



Metal Gear Solid

Raymond Benson

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From original story and game by Hideo Kojima, skilled retired FOXHOUND agent Solid Snake returns to his expertise - neutralize an epic crisis. Six deadly FOXHOUND renegades control a nuclear disposal facility on Shadow Moses Island in the icy Aleutians. If their demands are not met, a powerful, top-secret weapon will be unleashed upon the world. The solo mission is to breach the heavily fortified base, rescue hostages, and destroy the superweapon. His only obstacles are brainwashed commandos, DNA-enhanced troops, and six extraordinarily able assassins. But nothing is as it seems - secrets, a hidden agenda, and revelation to Snake of secrets from his dark past that would shake any man to his core.

Metal Gear Solid Details

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Author : Raymond Benson

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From Reader Review Metal Gear Solid for online ebook

Arik Manley says

Metal Gear Solid is my favorite video game of all-time. It's an intense and intelligent sci-fi espionage thriller with a gritty, dark atmosphere, a complex story that weaves through deep conspiracy theories and philosophies, unique and memorable characters, and it has just enough silly camp and self-awareness to make it absolutely fun alongside being totally compelling. Hideo Kojima's masterpiece is a work that truly transcends the video game medium into interactive cinematic art.

Unfortunately, the **Metal Gear Solid** novelization is garbage. Raymond Benson doesn't understand the characters at all and most of the action and whatnot just reads like a transcription of someone playing the video game, which isn't very interesting when I'm trying to *read a book*. Reading about how Snake keeps sneaking around grabbing stray hand grenades in boxes and a billion different guns just doesn't work when the prose is bad and boring.

There's also the aggravating fact that Snake keeps spouting off cringy, totally out-of-character one-liners that most of the time don't even make sense, such as:

"Merry Christmas," Snake said as he delivered two power-house punches, left and then right, into the guards' faces. The soldiers plopped to the floor. "I forgot to tell you — Christmas is early this year."

Or he just has really dumb thoughts **all the damn time**, like when he finds the Kevlar vest and thinks: *You don't find too many of these in Cracker Jack boxes!* There's one particularly mind-blowingly awful moment in the sequence where he's running from the Hind-D helicopter between two towers that are being increasingly engulfed in flames and basically thinks "these towers are on fire, but at least it's not as bad as 9/11!" I just...what the actual fuck.

The only time it's actually any good is when he's just copying the cutscenes and dialogue **verbatim**, but none of that is even actually his own creation so he doesn't even get any points there, especially when in most of these moments he's throwing in his own shitty dialogue and prose, completely ruining any tension or drama in the scenes.

This book is an embarrassment to the legacy of Kojima's creation, and the fact that he was brought back to write the **Sons of Liberty** novelization is absolutely amazing (and I hate myself for feeling the need to read it at some point as well).

George Edward says

Aside from a few sections such as expanding the backstory of Master Miller, Psycho Mantis, and references to future games in the series, this book fails to bring the magic of Metal Gear Solid into the form of a book. Snake is depicted as a womanizer who complains about everything that is happening around him. It's understandable considering Benson has written a number of James Bond novels, and I'm assuming that's why he was chosen to write this book. However, Snake is so much different than James Bond, and writing him to be anything like James Bond is a huge insult to what the character is all about. Furthermore, many of the other characters are not portrayed accurately at all, such as Meryl who is just seen as a damsel in distress

and an object of Snake's lonely sexual fantasy.

Much of the book is the script directly from the game. Those moments are all great. However, the added scenes and added text that go to explain the atmosphere, backstory, would-be gameplay, and Snake's thoughts are all poorly written. The writing in this book is bland and sounds the same throughout the entire novel despite what may be happening. The text merely does what it has to do to compliment the dialogue, nothing beyond that.

This book is good for those who may want to experience the MGS story without replaying the game...but it honestly will just make you want to replay the game. Not recommended for any others. This will turn off people from the series and make them feel indifferent or hate the characters. Play the games instead if you are interested, you won't regret it.

