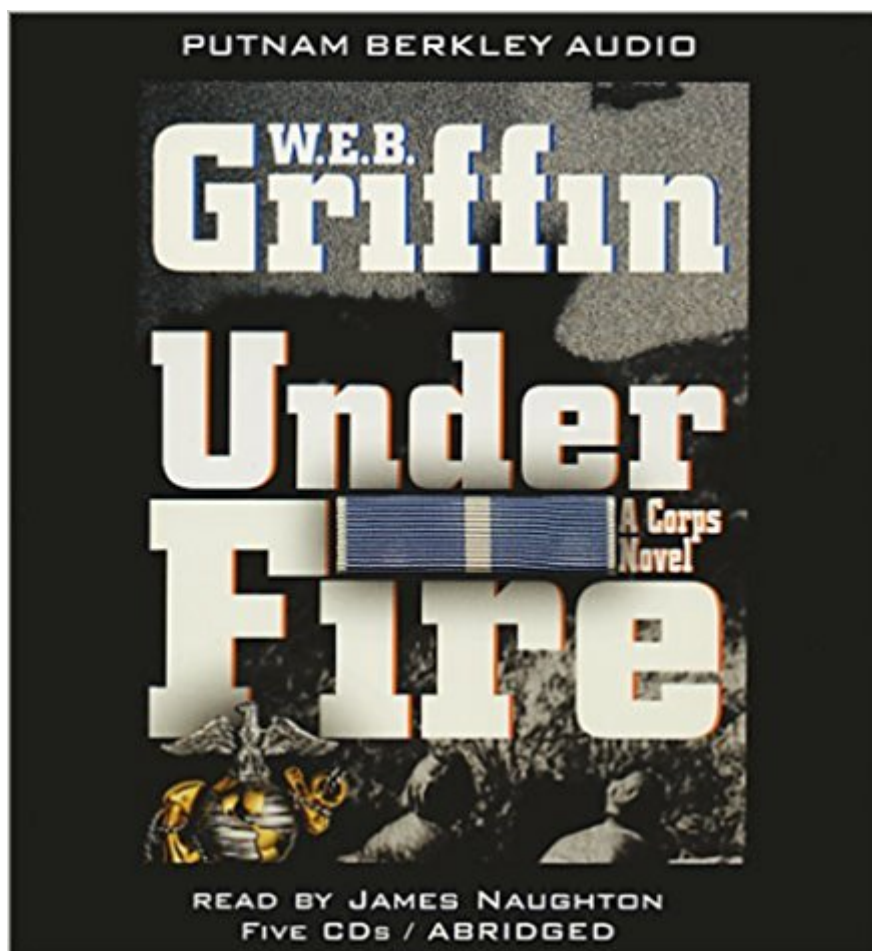


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# Under Fire



## Synopsis

Korea, June 1, 1950. Captain Ken McCoy's report on probable North Korean hostilities meets with so much bureaucratic displeasure that not only is it promptly suppressed, but McCoy himself is kicked out of the Corps. At least two outfits, however, are not impressed by such infighting: the fledgling CIA, which promptly hires McCoy; and the North Koreans, who on June 25th invade across the 38th parallel. Immediately, veterans scattered throughout military and civilian life are called up, many with only seventy-two hours' notice. For Fleming Pickering and Pick, his daredevil son, and Ed Banning, George Hart, Jack Stecker, Jake Dillon, Ernie Zimmerman and for the women who love them names such as Inchon and Pusan will acquire a new, bloody reality, and Korea will become not only a new battlefield but their greatest challenge of all.

