



Meg

Steve Alten

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On a top-secret dive into the Pacific Ocean's deepest canyon, Jonas Taylor found himself face-to-face with the largest and most ferocious predator in the history of the animal kingdom. The sole survivor of the mission, Taylor is haunted by what he's sure he saw but still can't prove exists--*Carcharodon megalodon*, the massive mother of the great white shark. The average prehistoric Meg weighs in at twenty tons and could tear apart a *Tyrannosaurus rex* in seconds

Written off as a crackpot suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, Taylor refuses to forget the depths that nearly cost him his life. With a Ph.D. in paleontology under his belt, Taylor spends years theorizing, lecturing, and writing about the possibility that Meg still feeds at the deepest levels of the sea. But it takes an old friend in need to get him to return to the water, and a hotshot female submarine pilot to dare him back into a high-tech miniature sub.

Diving deeper than he ever has before, Taylor will face terror like he's never imagined, and what he finds could turn the tides bloody red until the end of time.

Meg Details

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Author : Steve Alten

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From Reader Review Meg for online ebook

Cathy (cathepsut) says

Extended and revised edition, containing the prequel Meg Origins.

The prequel was an odd mix of National Geographic and embarrassingly bad pulp fiction.

One of the earliest sentences was "... *we'd need a bigger boat.*"

The author really went there. Was that supposed to be a quote or is he just oblivious?

And then we have gems like this: „*Fueled by the release of Adenosine Triphosphate (ATP), the luciferase caused the luciferin to oxidize, creating a bioluminescent light.*“

Come again? Not a sentence I want to read in an action novella/novel that precedes a blockbuster movie. The scientific info dumps read as if they had been copied straight out of Wikipedia and didn't flow well with the narrative.

The novel actually got better or maybe I got used to the style. Still clunky info dumps, but the writing seemed a little better.

The way women were depicted got on my wick though. They were all beautiful blondes or Asian beauties or voluptuous or had breast like swollen grapefruits, were always tanned, etc. The only women not looking like Hollywood stars were prostitutes. Well, thank you for that. Heaven help. By the time I came across this beauty, I just wanted to bash my own head it:

„*Neither facts nor logic held any bearing on a woman*“.

In what century do we live again?

Anyway, doing my best to ignore the parts that annoyed me, I actually had a pretty good time. The part towards the end where (view spoiler) was seriously icky and so far out there that I wasn't sure if I should scream or laugh my head off.

Predictable plot in terms of who dies, who makes it, who ends up with whom, which was to be expected. Fairly one-dimensional cardboard characters, corny dialogues, the usual sidekick for humorous relief, reasonably well executed action sequences. The right kind of stuff for a lazy day out on the balcony with something cold to drink.

I watched the trailer of the upcoming movie and I think it will be quite different in some parts. I plan to watch, so I can compare...

3 bioluminescent stars, I seriously can't give this more than that... I might be swayed to read the next one in this series... in a while... Bring popcorn!

P.S.: For the meticulous people among us: I logged my edition here by ASIN. Different cover on my Kindle, the Amazon page and here. Go figure.

?Lynn? says

10 years later and I still love this book to pieces. Cannot wait for the movie to premiere soon.

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I think it's finally time that this gets added to my favorites shelf. Me and my hubby started buddyreading this book during shark week for the past three years, and it seems like I love it more each read.

The writing isn't the best and there's a really cheesy scene towards the end, but I can overlook that.

And this is FINALLY becoming a movie thanks to the so sexy gore master, Eli Roth! About fucking time!! :D

What could be better than a 60 foot shark?

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## **Melissa Chung says**

OMG I don't know why I took so long to read this book. Erika my friend from booktube her channel name ThePerksofBooks, has been trying to convince me and all of her subscribers to pick up MEG and read it for years. I found this handy dandy mass market paperback and at Kauai Habitat Restore for 50 cents and it was the best 50 cents I've ever paid. 5 million stars for being a fun and fast read, full of action, adrenaline and one pissed off megalodon.