F0xh0undvix3n says

As a very devoted fan of the Metal Gear Solid series, I have to say this book is incredibly lacking in accurate characterizations. Most notably, Snake goes from the serious mostly-professional soldier he was in canon to an action hero spouting one-liners. In fact, I daresay *everyone* is spouting one-liners, up to and including the narration. If one were to approach this book expecting an accurate adaptation, they would be not entirely let down--about 85-90% of the dialogue is straight from the game script. Anything and everything expanded from that is less 'hammy' as it is 'ham on cheese on more ham on more cheese in a six-foot long sandwich of overacting'.

And you know what?

It is *spectacular*.

If you approach this book without taking a thing seriously, it is the most wonderfully hammy scenery-chewing piece of literature I have ever laid eyes on. Assuming that one played a game where cyborg ninjas, gasmask-wearing Russian psychics, and a blond acrobatic Cam Clarke shouting about inaccurate genetics, then I would assume one did not take said game very seriously. Read this while reminding yourself the source material is only slightly less ridiculous, and you may find this book as unironically hilarious and fantastic as I did.

Spyros says

Ok. There were some interesting parts in the book. It got into scientific detail in which the game could not, thus it was more sci-fi than pseudoscience.

Everywhere else the book failed. Why books are different from other mediums? Because they give you the space to imagine as no other form of art can. Also they should also have some literary merit. The book lacks both.

It doesn't even serve as a reminder of the excellent video game. It feels distorted. Snake is not portrayed as he should. Some parts feel cringy. The dialogs are bad. Many things don't make sense.

Anyway. Not really a waste of time, but I could had read something better.

An Odd1 says

"Metal Gear Solid" by Raymond Benson is based on original story and video game by Hideo Kojima, and highly resembles latter. Solo mission for "Solid Snake": neutralize "Metal Gear" nuclear weapon and rescue hostages - VIPs Anderson and Baker with detonate-disarm codes and cards, plus Colonel's niece Meryl. Theme is "When the going gets tough, the tough beat the shit out of everyone else" p224. Like a computer game, Solid conquers increasingly challenging levels, grunts, and bosses, to the top, his brother Liquid. All soldiers are genetically tampered with, so the biggest bugaboos are secret government and scientific, especially gene, experimentation. The moral is this condensed quote: "DNA governs only *potential* destiny. Until today, I looked for a reason to live. Now, I'll stop looking and just live" p317. The secrets keep on unfolding, layer after layer, But the bangup conspiracy surprise is the epilogue paragraph one-sided phone conversation.

Hard to get caught up when I question action after action, perhaps because predetermined by game, sectioned into levels and "dungeons", like original Dungeons and Dragons role-playing game before computerized versions. Routine shoot and smash, Personalities feel slotted, like NPCs, non-player characters. Ninja-cyborg is "chaotic" in D&D parlance. Fighting illusions may be fun in video game, but sucks in books. Shadow Moses secret facility hides, typical fort under remote island. Standard procedure of giving best soldier cigs and drugs for quick boost is disturbing.

The chief villain is Solid's clone brother Liquid. The assumption, from start to finish, that dominant genes are better than recessive, is oversimplification. That dominant and recessive would divide exactly between fetuses, impossible. Diseases may be dominant; a non-viable fetus would spontaneously abort. Dominant should have dark thick curly hair, dark skin, oval face, dark brown large almond eyes, freckles, cleft chin, broad wide lips, broad straight nose, straight thumb, wet ear wax, short, bald, astigmatic. (If one parent had straight thumbs, one bent, why do I have one of each?)

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_ge...

<http://www.sciencebrainwaves.com/blog...>

A "Boss" is the last, biggest, most powerful opponent on each game level (from ~8 year old given Nintendo DS same time as me). Epiphany: name "Big Boss" is self-explanatory, alias villains each a level "boss". Like games, with long dying speech, they gift him with key to unlock next level p235. A subterranean current of hidden agendas trickle up to the climax when S inputs codes.

(Spoiler:

He thinks he is deactivating, but the same process does activates, uh-oh - written before I knew answer.)

