



The Old Man

Thomas Perry

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A finalist for the Barry Award for Best Thriller

Edgar Award-winning author Thomas Perry writes thrillers that move “almost faster than a speeding bullet” (*Wall Street Journal*). *The Old Man* is his latest whip-smart standalone novel.

To all appearances, Dan Chase is a harmless retiree in Vermont with two big mutts and a grown daughter he keeps in touch with by phone. But most sixty-year-old widowers don't have multiple driver's licenses, savings stockpiled in banks across the country, and a bugout kit with two Beretta Nanos stashed in the spare bedroom closet. Most have not spent decades on the run. Thirty-five years ago, as a young hotshot in army intelligence, Chase was sent to Libya to covertly assist a rebel army. When the plan turned sour, Chase reacted according to his own ideas of right and wrong, triggering consequences he could never have anticipated. And someone still wants him dead because of them. Just as he had begun to think himself finally safe, Chase must reawaken his survival instincts to contend with the history he has spent his adult life trying to escape. Armed mercenaries, spectacularly crashed cars, a precarious love interest, and an unforgettable chase scene through the snow—this is lethal plotting from one of the best in crime fiction.

The Old Man Details

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From Reader Review The Old Man for online ebook

Louise Wilson says

3.5 stars. David Chase is a 60 year old widower. He spends his days reading and walking the dogs. But most 60 year olds don't have multiple drivers licenses, their savings in banks across the country and 2 Beretta Nanos in his spare bedroom cupboard.

Thirty five years ago he was a young hotshot in the army's intelligence. He was sent to Libya to assist a rebel army. Things did not go to plan triggering consequences he never anticipated.

This is a page turner from beginning to end. Well written and fast paced.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Grove Atlantic and the author Thomas Perry for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Skip says

Like most of my GR friends, I thought this was okay, but below average for Thomas Perry. Dan Chase is a retired U.S. intelligence officer is living quietly in obscurity until some Libyan killers show up, sending him on the run with Carol and Bob (his large dogs.) Many years in the past, he was supposed to provide money to a rebel group, but the money was kept by an intermediary until Dan took it back (violently.) Now, the Libyans are seeking revenge, with assistance from their friends in the U.S. government. Moving several states away, Dan finds a female roommate, helping him disappear again, but technology outs him and they flee together, despite Dan's attempt to separate. Decent action thriller, but characters just not as good as Jane Whitefield series.

PirateSteve says

Could be the makings of a thriller movie.

Larry says

Early on in "The Old Man" (page 4), Thomas Perry provides an ominous beginning to a sentence that tells the reader what is coming: "The first sign that something was wrong . . ." It is a classic chase novel introduction to murky and dangerous doings. All of Perry's skills are in clear view: the mastery of the cat-and-mouse game, clear prose, characters who aren't just cyphers (there are three to care about, five including two dogs), and the ability to plot up a storm. It goes on my shelf with P. M. Hubbard's "Kill Claudio," Geoffrey Household's "Watcher in the Shadows" and Perry's own Jane Whitfield novels. And, unlike some otherwise excellent thrillers, it has a finish to savor.

Sandy says

3.5 stars

Daniel Chase is just your average 60 year old widower. Since his daughter moved out, he spends his days reading & walking Dave & Carol, the dogs. But 35 years ago he was a covert government agent in Libya. After a botched assignment, he fled back to the states carrying \$20 million only to discover he'd been abandoned by his own handlers. Since then, he's been living quietly with a new identity. Now he's been found.

Daniel has no choice but to hit the road, dodging several attempts on his life before he makes it to Chicago. With a new name, he rents a room from Zoe McDonald, an attractive divorcee trying to make ends meet.

Meanwhile, the government enlists a special ops contractor to find their former agent. Julian Carson works loosely with military intelligence & it's not long before he tracks him down. But their "meetings" leave him with more than just bruises. Daniel's side of the story makes Julian question what really happened all those years ago, why he's been hired & who he can trust.

The story shifts to full thriller mode as Daniel & Zoe flee across the country, followed by Julian & a group of shadowy men. We know the military is behind the manhunt but it's not immediately clear why or if they're working alone. Gradually we (and Daniel) learn the real reason he's a wanted man after more than 3 decades.

This is a fast paced conspiracy thriller with plenty of twists to keep you entertained. Daniel's character remains an enigma but you can't help but pull for him as he tries to outwit everything the men in dark suits throw at him. He's a difficult guy to connect with & we never really get to know him any better. But this is in keeping with a character whose secrets prevent him from forming close relationships. In fact, most of the characters are lightly fleshed out. Zoe is a remarkably accepting woman whose life is turned upside down. When we're given details of her background, it's late in the game & doesn't really add anything to the story. The exception is Julian. We spend a fair amount of time in his head as he struggles to hold on to his integrity while making decisions that will alter the trajectory of his life.

But character development is beside the point as this is a straight up thriller made for fans of spy games & lot of action. It does exactly what it should....keep you turning the pages to see who is left standing when it all shakes out. I enjoyed learning all of Daniel's survival tricks & appreciated the author didn't go for the pat, easy ending.

