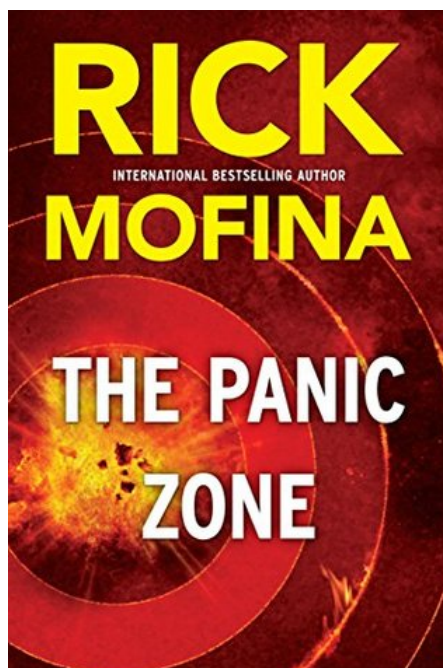




The Panic Zone

Rick Mofina

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“The Panic Zone is a headlong rush toward Armageddon. Its brisk pace and tight focus remind me of early Michael Crichton.”—Dean Koontz, #1 New York Times bestselling author

A car crashes in Wyoming: A young mother is thrown clear of the devastating crash. Dazed, she sees a figure pull her son from the flames. Or does she? The police believe it's trauma playing tricks on the mind, until the woman hears a voice on the phone: “Your baby is alive.”

A bomb explodes in Rio de Janeiro: The heinous act kills ten people, including two journalists. Jack Gannon's assignment is to find out whether his colleagues were innocent victims or targets who got too close to a huge story.

A Caribbean cruise ends in horror: Doctors are desperate to identify the cause of a passenger's agonizing death. They turn to the world's top scientists, who fear that someone has resurrected their secret research. Research that is now being used as a deadly weapon.

With millions of lives at stake, experts work frantically against time. And as an anguished mother searches for her child and Jack Gannon pursues the truth, an unstoppable force hurls them all into the panic zone.

Originally published in 2010

The Panic Zone Details

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Author : Rick Mofina

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Genre : Thriller, Fiction, Suspense, Mystery

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From Reader Review The Panic Zone for online ebook

CJ says

Overpopulation...mad scientist...let's take care of that situation! I have heard this scenario before, yet this was very well handled. The delivery system for the anti-population solvent was a horrifying addition. The further into the novel the reader gets, the harder it is to put down because the action is just moving like a tidal wave. Really good

Pat says

Oh yeah this is much more like it. If the first Jack Gannon book was a little slow, for this one Mofina has got it in overdrive and put the foot down. Jack Gannon crosses continents on the trail of a story that starts in Rio with the deaths of 2 WPA journalists. In other parts of the world a whole bunch of other weird stuff is happening.

Its a complex and satisfying plot that uncovers a conspiracy so frightening as to be unthinkable. Can Jack and his unofficial CIA 'partner' stop it in time. A real page-turner and highly enjoyable

Jim says

The second in series of Jack Gannon books from author Rick Mofina, "The Panic Zone" is a very complex story line of moving parts. Gannon a reporter formerly from Buffalo now works in World Press Associates (WPA) headquarters stationed in NYC. The boss sends Gannon to Brazil to follow up on a story about a bomb blast which killed an associate of WPA and was growing. Gannon runs into every possible wall of stone keeping him away from vital information. Meanwhile in Wyoming, Emma and Joe Lane are out driving with their infant son in the back, are involved with a head on auto collision. Joe is killed. Emma barely hurt, is told her baby Tyler completely burned up in crash. Emma knows she saw someone take Tyler out of crash before passing out. The story line from this novel gets very complicated. It's moving parts are in the Bahamas, London, Virginia, Onterio, California, as well as Wyoming and Brazil. Several other locations are in play which made it difficult to keep track of who was where. The novel is packed with a lot of scientific jargon and properties in it. The science was too much for me. I did a lot of skimming in several areas. Not the best of my school subjects. It also bogged the story down to a crawl several times. The parts of the novel dealing with Emma, and Gannon were great. The whole "Crucible" project, and file 91 with the mad scientist Dr. Gretchen Sutsoff were a bit too much. I thought the characters were great. Very well developed and nicely placed throughout with some great dialog. The last 50 pages of book went very quickly for a conclusion that was a real bang. Overall it was a pretty good book to read. Rick Mofina is one of my favorite authors. This is also the second Gannon book I've read. (First one was better). Hopefully the third is more of a direct story. I gave "The Panic Zone" 3 stars out of possible 5 stars. It really could be a 3.25-3.50 star book. But having to skim and being turned off with too much science kept this one down to a 3 star. Do yourself a favor and don't miss out on Rick Mofina's books. They are for the most part, excellent. Check them out- you won't be sorry, he's a great storyteller.

Bryan says

Excellent!

