

**CODE
RED**

Novels by Vince Flynn

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Kill Shot

American Assassin

Pursuit of Honor

Extreme Measures

Protect and Defend

Act of Treason

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And by Kyle Mills

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Enemy at the Gates

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Enemy of the State

Order to Kill

The Survivor

**VINCE
FLYNN**

**CODE
RED**

**A MITCH RAPP NOVEL
BY KYLE MILLS**



**SIMON &
SCHUSTER**

London · New York · Sydney · Toronto · New Delhi

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First published in Australia in 2023 by
Simon & Schuster (Australia) Pty Limited
Suite 19A, Level 1, Building C, 450 Miller Street, Cammeray, NSW 2062
First published in USA in 2023 by Emily Bestler Books/Atria Books,
an imprint of Simon & Schuster, Inc.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Sydney New York London Toronto New Delhi
Visit our website at www.simonandschuster.com.au

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A catalogue record for this
book is available from the
National Library of Australia

ISBN: 9781760857684

Cover image: Tobias Slinning Urke/Unsplash, Michail Dementiev/Unsplash,
guruXOX/Adobe Stock

Cover design: Luke Causby/Blue Cork

Printed and bound in Australia by Griffin Press



The paper this book is printed on is certified against the Forest Stewardship Council® Standards. Griffin Press holds chain of custody certification SCS-COC-001185. FSC® promotes environmentally responsible, socially beneficial and economically viable management of the world's forests.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As I bring the Mitch Rapp era of my career to a close, I find myself thinking back on all the people who made it possible. My agent, Simon Lipskar, for first pondering the possibility. Sloan Harris and Emily Bestler for their confidence, support, and unwavering professionalism. David Brown and his team for their inexhaustible energy and creativity. Lara Jones for keeping all the moving parts working in harmony. Ryan Steck for his unparalleled knowledge of the Rappverse and for giving me the benefit of the doubt. Rod Gregg for patiently explaining the complexity of firearms and keeping me out of the sights of the aficionados. Elaine Mills for all her critiques and encouragement. And, finally, my wife, Kim. The woman who puts up with me, talks me down, and gives it all purpose.

Most of all, though, I want to thank Vince's fans. I was overwhelmed by your enthusiasm for this project, the speed with which you welcomed me into the fold, and your passion for the character and the world he inhabits. Taking over for one of the leading lights in the genre was terrifying, and it was the people out there rooting for me that kept me going.

My undying gratitude to you all. It's been an amazing decade, and there's a lot more to come.

PROLOGUE

SALERNO
ITALY

THE mist that had blurred the sunset was becoming more oppressive as the night wore on. Visibility was still passable thanks to the powerful lights of Salerno's commercial dock, but Absaar Mousa wondered if that would last.

Only if Allah willed it.

He wiped the condensation from his binoculars and once again glanced behind him. The first few trees glowed green, but beyond that the darkness was impenetrable. The steep slope had been difficult to descend even in daylight and now the journey would be too treacherous for even the drug addicts and graffiti artists who normally haunted this section of ancient wall. Still, it would be unwise to rely too heavily on that assumption.

He put the binoculars back to his eyes and swept them slowly across his field of view. The verdant mountains and artistically lit castle ruin. The modern city and dark sea beyond. Finally, he focused on what had brought him there: the city's port.

Mousa had become something of an expert on intricate operations over the past year, but the scale and complexity of this one still astounded him. He examined a docked transport ship as a series of cranes plucked brightly colored containers from its deck. From this distance, the impression was that of a swarm of highly specialized insects carrying away the toys of some unseen child.

This, as much as anything, encapsulated Western society. The constant flow of goods that fed their materialistic frenzy. The meaningless possessions that they used to fill the place that Allah—and only Allah—had the right to occupy.

He backed a few paces into the trees, searching for relief from the intensifying rain. After finding a bit of protection, he focused on a garish yellow container stacked on a dock to the east. The smugglers he'd contracted had taken great care to make sure that it was in no way remarkable, and they had done their job flawlessly. Even knowing what he did, it seemed so insignificant. So unworthy of the effort that had been expended to get it there.

Ostensibly, it was full of parts used in the repair of farm equipment. Less known was the fact that hidden inside them were fifteen metric tons of captagon, a narcotic rarely seen in Europe, but extraordinarily popular in the Middle East. He himself had taken it while fighting for the Islamic State in Syria and had later become involved in its manufacture and distribution. The small white pills stamped with two crescents had served a surprisingly pivotal role in the fight to spread God's law. They provided billions in hard currency to finance jihad and suppressed fear and fatigue in the men carrying it out.

The drug in that container, though, was nothing like the substance he'd handled during his days as a warrior. It was a unique formulation powerful enough to change the tide of the war against the West. To tip the scale back in the direction of God's army.

Under the direction of unseen benefactors, Mousa had spent

the last twenty months developing a European distribution network made up exclusively of Believers. It hadn't been difficult to find disaffected immigrants unable to integrate into the societies they found themselves surrounded by. Young men thirsting for someone to blame for their misery. A cause to give their lives meaning. Purpose. All things that Mousa had become an expert at providing. He'd learned from the imams of his youth to speak with unwavering certainty about discrimination and corruption. Imperialism and heresy. To describe in the most lurid and visceral detail the eventual seduction of these men's daughters and wives by the easy pleasures of the West. And if those lofty ideas failed, Mousa simply offered the money that his shadowy masters seemed to have in unlimited supply.

