



Roses Are Red (Alex Cross)

By James Patterson

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In this heart-pounding new thriller, Detective Alex Cross pursues the most brilliant killer he's ever confronted, a mysterious criminal who calls himself the Mastermind. In a series of crimes that has stunned Washington, D.C., bank robbers have been killing bank employees and their families if the robbers' instructions are not followed to the letter. Alex Cross knows this is no ordinary criminal—the pathological need for control and perfection is too great. Cross is in the midst of a crisis at home—but the case becomes all-consuming as he learns that the Mastermind is plotting one huge, last, perfect crime...

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Roses Are Red (Alex Cross) By James Patterson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Roses Are Red, James Patterson's sixth Alex Cross thriller, opens with the District of Columbia detective attempting to mend his nearly unraveled family. The year-long kidnapping of one's intended (1999's *Pop Goes the Weasel*) will do that to a relationship. Christine, the kidnappee, is amenable with one reasonable condition: that her family's horizon remain uncluttered by homicidal maniacs. How unfortunate, then, that the joyous christening of their newborn son is rudely interrupted by the FBI bearing news of several heinous murders requiring the attention of detective (and doctor of psychology) Cross.

"Three-year-old boy, the father, a nanny," Kyle said one more time before he left the party. He was about to go through the door in the sun porch when he turned to me and said, "You're the right person for this. They murdered a family, Alex."

As soon as Kyle was gone, I went looking for Christine. My heart sank. She had taken Alex and left without saying good-bye, without a single word.

Which leaves Cross free to hunt the Mastermind, the barbarous brains behind a widening series of bank robberies in which employees or their family members are held hostage and, when instructions aren't followed to the finest iota, slaughtered. Given the cases' glaring and unfathomable inhumanity, Cross's long- time DCPD partner (the wonderful giant, John Sampson) gives way to the warm, attractive, and fiercely intelligent FBI Agent Betsey Cavalierre.

The longer and harder Cross and Cavalierre remain on his trail, the bolder and more brutal--and shiveringly close to home--the Mastermind's strikes become. And, thanks mostly to lightning-short paragraphs and a point of view that rappels from the first-person Cross to the third-person Mastermind, the tale progresses at hot-trot speed to a bona fide doozy of a denouement. It'll be over before you know it, so sit back, hold your breath, and enjoy the show. And stay tuned for the next one. --Michael Hudson

From Publishers Weekly

Alex Cross is backAand that alone will have this novel crowning bestseller lists, a feat Patterson's books have achieved often of late, both his Cross (*Pop Goes the Weasel*) and non-Cross (*Cradle and All*) thrillers. Patterson won an Edgar for his first novel, *The Thomas Berryman Number*, but he hasn't won one since. One reason is that his prose, though sturdy as a trusted rowboat, is just as wooden; another is that his plottingAhere detailing Washington, D.C., homicide detective Cross's pursuit of a crazed but crafty homicidal criminal known as the MastermindAis about as sophisticated as that of a Frank and Joe Hardy tale. So why are the Cross novels so popular? In part because Patterson constructs them out of short, simple sentences, paragraphs and chapters that practically define the brisk, fun, E-Z read, and in part because, here and elsewhere, he engages in the smart and unusual tactic of alternating third- and first-person (from Cross's POV) narrative. Mostly, though, readers adore them because Cross is such a lovable hero, a family-oriented African-American whose compassion warmly balances the icy cruelty of Patterson's villains and their sometimes graphically depicted crimes (as is the case here). In the new novel, Cross suffers lady problems as his old love, who's in terror of Cross's job, leaves him, and he fumbles toward a new romance with an FBI agent; he

also suffers personal trauma as his beloved daughter develops a brain tumor. That's back-burner action, though. The main focus here is, first, on a series of shocking Mastermind-engineered bank robbery/kidnapping involving wanton killings and, second, on the hunt to ID the Mastermind. A hunt both absorbing and annoying for its several (rather smelly) red herrings, and concluding with a revelation that screams sequel. While there's nothing subtle in this novel, every blatant element is packaged for maximum effect: roses may be red, but Patterson's newest is green all the way. U.K. and translation rights, Arthur Pine Associates. 1.25 million first printing; Literary Guild and Doubleday Direct main selections; simultaneous Random House large-print edition and Time Warner Audio. (Nov.)

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From [Booklist](#)

Alex Cross, Patterson's detective hero, is back in a thriller that is guaranteed to hold his many fans spellbound. This time around, Cross' nemesis is the Mastermind, a cunning bank robber who recruits teams of criminals to do his dirty work while he orchestrates the crimes from the shadows. What makes the Mastermind especially frightening is that he takes the bank executives' families hostage in order to ensure compliance, and he kills in cold blood, seemingly at random. Cross is called in on the case, but he may have more than he can handle on his plate. His girlfriend has left him, his beloved daughter is in the hospital, and an old enemy has popped up. But Cross throws himself into the Mastermind case, aided by an attractive FBI agent named Betsey Cavalier. Despite their resourcefulness, the Mastermind always seems to be a few steps ahead of them, even when the case seems to be coming together. Patterson keeps the pages turning all the way up to the jaw-dropping conclusion, which is sure to have readers eagerly awaiting the next Cross novel. *Roses Are Red* is far superior to Patterson's most recent novels and should impress readers who enjoyed his earlier Cross books, such as *Along Came a Spider* (1993) and *Kiss the Girls* (1995). This one is not to be missed. *Kristine Huntley*

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mary Redus:

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Andre Smith:

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