I've never been an acronym fan, abbreviations are easier to remember and decipher. (Aside: while my mom had a stroke, people remembered STOP, but not the symptoms represented = Fail.) Cast (some have past history) and acronym lists would help; here's a starter:

Good Guys & Gals & expertise

1 Solid Snake genetically engineered US special forces FOXHOUND soldier

2 Colonel Roy Campbell 60s FH commander

3 Dr Naomi Hunter geneticist

4 Mei Ling tech, comms - Codec codifying satellite comm system has locating tech

- 5 Natasha Romanenko hardware - explains weapons to reader, S already knows
- 6 Master McDonnell Benedict Miller survival
- 7 Meryl Silverburgh teen Roy's niece

Bad Team rebel FH elite - Why from different countries? Why wierdo fancy supervillains have cartoon superhero monikers?

PsychoM controls:

- genomes = genetically improved troops, novice grunts

true definition: entirety of an organism's hereditary information DNA, RNA, and more

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genome>

- Space Seals "genome" veteran squad, elite in black

- mercenaries (why bother distinguishing from others? all treated as bad guys even though co-opted by Psycho)

Big Boss - cryo-frozen corpse of S&S dad provides genes for super soldiers, chief villain on previous missions

- Is not dad as prime enemy p185 old news from Star Wars days?

1 Liquid Snake - Solid's clone

2 Psycho Mantis - Russian brain controller

3 Sniper Wolf - Kurdish Female sharpshooter

4 Decoy Octopus - Mexican disguise, languages

5 Vulcan Raven - Alaskan Indian/Inuit commands animals, birds

"giant" p17 2.1m (but Fahrenheit p30) 6'11" is common (even female) basketball player height.

<http://www.astrotheme.com/heights/6&#...>

6 Revolver Ocelot - Russian torturer, six-shooter

Questions: You know Solid will win from the start, so these comments are to provoke your own curiosity rather than satisfy, but they do hint loudly.

- Why do soldiers break down Solid's unlocked door p12, wouldn't a phone call do?
- Why does Roy Solid to strip p13 just for a nanotech shot - anti-freeze, brain boost p20 (how long do they lost and and flirt with pretty Naomi?
- Why doesn't Miller hold his breath against sevoflurane anesthetic gas p30?
- Oish, weapons are *all* real - numbers and acronyms sounded made up but check out <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpODCp...> M23 gun
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mil_Mi-2... Mi24

- Why doesn't he disguise himself in opponent's snowsuit p32? mobility? (A: "dark sneaking suit blended into the shadows" p38), question for prisoner locations? search for door key? take more than 2 grenades? (A: does later)
- With high-tech chemical weapons expert, why not give him something to incapacitate enemies longer than knockout punch, less permanently than neck-twisting, in case they can be rehabilitated to good side; imitate food sickness so they don't suspect infiltration? (A: later he kills all)
- If brown mice infest installation p32, why not infect them to take out enemy, remember bubonic plague nobody vaccinated for anymore?
- Simple grade-school vocab till occasional multi-syllable sprinkled in - penultimate p34, and weapon specs
- Why doesn't Solid warn HQ Liquid may take out jets "swat flies" p33, explain more of intruder? ask where prisoners, directions?
- Ciggies make smoke baddies detect, so why not start him out with nicotine patch or supply long-lasting doses?
- Cowboy daydream can't be "Again, a coincidence" p64 after vision, Psycho near.

- Why 4 pg p64+ prolonged chat, not kill each other at once? Why Ocelot not threaten hostage Baker, force S to go or disarm?
- Why not keep talking over Codec? Without, how can they know ninja bats away bullets - why bother shooting when armor reflects?
- Dying body loses temperature control, may be hotter, but thermal goggles show cooler than room p76.
- Does Codec not transmit that Hunter knows ninja identity?
- Ninja identity meaningless, slows momentum harking to past, though years torture do make Pentagon guys bad.

(Spoiler: so what:

Gray Fox p124, killed by best friend S)

When struggling over word "Pentagon" triggers heart attacks twice, duh, no coincidence.

(Spoiler:

Like Gray Fox connected to past, this only important for connection to future sequel - will FoxDie injection kill S too?)