Our main character Jonas Taylor took a trip down the Marinas Trench 7 years ago and saw something that caused him to change his career path and become a world famous paleontologist. Jonas is the expert when it comes to the prehistoric Megalodon. He has written books. One night after an interview at the Scripps Institute in La Jolla, Ca. his past caught up with him. He might get a big break. Jonas might be able to conquer his fear of the dark deep and maybe just maybe find truth in the abyss.

Just from the title alone you know the book is about a Megalodon. A gifreakinggantic shark. You know that the shark is going to go on a murderous rampage. We have all seen Jurassic Park. What else could the book possibly hold then an outcome of epic proportions. What I didn't know was how hooked I'd be in the first few chapters. How awesome it was to have actual facts from the first voyage to the Marinas Trench. I love love love when books contain real science in them. I was also just so in love with the entertainment value this book held. I can not wait to pick up Jurassic Park by Michael Crichton. I thought I would never read that book and now I want to. I also want to watch every cheesy shark movie that is out.

This book had everything a blockbuster movie would have. ACTION ACTION ACTION! Revenge. Overly heroic stunts. A romance. A sunset. It was literally everything I wanted to read this weekend and I did. I read this book in about 16 hours. Just so damn fun. I will definitely be picking up the other books in this series. WHY THE HELL NOT! That ending was a baby cliff hanger ;)

edit: New year, new read! I re-read this book in 2018 and this time around I read it to my two boys in anticipation for the movies release. My kids loved it. My 11 year old was kind of like ooh that shark is mean.

My 13 year old was like I hope so and so dies! They deserve it! LOL. He is super excited to read/listen to book 2!

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## Lee says

If you drew up a checklist of the necessary components of a B-movie creature-feature, then *Meg* would tick pretty much every box.

Imperfect hero haunted by his past? Check ?

Beautiful heroine who loathes the hero with every fibre of her being right up to the point where she realises that she's never loved anyone more in her life? Check ?

Outrageous monster that no-one except the hero believes exists until it starts eating everyone? Check ?

Comedy deaths of unlikeable characters introduced two minutes earlier? Check ?

The hero surviving a suicide mission to slay the beast? Check ?

Heck, while reading the book I couldn't help but be reminded of that magnum opus of creature features: *Shark Attack 3: Megalodon*. Don't misunderstand me, I'm aware that *Meg* predates *Shark Attack 3* by some five or six years, but the presence of a few set pieces common to both works led me to compare the two and wonder why I delight in watching the latter while reading the former was more of a trawl. And I think I figured out why.

B-movies tend to be fun because they fall into the "so-bad-they're-good" category. *Shark Attack 3* transcends such humdrumness, being so sublimely terrible and ridiculous that it becomes a work of art. The actor's ad-libs are left in the finished film, the human antagonists are bad people and worse actors, there's pretty much only one repeatedly used shot of the Megalodon, which is patently a shot of a great white shark crudely blown up in size. And so when someone rides their jet ski into the shark's mouth you can forgive how silly it is and rejoice in the moment.

*Meg*'s greatest failing is, ironically, that it's not quite bad enough. Steve Alten seems to be trying to play the book straight: with pages of dialogue given over to dry scientific discussion of a Megalodon's ampullae of Lorenzini; with relatively minor plot points discussed repeatedly so that the reader knows that some incongruous plot detail was a clever point and not an error; when the protagonist dons a pair of night-vision goggles we have to be told that they work by "improving light amplification by using a coating of gallium arsenide on the photocathode of the intensifier." I get it, Steve, you did your research, and it's impressive, but with all this straight-lacery around, a few pages later when a surfer douchebag surfs straight into the Megalodon's mouth it's somehow not as much fun as the aforementioned jet-ski incident.