The army that Mousa had built was now complete. European government officials had been bribed, clandestine distribution centers had been set up, weapons had been secured, and devoted personnel had been put in place.

Finally, after so many failures, the war had begun anew. But on a very different battlefield. It was time to admit that the followers of Islam would never be a match for the West's military. His movement would never be victorious trying to penetrate the armor of its enemy directly. No, they had to be hit where they were weak. In the soft flank that had been ignored by his brothers as they became more interested in glory and vengeance than victory.

The phone in his pocket began to vibrate, but he didn't bother to read the text. He knew what it would say. His man had reached the port's entry.

Mousa adjusted his gaze to the trucks passing through the initial security checkpoint, seeking out a bright blue one hauling a white container. He felt his stomach clench as it pulled up to the guardhouse and the driver—a particularly faithful young man named Ja'far Saeed—handed his identification through the window. Not that the act was

visible with the intervening glare and rain, but Mousa had become so familiar with the dock's rhythms that it was hard to differentiate between what he actually saw and what was playing out in his mind's eye.

Mousa let out a relieved breath when the truck cleared security and started toward the area where it would be relieved of its empty container. Satisfied it was safe, he redirected his attention to a crane moving along a stack of containers that included one originating in the Syrian port of Tartus. The one that he'd spent almost two years of his life preparing for.

Everything progressed as he'd come to expect during the endless hours spent surveilling the port. Over that time, its repetitive efficiency had become strangely soothing. Today, that meditative spell had been broken by a trickle of adrenaline.

With its chassis unloaded, the truck set out toward the crane that had closed its grip around the container in question. Mousa watched as it was lowered to the ground and retrieved by a loader. His man stopped in the designated area and the lumbering machine placed the metal crate on his chassis.

The rest should have been little more than formality. A brief mechanical inspection followed by a check of his driver's paperwork. Instead, two service cars parked nearby suddenly accelerated and blocked the truck front and back. Hidden spotlights sprang to life, casting a piercing glare over a series of port workers, who were revealed to be armed with everything from handguns to assault rifles.

Mousa barely managed to keep from vomiting. It wasn't just the last two years. In reality, he had labored his entire life for this moment. The madrassas of his youth. Deadly battles fought across the Middle East. His infiltration into Europe and recruitment into the organization he now directed.

The leak that led to this disaster hadn't come from his team. Of

this he was certain. He'd attended to every detail. He'd chosen only the most fanatical and obedient men. He'd compartmentalized information in a way that provided no one person with enough to create a failure on this scale.

The only plausible explanation was that he'd been betrayed. One of the unseen men he worked for had been compromised by the European authorities. It had to be.

Mousa's initial shock transformed into a mix of rage and despair as he used his cell phone to send a brief text. While the army of the godless had undoubtedly won this battle, their victory would come with a price. The Italians were about to learn that they were no longer dealing with the old women who made up their mafia.

A new kind of drug demanded a new kind of criminal.

Ja'far Saeed squinted through the windshield, examining the vehicle blocking his path and the armed men who grew in number with every passing second. The spotlights, initially blinding, were made even more disorienting with the swirling light bars of police vehicles.

A trap.

He looked in his side mirror and saw men moving cautiously toward his door, staying close to the container he had been charged with hauling to safety. A ping sounded on the phone mounted to his dashboard and he read the message as someone began shouting Arabic instructions into a megaphone.

Roll down the window!

Put your hands through it so they can be seen!

He hadn't come here to be martyred. His job had been to get the container to its destination outside of Bergamo. He knew nothing more than that. Not why. Not what it contained. Not who would be waiting for him. He didn't need to know those things. Feeling God's presence and being of service to Him was enough.

But now the mission had failed, and his orders had changed. There

was only one thing left to do. One final act that would carry him to Allah's embrace.

Saeed put the truck in gear and rammed the vehicle in front of him. It rocked on its wheels and began skidding sideways, hopping awkwardly until its tires were torn from the rims. The pitch of shouted orders rose, but no one fired their weapons. They wanted him alive. They wanted to torture him. To force him to give up his brothers and turn his back on God.

Sparks began to fly from the back of the vehicle stuck to his grille, and then, suddenly, he was free of it. He moved through the gears, increasing his speed as the people on the dock tried to escape. He clipped one and managed to hit another head-on, pulling him beneath the truck's wheels and causing the suspension to jerk satisfyingly.

The gunfire finally started when he wrenched the wheel left and accelerated toward a fleeing man dressed as a dockworker. Holes appeared in his windshield, but he paid no attention. Something impacted the window next to him, embedding glass in the side of his face and blinding him in one eye. Despite this, there was no pain. Only hate and elation.

Saeed twisted the wheel again as his quarry cut right, but this time the trailer lost traction and the weight of the container began pulling it over. He threw his door open and leapt out, enthralled by what he knew would happen next. He'd been given authorization for one last act of vengeance against his people's oppressors, and now he'd use it.

His feet hit first, but the momentum was too much to overcome, and he found himself rolling uncontrollably across the dock. His position on the ground was enough to save his life when the bomb at the back of the truck's cab detonated, but not enough to keep his clothes from igniting. Again, there was no pain. Only the yellow firelight visible in his still-intact eye.

Saeed fought his way to his feet and saw the vague outline of a

human a few meters ahead. The bullets impacting him were barely noticeable as he charged forward and dove at the figure, holding on with what strength he had left as the flames enveloped them.

By that point, he could no longer see but, praise be to Allah, he was still capable of hearing his victim's screams.