



## Patient Zero: A Joe Ledger Novel

By Jonathan Maberry

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Monday, 1300 Hours: Joe Ledger kills terrorist Javad Mustapha, aka **Patient Zero**, with two point-blank shots from his Glock .45.

Wednesday, 0800 Hours: **Patient Zero rises from the dead...**

When you have to kill the same terrorist twice in one week, there's either something wrong with your world or something wrong with your skills... and there's nothing wrong with Joe Ledger's skills. Ledger, a Baltimore detective assigned to a counterterrorism task force, is recruited by the government to lead a new ultrasecret rapid-response group called the Department of Military Sciences (DMS) to help stop a group of terrorists from releasing a dreadful bio-weapon that can turn ordinary people into zombies.

**"Plenty of man-to-zombie combat...a fast and furious read."?Publishers Weekly**

**"As palatable as your favorite flavor of ice cream. A memorable book."?Peter Straub**

***Patient Zero* is the first book in the Joe Ledger series by Jonathan Maberry.**

**This edition of the book is the deluxe, tall rack mass market paperback.**

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## **Patient Zero: A Joe Ledger Novel By Jonathan Maberry Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

### Review

“Brilliant, shocking, horrifying, it puts the terror back in terrorist.” ?*James Rollins, New York Times bestselling author*

“Plenty of man-to-zombie combat...a fast and furious read.” ?*Publishers Weekly*

“I had a fine old time reading *Patient Zero*. Jonathan Maberry has found a delightful voice for this adventure of Joe Ledger and his crew: while the action is heated, violent, and furious, the writing remains cool, steady, and low-key, framing all the wildness and exuberance in a calm rationality (given an almost comic edge) that renders it as palatable as your favorite flavor of ice cream. This is a lovely feat, and Maberry has written a memorable book.” ?*Peter Straub*

“*Patient Zero* is high-octane excitement from beginning to end, and the start of a fabulous new series. Joe Ledger and the DMS have my vote as the team to beat when combatting terrorist threats on a grand scale.” ?*David Morrell, New York Times bestselling author*

“Scary, creepy, and gripping--*Patient Zero* is *Night of the Living Dead* meets Michael Crichton.” ?*Joseph Finder, New York Times bestselling author*

“A fast-paced, creepy thriller that as prickly as a hospital needle and sounds a little too convincing. This guy is good.” ?*Joe R. Lansdale*

### About the Author

**Jonathan Maberry** is the *New York Times* bestselling and multiple Bram Stoker Award--winning author of the Pine Deep Trilogy, *The Wolfman*, *Zombie CSU*, and *They Bite*. His work for Marvel Comics includes The Punisher, Wolverine, DoomWar, Marvel Zombies Return, and Black Panther. His Joe Ledger series has been optioned for television.

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## CHAPTER ONE

**When you have to kill the same terrorist twice in one week, then there's either something wrong with your skills or something wrong with your world.**

**And there's nothing wrong with my skills.**

## CHAPTER TWO

**Ocean City, Maryland / Saturday, June 27; 10:22 am**

They came for me at the beach. Nice and slick, two in front, one big cover-man behind in a three-point close while I was reaching for my car door. Nothing flashy, just three big guys in off-the-rack gray, all of them sweating in the Ocean City heat.

The pointman held up his hands in a no-problem gesture. It was a hot Saturday morning and I was in swim-trunks and a Hawaiian shirt with mermaids on it over a Tom Petty t-shirt. Flip-flops and Wayfarers. My piece was in a locked toolbox in the trunk, with a trigger guard clamped on it. I was at the beach to look at this year's crop of sun-bunnies and I'd been off the clock since the shooting pending a Monday morning officer-involved discussion with the OIS team. It had been a bad scene at the warehouse and they'd put me on administrative leave to give me time to get my head straight about the shootings. I wasn't expecting trouble, there shouldn't have *been* trouble, and the smooth way these guys boxed me was designed to keep everyone's emotions in neutral. I couldn't have done it better myself.

"Mr. Ledger...?"

"Detective Ledger," I said to be pissy.

No trace of a smile on the point-guy's face, only a millimeter of a nod. He had a head like a bucket.

"We'd like you to come with us," he said.

"Badge me or buzz off."

Bucket-head gave me *the look*, but he pulled out an FBI identification case and held it up. I stopped reading after the initials.

"What's this about?"

"Would you come with us, please?"

"I'm off the clock, guys, what's this about?"

No answer.

"Are you aware that I'm scheduled to start at Quantico in three weeks?"

No answer.

"You want me to follow you in my car?" Not that I wanted to try and give these fellows the slip, but my cell was in the glove box of the SUV and it would be nice to check in with the lieutenant on this one. It had a weird feel to it. Not exactly threatening, just weird.

"No, sir, we'll bring you back here after."

"After what?"

No answer.

I looked at him and then the guy next to him. I could feel the cover-man behind me. They were big, they were nicely set—even with peripheral vision I could see that Bucket-head had his weight on

the balls of his feet and evenly balanced. The other front-man was shifted to his right. He had big knuckles but his hands weren't scarred. Probably boxing rather than martial arts; boxers wear gloves.

They were doing almost everything right except that they were a little too close to me. You should never get that close.

But they looked like the real deal. It's hard to fake the FBI look.

"Okay," I said.

## CHAPTER THREE

Ocean City, Maryland / Saturday, June 27; 10:31 am

Bucket-head sat beside me in the back and the other two sat up front, the cover-man driving the big government Crown Vic. For all the conversation going on the others might have been mimes. The air conditioner was turned up and the radio was turned off. Exciting.

"I hope we're not going all the way the hell back to Baltimore." That was more than a three-hour ride and I had sand in my shorts.

"No." That was the only word Bucket-head said on the ride. I settled back to wait.

I could tell that he was a leftie from the bulge his shoulder rig made. He kept me on his right side, which meant that his coat flap would impede me grabbing his piece and he could use his right hand as a block to fend me off while he drew. It was professional and well thought out. I'd have done almost the same thing. What I wouldn't have done, though, was hold onto the leather handstrap by the door like he was doing. It was the second small mistake he made and I had to wonder if he was testing me or whether there was a little gap between his training and his instincts.

I settled back and tried to understand this pick-up. If this had something to do with the action last week on the docks, if I was somehow in trouble for something related to that, then I sure as hell planned to lawyer up when we got wherever we were going. And I wanted a union rep there, too. No way this was SOP. Unless it was some Homeland thing, in which case I'd lawyer up *and* call my congressman. That warehouse thing was righteous and I wasn't going to let anyone say different.

For the last eighteen months I'd been attached to one of those interjurisdictional taskforces that have popped up everywhere post 9/11. A few of us from Baltimore PD, some Philly and DC guys, and a mixed bag of Feds: FBI, NSA, ATF, and a few letter combinations I hadn't seen before. Nobody really doing much but everyone wanting a finger in the pie in case something juicy happened, and by juicy I mean career beneficial.

## Users Review

From reader reviews:

**Tameika Ahmed:**

This book untitled Patient Zero: A Joe Ledger Novel to be one of several books that will best seller in this year, that is because when you read this publication you can get a lot of benefit onto it. You will easily to buy this particular book in the book shop or you can order it by using online. The publisher with this book sells the e-book too. It makes you easier to read this book, because you can read this book in your Cell phone. So there is no reason for you to past this publication from your list.

**Eddie Horton:**

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