There are some problems with the writing as well, with Steve Alten apparently going to the same writing school as Matthew Reilly. Exclamations points abound. When someone who isn't expecting to be eaten by a sixty foot shark is unexpectedly eaten by a sixty foot shark I get that it's unexpected. I don't need an exclamation mark to tell me to be surprised. There's also a slew of those annoying line breaks mid-dramatic moment, sometimes two or three in a row, which I've never seen the point of. And my last gripe concerns a moment very early on. The first chapter starts strong, with a T-rex in the Jurassic age hunting a herd of Shantungosaurus. Seriously, if the whole book had been as awesome as a freaking T-rex hunting a pack of honest to goodness Shantungosaurus then it would've been a contender for three stars. But wait, there's more! The T-rex follows its quarry into the shallow coastal water only to get stuck in the loose sand. We're in four star territory now, ladies and gents. A hush descends as the hunter becomes the hunted and a shark the size of

Texas shows up not for those pansy Shantungosaurus, but for the mother fuking T-rex. A shark eating a T-rex is perhaps the greatest shark related thing ever, with the possible exception of a shark genetically spliced with an octopus, but that'd never happen. What could possibly ruin this moment of perfect literature? Only this: after thrusting us so thoroughly into the Jurassic age that I can almost hear the Procompsognathus chirp outside my window, that I half expect a Stegosaurus to walk through my front door, what simile does Steve Alten use to describe a Megalodon charging into a T-rex? It was, and I quote, "like a freight train striking a disabled SUV." Way to preserve the mood, Steve.

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### **Sud666 says**

I really wanted this to be good. I do enjoy a good shark story. This is a decent, sometimes good, shark story. It's the rest of it that drags this story down. The story regarding the Meg is pretty decent and I wished the author had spent more time on the shark. Instead we are treated to a low class soap opera of stupid people. They do stupid things with a 60 foot shark. None of the people are really likeable and I ended up rooting for the Shark. I won't waste more time with this review-the book itself is not deserving of more time. I might have given it a 1 star rating but the shark parts do save the story-the rest of the characters? Could care less and they drag the story down into a bunch of banal tropes and enormous stupidity. Card-board cut out characters do nothing for the story.

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### **Paul E. Morph says**

This was a re-read of a novel I originally read on holiday in Turkey back in 2000. Believe it or not, this has been on my 'to re-read' list for about three years now and it's a total coincidence that I finally got around to it on the week the movie adaptation was released in cinemas.

Was I little generous with my original 5 star review? It's possible, but I'm not changing it now. I still had an absolute blast reading this 'b-movie-in-book-form' classic. What an ending! :-D

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### **Kelly (and the Book Boar) says**

That feeling you get when Shark Week and your birthday are on the same weekend . . . .

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### **Dennis says**

**Mega fun!**

A very entertaining book about a sixty-foot shark going on a feeding frenzy in the Pacific.

Just to make it clear what we are talking about:

These creatures actually inhabited the oceans of the Earth. Though this was long before you and I were born. They're extinct for quite some time now. Or aren't they? Well, I'm not saying they are still alive. But keep in mind that even though the oceans cover 71% of our planet's surface and contain 99% of its living space, 95% of it remains unexplored.

That's actually a very nice opportunity for an author to tell a convincing tale about a 42,000 pound shark with a garage-sized head terrorizing stupid people, not quite so stupid people and some poor whales as well.

Paleontologist Jonas Taylor doesn't believe in megalodon's extinction. He has his theory as to why they might still be alive and he actually believes he has seen one during a traumatic deep sea dive seven years ago. This makes him an easy target for quite some ridicule and additionally that incident destroyed his career as a deep sea pilot.

When his old friend Masao Tanaka asks him for his help in the investigation of a remote sub that got damaged and subsequently lost in the Mariana Trench, Jonas sees this as a chance to face his fears and maybe prove his doubters wrong.

Suffice it to say that things go south for a lot of people from there on out.

What started as an interesting and entertaining bio-thriller becomes an equally entertaining creature feature after about a third of the book.

Alten set up his popcorn adventure perfectly in the early parts of the book. He makes this whole tale somewhat plausible and then goes into full what-the-fuck-how-cool-is-that-mode, killing off character after character. Their deaths getting decreasingly believable and increasingly enjoyable in equal measures.

There are two or three characters most readers will want to see get through this unscathed and there are a lot of characters that readers will want to see dying, and horribly so, for being stupid assholes. So the reader can cheer on the shark and fear for the people and mostly will be satisfied with the end result.