- Crawling through air service ducts recalls funny film Galaxy Quest spoof that points out ubiquitous presence of same.
- Faced with laser beams of increasing challenge p93 recalls video game origin.
- Is enemy guiding? Deepthroat p95; despite torture, Liquid lets him live p103; "strange" Master Miller conversation p112; they leave his gear handy p175; "it was too easy" p195; in chopper "Liquid didn't really want to kill him" p204.
- Emmerlich chit-chat purpose p131 to set up sister Emma EE show up later? (future book? tedious sidetrack when no appearance here
- S: "I don't like to waste bullets" p139, but he tosses them around as diversions, why bother?
- Why offer her canteen "chugged longer than he wished" p139, when they are in loo with drinking water taps, and why not refill limited ration?
- Why not shoot Psycho right away p155? He almost kills Meryl too; his directions again suggest enemy guiding.
- Race huskies I met were tiny, vibrating with need to run; wolves normally 120 pd; these hybrids don't sound "huge" p161. "Hanging Woman Creek" by Louis L'Amour 0708902219 says "a big lobo I guess would weigh a hundred and fifty pounds ... and few get that big" p72
- Taking muscle relaxant diazepam p218, with dry mouth sideeffects, and backfire rebound withdrawal, instead of calming deep breaths, is bad example of solving problems with drugs, means game has resource for player to use at designated time
- If Naomi can remotely increase painkillers in S blood after torture p184, why not during? Why not ask after back shot p233?
- Can S feel initial injections, smarts, dwindle?
- Daniel Keyes "Flowers for Algernon" book inspired 1968 film Charly - Retarded man, like lab rat, senses fading of surgically improved IQ.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=loi3gD...> film 1/lots
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xyCwz2...> stills summate film (mostly YouTube has school projects)
- "Genome soldiers weren't very bright" p223, should be encoded on, why not? Smart people can obey orders. No?
- Why does S not borrow invisible suit of Emmerlich ("Otacon" another gimmicky nickname shorter written, still three syllables spoken)?
- Free scented hanky p190 could have been more powerful, more fun. • Elevator starts and stops by self p210

- duh.

(Spoilers:(view spoiler)

Wasn't a typo, was a mystery:

p58 "Anderson" already dead from 'heart attack', must be "Baker" in torture chair vision

Abby says

(I rated this book 2.5/5 stars!)

I'm a huge Metal Gear Solid fan so when I was made aware of the existence of these cheesy action/sci-fi novels I had to get my hands on them. Is it as good as the game??? Hell no. It's not even in the same realm of "amazing" as the games are, and this definitely shouldn't be the definitive way that you experience the story. It doesn't add anything new or expand upon anything in the story (except for the prologue and the Psycho Mantis fight, both of which I actually kind of appreciated?) and the dialogue is really cut-and-paste from the game and thus clunky at times. Practically all of the emotional impact of scenes is lost because of this. Solid Snake seems hilariously out of character at times too.

I did enjoy it, if only because it's a Metal Gear adaptation and because I had fun laughing at how Solid Snake apparently knows what manga is.

Behnam Riahi says

The following review has been copied from <http://behnammriahti.tumblr.com>

Metal Gear Solid, written by Raymond Benson (& Hideo Kojima) and published by Del Rey, is a third-person, plain-spoken novel written primarily from the point-of-view of Solid Snake, retired operative for FOXHOUND, an elite black-ops unit of the American military. Called into action by his former colonel, Roy Campbell, Snake is torpedoed to Shadow Moses, a secure military facility taken over by FOXHOUND renegades, "The Sons of Big Boss." Composed primarily of genetically altered soldiers, they're led by a man claiming to be Snake's twin brother, Liquid Snake—believing Solid Snake to be his genetic superior, Liquid didn't just take over the facility to control the warheads or the secret weapon hidden beneath it—he did it to prove his value by killing his brother. With numerous armed psychopaths running the facility, a strange disease that seems to be striking healthy men with heart attacks, and a mysterious ninja trying to slaughter everyone (including Solid Snake), our hero has to stop the weapon, save Campbell's niece, and simply survive long enough to finish the mission.

