



Lincoln's Bodyguard

T.J. Turner

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In "Lincoln's Bodyguard," an alternative version of American history, President Lincoln is saved from assassination. Though he prophesied his own death the only way he believed the South would truly surrender Lincoln never accounted for the heroics of his bodyguard, Joseph Foster. A biracial mix of white and Miami Indian, Joseph makes an enemy of the South by killing John Wilkes Booth and preventing the death of the president. His wife is murdered and his daughter kidnapped, sending Joseph on a revenge-fueled rampage to recover his daughter. When his search fails, he disappears as the nation falls into a simmering insurgency instead of an end to the War. Years later, Joseph is still running from his past when he receives a letter from Lincoln pleading for help. The President has a secret mission. Pursued from the outset, Joseph turns to the only person who might help, the woman he abandoned years earlier. If he can win Molly over, he might just fulfill the President's urgent request, find his daughter, and maybe even hasten the end of the War."

Lincoln's Bodyguard Details

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From Reader Review Lincoln's Bodyguard for online ebook

Morgan Jameson says

If you enjoy historical fiction, you'll love TJ Turner's new book; Lincoln's bodyguard. Not only are historical stories notoriously difficult to write well, but so is writing in the first person, yet TJ nails it. His premise – 'What if Lincoln had lived' is unique, and coming from the perspective of an Air Force officer who served for years in Afghanistan, gives great credence to a story about an occupying force in the late 1860's – early 1870's. He made me look at Lincoln's death in an entirely different light. I thoroughly enjoyed this book, and highly recommend it. I look forward to reading more from this author.

Jim Satterfield says

A remarkable historical novel, based on a reasonable premise: What if Abraham Lincoln's bodyguard had thwarted John Wilkes Booth? Author T.J. Turner explores a post-Civil War America through the eyes of Joseph, the man in the shadow whose job is to protect Lincoln and help save a country still torn apart.

This alternative historical has something for everyone; from the neophyte to the most ardent Civil War reader. I particularly enjoyed the parallels between Turner's hero and the real John Wilkes Booth during the climactic chase scene.

A fun read. Looking forward to more from this author.

Stephanie says

I read this book in one day, forsaking my children and my delightful husband. I had no intention of doing this, but the book compelled me...well not so much the book as the writing. This was a fantastic read. The thought given to what would happen if Lincoln hadn't died- how it would affect the war and the people in the divided nation- was so interesting and complex. The book was full of surprises, which kept me reading and kept me forsaking my family. I'm giving this 5 stars. Very intriguing.

Peter Hogenkamp says

Lincoln's Bodyguard is historical fiction at its best: authentic, thrilling and just plain good fun. Author TJ Turner starts out with the interesting premise that John Wilkes Booth does not kill Lincoln in Ford's theater, and moves on from there: to a post-Civil War America that remains as divided as it was prior to the war; to a presidential administration torn by competing influences and petty jealousies (sound familiar?); to a postbellum South ripped apart by an occupying Federal Army at war with a stubborn Confederate insurgency.

Historical fiction is either made or broken by the research that went into the writing, and Turner did not disappoint: Lincoln's Bodyguard is steeped in history—but reads like a thriller, taut and fast-paced. It is

obvious that Mr. Turner knows his history, but he also knows his writing; the prose is fluid (and not overdone), the dialogue is genuine and appropriate for the setting, the characters are well-developed, and the pacing is fast, but not rushed.

Stories drive books, however, and Lincoln's Bodyguard features a good one, a tail about a man on a journey to save his country and himself, a journey filled with pitfalls, romantic interludes and lurking enemies. Turner displays a veteran's skill in his debut novel, which bodes well for fans of the genre: I look forward to his next offering.

Elizabeth (Betty) says

I am definitely a fan of historical fiction, and this book did not disappoint in any way. It is a fast moving account of what could have been if Lincoln had been saved by his bodyguard rather than having been assassinated by John Wilkes Booth. The book is well written and developed and gives a vivid picture of the emotional state of our country at that time. This is a book that held my interest and kept me reading as I constantly wanted to know what would happen next. I thoroughly enjoyed every page. It is a book that I would recommend to anyone interested in mystery, adventure, history or historical fiction, and it even has a love story or two. You cannot go wrong if you chose to read this book.

Marcia Swan says

TJ Turner's debut novel starts with an alternative history premise and delivers an absorbing adventure tale. Lincoln's Bodyguard is more than just a historical thriller about what might have been, though. It's an allegory for modern times, as well, delving into the complex interactions among love and war, loyalty and betrayal, revenge and forgiveness, which are as relevant today as they were in the 19th century. Read the book for the adventure story, the plot twists, the period detail, and the fascinating historical characters. Appreciate it for its tightly written prose and emotional insight, and consider what might yet be.

