



Kill Zone

C.J. Lyons

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Lucy's back! In a story ripped from the headlines, the violence is the worst she's ever seen, the stakes are higher than ever, and then...things get personal.

It's a vicious, horrific crime: the brutal killing of a teenaged girl. When Pittsburgh detectives call FBI Supervisory Special Agent Lucy Guardino to the scene, their focus is on who and why? Was it the girl's Afghan father striving to regain his honor after she became too Westernized? Her Jewish boyfriend? Someone from Afghanistan settling an old grudge? Or one of the many drug cartels the father helped the DEA bring down seeking revenge?

Former Marine Sergeant Andre Stone has been home a month, but he has yet to leave the safe haven of his grandmother's house—other than to go to his appointments at the VA's burn clinic. Andre's disfiguring physical scars are the least of his worries. The emotional wounds of seeing his men massacred in a DEA raid gone horribly wrong have left him a walking dead man, numb to anything. All he can think about is revenge. On Rashid Raziq, the man behind the raid. When Andre is offered a chance at vengeance, the only question left is: How far will he go to get it?

The answers seem clear when Pittsburgh becomes engulfed in flames as a violent narcoterrorist turns the city into a kill zone...But in the dark of night, surrounded by men intent on destroying the truth, Lucy and Andre both learn that secrets hide in shadows.

Kill Zone Details

Date : Published February 16th 2012 by Nla Digital LLC

ISBN : 9781939038029

Author : C.J. Lyons

Format : Kindle Edition 356 pages

Genre : Thriller, Mystery, Suspense, Fiction, Crime

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From Reader Review Kill Zone for online ebook

Gabby-Lily Raines says

When I first read via Ms. Lyons' newsletter that a new Lucy Guardino book was coming out, I was quite excited. The titles may be off-putting to some readers, but they make perfect sense in context of the stories and the stories are excellent.

What I really love about this story (about all of her books really) is that it's of the edge reading. There is violence, yes, but it isn't gratuitous violence. There is, from my viewpoint, just the right amount to make the story realistic -- if there was either more or less something would be lost. There is mystery, action, and jurisdictional squabbling.

The characters also make the story. They are ordinary people you might know. They think, they are tempted, they must choose their paths, and their choices are ones that the reader could -- conceivably IF in the circumstances with that personality -- choose for themselves.

Looking forward to the next installment in the series!

(Cross-posted to Amazon.com, Librarything, Goodreads, B&N)

Richard says

My favorite series of the year. I hope there will be more.

Bobbie says

Great read. Fast paced thriller. Intriguing characters.

Todd Wilkinson says

The book starts off with a horrific crime, which grabbed my attention immediately, and gave me hope for a great read. But the remaining pages were filled with the ridiculously implausible, which left me wondering where Lucy Guardino hides her Supergirl cape. Drug cartels, gangs, a 13-year old psychopath, nuns, and a zoo all play a role in this 1 day of action.

I've read a few other CJ Lyons books and enjoyed them some, but these aren't on my must read list. I'll read more as time and opportunity allow, but this wasn't the great read I was looking for.

Nurse Lisa In Ohio (PRN Book Reviews) says

4.5/5!!!

I LOVE this series! It's based on true events and is fabulous.
Hiiiiighly recommend.

Debbie Mcnally says

Great book plenty of twist and turns.

Vicki says

This is my favorite Lucy book yet. Fast paced and nonstop action. I am usually the first to figure out who's the bad guy or good guy.

This one had me guessing until the very end. I like that the author doesn't try to make Lucy out to be perfect in every way. She is an FBI Agent, wife, and mother and is very likable but not perfect. In this one a few character's from the 2nd book but gives a brief account of them. However because I love this series would strongly recommend them as well and if possible, in order. That being said, don't not read this book just because you may not have read the others. It's a good book and I hope this is not the end of Lucy.

Diane says

Kill Zone indeed. A fairly face-paced novel which takes place in Pittsburg, PA. A combined group of terrorists create complete chaos and gets many police agencies involved. Then to top it off, the psychopathic teenager from first two books in this series is hanging around on the fringe of this chaotic mess waiting for her chance to contribute.

Two young girls are massacred in their home and who happen to be the children of a questionable relocated Afghani. A severely injured, but well on the way of recovery (at least physically), marine is thrown into the chaos and literally all hell breaks loose all over town.

I liked this book, but had a bit of time with all the characters introduced in such a short time.

2 thumbs up and 4 stars.

Bernie says

Kill Zone is the third book in the Lucy Guardino F. B. I. thriller series written by author C. J. Lyons.

Dorothea Müller says

Lucy ist zurück. Mit einem brutalen Mord eines Mädchens. Der afghanische Vater wird verdächtigt. Doch als alle auf den Weg zurück, kommt es zu einem Zwischenfall, der ganz Pittsburgh heimsucht. Andre Stone kommt zurück nach Hause und denkt nur Rache. Rashid Raziq, doch er weis nicht das man ihn im schon im Visier hat.

