



By - **James Patterson**

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When two children from well-known families are kidnapped from an elite school in the capital city, Detective Cross, an established criminal psychologist, is brought in. But he is not happy about it. It appears that nobody cares about the three unsolved murders of a poor black family he is already investigating. The rich, politically connected white children are seemingly more important. However, as he resignedly begins his probe, he realises things are not as simple as he thought. Also, he soon learns, nobody can be trusted.

It (Along came a spider) is the first book in the series. A great book that was made into a hit motion picture, "Along came a spider" has a superb story and perfect twists. While the story has different tempos in different sections of the book, James Patterson manages to keep the reader engrossed. Alex Cross has made it onto the big screen, via two good films starring Morgan Freeman in one, and starring Tyler Perry in another. However, now having gotten to know the character in his original form, clearly none of the films were specially well cast. Detective Alex Cross is an athletic, muscular 6'3" man in his late forties.

Like all of Patterson's books, the short, brilliantly written chapters make for a blistering pace. Even if you have seen the films and know the story, you will be pleasantly surprised by more brutal depiction and veering from the path in its telling. You will also like a masterful villain in the form of Gary Sonjei.

I found myself directly drawn to the Cross character, feeling his anguish and frustration from early on. Sir Patterson has done commendable job the way he depicts the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of a black man growing up amidst poverty and prejudice, which come across incredibly well. The close relationship of Cross with his partner is something else missing from the films, and is very well depicted in the book.

Along came a spider is a great story and full of pace, action, and thrills.

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