



The Detachment

Barry Eisler

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John Rain is back. And “the most charismatic assassin since James Bond” (San Francisco Chronicle) is up against his most formidable enemy yet: the nexus of political, military, media, and corporate factions known only as the Oligarchy.

When legendary black ops veteran Colonel Scott “Hort” Horton tracks Rain down in Tokyo, Rain can’t resist the offer: a multi-million dollar payday for the “natural causes” demise of three ultra-high-profile targets who are dangerously close to launching a coup in America.

But the opposition on this job is going to be too much for even Rain to pull it off alone. He’ll need a detachment of other deniable irregulars: his partner, the former Marine sniper, Dox. Ben Treven, a covert operator with ambivalent motives and conflicted loyalties. And Larison, a man with a hair trigger and a secret he’ll kill to protect.

From the shadowy backstreets of Tokyo and Vienna, to the deceptive glitz and glamour of Los Angeles and Las Vegas, and finally to a Washington, D.C., in a permanent state of war, these four lone wolf killers will have to survive presidential hit teams, secret CIA prisons, and a national security state as obsessed with guarding its own secrets as it is with invading the privacy of the populace.

But first, they’ll have to survive each other.

The Detachment is what fans of Eisler, “one of the most talented and literary writers in the thriller genre” (Chicago Sun-Times), have been waiting for: the worlds of the award-winning Rain series, and of the bestselling *Fault Line* and *Inside Out*, colliding in one explosive thriller as real as today’s headlines and as frightening as tomorrow’s.

The Detachment Details

Date : Published September 15th 2011 by Thomas & Mercer

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Author : Barry Eisler

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From Reader Review The Detachment for online ebook

Kaje Harper says

Barry Eisler manages a difficult challenge in his "Rain" books, almost like keeping a knife balanced on its edge. His MC, John Rain, is an assassin. And although Rain has his limits (no women, no children) he is a brutal and cold killer. As the book opens, he casually kills two men for the sin of following him and representing a potential threat. No questions, no investigation of who they might work for, just *snap - dead*. And yet I like Rain and he remains a sympathetic character. That's skillfully done.

This was a tough book for me, though, plunging deep into conspiracy theory, which is not my favorite place to go. I would never argue with the basic premise - that acts of terrorism and other outside threats have long been used, and even manufactured, to manipulate public opinion and get people to give up civil liberties. (Anyone recall the weapons of mass destruction that Iraq was actually known not to have?)

As Benjamin Franklin said (perhaps quoting from Richard Jackson): "Those who would give up Essential Liberty to purchase a little Temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety." Eisler uses this book in some ways to push that same message, with entertainment and not in a preachy way, but clearly. As an advocate of civil rights I am at his back with this one.

He also has a gay MC, who has been blackmailed into participating by threats against the family of his lover, and being gay is treated casually and acceptingly by Rain and the MCs in this book. The gay MC is in fact the most ruthless of the four and no kind of stereotype, and I appreciate that. The book is well written and tautly plotted.

But I'm an optimist and a humanist. And this book was way too successful at making me want to stick my fingers in my ears and hum "la, la, la." Even in fiction. The MCs brutality also crossed some lines for me, as a believer in law and order as a cornerstone of civil rights. So as good as the book was, I had a hard time reading and finishing it.

Mihir says

Full Review originally at Fantasy Book Critic

OVERALL RATING = 4 & 1/2 Stars

ANALYSIS: The Detachment is Barry Eisler's ninth book and the first one to combine both his previous book characters. When the book was announced, it was also announced by the author's move to the Indie side of publishing. This alone precipitated a heady mix of discussion and still is. For me while his move was intriguing from the business point of view as explained in his interview, it was more exciting to return to the world of John Rain, last seen in 2007's Requiem for an Assassin. This book would also pick up the plot threads from Inside Out which was # 5 in my top 10 books of 2010. I was anticipating top notch action, clash of personalities and much more, I'm glad to say The Detachment delivers that and much more.