Die Geschichte fängt wie bei jedem Krimi mit einem guten und bösen Mord an. Doch dann fühlt man sich als ob man falsch abgebogen ist und in einer Action / Endzeit Film gelandet ist. Spannung steigt, Atmung auch. Man wechselt immer wieder die Perspektiven, die Personen. Lucy ist die Konstanze, die anderen geben eine Information oder lenken einen in die Irre. Man kommt nicht zu Ruhe. C. J. Lyons macht Pittsburgh zu einem Schlachtfeld für eine Verschwörung die einen in ihren Bann zieht. Bis zum Ende weis man nicht ob es zu einem Happy End in irgendeiner Form kommt. Manchmal weis man nicht mal ob es irgendjemand überlebt. Viele Kämpfe, viele Tote und Wendungen, die plötzlich aus dem nichts kommen.

Quillracer says

This story had many elements in the beginning that made it hard for me to get caught up in the story. Some of those elements were a bit too ‘over the top’ for me to buy into, making it impossible to accept the story as realistic. Lyons did, however, mesh those multiple elements into a neat and more realistic whole by the end. And the tension is almost unending as the whole story takes place over the afternoon and night of one day.

The bad guys and their environs were also a little too ‘right out of central casting’ to be believable. Many thriller authors have the bad guys outthink and outmaneuver the good guys throughout the book until they suddenly suffer an outbreak of the stupids or the good guys get a sudden infusion of smarts near the end – another thriller convention that I find hard to believe. Lyons made the good and bad guys fairly equal with the edge shifting constantly from one side to the other.

One more thing I found a little hard to accept was the complete personality reversal one person underwent.

I liked the first book in this series but was a little let down by the second. Sadly, this one didn’t undo that. So, I doubt I’ll be back for more in the series.

Michael Sherer says

As a high school freshman I took ancient history, which included, of course, Greek mythology. Learning the names and relationships between all the Titans and then the Olympians who came after (let alone demigods and mortals involved in all those wars) was a daunting task.

Adding the name of another goddess in the pantheon of authors who populate the Mt. Olympus of thrillers is just plain pleasurable. Seems to me that these days, some of the best writing, not to mention some of the most ingenious premises and unique characters, are coming from the pens (or laptops) of the likes of Alafair Burke, Gillian Flynn, Megan Abbott, Nancy Pickard, JT Ellison, Allison Brennan, Hank Phillippi Ryan, and now CJ Lyons.

I met CJ Lyons at a mystery conference some years ago, but had not gotten around to reading her oeuvre (too many authors, too little time!) until I recently got my hands on a copy of *KILL ZONE*, the third Lucy Guardino FBI thriller. Though she shares a name and vocation with the heroine of another goddess's series (Allison Brennan's Lucy Kincaid), she is her own kick-butt character, and this entry in the series solidly establishes her as both an FBI Special Agent and a woman to be reckoned with.

From the discovery of the bodies of two girls horrifically murdered that opens the book, the action is nearly non-stop. Lyons knows how to ratchet up the tension by stacking up the odds against the good guys as a Mexican drug cartel and a Philadelphia gang join forces to take over the streets. She throws even more into the mix by bringing in a couple of potentially loose cannons in the form of a teenage serial killer intent upon revenge against Lucy and a former gang member turned Marine who comes back from Afghanistan burned beyond recognition.

Lyons cleverly interweaves all these threads into the action, but doesn't sacrifice her characters' humanity or individuality to do so. Lucy continues to face down danger ultimately to protect those she loves, and we get to see that first-hand in her relationship with her husband Nick.

Lyons calls her books "thrillers with heart," a play upon the notion that they fit into the sub-genre known as "romantic thrillers." But *KILL ZONE*, at least, as I'm sure is true of the rest of the series, plays more like a straight-ahead example of the thriller genre at its best. Which is why CJ, too, is one of the goddesses in the thriller mythology.

Layla Darnell says

Love love love this book!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

A Psychopathic killer, a Mexican drug cartel, an afghan man and his family, a former marine, and local gangs make for one day of hell in the city of Pittsburgh. Lucy Guardino returns along with Jenna, Walden and Taylor to help save a city from ruins. The murder of two young girls brings Lucy and her team out to investigate but things don't add up and it only gets worse from there as they all fight to save themselves while attempting to protect innocent civilians. This dark thriller is a high octane ride packed with action and twists and turns around every corner. The dark subjects in this book may not be for everyone but the author tells a great story and her characters are brave and determined to see justice served at all costs. The storytelling in this book drags you right into this crazy and chaotic world making you feel as if you're experiencing the terror and shock along with the characters. So buckle up and hang on its about to get crazy in Lucy's world!

y

Megan says

Kill Zone, like every book written by CJ Lyons is a must read. The book captured my attention and I had a difficult time putting it down. It was great to get to see the next chapter in Lucy Guardino's life. The book was realistic enough that you could picture it happening. The drug cartels in Mexico are not for the faint of heart and neither is this book. It takes things we read about and watch in the news and places it in our

backyard. This book will keep you on the edge of your seat. If you enjoy fast paced, with kick butt characters I would recommend this book for you.