Perfect for your next flight or road trip, this should appeal to fans of Steve Martini, Gregg Hurwitz, Joseph Finder or Steve Berry.

Jan says

This is the first book I've read by Thomas Perry. The old man is a retired army intelligence officer who served two tours in Viet Nam and whose last mission was to Libya to assist a rebel army. Everything about that mission went sideways and for the following 35 years, the old man has been hiding in plain sight. Without warning, the old man has been located and he's on the run again with survival instincts in high gear. This is a fast paced story, excellently told and the characters vividly well drawn. When it's over, you'll have

respect for the old man.

John says

I never write reviews, but this was bad enough that I felt inspired. The character of this book was so conflicting. The author tried to make him bad ass through a decent background story in Libya. Then became a family man after returning home, fondly loving his wife and daughter, taking extreme measures to protect them. Daughter grows up, wife dies, then he gets chased by some bad guys from his past. He meets a new lady and pretends to not be in love with her for the rest of the book. The nature of his relationship with her just made no sense.

Kicker #1 was that the author tried to interweave a story about a for-hire CIA agent and 3 mysterious acting CIA chiefs. But the parallel story really didn't add interest to the book and just seemed pointless.

Kicker #2 was the sudden back story of the new lady...murder as a child? Forced by her parents to run away? Afraid to be fingerprinted? Just painfully eye rolling.

Kicker #3 was the lack of parallel story about the person who had a death wish against him. It made the ending much less gratifying.

In the end, he ditches the new lady, gets the bad guy and lives happily ever after.

Frances says

By all appearances Dan Chase is an elderly man casually walking his two oversized dogs, Carol and Dave weighing some eighty pounds; an excellent choice for protection. However, he is on high alert at all times and as he crossed a bridge close to his home in Vermont, Dan was aware of a car going much slower than normal. After his last and final secret mission with military intelligence he had been safe for several years but now it would appear they have found him. Dan knew one day he would have to disappear from the quiet life he tried to create and outrun those in pursuit. The Old Man is a highly charged, action packed novel, written by Edgar Award-winning author Thomas Perry. If looking for a page turner, excitement, and drama this novel definitely ticks all the boxes.

** Thank you to Publisher Mysterious Press and NetGalley for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for my honest review. **

Jeanette says

It was ok. I was expecting more than ok, I guess. Not as much disappointed as just neutral. Lots of action. But for me, little connection. The protagonist is and has been so OCD his entire life with the early subterfuge governmental connections and also all that false identity set ups, that he didn't seem as an actual "normal" family man to me at all. His emotions strange, more than off. And Zoe? More so.

But hey, the dogs were truly keen. They were the highlight of the book for me. The rest seemed extremely cartoon like and difficult to context as anything believable. Especially at his age. No one I know over 60 can stay awake that many days, for one thing. And if they did, they would be easy pickings.

Readers will probably like this much more than I did. To be all over the place location wise and also have such underpinning of 30 years plus? I have to have a highly desirable protagonist and "known" man- like a Reacher. That makes the plot and action have nuance. This just gets brutal after brutal.

Jim says

Perry did it again. A seemingly average man isn't, but just how doesn't become entirely clear until the very end. He's a pretty good guy, but he definitely has a healthy streak of self interest which leads him into doing less than nice things. On top of that, it drives him & I keep thinking back about what a loss his talents were.

The other characters are also well drawn with plenty of revelations, motivations, & histories that are often only hinted at until they are slowly revealed. I was a bit disappointed by the data dump about one character, but the motivations suddenly made a lot more sense & supported an otherwise weak line. It also provided a knife-like twist.

For an obvious plot, it managed to take off in directions I never would have thought of & ended on a great note. As I wrote at the beginning, Perry did it again. He rarely disappoints. The narration was also excellent. I'll definitely be on the look out for more of his books.

Joyce says

Here's the problem with thrillers on audio sometimes: listeners have too much time to think and to ask questions about dropped characters and plot lines and even about the protagonist and his actions. Thomas Perry is a favorite and this novel has some strong points--the 60-year-old ex-CIA hero pitted against the agency and who know what other organizations, all out to kill him, all because of a mission 35 years earlier. Great premise, he's a fantastic character--plans ahead, keeps himself in shape, and manages to stay ahead of his adversaries and clean up the problem so he's off the hook. Fast paced story with lots of twists; interesting characters but frankly I liked a secondary character, a CIA contractor, more than the hero; interesting background into black ops and government bureaucracy; smartly written; suspenseful tone. Read the book--you'll be turning the pages so quickly you won't be second-guessing as I was. Better yet, watch Hopscotch with Walter Matthau, Glenda Jackson, and Sam Waterston. There are many of the same themes, much better played out against a European backdrop and an opera's-greatest-hits soundtrack.

Still says

Excellent.

I loved this novel a great deal.
It's a must for any Thomas Perry fan.