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## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Putnam Berkley Audio; Abridged edition (January 14, 2002)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0399148302

ISBN-13: 978-0399148309

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 1 x 5 inches

Shipping Weight: 6.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 257 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #4,678,691 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #16 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > ( G ) > Griffin, W. E. B. #8620 in Books > Books on CD > General #8816 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Military

## Customer Reviews

Having wrapped up World War II with 1999's *In Danger's Path*, bestselling military author W.E.B. Griffin now deploys his Marines in Korea with *Under Fire*, the ninth volume in his Corps series. Back are familiar characters from Griffin's previous Corps books--daredevil pilot Pick Pickering, his Scotch-sipping father, Brigadier General Fleming Pickering, Capt. Ken "Killer" McCoy, and Master Gunner Ernie Zimmerman--with historical figures including President Harry Truman and General Douglas MacArthur making appearances as well. It's now 1950, and with Communist forces making their presence felt below the 38th Parallel, Griffin's plot centers on Gen. Pickering, now high up in the newly created CIA, and Ken McCoy as they work behind MacArthur's back to covertly pave the

way for an invasion of North Korea. Readers who crave nonstop battle action and excitement may find it hard to stick with *Under Fire*, as Griffin takes the time to detail the background leading up to one of America's least-remembered modern wars. Griffin writes for the true armed forces aficionado, filling his prose with realistic descriptions of procedure, gear, and materials, an alphabet's worth of acronyms, and an ex-soldier's ear for military dialogue. Look for more sharp, authentic writing in this series' next installment. --Benjamin Reese --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

After eight books in the popular WWII Corps series, Griffin's latest kicks off on the Korean peninsula, where forces from the Communist North have just stormed over the 38th Parallel. Within a few weeks, the old team is back together, most under the steady command of Brig. Gen. Fleming Pickering, whom President Truman recalls from the helm of Trans Global Airways to assume the CIA's top Asian post. As the U.S. Army flounders to contain the North, Pickering struggles to restore Washington's faith in Comdr. Douglas MacArthur and his daring proposal to invade at Inchon. Meanwhile, as Capt. Ken McCoy and Master Gunner Ernie Zimmerman skulk behind enemy lines, seizing a crucial island in preparation for the invasion, a new calamity breaks out: Pickering's son, daredevil pilot Malcolm ("Pick"), gets shot down over a North Korean rice paddy. This new entry in the series moves more slowly than previous ones, as Griffin who served in the army in Korea sets up the historical elements of the conflict and positions all his characters. But once he gets going, he writes with even assurance and a keen eye for military camaraderie and nuance, offering galvanizing drama and a respectful yet irreverent treatment of military procedure and attitudes, not to mention plenty of Scotch. As the book ends with U.S. forces digging in for battle and Pick still missing the dean of the American war adventure has left himself room for plenty of action ahead. National television and ad campaign. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In his *Brotherhood of War* series Griffin did a great job with the first three books. The next three, of that series, were added and maintained a good continuity. The last three were garbage added on to extend a series that really ended with the *Generals*. In the Corps he tries to stretch the series out from the beginning and I had high hopes. Up until I read this book. In book eight his group of characters is involved in the early stages of World War II - then suddenly without finishing his arcs we are suddenly on the brink of the Korea War - 7 years later, and whoever wrote book nine forgot what he wrote in the preceding 8 books. Suddenly "Killer" McCoy got his knife from Bruce Fairbairn

after demonstrating his skills? WTF? Did we suddenly lose the original character who he played cards with Detective Sergeant Chattsworth, not Fairbairn. Mistakes abound in this book and then one book later the series ends without any resolutions. Why bother to read any of the other series if him and his son are just going to end them without really ending them?

I am prejudiced in that I am a Marine. But even a bit of pro Marine Corps prejudice is not what convinces me that WEB Griffin is a great writer. As far as I know he never served in the Corps, but he captures our ethos and our esprit de corps far better than any other author I know. Griffin writes with feeling and he captures the essence of military life. He manages to intertwine a great story line with an accurate telling of the history of the period. Strongly recommended for anyone who has even a casual interest in military life of the period.

I love Griffin's "The Corps" series and this book is an excellent novel in that series. In this one, it is 1950 and Killer McCoy is stationed in Korea. There are rumblings about the North Koreans, and we are off to another terrific story. All of our favorite characters are in this novel including General Fleming Pickering, Pick Pickering, Killer McCoy, and even our favorite of them all: Major Robert Macklin. The story starts out at Griffin's usual deliberate pace, but as always, it works. My only criticism of Book 9 is that there should have been at least two more stories preceding it dealing with World War II (or "War Two" as the characters usually call it.) Book 8 ended before the US strategic bombing of Japan, the Kamikazes, and much more had even occurred. There was lots of room for more stories before jumping to Korea. Even a story about the initial occupation of Japan would have been welcome. But no, just like with the Brotherhood of War series, Griffin seems to be hurrying the series to a conclusion; perhaps his only flaw (in my book) as a writer. With this qualifier, I really enjoyed this one. RJB.

