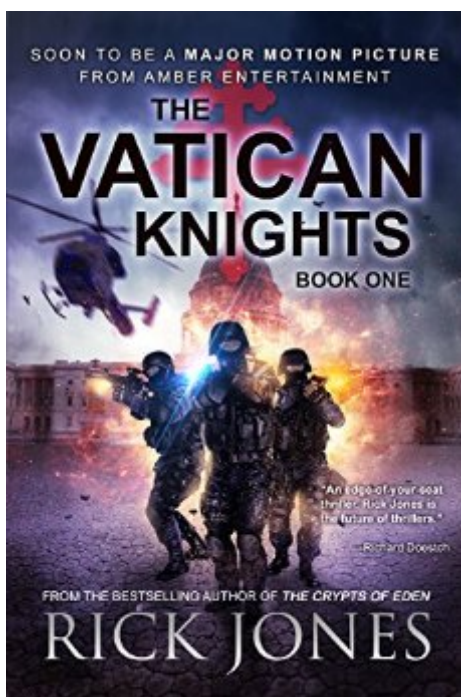


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The Vatican Knights (The Vatican Knights Series Book 1)



Synopsis

While on a visit to the United States, Pope Pius XIII is kidnapped by a terrorist cell calling itself the Soldiers of Islam. If the United States and its allies do not meet their demands, they will execute the pope. So when FBI Specialist Shari Cohen is called to duty to track down the terrorist cell responsible, she learns that she is not alone. Deep behind the Vatican walls a secret order dispatches a clandestine op group of elite commandos known as the Vatican Knights. Their mission: bring the pope back alive. As Cohen and the Knights work in tandem they uncover a White House conspiracy involving high-ranking members on Capitol Hill. When she begins to get too close to the truth about the pope's kidnapping, she becomes the target of indigenous forces trying to keep the conspiracy safe. However, in order to get to her they must go through the Vatican Knights.

Book Information

File Size: 1596 KB

Print Length: 316 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: EmpirePRESS; 3 edition (May 25, 2016)

Publication Date: May 25, 2016

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B01G7FEF20

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #3,287 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #29 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers > Military #38 inÂ Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Thrillers & Suspense > Crime > Kidnapping #48 inÂ Books > Literature & Fiction > Action & Adventure > War & Military

Customer Reviews

When the Pope is kidnapped on a U.S. visit, FBI negotiator Shari Cohen is put in charge of the investigation. It seems obvious that Arab terrorists are involved--two of their bodies are found on the site of the kidnapping--but where could they have taken the Pope and what are their intentions. With

precious little to go on, Shari is under pressure from the President himself and the whole world teeters toward a destructive war between religions. The Vatican does not take the kidnapping of its Pope sitting down. It sends its elite squad, The Vatican Knights, into action. The Knights are the best of the best, assassins, soldiers, code-breakers, men who live by the motto of "Loyalty above all else, except Honor." Somehow, the Knights, led by former US assassin Kimball Hayden, must persuade Shari to trust them, to share her information with them, to allow them to take the lead in the rescue of the Pope. Although the kidnappers have hidden their identities well, they are not actually Arab terrorists. Instead, they are using the pretense of being Arab terrorists to push the world into a war that would destroy the Arabic people. The tentacles of this conspiracy reach high into the US Government--and into the governments and oil ministries of powerful nations around the world. When Shari determines that there is information on an Israeli CD-ROM that might be related to the plot, she becomes a danger to the conspiracy--and is targeted for death. Meanwhile, with every ticking hour, the Pope's own death becomes more inevitable. Author Richard L. Jones writes a fast-paced thriller.

Richard L. Jones may be a first-time writer but his experience in having a degree in English coupled with his career in law enforcement (more particularly with Homeland Security) serves him well in this spellbinding journey through the possibilities of terrorism from clandestine sources. Yes, there are areas in this first novel where more polish is needed, but there are few first novelists who escape those pitfalls: it usually takes an audience response to uncover what perhaps an editor missed. THE VATICAN KNIGHTS is a tightly woven, non-linear, multi-location, varied viewpoints version of a tale of intrigue, and Jones wraps these sundry aspects of his story that takes place in a few days in September in such a way that it feels like reading current events, so well described and informed is he on the logistics of the background of his story. There are various groups - the Soldiers of Islam, the Omega Team or Force Elite, and the Vatican Knights - each sponsored by different factions surrounding the successful plot to kidnap the Pope for the purpose of starting an illegal war against the Arab nations in which the United States, Russia, Israel, and Venezuela can benefit from the power that oil renders. But it is not only a plot in which the White House is threatened by the kidnapping of the Pope (leader of the Christian world) on US soil, but the stance of the Islamic nations and the Israeli commandos and the demands placed on his release, and the involvement of the Vatican in the protection of the Pope.

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