



House Revenge: A Joe DeMarco Thriller

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In *House Revenge*, Congressional fixer Joe DeMarco is dispatched to his boss Congressman John Mahoney's hometown of Boston. Mahoney wants him to help Elinore Dobbs, an elderly woman fighting against a real estate developer intent on tearing down her apartment building for a massive new development. Mahoney is just in it for the free press until Sean Callahan, the developer, disrespects him and even worse, Elinore suffers a horrible "accident," likely at the hands of two thugs on Callahan's payroll. Now Mahoney and DeMarco are out for revenge. DeMarco tries to dig up dirt through Callahan's former mentor, and one of his ex-wives. But it's only when DeMarco gets a tip on the likely illegal source of some of Callahan's financing that things get deadly.

House Revenge: A Joe DeMarco Thriller Details

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From Reader Review House Revenge: A Joe DeMarco Thriller for online ebook

Jim Willse says

Another enjoyable entry in the series. The audio books, read by actor Joe Barrett, are just about perfect for a long solitary drive. Neat characters, intricate plotting and villainy that are only slightly overdrawn.

Eric_W says

Don't ever piss off Joe DeMarco. He brings a new cleverness to revenge.

His boss John Mahoney, high-ranking Congressman, was approached by Eleanor Dobbs, an 82-year-old woman living in an apartment building that has been marked for destruction so Sean Callahan can build (and make gobs of money) a new upscale development. In spite of Callahan's having offered her a great deal of money to move, Dobbs is set on living out the remaining three years on her lease.

Callahan pisses off Mahoney and the result is a monumental ego battle. Joe, taking Eleanor's side, goes (IMO) way out-of-bounds in getting back at Callahan. I like Lawson's serious. And this book, certainly held my interest (perhaps helped by the outstanding narration of Joe Barrett), but several lives were lost because of Eleanor's intransigence and Mahoney and Demarco's total over-reaction. The ending is tied up just a bit too neatly for my taste.

Tom Mahan says

First of this series for me, but will also be the last. An easy but weak read. A short list of stereotypes for characters whose dialog was flat with no humor to break up a tv style plot. It seems a quick, shallow and easy to read story is the formula for good ratings these days.

Leslie says

Implausible Action Thriller

The premise, story line and plot development are entertaining. The various sub plots and threads were implausible and left you scratching your head. A fun read.

Leslie says

This is the first book I've read in this series, and I doubt I'll read any others. While it was a quick and enjoyable enough read, which is why I'm rounding up from 2.5 to 3 stars, the scenario (evil developer harassing feisty old lady who refuses to vacate her apartment) was a cliché and pretty much every character

was a cardboard cutout, from the sleazy billionaire developer with his trophy wife (well, there *is* one of those out there in real life), to the corrupt congressman with a lecherous eye for the interns and a soft spot for feisty old ladies (even if he *is* supposed to be "based on" Tip O'Neill), not to mention said feisty old lady herself. Incidentally, I haven't seen a pay phone in *years*, yet the congressman and his "fixer," the main character in this series, always seem to be able to find one for their clandestine conversations at the drop of a hat. Maybe Boston and D.C. are different from the city I live in, but still...

Loy says

Another great installment of the Joe Demario series.
That Joe. - read them all and each one is great.

Not enough Emma or Neil

Dan Smith says

Congressional fixer Joe DeMarco is dispatched to his boss Congressman John Mahoney's hometown of Boston. Mahoney wants him to help Elinore Dobbs, an elderly woman fighting against a real estate developer intent on tearing down her apartment building for a massive new development. Mahoney is just in it for the free press until Sean Callahan, the developer, disrespects him and even worse, Elinore suffers a horrible accident, likely at the hands of two thugs on Callahan's payroll. Now Mahoney and DeMarco are out for revenge. DeMarco tries to dig up dirt through Callahan's former mentor, and one of his ex-wives. But it's only when DeMarco gets a tip on the likely illegal source of some of Callahan's financing that things get deadly.

