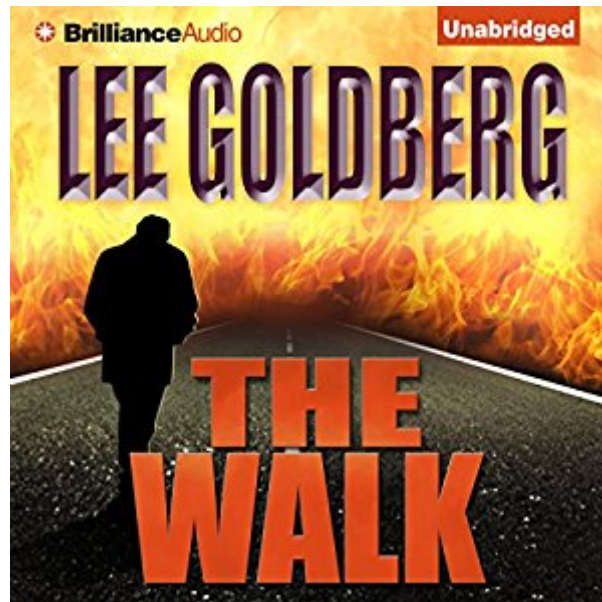


The book was found

The Walk



Synopsis

It's one minute after the Big One. Marty Slack, a TV network executive, crawls out from under his Mercedes, parked outside what once was a downtown Los Angeles warehouse, the location for a new TV show. Downtown LA is in ruins. The sky is thick with black smoke. His cell phone is dead. The freeways are rubble. The airport is demolished. Buildings lay across streets like fallen trees. It will be days before help can arrive. Marty has been expecting this day all his life. He's prepared. In his car are a pair of sturdy walking shoes and a backpack of food, water, and supplies. He knows there is only one thing he can do... that he must do: get home to his wife, Beth, go back to their gated community on the far edge of the San Fernando Valley. All he has to do is walk. But he will quickly learn that it's not that easy. His dangerous, unpredictable journey home will take him through the different worlds of what was once Los Angeles. Wildfires rage out of control. Flood waters burst through collapsed dams. Natural gas explosions consume neighborhoods. Sinkholes swallow entire buildings. Aftershocks rip apart the ground. Looters rampage through the streets. There's no power. No running water. No order. Marty Slack thinks he's prepared. He's wrong. Nothing can prepare him for this ordeal, a quest for his family and for his soul, a journey that will test the limits of his endurance and his humanity, a trek from the man he was to the man he can be... if he can survive The Walk.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

At the beginning of this novel, I pretty much hated the protagonist, Marty Slack. He was timid,

shallow and self-involved and pretty much a stereotype of everything annoying about Corporate America types. As time went on, he began to grow on me as he wandered around the city. By the time Marty's plot twist revelation was revealed, I had already figured it out but it still worked in context of the story. The book itself was an interesting snapshot of the aftermath of a major disaster and how people react. Some of the images were pretty disturbing but nothing rang all that false or contrived. (Although flooding Hollywood was a little reminiscent of the dam burst in the movie 'Earthquake' - but still pretty cool.) As with any disaster movie/story, Marty should have died numerous times but it's not unexpected to have the hero survive where normal people would be long gone. Overall, I enjoyed the book. It was fun but nothing unexpected occurred. It is pretty much a standard disaster story. That's not necessarily a bad thing when you're in the mood for some entertaining brain candy.

I would have given this book 4 stars but for one thing. The last obstacle that the protagonist faces was just too much (I don't want to spoil it). The author lost me right before the end of the book. Not that everything that happened before that in the book was believable, but the author convinced me it was believable in the way it was written. But that last one ... Otherwise, the book was very compelling. I wanted to keep reading. As others have stated, the hero was flawed but you grow to care about his fate. Some of the conversations were very stilted and formulaic, but then you realize that those conversations were take-offs on bad TV or film premises and the author quickly disabuses you of any notion that the language was meant to be realistic. There is a great deal of good humor mixed in with the high drama of the premise. I got stared at on the plane yesterday when I laughed out loud during the depiction of a dream/nightmare in which the protagonist was interacting with characters in disaster movies - one particular line about Anne Heche in Volcano set me off. The author manages to nicely mesh the drama and the humor. I really did enjoy the book, but I thought it jumped the shark with the last crisis the hero faced. Even though the book often lampooned disaster movies and such, it wasn't in itself a lampoon so it just didn't seem to fit.

I was not intrigued and captivated by *The Walk* nearly as much as some of the other people reviewing this book. While I usually don't read books surrounding disasters or the aftermaths thereof, the reviews of this book caused me to give it a shot. While interesting in some areas, it just lacked the punch that it had the potential to deliver. The book centers on Martin Slack's walk home after *The Big One* hits LA. The LA setting is central to the story as Martin is a TV executive, and it is clear that he lives up to the stereotypes most people have about executives. With respect to the

setting, Goldberg goes to great pains to detail which streets the character is crossing, the routes he is choosing, and some of the more mundane landmarks on the character's walk home. However, being that I have never lived or traveled anywhere near LA, I found myself skipping over these sections. I found them confusing. Whenever you read a book, 99 times out of 100 you have never been to the area where the novel takes place (if it even exists). However, rarely do I find myself skipping over descriptions of the locale as much as I did here. As much detail as the author went to in explaining the precise streets the character was walking, I found the description of the destruction following the earthquake oddly lacking. While the destruction was evident in the story, I felt the descriptions lacked punch and vividness, and failed to draw me into the setting. It becomes evident to the reader that the character's journey is really one of soul-searching. While the ending is interesting, I found that it was telegraphed well in advance and left open some holes in the story which could only be unsatisfactorily explained (in my opinion). Unfortunately, I can't provide any more detail without giving it away. Throughout the book, I felt as if the author was writing this as a TV episode, which is understandable as that is his background. However, what is missing here are the pieces colored in by the other people who develop TV shows (director, set design, cinematographer, etc...). While Mr. Goldberg has presented an interesting idea and story, the overall product is lacking where other people usually take over on a TV series.

This book did live up to all of the great reviews. I absolutely loved the combination of the apocalyptic story line mixed with the humanistic qualities of the characters. I love any book where I am surprised, and left to think about the book, and this book did that. It was not too over the top gory, which it could have been and I think takes away from a story sometimes, but just horrific enough to really give me goosebumps. It was like a horror movie from the seventies in that it left something up to the imagination. I got slightly bored with some of the description of the LA area, but that is just me. I will recommend this book, and look forward to other books from this author.

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