Fred Kirchner says

I enjoyed reading this title. Mr. Turner did a terrific job creating a world in which the Civil War never ended and Lincoln became president for life. After several too many terms, he's controlled by interests that are profiting from the continued struggle between North and South. The protagonist of Lincoln's Bodyguard, Joseph Foster, saved Lincoln from Booth's bullet that night in Ford's Theater. Since that night, Joseph has fallen into an out of touch malaise. He's called back into action by President Lincoln, and given the task of protecting, as well as escorting, a woman with whom Lincoln is involved back to Washington. The rest of the book tells the story of this journey. The author creates a US where the antebellum period never happened because the war never ended.

Even though this possibility runs against our history, Turner does his world building craftily enough that the reader is not burdened with it, and this allows the characters space to shine. Joseph is a reluctant warrior, hounded by his violent past, humbled by his dependence on alcohol, yet noble, self-effacing, and still very deadly as a fighter and agent. The villains are equally well-drawn.

This well-crafted debut novel augurs well for the writer. Look for more readable titles by T J Turner in the future--but they may also be about interesting variations on a past you thought you knew...

Wendy Beckman says

Wow! I was lucky enough to get an advanced copy of this book, which is due out this spring/summer. Tj Turner does a fantastic job of showing us what might have happened if Abraham Lincoln had not been assassinated that night at Ford's Theatre.

Turner, a veteran of three tours in Afghanistan, combines his military expertise with his own brilliant insights about history, politics, and our national economy. Lincoln's Bodyguard is scary in its plausibility. Besides being an intellectual treat in a "what if" kind of way, the novel is just a great piece of action/adventure writing.

This debut novel from Turner has set the bar high for his next work.

Ionia says

It is no secret that I have a total obsession with all things Lincoln. I collect these presidential artifacts, muse over them and ponder the writings of and about the man himself to the exclusion of most other interests in life. So, I hate most Lincoln fiction. I didn't hate this book.

I don't love it, but I didn't hate it either.

The author has done a fine job of choosing an interesting historical period for his setting, and has created a main character that can carry a book even without the use of a popular historical figure. His story was well thought out and I liked that the main character had a life in his own right.

My issue with this book was my own inability to suspend belief. Yes, I came into this knowing that it was a re-imagining of events. Yes, I also knew from the description that Lincoln survived in this story. Oddly, that wasn't what I took issue with. I will not reveal too much here for fear of spoilers, but I will say that although Lincoln became famous for freeing slaves--he did not exactly champion equality--and there is a certain thread in this book that I just could not put aside.

This is a creative story filled with imagination. The research that went into it is obvious, but for me, I found it difficult not to compare to history and that made it hard for me to fully appreciate.

For those who enjoy historical fiction and can come into a book with an open mind, this book will thrill you with action, intensity and solid writing.

This review is based on a complimentary copy from the publisher and provided through Netgalley. All opinions are my own.

Ron says

“Our stories are already written. We had yet to act them out.”

More alternate history than historical fiction. Turner rooted his tale in the events of 1865 but, rather than allowing the consequences of Booth’s failure to spin off naturally, he tries to get history “back on track” in this seven-years-later novel. The story follows the mixed-blood guard whose intervention provides the book’s title, though curiously all that action happened five years before the current story.

“The life pulled from his body as his maker took possession of his soul.”

A good story and a fun read, but the history is unconvincing. The whole Lamon-Norris-Barons subplot seems contrived and anachronistic. The real reconstruction struggle should have provided the necessary villains and heroes without introducing a Hunger Games-esque Lottery and labor unionism as motivators. The western separatist movement rings true enough.

“Death creeps quietly behind a man.”

The details were well-researched and gave a good feeling for the time and place, except for transportation. The horses pulled faster and longer than real horses, the trains were faster as well, and even afoot the people covered prodigious distances quickly. Standard fantasy fare, but knocks the reader out of the historical feel.

Quibble: When he surrendered to Sherman on April 18, 1865, Confederate General Joe Johnston had about 21,000 men, not 90,000 as reported here. On the other hand the "bushwhacker" insurgent campaign in Missouri throughout the war follows the pattern Turner suggests.

“Sometimes even death has to wait.”

(editted on April 1, 2016 to add quibble.)

Debbie says

Turner’s page-turning, nail-biting thriller is an amazing alternate history that fills the appetite of reader’s insatiable what-if curiosity and mixes in revenge, drama and a bit of romance to brilliantly widen the audience range. He successfully combines history fact and fiction and his gritty take-no-prisoners, narrative sets the tumultuous tone to the entire read. His characters are powerful and dazzlingly portrayed and his vivid, visual dialogue perfectly catalogs the atrocities and the altruisms during this endless, no-win war. Especially poignant was his post war draft; that will leave a lasting impression on readers. If you like alternate history, thrillers, historical fiction or you just want to keep your heart beating fast for a bit of time this is your next must read.