Thirty-five years ago when the Old Man was a young guy named Dan Chase and working for Army intelligence, he was assigned to deliver several million dollars to a Libyan strong man. This Libyan was supposed to supply an army of rebels with weapons and everything else needed to topple Muammar Gaddafi from power with money provided by American power-brokers. After risking his life to make this delivery, young Dan Chase is appalled to find that the Libyan strong man has decided to keep the money for his own creature comforts. The rebels will all starve to death or be captured, tortured and executed by Gaddafi's soldiers. The Libyan strong man will grow older in comfort and prosper. The American power-brokers will be sorely embarrassed but what the hell - it's not their money ...it's U. S. tax-payer money.

So, Dan Chase steals the money back with the intention of returning the money to the government of the United States.

Instead, his superiors sever all contact with Dan Chase and abandon him as a traitor to his own country. A disgrace to Army Intelligence.

The several million dollars Dan Chase has stolen back from the Libyan strong man are to be his consolation prize.

Thirty-five years later, living under a different name, various unknown men with Arabic accents show up attempting to murder the Old Man.

Killing him will prove to be an objective not easily realized.

As one young intelligence contractor assigned to aid the unknown assassins who come after the Old Man observes:

"He had warned his superior officers. He had told them a couple of times that the old man wasn't just an old man, like somebody's uncle. He was old the way a seven-foot rattlesnake was old."

Thomas Perry is known for the type of thriller most often described as "page-turners". This book has become one of my favorite novels of all the books he's published so far.

You won't be able to put this one down.

Highest Possible Recommendation.

James Thane says

This is another excellent stand-alone novel from Thomas Perry, author of the Butcher's Boy and Jane Whitefield series. The protagonist, whom we meet as "Dan Chase," is a sixty-something retired guy, a widower with two dogs named Dave and Carol, who is otherwise alone and attempting to mind his own business, living under the radar in Vermont. Chase is a man with a past, though, who's been looking over his shoulder for more than thirty years, hoping that it won't catch up with him. But, of course, it finally does; otherwise there would be no novel.

As a young army intelligence officer, Chase was assigned to funnel \$20 million to a Libyan warlord thought to be friendly to the United States. The warlord, in turn, was to give the money to a group of insurgents who would advance American interests in the country. But the operation went south, and when it did, Chase acted in a way that he thought best to protect the interests of the U.S. Not everyone agreed with his course of

action though, and Chase thus became a marked man, waiting for the ax to fall. When it finally does, he has spent years preparing for the moment, assembling new identities and stockpiling weapons and cash. Dan Chase may be an old man, but he's not going down without a fight.

As he's demonstrated in earlier novels, Perry is the master of explaining how people can go on the run and elude, at least temporarily, very skilled and determined adversaries who are in pursuit. Of course, that's becoming increasingly hard to do in this day and age, when virtually everything a person does, seems to leave a digital trail. As always, though, Perry's protagonist is ahead of the game, at least in the beginning, and the result is a gripping story that leaves the reader glued to his seat, rooting for the Old Man to succeed when the odds suggest that he never can. All in all, a great character, a great plot, and a great read.

Emily says

All of my reviews of Thomas Perry's books sound the same, so instead let me gripe about the flight on which I read most of the book. After suffering the indignity of not getting precheck and having to shuffle around in my socks like some kind of non-business traveler, I found my window seat in the way back of the American Airlines plane. Soon, the occupant of the middle seat arrived, asked whether I was with the young girl who was sitting on the aisle (no) and then asked if either of us wanted to switch with her anyway (...no? No one in the world would accept that deal?). She then sat down and started passing items of luggage among her party of about eight passengers scattered through the back of the aircraft. After we took off, she: requested a cup of ice; managed to knock it over and spill it everywhere; requested a second cup of ice; crunched the ice noisily; ate a ham, egg, and cheese croissant; then farted magniloquently for the second half of the flight. I might have found that forgivable if she and her friends hadn't kept up a shouted conversation throughout, about such topics as who had put what items they needed on board in their checked luggage (where are Pat's headphones?); hints on the crossword puzzle that one person was doing (nooooo); how to use the wifi and entertainment app (nooo, you are all so wrong); and when we were going to land (THAT IS NOT HOW TIMEZONES WORK).

Thomas Perry's latest novel kept me entertained throughout! Also, not only did I not assassinate any of these fellow passengers, Thomas Perry-style, but I apparently managed to keep my inner rageful sarcastic New Yorker so well in check that the whole party chatted cheerfully with me as we disembarked. I'd recommend this even if you didn't have a horrible flight. I think I like Perry's standalone novels even better than the series that made his name.

Donna says

This book falls into the Thriller/Suspense genres, which use to be all I read back in the day. So no surprise that I liked this one a lot. It was the perfect book for my day. I liked the MC. I liked that he wasn't described as a humble, charming Adonis the way most MC's are in this genre. By the end, I still would have liked more detail on him, but I think not having that added to the mystery of the character. I also liked that he had dogs and was a good dog owner....he gets extra points for that.

The pace was great and I liked the way the other characters were used to create the drama. I could have done without the love interest though. She seemed like the perfect woman a guy would describe. I hated the cliché in that, not to mention the fantasy of that whole idea. Just sayin'.