Steve Alten is actually a pretty decent writer. And MEG is a pretty good book that's sometimes thrilling, sometimes silly, but almost always fun.

Almost five star fun.

But I deduct one star for a single character that annoyed me tremendously. In books like this people are mostly *supposed* to be annoying and then (to the reader's delight) becoming fish fodder in the end. So it may seem a little harsh for me to lower the rating because of one of them. But the one I'm talking about (and will not name) was actually quite important for some of the actions taken by a certain other character. And the dynamic between the two was not plausible at all and in my opinion overall was just badly written. And I'm convinced now that Alten can do better.

This was a buddy read with my dear friend Trish, the world's leading expert in horrendous deaths that actually make people laugh. Who better to read such a book with?! Exactly!

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### **Erika says**

You'd think i'd get tired of reading this book after a billion times, but nope, still my favorite <3  
(reread again... still love it)

Read it again for the billionth time... still the best.

Has everyone seen the movie trailer yet??? So excited!!!

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### **Luvtoread says**

The book was very entertaining, so much better than I expected which is always a nice surprise.

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### **? Garima ? says**

I don't care if you judge me for giving 5 stars to this one. I absolutely enjoyed this, there is nothing I would like to change. There is correct chemistry between characters (that includes the Meg) and appropriate people are being killed and eaten. What's not to like?

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### **Trish says**

I love sharks. They are among the top three of my favourite animals (alongside owls and Komodo dragons). And Great Whites are probably the best ones among them. Naturally, little Trish always loved to see sharks in illustrated childrens books or on television. I cried at the end of Jaws, mourning the poor creature.

Thus, I was delighted to see there would be a movie called **MEG** to hit theatres this summer (and not only because Jason Statham is playing one of the leading roles in it) and as soon as I saw that it was based on a book, it was only a matter of time until I read it.

Apparently, there was another version in the 90s that was updated (partly to include the latest scientific findings, partly to change characters and events as well). I have the updated version and after hearing of some differences, I'm glad.

Anyway, this is the story of Jonas Taylor, a dishonorably discharged Navy commander specialized in deep dives, who has believed in the existence of megalodons (basically huge, pre-historic versions of the Great White) ever since that fateful dive a few years ago when two scientists diving with him got killed. The Navy claims it was him losing his marbles, he says they were attacked by a megalodon. Guess who won that argument.

He is asked to help an old acquaintance who wants to establish the worlds largest aquarium (an artificial lagoon so huge, whales and other large sea creatures can be studied as if in the wild). He agrees like the imbecile that he is, wanting to overcome his trauma and escape what must be the worst marriage ever - and gets much more than he bargained for.

For the monster is real, not imagined, and she found a way to escape the biological confines her kind have lived in for tens of thousands of years. Momma's gotta eat!

What follows is a mad romp through the Pacific with lots of gloriously gruesome deaths, claustrophobic underwater scenes and a cast of assholes and bitches. Sorry, but there really only were one or two people who didn't deserve to die here (Mac being chiefly amongst them).

I very much enjoyed the mix of accurate scientific detail, believable conjecture and breathtaking action. Some things were less "realistic" than others, but let's be real here: we're not here for realism, we're here for the monster chomping on annoying humans! :D

Know that feeling when reading a book or watching a movie and sitting at the edge of your seat, full of suspense about whether or not the hero is gonna be able to save the day? Well, here I sat at the edge of my seat hoping he would NOT be able to save the day because I wanted people to DIEDIEDIE!

BWAHAHAHAHAHAHA! And I got what I came for. So much so that I'm considering reading the rest of the series (and soon). \*lol\*

Wonderful creature feature!

(First: actual megalodon tooth. Second: Comparison of a megalodon's tooth and a Great White's.)

(Size comparison for a better understanding.)

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### **Erin ? \*Proud Book Hoarder\* says**

Far-fetched but fun = that's the point of these types of books anyway. There's so much that fascinates man about the creatures of the deep, so many hidden horrors beneath the water. This goes farther than Jaws, to the original beast which grew up to 60 feet, the Carcharodon megalodon, a shark that would swallow today's Great Whites. Clearly these creatures went belly up long ago, but the author takes pains to paint a realistic enough plausibility of how one could survive, break the surface, and become a modern day terror.

