

Rogue Warrior: Blood Lies (Rogue Warrior, 16)

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When the daughter of a retired Navy SEAL is kidnapped and held for ransom in Mexico, the Rogue Warrior and his band of Red Cell International warriors head south of the border to rescue her. Along the way, they encounter drug dealers and human traffickers, break into a cartel kingpin's mansion, and do battle with a hundred of the meanest banditos since Pancho Villa. And for good measure, Marcinko uncovers a secret Hezbollah camp funded by the Iranian government and sheltered by the drug lords. But the founder of SEAL Team 6 finds his toughest opponent may actually be...the woman he's come to rescue.

Rogue Warrior: Blood Lies is another no-holds-barred thrill-ride from Richard Marcinko, the creator of Seal Team Six.

This edition of the book is the deluxe, tall rack mass market paperback.

RICHARD MARCINKO is a living, breathing hero--he was honored with the silver star and four bronze stars for valor, along with two Navy Commendation medals. After serving in Vietnam, he started and commanded SEAL Team 6, the Navy's first Counter-terrorist command, and Red Cell, a high-level anti-terrorist unit whose exploits, fictionalized for security and legal reasons, have formed the basis of his novels. Besides an active speaking and consulting calendar, Marcinko keeps his hand in the field as the president of a private international security company. He lives in Warrenton, Virginia.

JIM DeFELICE is the author of many military based thriller novels and is a frequent collaborator with Stephen Coonts, Larry Bond, and Richard Marcinko, among other New York Times bestselling authors. He lives in New York.

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It's not hard to get mugged in Juarez, Mexico. Walk down the wrong street, flash some cash, act a little tipsy--before you know it, you've got a crowd lining up behind you, fighting over who has dibs.

Getting kidnapped is harder. First of all, it pays to be choosy. You don't want to be kidnapped by just anyone. Or let me say, you don't want to be kidnapped by the wrong anyone. The crime has to be seen as a business transaction, not one of passion. Passion will quickly get you killed, not just in Juarez but anywhere.

It also has to be the right kind of business transaction. You don't want it to be part of a merger and acquisition. The latter is pretty common in Juarez, where drug cartels and their various factions are constantly jostling for position. If your kidnapers grab you as part of a hostile takeover, your chances of emerging with significant limbs intact is small.

You want to be kidnapped by someone who doesn't see you as competition, who expects a good ransom, and who knows that damaged goods are bad for business. He should be fairly adept at it, too--the last thing you want is a nervous finger on the 1911 Model knockoff when it's pushed against your ribs. (Most kidnapers in general are male, and this is especially true in Mexico. I'm not sure why they gravitate toward inexpensive versions of the

venerable Colt automatic; maybe they get a bulk discount. Or maybe they missed out on our ATF royally fucked-up scam-excuse me, sting operation-"designed" to trace U.S. illegal gun sales throughout the Southwest, Midwest, and dead West. It was your typical cocked-up brain-dead government operation, helped along by some greedy cock breaths on the U.S. side of the border.)

If you want to be grabbed by higher-end thugs, you have to position yourself just right. Attractive and available alone won't cut it. Your cover story has to fall close to the profile of people they like to snatch. You also have to present yourself as easy, but not such a patsy that lesser villains try to pick you off the street.

Becoming functional bait isn't just a difficult business, it's an art form.

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My interest in kidnapping was sincere and honorable. I wanted to be grabbed as part of a plan to free a legitimate kidnap victim, the twenty-two-year-old, tactfully blond and delicately curvaceous daughter of a fellow SEAL.

There were ulterior motives as well, the most important of which had to do with Hezbollah¹ and a reported terror camp in the border area. But that part of the story is best saved for a moment when things are a little calmer. Because at the moment this book begins, I'm east of Juarez being chased by a pair of pickup trucks filled with gun-toting banditos. My foot is to the floor and the big Cadillac is fishtailing across a sandy Mexican road parallel to the border.

The car responded by pulling to the left, the torque steer nearly jerking her out of my hands. Careful not to overcorrect, I muscled the vehicle onto the pavement, holding the nose steady as the speedometer stretched toward triple digits.