The Detachment begins by re-introducing John Rain who has been living a retired life of sorts but is still

proficient enough to notice that there are people tailing him. Turns out that Daniel Larison and Ben Treven and two others have been asked by Colonel Scott Horton to recruit Rain for a particular mission. Rain accepts but not before showing why he's being considered for a mission. The other person who is sought by them, is Dox and after Rain's acceptance, he blindly agrees. The plot has them unite due to Horton's plan and they truly don't know whether he's telling the truth or just playing his games. Thus they set out to finish their tasks not knowing exactly whose goals they are advancing.

The book starts with a terrific premise and then rushes to give the reader an excellent thrill ride all the way. What I loved about the book was its characterization not only does it feature the return of John Rain but also has him mixing with Daniel Larison. With Larison & Rain, Barry has created two enigmatic and deadly individuals and it was a sheer pleasure to see how they would react to each other. To add to the mix there's Dox as well as Treven and this detachment becomes as stable as old dynamite. They are all lone wolfs who have to act as a team as they are given a substantial amount to do so and are told to kill three people to foil a plot which aims to derail the America as we know of it today.

Another highlight is the character interactions as they showcase the psyche of each individual which is a bonus for ever Eisler fan to read. Through out the story the reader is shown a tremendous glimpse in to the life of a covert operative both official and mercenary. The action in this book is almost nonstop as the author lays about his set pieces and in between them gives the reader dollops of character intrigue. The plot-twists can be a bit predictable however do not detract much from the read. They however will have the reader turning pages to see how it all ends, as for me I read the entire book in one sitting on the day I received it. The prose is very tight and does not waste the reader's time in extra details however it isn't so spartan as well not to develop the complete picture. While on the subject of details, it can safely said that the author did his research very well and all the minute facts add to the strength of the subject matter.

For fans of Rain & Larison, this book is a goldmine as we get to see them collide with each other and I'm not telling how it all ends, Ben Treven the protagonist of two previous books gets a more secondary role but I'm not complaining as this was a bit expected. He however still plays a crucial role in certain events which sway how the chips line up. Overall the way things end it does seem that there might be further books written about this cast and I for one will be glad to read them.

While this book deserves the praise it gets, there are some points which cannot be overlooked, the biggest plot hole was the lack of a perceivable enemy and while the book does explain a lot in the end. I felt that the author is definitely trying to link some real life happenings within the fictional nature of this plot. While this was done very smoothly, I'm sure there are readers out there who do not appreciate such subtext. The climax of the book is something which will cause fans to have differences of opinion in regards to the path taken by the author however to discuss it, would be a huge spoiler. Personally for me it felt right so I don't think it was a wrong move on the author's part but again some readers might beg to differ.

CONCLUSION: If you like thrillers with action, terrific plots and great characters then The Detachment is the book for you. Even if you are a newbie reader who's a bit hesitant to start out with this book, don't be worried as the author gives enough of the back story about the characters for all newcomers to understand their complex psyche and enjoy the book at the same time. The Detachment managed to give me a terrific thrill ride while at the same time overcoming my anticipation for the book. In this regards you can't ask for more from any author. Give it a try if you find yourself bored reading the same thrillers over and over again.

James Thane says

After a four-year absence, assassin John Rain returns in *The Detachment*. Of late, Rain has been living quietly under the radar in Tokyo, visiting his favorite jazz clubs, coffee shops and whiskey bars, but he remains ever-vigilant and one night, while training at his local *daidojo*, he notices two Americans who seem strangely out of place. When he sees them a second time, he knows that he has fallen into someone's crosshairs.

That someone turns out to be Col Scott Horton, head of a secret military group of covert killers, who convinces Rain to meet with him in L.A. Once there, Horton lays out a chilling scheme in which a group of plotters is planning a coup against the United States government. Their plan is to make a series of "false flag" attacks against targets in the U.S. which will be blamed on Islamic extremists. In the wake of these attacks, the president will suspend the Constitution and rule the country under special executive powers, dispensing with such inconvenient obstacles such as the Congress, courts and voters. The assumption is that, scared witless by the attacks, the American people will happily surrender what little remains of their liberties for the sake of their safety.

Horton wants Rain to lead a team that will assassinate the three principal coup plotters and thus head off the threat. There's a big payday involved for Rain and the chance to do some good for the American people at the same time. Naturally, this won't be easy, which is why Horton needs someone like Rain. Rain accepts the challenge and calls in his old friend, Dox, to fill out the team which will also include two of Horton's hand-picked men.