Mr. Turner you’ve got my complete attention and I can’t wait to see what comes next. It’s 1872, seven years since Joseph Foster saved President Lincoln from the bullet the assassin John Wilkes Booth meant for him. The country’s still in turmoil from the war that’s been over for years but is still raging and each side is executing dastardly deeds and suffering huge losses. Lincoln’s tired and scared and just

wants out of office but has been forced to endure term after term. He needs his most trusted ally and former bodyguard Joseph for one last clandestine, very personal mission that will send him into the belly of the beast to achieve.

Joseph doesn't hesitate to answer the Old Man's call even though he's not as young or as capable as he was seven years ago. He knows he should travel this road alone but when his former lover and Union spy, Molly insists on accompanying him he selfishly accepts her offer, maybe he just needs a friendly face or maybe it's something else. But one thing he does know is that accomplishing this assignment may finally lead him to retrieve his kidnapped daughter.

Jen says

I could not put this book down! I stayed up until 2 in the morning to finish it. I love historical fiction, but I was skeptical when I received a copy of this book as I usually don't like alternate history books. I soon realized that I couldn't have been more wrong!

I love the strong female character (Molly) who is witty, sassy, strong, and brave all while being charming. Her character makes me want TJ Turner to write another book that focuses on her!

Molly may be my favorite but that isn't to say that I care any less for the other characters. I love a book where I can care about the characters in the story, and this book doesn't disappoint. I felt myself cheering anytime something good happened and felt my heart skip a beat when something went wrong.

I don't usually re-read books, but I found myself picking this book up again. In fact I have read it three times already and I will probably pick it up again. I also purchased copies for my whole family. The only other books I have done that with are the Harry Potter series.

Melissa Tinker says

I could not put this book down. Lincoln's Bodyguard is a gripping page turner that imagines what would have happened if Abraham Lincoln had not been assassinated. TJ Turner convincingly takes us into the world of the late Civil War and engages us in the adventures of Lincoln's bodyguard, Joseph, and his true love, the strong and gritty Molly, as they pursue and evade the forces that would tear down the country for their own benefit in a Civil War that rages on in the form of guerilla warfare and industrial oppression - a dystopia of the past. If you are looking for an engaging narrative, strong, believable and sympathetic central characters, and a vivid re-imagining of history, I highly recommend this book.

Alannah Clarke says

To be honest I don't know much American history but I was aware of Lincoln's involvement in the civil war

and his death. As someone who is interested in history, I really love the whole alternative history genre, asking what would have happened if events had occurred differently. For example, what happened if Lincoln had survived his own assassination. I had read Stephen King's take on alternative on President Kennedy's survival so when I saw this book available on netgalley.com, I was eager to snatch it up!

I have to say that Turner did a brilliant job with this job, I really enjoyed reading it. The brilliant characters and storyline kept me hooked, I look forward to seeing more from this author

Reader Views says

LINCOLN'S BODYGUARD

TJ Turner

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Reviewed by Ben Green for Reader Views (11/15)

I am generally not a huge fan of alternative history. Though I find it interesting as a thought process, the idea of creating stories around it has never really interested me. That being said, "Lincoln's Bodyguard" by TJ Turner is not what I would typically think of as alternative history. Yes, it is set in an alternative historical setting, but the story itself is not particularly exploratory of the world it is set in, as the same story could be told almost anywhere. I actually think the author's choice to do this was very helpful, because it does not require the reader to have a great understanding of actual historical events, allowing people to focus on the story presented in the novel itself.

The story follows Lincoln's bodyguard as he goes on secret missions assigned to him by the President. At its core, "Lincoln's Bodyguard" is an action/spy thriller set in an alternative Wild West. It is filled with twists, turns, and plenty of action. If you are looking for a fast and exciting read and happen to like westerns with a little more depth than usual, or if you are looking for a spy novel with a unique setting, then look no further as this book delivers both.

The main issue I have with the book, however, is that there is too much going on and some of the story lines in the book do not feel that flushed out. By Chapter 7 or so, I was starting to get frustrated, not because of the twists and turns, or because I was trying to keep track of what was going on, but because the number of people needing saving by the main character was getting irritating. In fact, it felt like I was reading about a character in a video game who, instead of completing one quest at a time, was running around activating them all at once. Because of this, parts of the story seem to drop off and then reappear unnaturally further down the road. While it is clear that the author put a lot of work into trying to spin a good yarn, I personally think it would have turned out better if he had focused on only one or two elements.

"Lincoln's Bodyguard" by TJ Turner is truly an enjoyable story that I had a lot of fun reading. I just feel that it tries to do too much all at once, and the book does in all fairness, suffer for it. Having said that, I think it is an excellent start, and well worth the price and time. I cannot wait for his next book and expect great things to come from Mr. Turner. Overall, I give it 3 out of 5 stars.