So you've probably heard of Metal Gear Solid. Shame on you if you haven't—it's only one of the most popular video game series to have lasted from the original Nintendo Entertainment System and, as far my opinion goes, the only one that's still putting out games of indisputable quality. In fact, I decided to read this because as I play through the series again, grabbing the book just seemed less stressful than slaying my

Playstation with yet another download it seemed incapable of handling. Granted, I would've preferred the Gamecube version, Twin Snakes, but I didn't have enough money on my Amazon gift card to buy an old Gamecube and this game. I had about two dollars, which was just enough to buy this book. Seeing as how I'm a fan of the series, I'll do my best to keep my nerdy fandom from exploding through this review of the book. However, because this novel is an adaptation of a story that wasn't originally intended to be a novel, I think it's fair to draw comparisons where they're needed.

That said—from a more personal point-of-view, adapting video games into novels is the job I want. In this day-and-age, novels written related to video games tend to focus more on extra content that didn't make it into a game, hitting alternate stories or unmentioned timelines in a character's life. With the reknowned Elder Scrolls series, their novels center around groups of warriors travelling their world of Tamriel before the games were ever set. With Assassin's Creed, their novels tend to focus on the character's lives that aren't shown in the games—or the moments only glossed over in minor detail. Whether it's writing new material for a game or taking existing material and making it prose, this is the job that I demand someone give me. Listen, if you're a publisher or a video game designer reading this, know that I have writing samples—novel-length writing samples. Get to me early before I publish one of these novels and my agent jacks up the price, because I'm damn near ready to do this for free. That's especially a nudge to you, Mr. Kojima. Nudge nudge.

I don't think I've ever spoken so many volumes about myself in a review, so it's time to move on to the actual review portion of this book review. If you're familiar with the series, this book has everything—it's nostalgia at its finest, allowing the reader to relive all the powerful, tear-jerking moments of Snake's escape from Shadow Moses without having to go out and buy a Playstation 1. However, if you don't know who the fuck Snake is, why he's so fixated on this Big Boss character, or what the fuck a Metal Gear is actually supposed to look like, I don't suppose this is the book for you. Simple as that. Benson just doesn't put the extra effort in to do description. Every detail is brief and abruptly stunted because of interchanging environments that Snake moves through and, thus, they lack fluidity because while we're still discerning one place in our mind's eye, we're already stepping over to the next one. One moment, I think I'm in a base with catwalks and parked tanks and the next minute, I'm in a snowdrift the length of a football field and all I know is that there are claymore mines in front of Snake. Tell me something about the sky, show me how the walls are saturated by vehicle exhaust, give me something. Weapons are actually given better descriptions in the games than they are in the book (for instance, Metal Gear Solid 3 and Snake's rant about his customized pistol) and our sense of space and movement is non-existent. Basically, if you've never played the game before, you're pretty much just randomly assuming where everything is. Worse yet, character descriptions are vague at best. Yes—the majority of the story is told from the point of view of Snake, who only seems to take note of an appearance when it comes with a set of tits, but even he's supposed to be observant enough to remark on external appearances of most other people. Liquid Snake supposedly looks exactly like Snake, only we don't really get much of Snake's own description until the end of the novel. Other important characters aren't even shown—while I read this, I kept imagining Roy Campbell as Metal Gear Solid 3's Major Zero until I sat down at my computer and rewatched some of MGS1's gameplay footage. Why was it like that? Because Benson doesn't give us anything to go off of unless we already actually know the character. Well, thanks for nothing, Benson—you're not exactly inviting new fans to the series.

Still, Benson isn't all terrible. As an author with someone else's work, he takes some fairly powerful liberties that I absolutely salute him for. For instance, over the course of the video game series, Kojima has never once detailed Master Miller's death. He's certainly explored Miller's life, with games like Peace Walker and Ground Zeroes that show Miller (also known as Kaz) working hand-in-hand with Big Boss, but his death has remained a mystery for fifteen years. Even if Kojima comes out tomorrow and says that Miller's death was nothing like how Benson perceived it, I don't care—at least Benson filled the gap, if only for a little while.