The Pirate Ghost (Formerly known as the Curmudgeon) says

Okay, this is the best book in the Lucy Guiardio series yet. The action starts early and never lets up until the last page. Lucy Guiardino has grown much since her last book.

There are many likes and most of them are terribly simple. It's just a fun story. Fun stories have lots of things to like in them.

Here are some particulars (some of these go through all three books)

Lucy - I like her as a strong character, she's complex, she's tough, she's feminine (difficult to write a feminine action hero even when it's a woman) and she's in charge. She gets beat up, she makes bad decisions, she takes chances and feels guilty. You do need to read all three to understand her better here because she gets less face time than in the previous books. Lucy's just a winner with me as a pistol totin' tough FBI Agent in Pittsburgh.

Nick - this is the best image of Nick we've seen yet. He's still the ultra sensitive insightful shrink, but this time we get to see him scared, angry and in danger and, he doesn't fire a shot. With words and wit he faces down gang-bangers and serial killers. He's got a good heart and more than a little hero in him and he cares about his patients (as a therapist).

It was refreshing to see Nick as a human for a change and not some insightful priest like figure married to Saint Mary.

Jennah- Jenna grows too. She's tougher than she looks and, flawed in very human ways. She's a tough pistol packin' sharp shooting woman. I mean, "don't mess with the US Mail" if you know what's good for you. She's a sour sidekick, with a batman like zeal and she really resnets Lucy which makes for interesting chemistry.

Andre - a new figure. A veteran of the Afgahn War with horrible disfiguring burns. I could gush about him for a long time. I'll just say this. Thank you Dr. Lyons for including this kind of human figure of courage and kindness.

Morgan - I actually hated Morgan as a character in the last book. I thought she was too young for the role she was cast in. This time, she's a bully, but she grows too, thanks to Nick. It must have been a tough balance to have her change thinking and still keep her sociopathic side. She makes a dark Avenging Angel, as much as a Dark Gardian Angle when she chooses to be. And, even when she's being nice, she's scary. She's definately the girl you'd never think was dangerous, until she puts a knife in your gizzard!...or shoots you....or tries to burn you alive... or any number of unpleasant things.

Nick - Lucy - I still love the romance, the relationship and the fact that it's still a loving marriage at the end of the book, despite the hardships faced in the middle. It's really great that there's a female heroine out there who's not married to, or in love with a jerk, or single and having to sort through would-be-suitors to find Mr. Right while chasing serial killers and dodging the badguys. Nick's a bit on the perfect side, but, he's growing

to meet us on the human side of things.

Morgan - Jenna - I liked that Morgan, a young girl, was Jenna's bully. Yes, Bully tactics work on adults too. You just have to "up the ante first." This is a twisted relationship and it's hard to tell if it's Thelma and Louise, Beauty and the beautiful beast or Beastie and the Beastier Beast but what ever they've got going, it only gets more interesting as the book goes buy, ends up just as convoluted and, gave room for both characters to grow and mature without looking like rediculous villains or helpless victims.

the Action-... I Mean "HOLY FREAKIN CRAP BATMAN!" Once this took off, it just didn't stop. When it slowed down, the character building scenes and tension kept things as tight as a circus tightrope and it just kept on going.

Healing themes - In this one, more than the other two, there are healing themes all over the place. Everybody has a wound, emotional baggage, fears, problems you name it and, most of the characters we've grown to care about find some version of healing and personal growth. Considering how violent this book is, how wicked, racy and lucivious some of the content is, these characters find a way to become closer to whole than they were before.

Plot - The plot was perhaps a bit transparent, but the subplots that carried themes over from previous books and new ones started here made ever step complicated and left me wondering "what's going to happen next" even when I had figured out who we were dealing with and even the bad guys next moves. Working the complexity in with all of this balls to the wall action must have been hard. This is a good story.

Place - Pittsburg PA? Who'd have thought something like this might happen in Pittsburg? I never did, but, it sure worked. There were times when it had the same confused feel that reminded me of the LA Riots and the Watts Riots even before that. Shooting at firemen trying to put out fires, chaos in the streets. Police as targets.

The Little' ol' Grandma's Auxilliary - I loved the ladies with Andre's Grams and the two nuns driving the projects in a pannel van to rescue those caught in the chaos. The little old ladies "We're Skyping" running their own Emergency dispatch unit in Grams's basement. It was a nice touch.

Warnings

Violence, all kinds of it delivered with lethal intent and vicious means. The Villain(s) are wicked, mean, horrible people who enjoy inflcting pain. The Victims never deserve what they get. It's Mob violence, it's Gang violence, it's police brutality and the D.C. Sniper all rolled into one. I think it's managed well and though there is a lot of it, it's not gratuitus or pointless (which is important to me). I can handle violence that, maybe I don't agree with, but has a human mission to solve or meet a problem head on.

Good story, over all 4.5 stars (Rounded up to 5). As good as I thought the first book was, this is better. As much as I liked the second book, this is much better.

Best Lucy G story yet.