Danielle Gonzalez says

I've waited so long for this next installment. Joe DeMarco is back, and it didn't disappoint! Joe's boss, Congressman Mahoney, is home in Boston meeting with his constituents. He meets a lady in her eighties who is being forced out of her apartment by a greedy land developer. The developer is pulling nasty tricks like shutting off the utilities, not changing lights, vandalizing the property, and having two thugs terrorize the last remaining residents. Mahoney takes up her cause and starts a snowball of revenge based on egos. The developer doesn't treat Mahoney respectfully, Mahoney doesn't treat the developer respectfully, so they both scheme to put the other in their place. Mahoney calls his fixer, Joe DeMarco. Joe uses his smarts to figure out ways to fix the problem, but things keep backfiring and escalating. This story brings in the complete alphabet soup - IRS, FBI, ATF, DEA; and includes everyone from the poor elderly lady to ruthless drug cartels in Mexico. This was a fast and intriguing read because it was hard to put the book down. Joe comes up with creative ways to deal with the problem, and it's fun to see what he is going to do next. While this is the eleventh book in the series, you don't have to read the others to enjoy this one. This can be read as a standalone. But I'm sure it will wrap you in to want to read more. I love this series, and I'll be anxiously awaiting the next one.

Bent Hansen says

I really like Mike Lawson's series about Joe DeMarco and his varying errands for Congressman John Mahoney. Before this one, I had read the first four in the series and worried somewhat that I would have missed a lot between book 4 and this book 11. Well, I am sure that I have missed a lot of great stories that I plan to make up for along the way, but my reading of this 11th installment of the series was in no way hampered by what has happened in the past six books, so kudos to Lawson for not making references to past events too important for the understanding of the setting and characters in this one.

The Joe DeMarco character is still an interesting and pleasant acquaintance due to his stubbornness and many flaws but also his morals and big heart.

The plot is never too predictable, and the pace of the story is set at a level where the pages turn themselves, but the reader rarely loses his/her breath.

Fans of the series will also love this one, and I guess that readers new to the series can easily jump aboard now without being too confused.

[An ARC of this book was generously provided by the publisher through NetGalley in exchange for an honest review]

HBalikov says

If the name John Mahoney means nothing to you, you're in the wrong book. About 10 books back with *The Inside Ring* is where you should start. (But, if that isn't possible, *House Revenge* also works by itself.)

Mahoney, back then, was the Speaker of the House and one of the great powers of our Congress. Now he is Minority Leader and still employing Joe DeMarco to do some of the things that Mahoney is either too lazy or too wary to do on his own.

Mahoney's district is in Boston, Massachusetts, but the man likes to spend his time in DC where he gets all the perks of being a mover and shaker. Thus, Joe DeMarco is rarely asked to do anything in the home district, until now.

Mike Lawson has a deft touch with the political gamesmanship as it is played now and forever. As the story opens, Mahoney is back in his district and the scene is as follows:

"At least once a month, Mahoney would fly up to Boston from D.C., where he'd attend fund-raisers, make speeches, and try to get on local talk shows. Most important, he'd meet with his big-money donors and see what he needed to do to keep them happy. As Mahoney ran for office every two years, he was constantly scheming and groveling to keep the campaign money rolling in. But about every fourth month, he'd do what he was doing today. He called it Open House.

"Mahoney didn't care at all for the town hall meeting format used by some politicians. He'd tried it once and hadn't liked the unruly, disgruntled crowd that gathered --- yelling out questions, booing his responses --- not to mention the Republican-planted hecklers trying to shove political sticks in his eye. Then there were the reporters writing down every word, taking things out of context, pointing out every inconsistency with things he'd previously said. So instead he held Open House, where he could meet with his constituents one-on-one -- without the media jackals present --- and listen to their problems. He did this partly to give the impression that he cared --- which he actually did --- about the ordinary slobs who voted for him. He'd take the temperature on how they were feeling about certain issues, listen to them bitch, and assure them that he was fighting for them body and soul down there in Washington. The other purpose of Open House was that he was always looking for something that would play well in the press, something to remind the voters that the

man they'd elected was really on their side, and not on the side of the people who contributed vast sums of money to him."

If all Lawson was doing was sharing his insider's cynicism about our political system this would be an interesting read. But, he usually has a top notch mystery or thriller wrapped around this core vibe. This is one of his best.

In many of the plots, Joe DeMarco accumulates a big karma debt that he then has to work off. Not in this one. From the start DeMarco is working to help a nice and bright "old woman" who just wants to stay in her Boston apartment until the end of her lease. That is not to be, because her new landlord wants the building demolished so that he can put up his massive gentrified complex of upscale residential and commercial development (and walk away with a big profit).

This woman complains to Mahoney at an Open House and the Congressman asks DeMarco to help her out. This is not easily done since the developer has much of the local political crew in his pocket and he is willing to cut heat, light, trash pickup or anything else that will get her out of her apartment. DeMarco shouldn't have been surprised when his efforts are met with great resistance and one morning this constituent meets with an "accident."