This installment jumps ahead a full seven years from the previous one—its 1943 OSS action to the Korean War—its outbreak in 1950. Any fictional treatment of the Korean War is welcome, since it for often gets overshadowed by those before and after it. (Even its best-known dramatic representation, "M.A.S.H.", was really supposed to be about Vietnam.) And Griffin delivers, portraying the desperate effort to hold South Korea and a peacetime nation once again seeing men suddenly called back to war. The North Korean invasion of the south, occupying nearly the entire country, takes most by surprise except Ken "Killer" McCoy. Now married to

wartime sweetheart Ernestine Sage, he is forced to choose between being busted to the enlisted ranks or leaving the Marines entirely after he delivers an intelligence assessment predicting exactly such an invasion. That's not what MacArthur's aides are telling him. "El Supremo," now the godlike U.S. viceroy in Tokyo. They make sure the report is buried and start pushing McCoy out of the service. When he returns stateside he sees old buddy Pick Pickering is now a pilot and big wheel in the family's burgeoning airline business as well as Pick's dad Flem Pickering. The latter doesn't know what he can do to help McCoy, but when he is called up and made deputy CIA director, he's in a position to let Truman himself know about it. The war reunites the old Marine gang as the U.S. scrambles to ship troops to South Korea. Pick, a reserve pilot, is called up to once again serve under his old comrade Billy Dunn as Marine flyers help stem the surging North Korean tide. George Hart, back to his old career as homicide cop, commands a Marine reserve unit in St. Louis. They're called up, but Hart himself is diverted to his old position as Flem Pickering's aide and bodyguard. McCoy's buddy Ernie Zimmerman is based in South Carolina near their old OSS commander Ed Banning, now married to Ludmilla, his White Russian wife. Ernie's Chinese wife Mae Su has shrewdly grown a chain of small businesses. Zimmerman is mobilized as well. And McCoy, mere hours from leaving the service, becomes once again Flem Pickering's chief ops guy. There's growing tension between MacArthur and Truman. MacArthur is nearly alone in promoting a landing at Inchon, near Seoul, to cut North Korean supply lines and retake the South Korean capital. The fleet must go in a single file up a long channel with murderous tides, treacherous mud flats, and a high risk of grounding. The Washington brass think the plan too risky and they've got Truman's ear. MacArthur's plan depends upon occupying two small North Korean-held islands with artillery overlooking the channel. He wants them taken the day before the invasion, but won't that tip off the North Koreans that something big is being planned? McCoy proposes an alternative: Take the islands weeks earlier, making it look like an isolated action by the South Korean national police, not tied to any greater objective. There's a whole lot of problems, lead among them that MacArthur and his staff can't be told about it: the staff will certainly shoot the plan down and MacArthur will probably side with them out of loyalty. Flem Pickering fights the bureaucratic wars again, making a key ally in a Marine general who's a Truman buddy. McCoy goes into action planning another risky, top-secret mission. The still-single Pick is

enchanted by ballsy war correspondent Jeanette Priestly, but their romance has barely begun when Pick is shot down behind enemy lines. Most other characters are married and settled, so there's less wartime romance in the air. (A couple of relationship threads are still not tied up, such as the fate of Jim Weston, who in the previous book volunteers for a dangerous as his only way out of an embarrassing love triangle, and whatever happens to Hart's former prostitute paramour from World War II. We also haven't heard from Charlie Galloway, Steve Oblensky, John Moore, Steve Koffler or some of the other series mainstays.) The series continues with its distinctive style taking place mostly in hotel suites, usually owned by the Pickering family, with conversations interlaced with telexes between military commanders and lubricated by endless belts of scotch. It's a wonder any of the characters can remain vertical. This series is basically an ad for Famous Grouse scotch.

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