There's no way this could make a decent movie because of the budget - this shark was huge, and the author takes it on a long ride to destroy many types of vessels, even attack a helicopter, all in the name of giant shark fun. I could have done without some cliche characters like the hard-driven, ambitious, evil wife, but the scene with the shark pod was epic enough to make up for it. Her love interest was unrealistic, though, the weakest character written for the story. Jonas was a main character strong enough to propel this shark-driven story forward - it opens with him lecturing about the legend of the monster, then he's forced to confront his worst fears and make them a new reality.

The pacing is swift and this one is hard to put down. Even if a lot of it is unbelievable, especially a certain escape at the end, that doesn't matter. A few times there's a creep factor, especially when exploring the mariana trench and picturing that triangular head that appears to grin...There's enough science driven in it to keep afloat, plenty of action to invest interest, fun moments, tense and narrow escapes, and even a small nudge toward a sequel with the final page.

I have the fourth one, but it will have to wait until I track down the second and third first.

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## **Ken says**

I first heard about The Meg when I saw a trailer for the forthcoming Statham movie.

I honestly thought it was a Sharknado inspired Shark film.

So I was really surprised to see the movie tie-in edition and instantly had to pick it up.

This book certainly delivers on the big dumb cheesy monsterfest.

A believed extinct prehistoric Megalodon is terrorises anything that stands in its way...

It's was just the right side of enjoyable for me. I wasn't fully invested in all the characters and the way the book ended, I'm not too desperate to pick up the next instalment.

That said I'm more interested in seeing the movie now, so I'm glad that I'd decided to read the book first.

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## **TK421 says**

\*\*\*\*HERE THERE BE SPOILERS\*\*\*\*

Do you like reading about monsters?

More specifically, do you like to read about monsters of the deep that have been thought dead for millions of years?

If you do, search no further -- Steve Alten's MEG will not disappoint.

From the epic beginning of a T-Rex getting its terrible-lizard ass handed to itself to the absurd gastronomic defeat of the Megalodon, this book keeps the action flowing at a constant rate throughout.

There is a really lame extramarital affair sub-plot, but in the end it works, I guess. Enough about that. To the real story.

Jonas Taylor, a deep-sea expert, ex-Navy submersible extraordinaire, and also the world's foremost expert on the extinct Megalodon, is called upon to inspect some sensors that have gone off the grid in the Mariana Trench. Problem is, he has already been to the Trench before; it wasn't a pleasant experience for him. During this previous exploration he freaked out, and it cost the lives of two coworkers. Because of this he is kinda considered a pariah in the deep-sea community. Now, the only place he really explores is the lecture circuit, where his theories of the ancient shark being alive are mocked and derided in glorious fashion.

If you're still with me, I'm sure your cheeseometer is probably going crazy. Well, you ain't heard nothing yet.

So he decides to help a billionaire (really, who else could afford to fix sensors in the deepest part of the ocean?) and go back down into the abyss in one submersible while the billionaire's son goes down in another. Needless to say, it doesn't work out so well for the son. And so begins a tale of revenge. But don't think MOBY DICK, folks. MEG is nowhere in that class.

Think JAWS, on steroids.

People begin dying left and right in some gruesome ways. I'll let you experience those for yourself. But I will say that if you like every scene of carnage to include the words: entrails, teeth, entrails some more, some more teeth, and, yes, entrails again, then you'll love how creative Alten is with his descriptions.

But the Meg does not only attack humans.

Whales and subs (yes, I said subs -- not the Jared kind, but the decommissioned WWII variety) are also its prey.

At one point I laughed so hard while reading a battle scene between Meg and sub that I snorted...then farted. Don't ask. I'm still trying to figure that one out myself.

But Alten does save the best for last.

**STOP READING IF YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW THE ENDING!!**

When the final battle scene takes place, Jonas finds himself in the belly of the beast. Literally, folks. Alten tries to explain this in some pretty creative ways. None of them really make much sense, but, hey, it's his book. All Jonas can do is start hacking at the best with his knife. I'll let you read the book to find out the rest.

