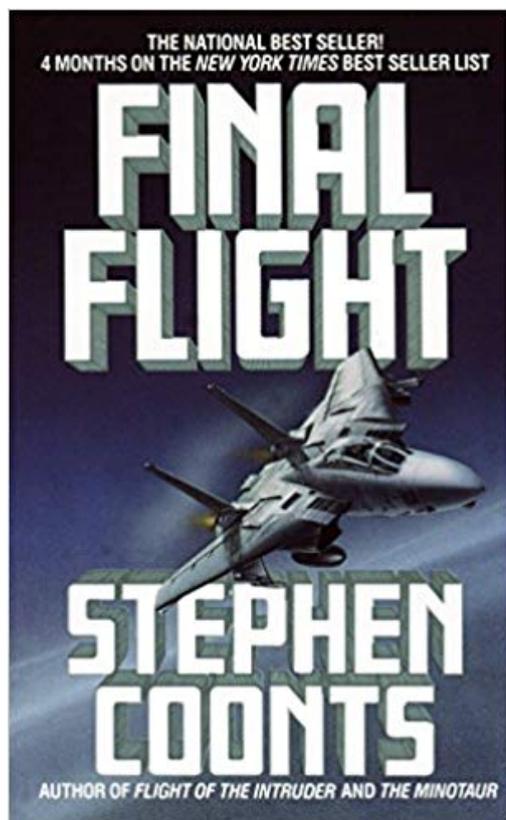


## Final Flight (Jake Grafton) by Stephen Coonts



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The most daring -- and deadly -- terrorist plot of all time is about to unfold aboard the supercarrier *USS United States*. If it succeeds, the balance of nuclear power will tilt in favor of a remorseless Arab leader. And it looks as if no one can stop it - except navy "jet jock" Jake Grafton. "Cag " Grafton is one helluva pilot. His F-14 Tomcat is one helluva plane. But some of Jake's crewmates have already vanished. A woman reporter who boarded the ship in Tangiers may not be who she claims to be. And Jake may have to disobey a direct order from the President himself for one spine-tingling, hair-raising *Final Flight*



## Reviews of the Final Flight (Jake Grafton) by Stephen Coonts

### Bradeya

Felt like I was there, lots of background in ship and airwing life. I flew as a Naval Flight Officer (right seater) off carriers in Navy EA3B Douglas Skywarrior an Elint passive reconnaissance platform in the Med and Vietnam in 60s to 80s. The author does a great job of describing some of the tough decisions a CO and Crew face. Naval Pilots are the best to be able to do the Mental work and skills to land an aircraft at night safely after the Stress of combat and often confining Rules of Engagement. I salute our men and women who serve to protect our Freedom. Best to them and their

families who love and support them.

### **JoldGold**

Read this decades ago. Brings you aboard a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier, the bosun's pipe in your ears. Excellent and authentic detail, from the organized bedlam of the flight deck to the air-conditioned spaces of CATCC, Strike, and the Combat Information Center to the shore leaves in chaotic Naples. Written during the era of Lebanon, Libya and the Sixth Fleet's hunting exercises in the Mediterranean.

Coonts never really wrote like this again. His take on what it was really like on board a carrier, from the cockpit of an F-14 to the rarified air of flag quarters is the backbone of this thriller. No magic airplanes, no science-fiction weapons. Just the salt air, the steam leaking out of the catapult track, and a thousand other details of a supercarrier and its crew. Palpable storyline and a very satisfying climax. Welcome aboard.

### **Linn**

The 4 star rating is specific to the adventure/thriller genre. Coonts is the inheritor of the Tom Clancy crowd for making you feel like you are really there. He knows his aircraft carriers so thoroughly and describes living in one so well that you can practically feel the steel on your skin as his characters walk the hallways. You get a feel for the kind of camaraderie that is natural to people living in tight quarters, trusting their lives to the good work of their shipmates and dealing with intense workloads and billion dollar responsibilities. As usual with this genre, the characters are thin and their motivations are thin, which makes both the heroes and the villains less compelling.

