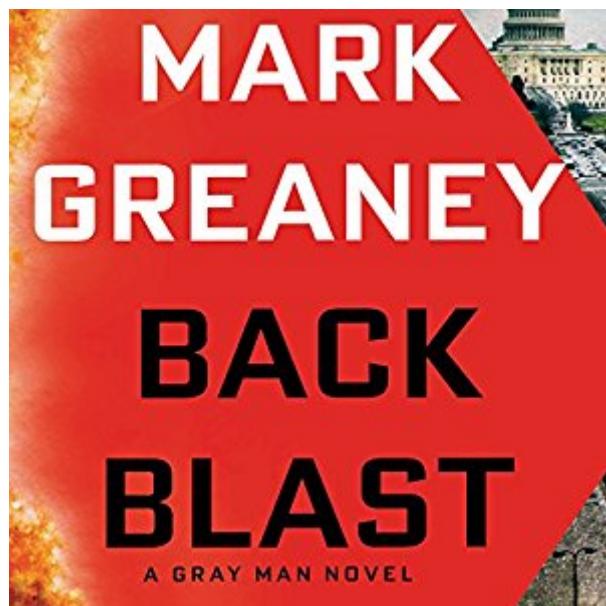


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# Back Blast: A Gray Man Novel



## **Synopsis**

From the number-one New York Times best-selling coauthor of Tom Clancy's Jack Ryan novels comes an all-new explosive thriller featuring the lethal assassin known as the Gray Man.... Court Gentry was the CIA's best agent. Until the day the agency turned against him and put out a kill-on-sight order. That's when the enigmatic international assassin called the Gray Man was born - and Court has been working for himself ever since. Now Court is back in Washington, looking for answers. He's determined to find out what happened all those years ago that made the agency turn against him. On his list to interrogate are his former partners and the men who sent him on his last mission. What he doesn't realize is that the questions that arose from that mission are still reverberating in the US intelligence community, and he's stumbled onto a secret that powerful people want kept under wraps. And now they have Court in their crosshairs. Court Gentry is used to having people on his trail, but this time it's on US soil - the last place he wants to be. Now he'll have to find the answers to his fate while evading capture...and avoiding death.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

In some of my other reviews, I generally reveal a bit about the books I'm reading. For the benefit of the reader, I'm going to be quite a bit more vague with "Back Blast". For Gray Man fans, fans of the genre, or for those that are perhaps discovering the series for the first time - this book deserves to be explored on its own, untainted by even a hint of plot spoilers. In creating "The Gray Man" series, Mark Greaney gave readers of the espionage and political/military thriller genre something special.

The magic ingredients, so to speak, in the Gray Man series aren't a hero name that you'd never hear outside of a fiction novel, or super-secret organizations run by either maniacal billionaires or heads of state bent on world domination. Or, even worse, the latest "Middle East terrorist have evil plot to destroy the world, kill the President, etc." The genre is completely polluted with this kind of "fiction", for all the wrong reasons. What makes the Gray Man special is that, to most people, he's just some guy with a somewhat complicated past, looking for answers. And, yet again, unlike most characters in the genre, he's not running from the Illuminati only to come back with some brilliant scheme at the end of the book and save the world. While he's certainly fighting to survive, Court Gentry is constantly running \*toward\* his enemies, sometimes with a plan, sometimes completely winging it. And the Gray Man doesn't always win. What he does do, however, is live to fight another day. And every day gets him closer to the truth. Until the arrival of "Back Blast", the reader is generally kept in a state of suspense about who burned Court Gentry and why. This is trademark Greaney - he made us wait for 5.5 years and four books just to find out what happened in Kiev. And the payoff, so to speak, was totally worth it. In "Back Blast", all old scores are finally settled as Gentry finds out the truth about what happened to him. Was the wait worth 7 years and 5 novels? The answer is a resounding yes. And here's why: All of Greaney's "Gray Man" novels, until now, have had a savage intensity and a writing style that is lean, sparse and to the point. "Back Blast" is, in a sense, much more complex than his other books. There is much more of an emotional quotient to the writing, rather than the raw, in your face action we're used to seeing from the Gray Man (though, without exception, there is plenty of action in Back Blast as well), and there is a longer story line with a much greater level of detail. The reader is also exposed to dimensions of Court Gentry that they haven't encountered before. For those who have read the first four books, we know that Court is something of an anti-hero. And as tough and menacing as the Gray Man is, "Back Blast" reveals a very human and very vulnerable side to Court Gentry, something perhaps not seen since "Ballistic", and something that Greaney clearly paid attention to in this book. It's an investment that pays off. Inevitably, as Court finds the answers he's been looking for, the reader gets to explore Court Gentry for what he ultimately is: a flawed human being, like the rest of us, but ultimately a good person who is ready to face his demons, just wants answers and will either get them or get killed in the process. The story unfolds at a pace all its own, and as the "a-ha" moment is finally revealed, the reader is left with a sense of satisfaction, and a clear promise of more to come. Some of the characters in "Back Blast" will be familiar. Some characters are new, and their development ranges from superficial to deep and complex. Greaney has a knack for not only bringing back the right characters at the right time, but giving characters that previously held small supporting roles,

