president hostage. His ultimatum: either the US retreats from the world stage both financially and militarily and the President announces this during his state of the union address, or his sleeper agents will set off the nearly two dozen suitcase

nukes spread around the country in strategic cities. Even one of the nukes could kill millions, and leaving the world stage would be devastating for the US economy. Things look bleak for President Jack Rutledge and Stavropol seems to be holding all of the cards, but Rutledge has an ace in the hole - Scot Harvath. With only one week to work miracles, Harvath sets out to do the improbable. With help from some of the CIA operatives from the previous book, as well as beautiful but deadly Soviet agent Alexandra Ivanova, who's loyalty is in question, Harvath must disable the missile defense system and find the suitcase nukes before it's too late. If one reads enough of these books, the outcome is not in question. The interesting thing is to see how Harvath goes about accomplishing his task. With equal part skill and luck, Harvath doesn't have a moment to spare when we finally reach the climax. This book is full of action and the scenario is definitely plausible. Just like the James Bond books, Scot Harvath has a tendency to get into tight spots, and also an uncanny ability to get out of them. I enjoyed this book more than the previous two, as counter-terrorism is Harvath's niche. I liked his involvement with Meg Cassidy from the last book, but she barely makes an appearance in this one. I guess Scot's career doesn't leave much room for a personal life. Nevertheless, I rate this 5-stars as the action kept the pages turning for me. I am looking forward to book 4 in the series.

I enjoyed the book overall, but found some of the 'leaps' in the plot to be off-putting. There were points in the story where things just plodded along in the weeds of detail but, at other (IMHO) critical junctures, there were sudden (and to me, somewhat unexplained) leaps in the story. It almost felt like those points were reached/written around dinnertime and, after Brad's long day at the computer, Mrs Thor called up the stairs and said, "Brad...we're running late...time to wrap things up" and he banged out a couple pages in 10 minutes that would have taken him 3 hours to develop earlier in the day.

Brad Thor has created a plot that is chillingly realistic. The Cold War seems like a thing of the past, but has been resurrected. Harvath's challenge and America's predicament from Russia seems unsolvable. The adventure to overcome is fast paced and believable. Great read!

I don't know, Thor-lovers. My first go 'round and I thought pedantic, good on gear, lifeless writing. Not Fleming or Le Carre but your basic make-a-movie franchise like series. Better reading than nothing...

This is the third book in Brad's Scott Harvath series and like the other two, it had me right from the start. I'm really loving the richness of each of the story lines and the depth of tactical that Brad brings to the action scenes. The pages fly by but leave me thinking about them for days after. I actually read his latest few first (Full Black, etc) and thought they were some of the most well-written books I had ever read. They certainly were the smartest action books I had ever read, no disrespect to Tom Clancy. Because the late books were so good, I went back to read the beginning of the series and was expecting slower, clunkier books because book 1 (Lions of Lucerne) was actually the writers first book ever. A lot of times I'll read a writer's early works after having read a book written much later in his/her career. Typically that early book makes me realize the quality arc the writer had crossed through over the years, becoming better and better in the craft with each passing book. But Brad Thor had it right out of the gate. The Lions of Lucerne was every bit as compelling and engrossing as Full Black. Impressive.

As suspected, Scot saves the day. However, the plot is very logical and plausible. The characters are well developed and the action suspenseful.

This is a bad Bond script. How can people be so smart in some areas and so stupid in others? I have read three of these books now and for the love of God would you give Scot some training in detecting when he is being followed.

Having just discovered Brad Thor after reading everything Tom Clancy has written (fiction), and all of Vince Flynn's Mitch Rapp series, as well as most of David Baldacci who kept me going with the Camel Club, Maxwell and King, and now Will Robie, I can say that I love books that satisfy my lust for revenge on "bad guys." Whether some things are improbable or not, I manage a "suspension of disbelief" if needed, and enjoy the ride! In truth, I am already reading the NEXT Scot Harvath novel in the series, and will continue until I finish the currently published novels. Maybe I am just easily pleased or maybe I am simply a vicarious adrenaline junkie!

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