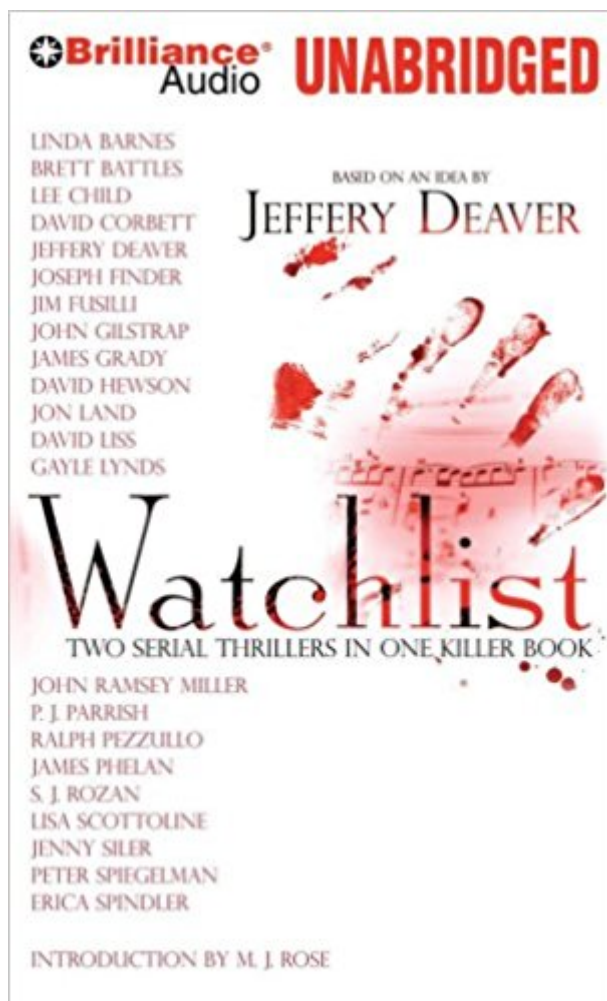


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# Watchlist



## Synopsis

From International Thriller Writers, comes Watchlist: two powerful novellas featuring the same thrilling cast of characters in one major suspenseful package. The Chopin Manuscript and The Copper Bracelet are collaborations of some of the world's greatest thriller writers, including Lee Child, Joseph Finder, Lisa Scottoline, and Jeffery Deaver, who conceived the characters and set the plots in motion. The other authors each wrote a chapter and Deaver then completed what he started, bringing both novellas to their startling conclusions. In the first novella, The Chopin Manuscript, former war crimes investigator Harold Middleton possesses a previously unknown score by Frederic Chopin. But he is unaware that, locked within its handwritten notes, lies a secret that now threatens the lives of thousands of Americans. As he races from Poland to America to uncover the mystery of the manuscript, Middleton will be accused of murder, pursued by federal agents, and targeted by assassins. But the greatest threat will come from a shadowy figure from his past: the man known only as Faust. Harold Middleton returns in The Copper Bracelet as he's drawn into an international terror plot that threatens to send India and Pakistan into full-scale nuclear war. Careening from Nice to London and Moscow to Kashmir to prevent nuclear disaster, Middleton is unaware that his prey has changed and that the act of terror is far more diabolical than he knows. Will he discover the identity of the Scorpion in time to halt an event that will pit the United States, China, and Russia against each other at the brink of World War III?

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Fans of the TV series 24 will best appreciate this two-part serial thriller written by 22 members of International Thriller Writers. Based on an idea by Deaver (The Broken Window), who provides the opening and closing chapters of each segment, the volume recounts the adventures of middle-aged Harold Middleton, an ex-U.S. military intelligence officer. In part one, The Chopin Manuscript, the discovery of a previously unknown Chopin score leads to murders, betrayals, and frantic efforts to stop a villain code-named Faust from carrying out a terrorist outrage. Part two, The Copper Bracelet, sets Middleton and his allies on the track of a Kashmiri planning the assassination of the U.S. secretary of state. While the contributors include many of the biggest names in the genre (Lee Child, Joseph Finder, Gayle Lynds, S.J. Rozan, etc.), the constraints of the form all but assure homogenized prose, thin characters, and stock action scenes atypical of their solo work. (Jan.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Books written by groups of writers are not new. The most famous probably remains the scandalous Naked Came the Stranger (1969), published pseudonymously by Penelope Ashe but written by a group of newspaper reporters. This one is a thriller—two short novels, really, featuring Harold Middleton, a former military intelligence officer and war-crimes investigator who gets embroiled in international intrigue and derring-do. Jeffery Deaver came up with the basic plots and wrote each story—his opening and closing chapters, while various other writers (Joseph Finder, Erica Spindler, and Lee Child, among them) contributed a chapter. The result is exciting and fast paced (Middleton foils a couple of evil plots while battling some nasty people), and the format gives readers a unique opportunity to watch a story evolving before their eyes, as each writer begins where the previous one left off and adds something new to the mix. Considering that each contributor has his or her own distinct voice, the novel flows surprisingly well, too. Not merely a literary experiment, but a very good thriller in its own right. --David Pitt --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

