

Manhunt: The 12-Day Chase for Lincoln's Killer (P.S.)

By James L. Swanson

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The murder of Abraham Lincoln set off the greatest manhunt in American history. From April 14 to April 26, 1865, the assassin, John Wilkes Booth, led Union cavalry and detectives on a wild twelve-day chase through the streets of Washington, D.C., across the swamps of Maryland, and into the forests of Virginia, while the nation, still reeling from the just-ended Civil War, watched in horror and sadness.

James L. Swanson's *Manhunt* is a fascinating tale of murder, intrigue, and betrayal. A gripping hour-by-hour account told through the eyes of the hunted and the hunters, this is history as you've never read it before.

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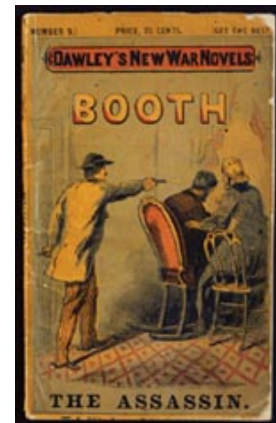
Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The Greatest Manhunt in American History

For 12 days after his brazen assassination of Abraham Lincoln, John Wilkes Booth was at large, and in *Manhunt*, historian James L. Swanson tells the vivid, fully documented tale of his escape and the wild, massive pursuit. Get a taste of the daily drama from this timeline of the desperate search.

- April 14, 1865 Around noon, Booth learns that Lincoln is coming to Ford's Theatre that night. He has eight hours to prepare his plan.
10:15 pm: Booth shoots the president, leaps to the stage, and escapes on a waiting horse.
Secretary of War Edwin Stanton orders the manhunt to begin.
- April 15 About 4:00 am: Booth seeks treatment for a broken leg at Dr. Samuel Mudd's farm near Beantown, Maryland. Cavalry patrol heads south toward Mudd farm.
Confederate operative Thomas Jones hides Booth in a remote pine thicket for five days, frustrating the manhunters.
- April 19 Tens of thousands watch the procession to the U.S. Capitol, where President Lincoln lies in state. Wild rumors and stories of false sightings of Booth spread.
- April 20 Stanton offers a \$100,000 reward for the assassins, and threatens death to any citizen who helps them.
After hiding Booth in Maryland, Jones puts him in a rowboat on the Potomac River, bound for Virginia. More than a thousand manhunters are still searching in Maryland. In the dark, Booth rows the wrong way and first ends up back in Maryland.
- April 20-24 Booth lands in the northern neck of Virginia, and Confederate agents and sympathizers guide him to Port Conway, Virginia.
- April 24 Booth befriends three Confederate soldiers who help him cross the Rappahannock River to Port Royal and then guide him further southwest to the Garrett farm.
Union troops in Washington receive a report of a Booth sighting. They board a U.S. Navy tug and steam south, right past Booth's hideout at the Garrett farm.
- April 25 The 16th New York Calvary, realizing their error, turns around and surrounds the Garrett farm after midnight that night.



- April 26 When Booth refuses to surrender, troops set the barn on fire, and Boston Corbett shoots the assassin. Booth dies a few hours later, at sunrise.
- April 26-27 Booth's body is brought back to Washington, where it is autopsied, photographed, and buried in a secret grave.



From Publishers Weekly

Thomas has done many solid jobs of acting in all mediums since his television days on *The Waltons*, but it's the memories of the wide open American country tones of his flexible voice that add immeasurably to his reading of the audio version of Swanson's intensive new book about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln and the full-throttle hunt for the conspirators who planned and carried out the deed. Thomas's nuanced but never hyped narration serves as a seamless link between the words of the individual characters he brings to life. Some of the voices work better than others: his Lincoln is perhaps a bit too young and straightforward, especially compared to the darker, richer oratory of actors connected to the role such as Raymond Massey. But his John Wilkes Booth is just about perfect, catching the desperation and increasing lunacy of an actor getting ready for his role in history. And the other major characters—plotters, hunters, politicians, distraught family members—all bring a familiar story to exciting new life.

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

James L. Swanson's Web site includes a glowing review quotation from Patricia Cornwell. The correlation is apt since critics find this nonfiction account of Booth's getaway as compelling as the best thrillers. Swanson, a legal scholar with the Cato Institute and a Lincoln historian, knows the assassination inside and out; he's been studying Lincoln since he was a child, and his previous book (with Daniel R. Weinberg), *Lincoln's Assassins*, was a photographic and archival study of Booth and his co-conspirators. With a surfeit of detail at his disposal, Swanson weaves an absorbing tale in unadorned prose that critics greeted with unanimous approval.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Chuck Deschenes:

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Melvin Hayes:

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