### **Walianirv**

Coonts got a great start with "Flight of the Intruder" thanks to Ronald Reagan who happened to be reading the book and a reporter saw it on his desk. As a Naval Aviator myself I must admit it was a great read. However his subsequent books have not been as entertaining. Final Flight has a lot of aviation description that the average reader might not be familiar with ie. JBD shows up frequently but most don't remember that it stands for Jet Blast Deflector. In general the character development is weak as well as the subject matter. A fun read but I believe Coonts can do better.

### **Sarin**

A throwback to his days as a naval aviator, this sequel to his first novel, "Flight of the Intruder" is a must read for the fan of Jake Grafton. Written almost 20 years ago, it was final time to catch up to a copy and read it, which I did and found it very worthwhile and pleasurable experience. Like other early novel of Coonts, forget the romantic involvement, it is truly limited, but the reader learned more about the inner thoughts and the mind of the central character for his subsequent works of fiction. Very good character development and worth the reader's time to find the book and sit down for a truly great "flight".

### **Eigeni**

This novel begins with the pilots of two F14D Tomcats, on separate catapults, shoving the throttles of their engines to full military at the same time.

The bow catapult officer returned the salute of the fighter pilot on Catapult One.

The waist catapult officer looked across the nose of the fighter on Catapult at the signal light on the island superstructure. He, too, checked to ensure the deck was clear.

The light on the island changed from yellow to green.

Simultaneously, both launching officers pushed the fire buttons on their catapults.

Three seconds later, both fighters were catapulted into the air.

The plane off the bow catapult was piloted by Captain Jake Grafton. His Radar Intercept Officer (RIO) was Lieutenant Toad Tarkington, who sat behind him.

"You OK back there?" Grafton asked him.

Tarkington replied, "Sure, CAG, no sweat."

They had only flown together three times before today.

The carrier from which the fighters had just been launched was the USS United States, America's newest Nimitz-class ship.

Russian planes were aloft today over the North Atlantic, searching for the United States. They had been searching for her for three days, over millions of square miles of ocean, and had been unable to find her.

Unfortunately, many, many pages follow of extended descriptions of meaningless events and activities that require skimming to find content.

Then, El Hakim, the Ruler, took a deep breath, and then spoke.

"There are enormous risks involved, Colonel Qazi. The Americans declared war at the end of the last century when one of their warships was merely suspected of being lost due to hostile action. You have never failed us, Qazi. But you have never attempted so much. Tell me about the ship." And Qazi did.

He described all the details about the USS United States. "Her deck is crammed with aircraft. To launch them cannot be done quickly, if at all, when the ship is at anchor. That is when she is most vulnerable."

Then, many more pages of extended descriptions, etc. follow.

Then, there are some interesting stories, in Italy, near the middle of the novel. Islamic Terrorists, allied with the Mafia, kidnap, and or talk to people from the carrier and interrogate them to find out information they still need for the attack on the carrier.

Unfortunately, this is again followed by many more pages of meaningless descriptions, some of which are ridiculous. There are also some romantic moments that readers will enjoy.

Then, there are more meaningless descriptions, etc. regarding terrorist regarding preparations by the terrorists for their attack on the carrier.

There is also another interesting note. The subject of Toad's romantic interest is working for the CIA.

The last story in this novel, is the terrorists DO take over the carrier. Readers will have to read the rest of the novel to find out what this story is about.

Very unfortunately, this entire novel contains too many detrimental factors. First, there are way too many "F" words used by everyone, from Admirals down to enlisted personnel, that are out of place. There is also too much use of first and last names, and titles.

All of these factors make FINAL FLIGHT barely worth reading.

### **Acebiolane**

Enjoyable novel from the beginning to the end! Enjoyed the way the author keep thing running. The only part I dislike is the lost of very likable person that was interested in only doing what was right!

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