Perhaps the most bold and most innovative liberty that Benson took is updating the content. Remember, Metal Gear Solid came out on the Playstation in 1998 but the game is set in 2005, thus creating a 7 year gap from the story content after the time of its publication. A lot happens in 7 years—especially when taking the story of Metal Gear Solid into mind. After all, the main conflict of the game is about a terrorist organization taking over a nuclear weapon. Terrorism in 1998 and 2005 are two entirely different things and Benson adapts the existing work for Snake to take the events of September 11th, 2001 into mind when he estimates the crippling damage done by explosives in buildings and the tremendous destruction it causes. I think some might find that distasteful, but let's be realistic here—that's exactly how it would be.

Still, Benson doesn't deserve all the credit for the strengths of this novel. After all, the plot, characters, dialogue, setting, etc. were all originally conceived by Hideo Kojima. In the end, Benson's weaknesses are made-up for through Kojima's strengths. That's why I find it hard to rate this book poorly. Kojima spun the story of a tragic hero, faced with his own past and his lack of future, utilizing themes of nuclear destruction and genetics to divine an allegory of war, how every bullet is dependent on the very blood that pulses through the finger pulling the trigger to the grand scale of destruction caused by automated, lifeless technology as it literally stands on its own, only to blow away everything within its apathetic sensors. Kojima juxtaposes sibling rivalry against comradeship, sacrificing everything to make father proud, whether father is the man you look up to or the nation that commands you. In choosing between love and loyalty, we come to love Snake and his commitment to a mission that defines him as a tool for higher powers, not as the caring, sensitive man haunted by those he's killed. In truth, Benson could have captured this better, but whether it bleeds through the text or not, Metal Gear Solid simply will always be Metal Gear Solid. Though the execution may be imperfect, what it captures certainly is.

Jason says

While I enjoyed Metal Gear Solid the game, I thought the book lacked something. I know it has to be difficult to try and convert a story that was based on a list of items to be completed for a game with a strong subplot thrown in, but come on...let's not just take the script from the game and then insert a little description here and there and call it a book. If anything Mr. Benson should have to share the stage with Hideo Kojima and the script team at Konami for the credit here.

I think I missed the pulse pounding moments of almost being discovered and the surprises of rounding a corner and coming face to face with over the top enemies. The story just fell flat in too many times where it could have shined. Had I have written this story I would have tried to go into the back story more, and dig out some of the scenes that were missing that could have fleshed out a wonderful narrative. For me the best parts of the story are when we diverge from the game and get a glimpse of what happened to McDonald Miller before the insanity began. Or the scene of Naomi going to contact Snake while under house arrest. These scenes seemed a short break in the monotony of repeating dialogue from the game.

Joseph says

Pretty good for a novelization of my favorite video game. The author portrays the main character's personality a little different than I perceived it from the video game, but that's pretty minor to the story.

Teo says

Metal Gear Solid is, without a doubt, THE BEST GAME EVER. As someone who has played it through and through numerous times, I was thrilled to find out there was a novelization. Since Hideo is quite careful concerning his precious, and is reluctant to give someone else rights to mess with the franchise as they please, I had hopes the author commissioned to pen the novel would be someone of the highest caliber. Raymond Benson is NOT the person I had in mind.

The plot is the same as the game: the FOXHOUND unit has gone rogue, and have overtaken a Nuclear Disposal Facility on the Shadow Moses island in the Fox Archipelago in Alaska. They have issued their demands, and if they're not met a nuke will be launched. Ex-FOXHOUND operative Solid Snake is taken out of retirement and given a solo espionage mission to infiltrate the facility, rescue the hostages, and stop the terrorists at all costs. Of course, Snake is briefed on a need-to-know basis, and there is more of what he doesn't know, than what he does. During his ordeal, secrets old and new will come to the fore.

Those who've played the game are aware of the magnitude and depth of MGS's plot. Even though the the back cover boldly states that "this explosive MGS novel ventures beyond the thrilling videogame and delves into the dark heart of Solid Snake's world", that is a fat and blatant lie!