so to speak, a much bigger casting in subsequent novels: their chance to shine in the spotlight and formulate subplots all their own. Most authors shy away from this, for a very simple reason: if done poorly, it ruins the book. Other than Lee Child's "Jack Reacher", Greaney is perhaps the only author in the genre who can interchange characters at will and not rely on heavy recycling for continuity. The magic of the Gray Man series is that the books can be read out of order, and "Back Blast" is no exception. You can pick up the book without having read the previous novels, and it's still incredibly enjoyable. And as the characters and subplots twist and turn, the whole thing "just works". The pace and action don't feel pushed, or artificial. You find yourself yearning to turn another page and at the same time want to go back to read a piece that stood out to make sure you didn't miss anything. As opposed to the previous books, there are multiple actors with multiple agendas, some that fully develop during this novel, and end one way or another, and some that set a tantalizing stage for the inevitable Gray Man book number six. With Gray Man 1-4, Greaney introduced us to a character that is, in a sense, a wounded animal trying to survive through a series of heroic actions. In "Back Blast", the creature truly becomes cerebral, savvy, and tactical. The prey becomes the predator, and the hunters become the hunted. And in the end, perhaps the Gray Man finally gets the closure and vindication he's looking for. Or does he? You'll have to read the book to find out. As far as I'm concerned, this is the apex of Greaney's writing - a true 5 star novel that will be incredibly difficult to top.

I just loved this book. Could not put it down. Got absolutely no exercise this weekend because I was stuck to the couch with this book. Grabbed me by the nose from the first page. I know, I know, that the escapes are a little more than miraculous, but I love this character, and to be fair, he is rarely unscathed as he out thinks his pursuers. ( It almost reminds me of the Robin Hood series by AngusDonald.). Fun and fast paced and a great story twist at the end. I thought I had it all figured out..(.SURPRISE!!) I think it is my favorite one in the series so far. If you have been following the Gray Man, this is a must read. I know one other reviewer who thought it was too long and could have been written 100 pages shorter, but I say, thank you to the editor for all that you allowed. I couldn't get enough of it! Go Gray Man...you poor, troubled, lonely (but dedicated) soul.

Wow! I'm new to the Gray Man series and just finished reading all 5 books back to back. I am an avid reader of Thor, Flynn(Mills), Ben Coes, Marc Cameron and many many others in this genre. This author and series is by far the BEST. The action is non-stop at a break neck pace. The Gray Man, Court Gentry, is a "good guy" in a world where he is constantly up against nothing but bad.

He's has been on the run from the CIA for 5 years, due to the "shoot on site" order the Director of NCS gets signed by the President. The thing is, he really DOES NOT know what he did to get into this situation. He followed orders, did his job well, actually was the best employee anyone could ask for. His reward? To have his own team at the CIA sent to terminate him. So, he runs for his life, and in the process becomes the "Gray Man". Court's skills make him the best, highly paid assassin in the business. He works all over the world, and along the way, he makes enemies, like the CIA, who want to kill him. Now, he has enemies everywhere and he is constantly hiding, watching over his shoulder and can never rest. What makes him so special? He not only is the best assassin in the world, he also only takes on jobs where he knows he is ridding the world of truly awful people. He does the right thing. Even through 5 years of hell, hiding out in 3rd world countries from everyone who's after him, he remains fiercely loyal to the United States. He is a patriot and really wants nothing more than to go "home" to the US AND to get answers as to why the CIA wants him dead. In this, the 5th book in the Gray Man series, he finally gets those answers. These books are so well written, the ideas that Mark Greaney come up, both that get Gentry into trouble, and the way he gets himself out, with are beyond heat pounding. Waiting for the next phase of what Court Gentry's life becomes is going to be like torture to this fan. Although, there is one thing that will make waiting for the next book bearable, the new book will be released on Feb. 21, 2017, my next birthday.

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