What follows is a great thrill ride that is guaranteed to keep any reader awake well into the night and perhaps for a good long time thereafter. In addition to being an excellent thriller, this is a very scary and thought-provoking book as well. Given the way so many Americans were willing to compromise their fundamental freedoms in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, it does not seem at all beyond the realm of possibility that a scheme like this might succeed. Eisler has done a lot of research on rendition, secret prisons, government torture of suspected terrorists, and other such unpleasant topics, and has woven this into the story to create a very plausible scenario in which a plot like this might be nothing more than the next logical step, given the developments that have occurred in the U.S. over the last decade.

Inevitably, the book contains a lot of twists and turns and enough action to satisfy any fan of the genre. There's a great deal of tension among the members of Rain's team and it's never really clear who can and cannot be trusted, both within and outside of the team. Eisler, who was once himself a covert op for the CIA, clearly knows his stuff. He's an excellent writer and has a gift for spinning a story that keeps you riveted and turning the pages. Fans of the series will be very happy to see Rain return and those who haven't yet made his acquaintance will likely be scurrying to find the earlier books in the series after reading this one.

Noran Miss Pumkin says

This is a major page turner for me, tough I saw plot twists coming a long way off. The thought of false flag attacks on American soil, troubles me-it could happen. These men, though you come to like them, are all trained assassins. They have done very bad things, and now they are brought together, to open the flood gates of despair on the US. Gee they thought they were preventing it by killing a few men. Character development was very good. I enjoyed it, even though it out of sequence with the Rain series. The book stands alone very

well.

Harry says

All right, so I appear to be hunting for a specific character: from Jack Reacher (Lee Child), to Jonathan Quinn (Brett Battles), onto John Rain (Barry Eisler). From ex military, to cleaner, to assassin.

How do we as readers gain empathy for a killer? Simple enough, join John Rain in his voyage from assassin for hire to conscientious killer (kill bad guys) to wanting to get out of the business...but unwilling to leave his perspective of the world (no worries, this transformation takes place across many books, more than enough to satiate the most avid genre reader)

I devoured these books as I did the others above (more to come as I continue hunting). You'll just have to see for yourself.

P.S. If you've read this review, you've read all my John Rain reviews. There are no discrepancies in Eisler's work. Every novel is top notch, provided you share my predilection for this sort of character.

HR

Skip says

OK, I admit it: I am a huge fan of John Rain and Dox. I like these characters developed by Barry Eisler. In the newest John Rain novel, he brings in Ben Treven, Hort, and Larison from his other two novels. They are hired to stop a governmental plan of staging domestic attacks in order to precipitate the suspension of American civil liberties by the President and his anti-terror team, and the four assassins are not sure whether their kills are promoting chaos or freedom. Hort remains the master manipulator. Rain's attempt to elicit Larison's humanity as Dox did for him was a highlight.

Mark Chisnell says

I first became aware of Barry Eisler after the controversy surrounding his decision to turn down a serious amount of money from a traditional publisher, in favour of bringing the books out himself. Subsequently, he accepted a deal with one of Amazon's publishing imprints, and hasn't looked back. Meanwhile, I became a fan of his blog; his writing on book marketing, the publishing industry and politics is always engaging, entertaining and usually right on the money.

I'm not sure why it has taken me this long to try one of his thrillers – I think it was the lack of availability as a reasonably priced e-book, something that Eisler is planning to fix. But having finally got to it, I'm happy to report that Eisler deserved every penny of whatever money Amazon threw at him – The Detachment is an excellent book.

Eisler has been writing about the assassin John Rain for a while, and this is the latest of those books. I guess

it's not an ideal place to start as I came into it with none of Rain's backstory – but it didn't matter. The book works perfectly well as a stand-alone thriller, while the writer still encouraged me to go back and read the earlier ones by making some adroit references to Rain's previous adventures.

Barry Eisler's bio says he worked for the CIA in a covert position, and it shows. Or, at least it shows as far as I – a civilian – can tell. The book has an incredibly authentic feel, that's the first thing. The second is that it rips along at pace, with a rock solid and all-to-believable underlying conspiracy at the centre of the plot. John Rain, the conflicted killer is a terrific central protagonist, and the other characters that make up *The Detachment* are all well drawn and keep you guessing. My pulse was racing in the final set-piece shoot up – only the denouement of *Argo* has matched that recently. I hope we see more of Rain, and the other characters in *The Detachment*, but I will most certainly be reading more Eisler either way.

