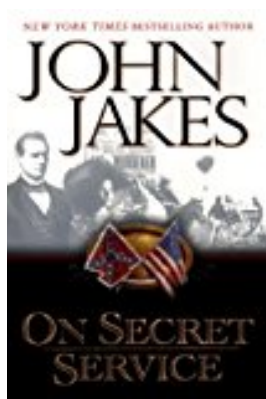


# [PDF] On Secret Service

## John Jakes - pdf download free book

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### Books Details:

Title: On Secret Service

Author: John Jakes

Released: 2000-06-05

Language:

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### Description:

John Jakes is to historical American fiction what Stephen King is to horror: a one-man industry. Jakes, the author of over 60 books, including the eight-part Kent Family Chronicles, the North and South Trilogy, and innumerable short stories of the American West, returns to his well-trod Civil War stomping grounds in the engrossing *On Secret Service*. The story of a war within a war on various levels--the North v. the South, the Union's Pinkerton Detective Agency v. the Confederacy's agent provocateurs, youthful idealism v. youthful lust--*On Secret Service* chronicles the lives and times of four young Americans, from the war's early tremors in January 1861, through its bloody conclusion, Lincoln's assassination, and John Wilkes Booth's murder in May 1865.

The main players are Lon Price, the ardent abolitionist and rising-star operative of the Pinkerton Detective Agency, and Margaret Miller, the beautiful, initially vacuous daughter of the South whose chief concern is that the war be over quickly so as not to interfere with Washington's upcoming social season. After a chance encounter in a Washington park, they are as repulsed by each other's political views as they are drawn together by an undeniable physical chemistry. As hostilities increase, the Pinkertons are pledged to the service of the Union and Lon becomes, ipso facto, a charter member in the U.S. Secret Service. When Margaret's stridently pro-slavery father is gunned down by a Pinkerton operative at a clandestine "Secesh" meeting, Margaret throws off her socialite mantle and vows revenge. She pledges allegiance to the South's most notorious female spy, the wealthy, well-connected, and equally well-endowed Rose Greenhow.

A parallel relationship develops between Margaret's unlikely best friend, the boyishly slight Hanna Siegel, a devout abolitionist who longs to prove herself on the battlefield, and the conflicted Captain Frederick Dasher, late of West Point, now of the First Virginia Cavalry, and protégé to Brigadier General "Jeb" Stuart. Played out before a scrim of battles, lives, fortunes, and reputations won and irreparably lost, Lon, Margaret, Hanna, and Fred cat-and-mouse their way through America's costliest war.

While the respective outcomes are somewhat predictable, what is not predictable is the degree to which the reader is captivated by Jakes's encyclopedic command of historical fact and his unmatched storytelling. The mingling of well-drawn fictional characters with nicely fleshed-out historical figures raises to rare levels circumstances that would, in lesser hands, seem mere contrivances. --*Michael Hudson*

**From Publishers Weekly** The author of the bestselling North and South trilogy remains in familiar territory as his latest sweeping historical novel retells the story of the Civil War, and also examines specific aspects of espionage, the development of the Secret Service and the controversies surrounding the Lincoln presidency and assassination. The chaos and drama of romantic love, also figure in the saga, centering on two young couples: Lon Price, a fledgling member of the newly founded Pinkerton agency, encounters beautiful actress Margaret Miller while investigating the secessionist movement, and Confederate lieutenant Frederick Dasher suffers a largely unrequited love for Miller's friend Hanna Siegel, also an actress and a secessionist. The Price/Miller pairing is by far the more interesting of the two, especially as Jakes explores the evolution of Pinkerton's secret service and how it linked with and diverged from the government's efforts to infiltrate the Confederate Army. Most of the scenes take place in and around Washington, and Jakes spreads himself a bit thin by covering the entire war rather than focusing exclusively on a smaller number of clandestine campaigns. The author saves the best for last in dealing with Lincoln's assassination, bringing the drama to life by giving each of his protagonists a crucial role as the conspiracy unfolds with expert pacing and suspense. Jakes uncovers the little-known history of espionage and counterespionage during the War Between the States with his signature combination of meticulous research and epic narrative, once again proving himself the foremost historical novelist of our national conflict in a title marking his 50th year as a professional writer. (June)

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