Jael says

You notice a strange white car following you. Initially, you dismiss it. Maybe you are seeing things. Then you start to receive strange phone calls from a blocked number. The caller doesn't speak, he or she hangs up after a few seconds. Could this mean something? Maybe. You let all of that go to enjoy a picnic with your husband and son. Then tragedy strikes on a day that was supposed to be filled with joy.

And all of that is in just the first chapter of *The Panic Zone* by Rick Mofina, the second novel in the Jack Gannon series.

Emma Lane of Big Cloud, Wyoming, is left to pick up the pieces after a car accident takes the life of her husband, Joe, and son Tyler. Emma accepts Joe's death, she felt him slip away while holding his hand amidst the pieces of metal and glass. But in her heart, Emma knows she saw someone rescue Tyler. She tells anyone who will listen that Tyler is alive, but Emma's words are dismissed as the ramblings of a grieving mother. To make matters worse, Emma receives another mysterious phone call. This time the caller speaks, "Your baby is alive." Will anybody believe the anguished mother? How will she find Tyler?

Emma's story is just the beginning of this intricate plot. A reporter in Rio de Janeiro gets a tip about a big story. But before reporter Gabriella Rosa and a co-worker can get the story, the tipster, Maria Santo, and the journalists are killed by a bomb. Enter Jack Gannon, a reporter from the New York office. Gannon is dispatched to put together the pieces of the puzzle. Gannon is loathed by his Brazilian counterparts, who feel he isn't experienced enough. Despite the animosity, Gannon is undeterred. Attempts on his life can't stop this determined man. Gannon picks up where Maria Santo left off, investigating a Brazilian law firm, which serves as a front for illegal adoptions, human trafficking, and many other nefarious deeds. Piecing the puzzle together takes Gannon to London, Morocco, the Bahamas and Wyoming. Every step of Gannon's odyssey is filled with danger.

There are so many characters and locations, it was a little hard for me to keep it straight. We have government official Robert Lancer, who is hell bent on capturing rogue, ex-CIA scientist Gretchen Sutsoff. This particular scientist is determined to make the world pay for her pain. How she intends to do that is rather disturbing, you'll just have to read the book to find out, but I can tell you it involves experimenting on human subjects!

Human trafficking, illegal adoptions, and questionable science experiments, any one of those topics alone would make for a good book. At times I was wondering how does this all come together? It felt like reading a full season of *24*. The conspiracy at the heart of the novel is extremely complex. In real life, I have a hard time believing it could be pulled off. But as a work of fiction, I enjoyed it. As the final 80 pages ticked away, I was reading at a rapid pace. You pull for Emma and Jack immediately because they are everyday people. They are people you come across on your way to work or the grocery store. Does Emma get Tyler back? Will Jack get the story? Will Gretchen be stopped? Of course I won't answer those questions, but you will quickly get sucked into this story.

Rating: Give it a try

Notes: I received a copy of the novel from Planned Television Arts in exchange for an honest review. For more information on author Rick Mofina visit: <http://www.rickmofina.com/>

Kristin says

While this is the first book of Mofina's that I've read, it was the second thriller focused on child abductions that I started at the end of September, the other being Ridley Pearson's 'The Pied Piper'. Although I didn't intentionally choose to read 2 books with similar plots at the same time, it provided an opportunity for comparison, and I ended up liking this one much more, which will likely lead to me reading more of Mofina's books should I come across them. Where the children in 'The Pied Piper' are taken to be released into the black market of the adoption industry, in 'The Panic Zone', the kidnappings become just one series of events in a worldwide terrorism plot.

The focus of this book is on Jack Gannon, a news reporter disgraced at his former job in Buffalo (I suspect this is the result of the events of the first book in the series) who lands at the World Press Alliance at the request of one of the few people who believe in him after Buffalo. He has a knack for getting to the bottom of a story and being fearless, and a bit reckless, in his pursuit, so when a bombing in Brazil kills 2 members of the WPA bureau who may have been on the way to meet a source for an unknown, but reportedly big, story, Gannon is sent there to figure out what he can about the bombing. As the story unravels, the leads take Gannon to 4 continents, putting him into potential danger at every turn.

Meanwhile, Mofina pursues 2 other stories that eventually feed into the Gannon plotline. First, young mother Emma Lane survives a fiery car crash that kills her husband, Joe, and baby, Tyler. While she was next to Joe in the wreckage and feels his life slip away, she is convinced that someone pulled her baby out, but everyone she talks to chalks it up to trauma-induced hallucination and survivor's guilt. Readers are also introduced to Dr. Gretchen Sutsoff, a former government scientist concerned with the impact of human population growth on Earth's natural resources. After leaving the government due to a disagreement over the use of human subjects for her experiments, Sutsoff goes rogue and continues her experiments in secret, with a master plan to produce via nanotechnology an agent that, when activated, can selectively reduce the population with 100% accuracy.