Bettie? says

Read by author and he is easy on the ears as well as being easy on the eye.

Not having read the Treven/Larison teamed-up series to flesh out their back-history and quirks, I didn't initially warm to their inclusion, yet the Rain/Dox duo carried me over and this settled down into an exciting testosterone adventure.

That said, I'm pretty much over and done with Eisler's oeuvre.

- 3* A Clean Kill in Tokyo (John Rain, #1)
- 3* A Lonely Resurrection (John Rain, #2)
- 3* Winner Take All (John Rain, #3)
- 3* Redemption Games (John Rain, #4)
- 3* Extremis (John Rain, #5)
- 3* The Killer Ascendant (John Rain, #6)
- 3* The Detachment (John Rain, #7)
- 2* Paris Is A Bitch

Andrew Smith says

Sometimes a series can go on too long. Maybe the author runs out of ideas, having exhausted every possible nuance of character and all plausible plot configurations. Such may be the case here with self employed hit-man John Rain. It's the seventh book in the series and so I guess it's excusable...well, to some extent. What's not so acceptable is for the author to come up with a plot so *inplausible* that it beggars belief and a narrative that explores no previously hidden aspects of our anti-hero's character.

The first half of this book could easily have been compiled from sentences cut and pasted from the first six episodes. Literally nothing happens that any follower of the series has not come across at least once before. Boring! Then in the second half the book kicks up about five gears as the tale quickly morphs into a Mitch Rapp adventure so complex and so unlikely it had me grappling for the off button on my audio recording.

I finished the book, but it's by some distance the worst in the series so far. For me, the best bits in the previous books have involved Rain thinking deeply about what he's doing and why, contemplating how his life will play out and worrying over relationships. This is always great stuff and has been, as a matter of course, very well written. But there's none of that here – or little enough that I missed it. What is here, and is new, is Rain dealing with conflict within his team and using techniques we haven't seen him use before to do so. And this was good – there just wasn't enough of this sort of stuff. The rest was all shoot 'em up dross.

I really don't want to rubbish this series. I've thoroughly enjoyed getting to know the complex killer and I do think the books are better written than most books in this genre. As well as the fascinating character insights Eisler has provided, the action sequences have been really well done too. The words have really brought the sequences to life with high tension being built and (crucially) a decent picture being painted of what's actually going on, once the fighting starts. It's a series I'd highly recommend.

For that reason, I may one day pick up another Rain book - but not for some time, I think.

Giovanni Gelati says

I am a huge of Barry Eisler's work, I make no bones about it, and so I am going to keep it short. In this novel he tackles many things, melding the thoughts and feelings of four different killers, four different Alpha males, four totally different viewpoints and even more agendas in this novel and he does it seamlessly. The read is taunt, moving and intense. It was hard to separate myself from the read until I finished it.

I was fortunate enough to interview Barry Eisler on my blogtalk radio show The G-ZONE. Here is the link for the interview:

<http://www.blogtalkradio.com/gelatiss...>

Here is the synopsis for you:

"John Rain is back. And "the most charismatic assassin since James Bond" (San Francisco Chronicle) is up against his most formidable enemy yet: the nexus of political, military, media, and corporate factions known only as the Oligarchy.

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But the opposition on this job is going to be too much for even Rain to pull it off alone. He'll need a detachment of other deniable irregulars: his partner, the former Marine sniper, Dox. Ben Treven, a covert operator with ambivalent motives and conflicted loyalties. And Larison, a man with a hair trigger and a secret he'll kill to protect.

From the shadowy backstreets of Tokyo and Vienna, to the deceptive glitz and glamour of Los Angeles and Las Vegas, and finally to a Washington, D.C. in a permanent state of war, these four lone wolf killers will have to survive presidential hit teams, secret CIA prisons, and a national security state as obsessed with guarding its own secrets as it is with invading the privacy of the populace.

But first, they'll have to survive each other."