The MGS novelization had to be given to someone who actually has some appreciation for the source material, to someone who had played and loved the game. Raymond Benson, obviously, didn't touch it. He already had expertly written material to work with, as MGS's scripts are incredibly deep and detailed. Unfortunately, he had been given some great creative freedom, which he also used to a great extent. When the dialogue isn't copy/pasted from the game script, it's dreadfully butchered by Benson's ineptitude. To illustrate what I mean, here's some of Benson's addition to the script...

During his mission Snake uses the following words or terms:

- he calls Liquid "the terrorists' head honcho";
- he calls Col. Campbell on the CODEC and tells him his niece Meryl is "one wacky babe";
- he says Mazel tov when blowing the wall which leads to where Baker is being kept;
- he says Gesundheit to a guard before killing him (yes, killing - more on that later);
- he says "Merry Christmas" to another guard, knocks him out, and says "I forgot to tell you - Christmas came early this year!";
- he says Nada;
- he says hunky dory;
- he ruminates whether he'd like to kiss Meryl, or spank her... and if maybe he'd do both;

Need I go on? Cheesy one-liners - more so, BAD cheesy one-liners - do not belong in a MGS novel. Not only that, but Snake is totally out of character. His sneaking mission is more of a slaughter mission, because he keeps piling up the body count, killing almost every guard he comes across. His reasoning is faulty - when he infiltrates the facility itself he overhears guards talking about "an intruder that's killed 3 people so far". Snake immediately dismisses they're talking about him, because he had killed 6 people. As if they couldn't have discovered only 3 out of the 6 bodies. Before the mission, the Colonel informs him this is an On Site Procurement mission, only to issue him with a SOCOM. Later, Snake pulls a mine-detector out of nowhere, and so on.

I realize the game couldn't have been literally translated to the novel medium, and I wouldn't have minded if

Benson took certain liberties with the flow of the story; some alterations had to be made. But he made the wrong ones. While Snake is now spewing one-liners, he conveniently continues to find weapons (like chaffs, frags, Stinger and Nikita missile launchers, etc.) just lying around the base - the only difference from the game is that the items do not spin.

Furthermore, he took the transcript of the game, took some lines, added some of his own, and filled the rest with atrocious prose. His action is repetitive, he can't build suspense for shit, his vocabulary is extremely limited and he writes with a plain and uninteresting style. Events are rushed and detached, the characters have no personality since Benson almost completely omits any descriptions or attempts at character development. All in all, this reads more like an average fan-fiction, than the work of a professional.

To tell the truth, this novel is a travesty, going through it once was torture, and judging by it - Benson shouldn't be allowed to write ever again; I for sure know this was my first and last novel of his I've read. He's not a new and aspiring author, he's been around the block for quite some time, and it is unlikely he'll get better. And if this is his best, than I pity the man, and even more so his fans who pay for his works. Avoid this novel by all costs, and stick to the game.

Rating: 1/10

Foshi says

Recreates the atmosphere and characters of the first video game well, but fails to personify the main character the same way as that game. There were many moments in the novel where I just had to shake my head in disgust for the failing of Snakes personality present in the book which was not present in the video game. Still a good read if you can't handle playing the old PS1 game on an HDTV.

Brett Chapin says

This book was perfect! All the dialog from Snake fits his personality perfectly! Wonderfully written. Raymond Benson is brilliant! He and Hideo are amazing story tellers. I couldn't have imagined the game written as a book any better.

Alexander Case says

Benson does not do a good job of weeding out all the dialog from the game that was actually meant for the *player* as opposed meant for Solid Snake.

Nh? Lê says

I am not a Metal Gear Solid (MGS) fan. Thanks to my brother's passion for the game, my knowledge was expanded to the identities of the Twin Snakes, Otacon, Ocelot, and especially the one and only handsome Raiden. That's all! Don't ask me for more! Raiden is my only interest. But then, when my eyes caught the

title MGS among the pile of worn-out books at an old bookstore in Thailand, the book was brought home without hesitation. Well, one day, my bookshelves will be filled by video game adaption novels – my other precious collection beside BJDs and tea. Anyway, that's how I stumbled into this unexpected novel.

metal gear solid, mgs, solid snake, liquid snake, otacon, revolver ocelot, solidus snake, big boss

Even though the book will serve as a part of my collection, I never buy a book just for its cover. Somehow it would be a crime to the author in my way of thinking, wouldn't it? And beyond my expectation, the good is really really good.