Like I said, cheese cheese cheese. But it's summer and this type of book is the perfect beach read.

**RECOMMENDED**

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**Ana says**

3.5 \*If you see her glow, it's too late\* stars

Duunnn dunnn... duuuunnnn duun... duuunnnnnnn dun dun dun dun dun dun dun dun dun dunnnnnnnnnnn dunnnn.

As you all know by now, I love sharks.

I love everything related to sharks. Watching shark movies is my guilty pleasure. Deep Blue Sea, The Reef, Open Water, 47 Meters Down, Jaws 2... But there's one more that stands above the rest. Yes, you've guessed it. Jaws, the granddaddy of them all.

I even watched Sharknado. I watched it and found it deeply moving, honest and engaging. Said no one ever!

Yeah this actually happened.

Brace yourselves, Sharknado is coming. A tornado — full of sharks. We're all doomed.

Ok. Enough small talk. Let's get back to the subject at hand. Meg. I was browsing through Goodreads when I stumbled upon this beauty.

*If the T. rex was the most terrifying creature ever to walk the earth, then Carcharodon megalodon was easily lord and master of the sea.*

The opening chapter blew me away. I don't want to spoil it for you, so I'm not going to tell you what happens. It's simply awesome.

The story centers around a thought-to-be-long-extinct 60-foot female Megalodon shark. Professor and U.S Navy deep sea diver Jonas Taylor believes that the Megalodon is still alive and thriving in the Mariana Trench. (For those who don't know, the Mariana Trench is the deepest & most unexplored place on the planet. It is located near the Mariana Islands in the Western Pacific Ocean). Oh Jonas, you don't know how close to the truth you are! Meg rises from the depths of the Mariana Trench, and goes full Jaws on unsuspecting beachgoers.

The plot is very interesting to keep you engrossed throughout the book. Unfortunately, I didn't care for the characters or the unnecessary marital drama. I'm not here for the human drama, I just want some shark action dammit!

*The Meg was a companionless creature, territorial by nature. It mated when it must and killed its young when it could, for the only challenge to its reign came from its own kind. It could adapt and survive the natural catastrophes and climatic changes that caused the mass extinctions of the giant reptiles and countless prehistoric mammals. And while its numbers would eventually dwindle, some members of its species might survive, isolated from the world of man, hunting in the isolated darkness of the ocean*

*depths.*

The ending was a surprising one. I was not expecting that at all.

I'll leave you with this- be kind to sharks. ❤

P.S. Meg will soon be a major motion picture starring Jason Statham. Get hype.

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### **Neil says**

A to Z Project, Book 11

Wow, I know that thrillers are for fun and excitement, but this book is just so relentlessly dumb that I couldn't suspend disbelief for a minute.

I'm not sure if it's the he-man/author stand-in lead character, the comically cardboard villains, the tsunami of cliches, or the ridiculous contortions that the author goes through to put all of his characters in exactly the right place in ALL OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN for his unbelievable big shark to attack them as opposed to all of the other creatures and people in the sea. Also, the author obviously has a problem with women.

The only upside is that it is very short, with big print and tiny little chapters, and it's bad in a funny way, so like me, you'll probably finish it despite how jaw-droppingly dumb it is. I won't give away the ending, but you should read the whole book just for it, as it has to be one of the stupidest scenarios ever committed to the page.

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### **Waffles says**

This book/series deserves 529 stars! Seriously! Any book with a jacket blurb stating "I have just two words for you: JURASSIC SHARK!" deserves the Nobel Prize for first class airport literature.

This is what pulpy, guilty-pleasure reading is all about. You've got action, sex, and **PREHISTORIC SHARKS!**

Dan Brown's book (I've only read one and that was too much) seriously insulted my intelligence - I recognized the Fibonacci numbers from a high school class - THAT I FLUNKED! Steve Alten does not insult your intelligence. You feel so much smarter after reading his novels. His novels cure impotence - so

I've heard.