I enjoyed how Mofina wove all the stories together. For me, the most interesting was the Sutsoff plot simply because enjoy medical thrillers and the doomsday scenarios that authors come up with to sicken or kill our fellow man, but there was plenty of intrigue in all of them. Unlike 'The Pied Piper,' which I felt followed a very formulaic plot, 'The Panic Zone' took many twists and turns, particularly in Gannon's investigation of the bombing and related events that left me guessing until the very end.

Philip says

This is the best Rick Mofina that I have yet read!

My first impression when I started reading it was "What in hell is this all about anyway and if it's supposed to be a Jack Gannon book, where is he?" and this is going to be a slow read! Boy was I wrong on all counts! The format of all the individual and seemingly unconnected storys in alternating chapters took some getting used to but I think it presented the story in just the way an investigative reporter like Gannon and all the various Law enforcement agencies would have seen it happening. And when the action starts the book rolls along like a freight train and hauls the reader along at a breakneck pace!

While some of the science might seem a bit far fetched who knows what with today's technology and the rate at which it's advancing!

The actual ending, while somewhat predictable and maybe foreseeable, was, perhaps, a bit of a let down but

it probably was the only way the story could end. Especially with the "Good Guys" all living happily and healthily forever after!!

Super book that still has me thinking about it some days after I finished it. Looking forward to "In Desperation" and the rest of Rick's great novels.

Sandy says

I am enjoying these but there is a lot of extraneous details that I skip. It seems to take forever for all the pieces to come together and then it all happens in the last 20 pages wrapped up in the blink of an eye. I keep waiting for that aha moment.

Deborah says

Loved this book

This book had more parts to it and was very intriguing. Getting ready to read the next one in this series.

Baglady says

multi-plot story with all the elements of a good suspense novel and if the instrument of terror is realistic we all need to be frightened

Heather says

The plot to The Panic Zone is compelling and complex. But it's not so complex that it's hard to understand. Mofina does a great job of making the science behind the plot understandable and exciting (not necessarily in a good way). A thriller from start to finish, The Panic Zone had lots of action and many characters. At first, I had a hard time getting the characters straight, and I was concerned that the number of characters would work against the plot to make it more confusing and less enjoyable. Thankfully, my initial concerns proved wrong. Once I got into the book and the action, it was quite easy to keep everyone separate. Character names and personalities (not to mention circumstances) were quite different and easily kept separate once everyone was introduced. When everyone came together toward the end, I was familiar enough with everyone that there was no confusion at all. I knew exactly who was who and what was going on. That's no easy feat with such a complex story that has so many integral characters!

As for the characters, they were all well-developed and believable. We got enough of their background info (in most cases) to understand their motivations as well as their weaknesses. Even the protagonist was easy to see why she was doing what she was doing – even if it was insane. And, I must say, it was a HUGE relief not to have anyone fall in love with anyone else by the end of the novel. Too many thrillers have that thrown in, almost as a (I'm guessing at this) nugget for the female readers. Most recently read by me would be Dan Brown's Angels and Demons and his The Da Vinci Code. While romances – or even flings – from these events can give the readers warm fuzzies, I think they're more often than not distracting from the action and suspense. I appreciated not having any such distractions in The Panic Zone.

More specifically about the characters, I really liked Jack. I would have liked more information about him. There was talk toward the beginning about his getting hired with WPA, and people dismissing his credentials. People thinking he didn't belong and had no talent. He made a comment to himself about how that wasn't the real story, but we never learn what really happened. I would have loved for that to be shared. (Now, at this point I'll say the end leads me to believe that perhaps there's more on Jack coming in another book. I sure hope so. And if so, I hope we learn more about his background – a lot more!) Robert Lancer was also very interesting, and I would have liked to have seen more of him.

Emma was a great character. The “mama bear” disallowing anything to come between herself and her cub. Now, given the description on the back of the book, I can share my thoughts without spoiling anything. And that's this: the description about her ordeal, I felt, was too much. It left little surprise and little unknown about Emma's situation. Even before cracking open the book, we know that she believes that she saw someone rescue her son. We also know that she gets a phone call telling her that he's alive. I think the story would have been better if I didn't know both of those things. I think the phone call could have been an added thrill to an already thrilling tale, if it wasn't disclosed on the back of the book. I think this made her story, while interesting, the weakest in the book.

Overall, this was a good, fast-paced thriller that reminded me of Jurassic Park in that there was a lot of science behind the central threat. I liked how everything that was seemingly separate was woven together into a detailed scheme. This book kept me reading because I wanted see just how exactly these components were related. I was satisfied by the conclusion, and hope we'll be seeing more of Jack Gannon.

David says

Took me quite a while to read and as such it became bitty. Not the fault of the story, just Xmas and things getting in the way.

Theri says

Wow

Action packed is an understatement. Love this author and can't wait to read more. Highly recommend as great summer reading escape.

JoAnn Meaker says

Awesome

This book kept me reading, wanting to learn more. The characters were believable and the storyline moved at a quick pace. The last line sets up the next book.

Barbara B. says

Really good story, good main character. Looking forward to more of these.