The plot has the right mix of interesting characters, deft twists, some comedic situations and a grounding in reality. 4.5 stars because I try to save 5 stars for fiction beyond mysteries, thrillers and space operas.

(There is violence, but no gory details; a lot of "bad" language; and , some "adult" situations.)

Todd Simpson says

Fantastic Read. This is the 11th book in this series that I have read, and I have loved everyone of them. However this book could be read as a stand alone, and you would still really enjoy it. The characters really make this book. Joe De Marco is a government fix it man for the congressman John Mahoney. The book moves along at a good pace with plenty of things happening. Mike Lawson is my favorite writer for Political Thrillers. This book is worth reading.

Matt says

First and foremost, a large thank you to NetGalley, Mike Lawson, Grove Atlantic, and Atlantic Monthly Press for providing me with a copy of this book, which allows me to provide you with this review.

As Lawson brings Joe DeMarco back for another 'fixer' experience, the stakes are higher than ever. This is no Washington political mess that needs rectifying or an international scandal that might sully the President's reputation, but an issue of a local nature. During a meeting in his congressional district back in Boston, Congressman John Mahoney heard the plight of Elinore Dobbs, an elderly woman who is being forced out of her apartment against her will. Project developer, Sean Callahan, is behind the attempted eviction but Dobbs will not cede her dwelling, no matter the recompense. Mahoney knows Callahan well, both as a powerful contributor to his past campaigns and a thorn in his side. When a discussion leads Mahoney nowhere, he calls on DeMarco to head to Boston to iron out a solution. It is at this time that DeMarco comes face to face with the McNulty brothers, small-time enforcers who have been sent by Callahan to resolve the Dobbs issue. After a few run-ins with the brothers and learning of an 'accident' that befell Dobbs, DeMarco takes things

into his own hands and seeks to remedy the McNulty issue. However, upon turning up that stone, a larger issue emerges and DeMarco must end Callahan's bid to continue his massive project. Using the oddest assortment of connections, DeMarco tries to bring down Sean Callahan while his boss watches on, cursing from the sidelines. An excellent story combined with fast-paced action keeps Lawson at the top of his game and DeMarco a champion in the hearts of readers!

As I am used to the audiobook versions of Lawson's work, I was pleasantly surprised at how well the story flowed and swiftly the action dissolved chapters. Any reader used to Lawson's style will know that DeMarco's adventures can take many tangents, which keeps everyone guessing and the plot from getting stale. In this story, which moves away from traditional politicking, Lawson utilises some interesting angles while keeping DeMarco's rough exterior in tact. Additionally, the three tiered storyline keeps DeMarco on the move and the reader is able to keep everything in order, while not losing interest. The Dobbs situation is handled nicely, though not as the reader might hope, which flows nicely into a DeMarco-McNulty brothers clash, complete with just enough violence to keep series readers from doubting DeMarco's abilities, and finally a clash to cut the head off the beast as DeMarco seeks to bring Callahan down. Put together, the pace never lessens and the characters used in all three parts keep the story alive. An interesting summation to the story leaves a few threads out there for Lawson to utilise at a later date, though it is clear that DeMarco is always stepping into unforeseen situations that require less than orthodox solutions. A great novel that should keep Lawson fans excited for another year, but pining for a further adventure.

Kudos, Mr. Lawson for this refreshing look at Joe DeMarco and local politics. I enjoy your take on things and hope to read many more novels in the years to come.

Like/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

Lee says

This Demarco adventure finds him dispatched to Boston to stop a developer and his goons from beating up on a sweet old lady. Trying to get at his thugs and the developer without getting caught and fingering Mahoney makes the job tough. Good read.

TraceyK says

10 stars :)

I hate that I just complete the series :(

It's usually hard for me to follow books with more than 2 in a series, but not these!

You just can't wait to pick up the next one. I feel like Mike Lawson also has a genuine sense of humor in his thrillers that you fall in love with. Cannot wait for the next one!

Jim A says

Typical DeMarco novel from Mike Lawson. DeMarco, for those who aren't familiar with the series, is a 'fixer' for congressman John Mahoney. Mahoney is typical of what people think of congress critters these days. Pretty much as corrupt as they come, yet thinking he is as pure as the early snow.

DeMarco makes more than his normal share of mistakes and bad decisions which lead to the story going where it goes.

A fun read without the necessity of reading the first 10 in the series.