The readers don't need to be a fan to understand the first part of this complicated franchise. In the very first chapter, we were introduced to the Les Enfants Terribles project, in which our hero Solid Snake and his future nemesis Liquid Snake were cloned from their father's gene, the legendary soldier Big Boss. The story began 30 years later, after the Outer Heaven incident when our already-retired Solid Snake was dragged back to a secret mission at Shadow Moses Island to rescue the world, which adapted closely to the game itself. Sound typical, right? It is! This first novel doesn't have many things to say but mainly as a guide to the complex world of political schemes, which would be opened tremendously in later games. In this book, we would follow Solid Snake in his dangerous mission against Liquid Snake and witness his amazingness along the way.

As other video game adaption novels, MGS was very well written: very tidy, neat, and well organized. The sentences were smooth and easier to read than other novels that I've read. Though without complex sentences as well as difficult words, every scene was still vividly described, very entertained, and very engaged. Only through words, the readers could effortlessly vision Snake's amazing military skills as if a movie we're watching. Additionally, all chapters were short which I personally more comfortable. Whenever I started to read, I always tried to stop at the end of the current chapter but usually went on at least three more before the night was getting too late.

: Laughing Octopus, Psycho Mantis, Revolver Ocelot, Liquid Snake, Sniper Wolf, Vulcan Raven, metal gear solid, mgs

From left to right: Laughing Octopus, Psycho Mantis, Revolver Ocelot, Liquid Snake, Sniper Wolf, Vulcan Raven.

Prior to this book, I haven't ever developed any affection for Solid Snake due to my lack of understanding about his personality and the storyline at a whole. Never before Snake appeared to me with such attractive demeanors: witty, talented, collected, and humorous. Other characters were also fabulously built with cool nicknames and fantastic abilities, like Laughing Octopus, Gray Fox, Psycho Mantis, Sniper Wolf, Vulcan Raven. Some of their skills seem to be unreal, but they perfectly reflected the creative insanity of Hideo Kojima (of why we love this game).

Last but not least, though as simple as a dull action movie, the novel still sharply conveyed the idea of it's us who decide our life, not by God or the genes we're carrying within. We are what we want to be.

Artemis says

I love Metal Gear Solid as a series. I love it for the characters, the plots, the themes, the emotions, the shenanigans, the wild tonal shifts between heartbreaking & tragic and goofy & ridiculous.

Raymond Benson doesn't seem to get any of that.

This novelization had some good points - the embellishments to the Gray Fox scenes were good! Allowing Otacon to participate in the ending was great! - but mostly it vacillated between "bland" and "insulting". The writing itself was boring, the video game plot was exposed as utterly ridiculous in print format... and the characters were *butchered*. That's what was so disappointing.

Solid Snake is supposed to be a tired, grumpy, jaded veteran with PTSD who doesn't want to be a killer and who mostly just wants to go home and be depressed in peace. In this novel, he's written as a suave, (attempted) snarky, ruthless killer who just sort of slaughters rather than sneaks his way through the base. By the end of the book he's going *out of his way* to kill people for extremely flimsy reasons, making stupid one-liners as he does so. He has very few real emotions besides pride and annoyance about anything that happens (can't tell if this is bad characterization or just bad writing, though). Important emotional beats from the game that characterize Snake as being thoughtful, regretful, doubtful, philosophical, caring, they're all downplayed or removed entirely. And he's *significantly more* of a leering creep. This isn't Solid Snake - it's a painfully generic too-cool-to-care action hero. It's a knockoff James Bond. (Which isn't surprising, I guess. This author spent a good eight years writing official Bond novels. It shows.)

The problem is that this author seems to want so badly for Metal Gear to be *cool*, and thus takes out all the parts that make it dorky or silly or goofy or awkward or embarrassing or random or honest or earnest or emotional or *fun*.

Like, okay, it's a video game novelization, it was never going to be great literature. I only read it because I'm too deep into Metal Gear Hell to be able to pass up the chance to see what the book was like. I'm still grumpy though.