To paraphrase the noted urban 20th centruy *philosophe* Laurence Tureaud ... "I pity the fool who don't like Jurassic Shark!"

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### **Bradley says**

Everything in me wanted to either rebel against reading this or just submit to the gleeful horror of a shark who's head is as big as a truck.

Obviously, I had to submit.

And you know what really caught me off-guard?

The plausibility.

Yeah, a 65-foot albino shark from the deep trenches, or rather, the ongoing survival of the species, living in the depths, never needing to see sunlight... until they were disturbed by intrepid explorers. :)

Yeah, well, there's real talk about Megladon teeth as far back as 10 thousand years ago. That's not exactly extinct.

Enter in the story.

Well, this is written well and fun, all horror, then adventure, and then pure action. No wonder it got made into a movie. :)

But you know what I like best about it?

\*spoiler alert\*

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The story of Jonah inside the whale. :) Nooooooo... noooo spoilers!!!!

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### **Jim Cherry says**

I Re-Read So You Don't Have to...

In 1997 I was touring my local Borders Book Store and saw a book titled Meg with a blue cover and what looked like blood in the water. I instantly knew what the novel was about the survival of Carcharodon Megalodon, a prehistoric shark thought to resemble the modern day great white shark (Carcharodon carcharias), when I was a teenager I became interested in marine biology because of Jaws and in that exploration I discovered the Carcharodon megalodon, and since it was a larger version of the great white thought there could be made a case for it's survival into modern times. I immediately sat down with the book

and started reading, and being a writer and knowing something of the subject I soon became disappointed.

Meg is about submersible pilot Jonas Taylor working out of the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute who is working on a Navy project diving into the Mariana Trench reputedly the deepest part of our oceans, in that dive Taylor thinks he sees a Megalodon and blows his tanks in an emergency ascent to the surface killing two researchers. Taylor immediately quits being a submariner, so terrorized by what he saw or what he thought he saw and becomes a paleontologist with an expertise in Megalodons. Five years later he's lured back to diving in the Mariana Trench by former mentor Masao Tanaka has lost some equipment in the trench that he needs recovered, and a thriller soon Jonas finds himself in a sub back in the Mariana Trench. In the trench Taylor encounters not one but two Megalodons and all questions are gone, but in the ensuing chaos one of the sharks makes it above the thermocline (miles of cold water above the trench) by being enveloped in the warm blood of her mate that is being pulled towards the surface by Tanaka's ship. Once in the warmer waters off Hawaii the Megalodon soon starts attacking whale's and then turns east heading for California and attacking ships and humans.

In Meg author Steve Alten has the basis for a novel with good characters and plausible action maybe not on the level of Jaws but it could have rivaled a Michael Crichton novel (in fact a Los Angeles Times blurb calls it "Jurassic Shark"). The problem with Meg is that Alten passes up every opportunity to add a little complexity or even the slightest verisimilitude and stacks implausibility upon improbability, upon impossibility leading to disbelief. Characters are cardboard creations there is no real depth to their motivations, plotting is simplistic and chapter ending cliffhangers are awkward. Meg seems like Alten wrote the book with the help of a plot generator, add character here, insert exposition, info dump here, add love interest, need some action here. A perfect example of the problem with Alten's characters is how Taylor is convinced to return to diving in the Mariana Trench. Meg right from the start has Taylor frightened to the core of his encounter in the trench and what a life altering event it was. How does Tanaka lure Taylor back to diving? He simply says "you have to face your fears" and he's off! In a thriller you know the hero will confront his fears and embark on the journey or quest he's asked to, the thing is, for the reader to believe it you have to give the reader a plausible reason and motivation to do it and "you have to face your fear," "oh, okay," hardly seems plausible after we're told how terrorized and afraid he is. Characters motivations are also non-existent or swing wildly from end of the spectrum to the next. Terry Tanaka at first can't stand Taylor because he got her brother killed, then suddenly with no explanation or reason it seems they're having an affair but nothing in book develops how that happened!

Meg is a fast read, for all the wrong reasons. It's not a page turner in the sense that the action and or writing is compelling, but because there's nothing to think about and if you do Meg falls apart in front of you.

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