Barry Eisler says

Of course I thought this book was excellent. :)

Simeon says

If you're new to John Rain, you don't need to read the older novels to enjoy this one, though it helps with returning characters. It's brilliant, realistic, and relevant. Eisler is a master of tension who takes great care in building subtle, memorable characters, through multiple perspectives, battles of will, a transformative killer's conscience, and so on. Superb spy thriller.

If you want details: four of the most dangerous badasses form a detachment. And then the the mayhem begins.

Jeanette "Astute Crabbist" says

Yeah baby. It's love. Once I got past the preliminaries this was can't-put-it-down good for me. The end was a little too pedestrian, but the story still has enough going for it that I want to give it five stars.

This is a hybrid, a sort of harmonic convergence of characters from two series, although they don't always converge most harmonically. John Rain and his buddy Dox team up with Ben Treven and Larison at the behest of Colonel Horton, who offers them a pay-off they can't turn down.

The dynamic among the four members of the detachment keeps things lively, with Dox providing the comic relief that lets everyone stand down and still save face when things get tense.

This group is a walking testosterone storm. They're all ultra-macho and suspicious -- typical in their line of work. The power struggles and pissing contests are inevitable, but they have to man up and keep it together so they can accomplish their mission.

Said mission being nothing less than saving America from a plot to suspend the Constitution by sowing so much fear in the hearts of Americans that they're willing to give up their freedoms for an illusion of safety. Sound far-fetched? Read Naomi Wolf's *The End of America* for a nonfiction perspective.

Does Eisler have an agenda? Most certainly. He blogs about torture, civil liberties, and the rule of law, so it's no surprise that his political views influence his fiction writing as well. What's more, he includes five pages of web addresses at the back of the book introduced with the following statement: "*Much of the backstory and the technology, and many of the incidents, described in this book are real.*"

It's not necessary to have read the Ben Treven books before reading this one, but you really do need to be familiar with the John Rain series to appreciate the bond between Rain and Dox and understand Rain's peculiar set of powers and proclivities.

D.G. says

4.5 stars

I'm so glad to be back reading this series.

It took me a while to catch up because **The Detachment**'s events are closely linked to what happened in Inside Out, the second book in another series by the author. To understand what's really going on in this book, it's pivotal to read the other one.

Unlike prior books in the series, **The Detachment** is told in multiple POVs. Besides Rain's, we also have Larison's and Treven's, each with their own issues and agendas. However, the one that stole the show was Dox. With his brand of good ol' boy humor, remarkable but unexpected smarts and instincts so sharp that he can detect a switch of moods in nanoseconds, he was able to charm from children to kidnappees and stop the other three from killing each other more than once.

My daddy taught me that gentlemen can kill each other, preferably with firearms, and that's fine, but that we respect womenfolk. I'm sure that sounds fucked up to most of your more modern, egalitarian, self-actualized killers, but it's how I was raised."

It was clear throughout the book how Dox's friendship has affected Rain. From the beginning, he seemed more settled and the way he handled Larison was shocking. Maybe because he acknowledged something he'd known for a long time but was unwilling to accept:

Now, with too many yesterdays and fewer and fewer tomorrows, I find I'm increasingly troubled by knowledge I was once adroit in avoiding. The knowledge that following my brief encounters with every stranger I agreed to eliminate, I left nothing but tears and trauma, a wreckage of interwoven lives forever riven and malformed. The knowledge that there would never be a way to account for the amount of pain I have brought into the world. The knowledge that the world would have been marginally better off if I had never been born.

Mr. Eisler simply ROCKS as the narrator - thank you to whomever suggested to him to narrate his own books!

I'm sad that Dox is not the next two books in the series (they are set when Rain is young) but nevertheless, I'm really looking forward to them both.

Glen says

The John Rain series was one of the best of its kind in the early 21 century, but at some point, it lost its way. With **The Detachment**, it shows signs of new life.

This is a team up with characters from Eisler's other series. A colonel hires Rain and some other soldiers to assassinate political leaders to stave off a deep state coup. The hits are well done, I thought.

Then the aftermath of the hit, when everybody is on the run is quite good as well. Rain's friend, Dox, really shines here.

The book seems prescient today, but possibly not in the way Eisler was hoping. There's a lot of commentary that would be seen as pro-Trump in just a few years, but this was written well before 2016. Maybe Eisler was seeing the same things that Trump saw at the time.