This is two novelettes in one volume, both written round robin style with a different author for each chapter - in this case Jeffery Deaver wrote the first and last chapters for each of the novelettes. I have read much better round robin stories. These stories seem to wander a little too much as action moves around the globe, and good guys and villains appear and are sometimes killed off (or sometimes are resurrected). It is hard to tell who your friends are as villains sometimes have different agendas and work against each other. Overall, it is interesting enough for three stars, with

some chapters being better than others, but it is a long ways from being award winning. For a better novel written round robin style, see *No Rest for the Dead* Edited by Sandra Brown.

This collection reminds me of the parlor game Story Telling. A story starts with a premise, and is passed from one person to the next in an attempt to find entertaining continuity. Intended for entertainment and usually fueled with alcohol for inspiration, the story usually takes some absurd twists and turns. So it is with this collection. The most absurd twist with this collection takes place with Lee Child, who gets so absorbed in musical technicalities that the point is lost for most readers. There seems to be some effort to duplicate Dean Brown's use of classical art as a plotline with classical music instead, but was so far over my head ( and I assume many readers) to the point of distraction.

I think I'm being generous in giving this three stars. I bought the Audiobook of "The Chopin Manuscript" as it was being released, out of loyalty to my favorite author, Jeffery Deaver. It had exciting plot twists, but the inconsistencies drove me up the wall. Here's an example, which won't involve a major spoiler: a character is murdered in his home, and the author of that chapter stresses his having been extremely security-conscious--meaning that the killer had to be someone he knew. But Deaver, in his wrap-up, has the killer turn out to be, not only a stranger, but an obviously dangerous-looking individual whom the victim never would have let in. The contradiction could have been explained away in a few sentences--heck, I could have written my way out of it! But Deaver simply doesn't bother. At another point in "Chopin," an author's establishing that it was "morning" left me extremely confused about the timeline. Had Character A been talking to Character B on the phone after Character B was killed? Or...just how late the previous evening had characters been having dinner? And how many hours would it have taken B to drive 150 miles? The problem never would have occurred to me if an editor had deleted that unnecessary reference to "morning." Worst of all, I found Deaver's final plot twist ridiculous. I was stunned when "Chopin" was named Audiobook of the Year. What must the competition have been like? Still, I loyally bought "The Copper Bracelet." But I couldn't force myself to start listening to it--and was delighted when I could, instead, read "Watchlist." Had editors corrected any of the inconsistencies in "Chopin"? Nope. On the whole, I enjoyed "Bracelet" more than I had "Chopin"--probably because I could read all of "Bracelet" at once, without having time to think about what had been established in each separate chapter. But once again, I felt cheated by the ending. This time, the problem was a plot device involving the U.S. presidency. In my opinion, it doesn't work--wouldn't have been plausible in any

time period since the 1930s.

I totally loved it. I didn't want it to endHope the authors write another book

enjoyed

Awesome, as always.

I love the novels of many of the contributors to WATCHLIST, but failed to realize in buying this book that what I love is their skill at plunging the reader into a credible world for several hours. The individual chapters in WATCHLIST are quite good (and it's fascinating to see how different writers tackle a situation), but overall the two novellas suffer from coitus interruptus. Just as you begin to get into one writer's tale, you're interrupted by somebody else's take on the story. It's entertaining, and Jeffery Deaver does a great job with the setup and wrapup, but you just can't be thrilled (the point of a thriller, no?) when the timer is going off every 20 minutes for another writer to step in. I understand this was initially an audio book. It actually would work quite well as a serial story (audio or in print), where the passage of time would tend to erase the reader's/listener's immersion anyway.

Don't usually read books that are written by a group of authors. This book provides a good reason for tht decision. However, it gave only one author when I received it. Story was ok, but a little jerky as you can imagine with a group of authors and one ending a chapter to give problems that the next author has to undue or at least chnge for their ownl purposes. Ok if you like this kind of thing. J. Robert Ewbank author "John Wesley, Natural Man, and the 'Isms'"

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Watchlist

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