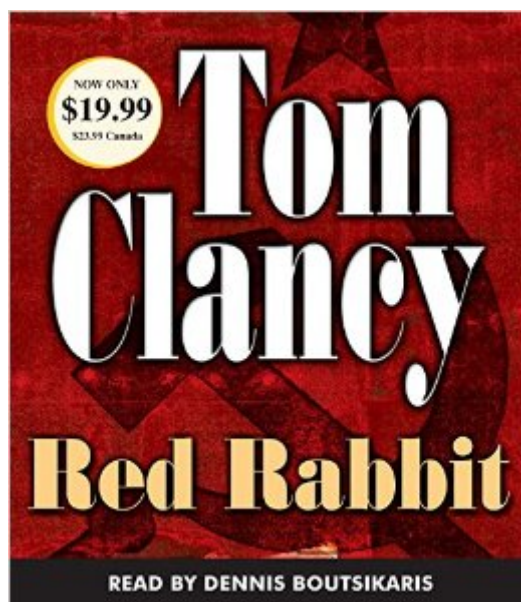


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## Red Rabbit (Jack Ryan)



## Synopsis

Long before he was President or head of the CIA, before he fought terrorist attacks on the Super Bowl or the White House, even before a submarine named Red October made its perilous way across the Atlantic, Jack Ryan was an historian, teacher, and recent ex-Marine temporarily living in England while researching a book. A series of deadly encounters with an IRA splinter group had brought him to the attention of the CIA's Deputy Director, Vice Admiral James Greer "as well as his counterpart with the British SIS, Sir Basil Charleston" and when Greer asked him if he wanted to come aboard as a freelance analyst, Jack was quick to accept. The opportunity was irresistible, and he was sure he could fit it in with the rest of his work. And then Jack forgot all about the rest of his work, because one of his first assignments was to help debrief a high-level Soviet defector, and the defector told an amazing tale: Top Soviet officials, including Yuri Andropov, were planning to assassinate the Pope, John Paul II. Could it be true? As the days and weeks go by, Ryan must battle, first to try to confirm the plot, and then to prevent it, but this is a brave new world, and nothing he has done up to now has prepared him for the lethal game of cat-and-mouse that is the Soviet Union versus the United States. In the end, it will be not just the Pope's life but the stability of the Western world that is at stake. . . and it may already be too late for a novice CIA analyst to do anything about it."Clancy creates not only compelling characters but frighteningly topical situations and heart-stopping action," wrote The Washington Post about *The Bear and the Dragon*. "Among the handful of superstars, Clancy still reigns, and he is not likely to be dethroned any time soon." These words were never truer than about the remarkable pages of his breathtaking new novel. This is Clancy at his best "and there is none better.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When I heard that Clancy wrote a book that was set back in the 80's Cold War era again I was hopeful that he could regain some of his earlier writing success. Not that I was hopeful for his well-being, but more that he would start writing books that were as enjoyable as the ones he wrote early in his career (Red Storm Rising, Patriot Games, Hunt for Red October, etc.). If Red Rabbit was an attempt at reliving the early years then he failed miserably. Red Rabbit focuses on the spy game that was so prevalent during the Cold War 80's between the Soviets and the British/Americans. Attempting to relieve political pressure from the Pope and remind Poland who's boss, the Soviets decide to assassinate the Pope. Having read previous Clancy books I assumed that this was the catalyst and that the plot would promptly fill in around it. That was my first mistake (and possibly Clancy's too). Instead of moving on with the details of the assassination and the West's attempt to prevent it, the story completely switches gears, now attempting to highlight an unremarkable character in KGB agent Oleg Zaitzev that has an attack of conscience and decides to defect with his family and some very sensitive information. On a sidenote, how can Clancy possibly expect the reader to believe in the sheer coincidence of Zaitzev arbitrarily choosing a person on the subway to help with his defection because the guy looked like an American, when in fact he's actually chosen the CIA chief of station in Moscow. Lucky guess, right? My second mistake was assuming that the story would right itself and get back on track with what seemed to be more interesting, the prevention of the assassination. Instead the pace of the books slows considerably while the focus has shifted to the defector.

A generous review: take this book as a long character exposition piece, with a middling storyline around it. The book gives some foundation to Ryan, the Foleys, and the crew at the CIA, and puts some meat on the bones of Ryan's reputation at the CIA. The book does a pretty good job at conveying an impression of the cities and offices in which the action takes place (note that I say "an impression" not necessarily "an accurate impression." Clancy has his foibles and faults as an author, but when you read a Clancy wannabe, you can see his talent. Fine for a long plane ride and pretty good for sitting by the pool. Now, what I really think: Gadzooks, does this book suck! Where to begin? The main plot: we know the Pope gets shot and we know he lives, so whether the KGB guy gets out of the USSR is irrelevant: which makes it hard to really get too worried about the KGB guy.

Moreover, the fact that NOBODY IS CHASING THE GUY makes his escape not terribly dramatic. As for Ryan, the part where he works in the garden, drips sweat on Lady Somebody's roses, and the next day they bloom a color never seen before by mere mortals, was pretty cool. Just kidding, but even in a genre where you expect to main character to be an all-around stud, the "Ryan Is Perfect" kick was over the top. So Ryan is a jock, brave, has a brilliant wife who loves to cook him breakfast, is a millionaire, a PhD, brilliant himself on all matters large and small, thinks little girls give great kisses and refers to his son as "the little bast\_\_\_," and I think he was in the Marine Corps (I think this because it was mentioned about 4,353 times in the book).

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