I'm not ordinarily a Cadillac guy; if I were going to choose a car from Government Motors at all it would probably be more in the Chevy line. But this Caddy had a lot going for it-most especially the ceramic plate inserts throughout the chassis and body designed to withstand anything short of a 120 mm armor-piercing shell. The glass-front, back, and sides-had been replaced with thick bulletproof material, all of which added a shitpot of extra weight to this lead sled. In exchange, the armor could ward off slugs from a .300 Win mag.

Unfortunately, the bastards behind me opened fire with a pair of fifties-as in 50 mm machine guns. The bullets, heavier and designed to act like frickin' can openers, peppered the back of the car. A dozen shattered the window, embedding themselves in the ceramic plates in the driver's seat behind me.

I ducked as low as I could, trying to hide behind what was left of the seat as bullets splattered through the interior of the car, smashing the burlled walnut interior accents and adding random vents to the automatic climate control. The front windshield spiderwebbed with bullet holes, and the radio, which had been playing an old Willie Nelson tune about cowboys, gave up the ghost.

That was pretty much the last straw. I veered right, then reached for the flasher button.

The button was preset to send a radio signal to my trail team; roughly translated, the signal meant "Get your fucking butts over here and rescue my ass." Only not as polite.

In theory, I didn't need the signal: we had a small UAV overhead watching, sending signals to a temporary command post and the trail team. But theory and reality had already separated: in theory the gang I was enticing as a kidnap victim didn't fire at its victims. In reality, the bastards behind me were about to fry me alive.

I swung left and right, onto the shoulders, then back to the highway. As I came up over a rise, I spotted a tractor-trailer headed in my direction and moving at a good clip. I waited until he had pulled almost even, then swerved my car, sliding off the road behind him but managing to regain the pavement in the opposite direction of my pursuers.²

Somewhere between the bullets and the hard turn, two of my four tires blew out. That didn't slow me down too much, since they were run-flats (or more accurately "run while shot to shit" flats), but I strongly suspect there was a connection between the blowouts and the stench of burning rubber that began filling the cabin.

At least I didn't have to worry about ventilation. I kept my foot firmly on the floor, heading in the direction of the pickup truck with the first half of my trail team, Shotgun and Mongoose, aka Paul "Shotgun" Fox and Thomas "Mongoose" Yamy. Somewhere to the east, behind me now, was another vehicle with two more of my shooters, Trace Dahlgren and Tommy "Tex" Reeves. Both halves were undoubtedly heading at high speed to my rescue. I thought eventually they were going to converge and help get me the hell out of this mess.³

Unfortunately, it didn't look like I was going to reach eventually. As I approached the back of the tractor-trailer, the tailgate rolled up, revealing another machine gun.

It began peppering the pavement in front of my car with bullets. I pulled the wheel hard right, taking the car off-road. The Caddy's front end had been carefully reinforced, but even a Bradley Fighting Vehicle would have buckled under the strain. What was left of the windshield disintegrated; steam started shooting from the hood area. I lost the rest of the tires and struggled to keep the car moving, wrestling with it as it wove and bucked in a drunken, smoky swirl.

Flames flicked from the floor. I had two options:

- a) get the hell out of the car or
- b) start a second career as a burn-center test dummy.

I chose a).

The car, against all common sense and probably the laws of physics and motion, was still moving at a very good pace; jumping would have been even more suicidal than staying. We careened back toward the road, then swirled sideways and slid down a washboard gully flanking the macadam. Sparks flew as the rims and chassis hit the asphalt, rebounded across the highway, then spun onto the soft desert sand and came to a stop. I wish I could have said the same for my head, which was turning revolutions so fast it felt like it was trying to unscrew itself. By the time I managed to get my seat belt undone and the door open, I was engulfed in a thick, inky fog of smoke and fire. I coughed like a three-pack-a-day smoker, falling to my knees on the ground. I started crawling toward daylight. The tractor-trailer stopped catty-corner across the road about seventy-five yards ahead. The machine-gun fire had stopped. For a moment I thought the smoke might give me enough cover so I could hide in the desert until my people arrived; surely they'd be along any second now.

Then something flew out of the back of the trailer. It looked like a fastball thrown by Nolan Ryan during his heyday, but it was even more explosive—a 40 mm grenade.

It sailed well off the mark, a good seventy yards or more over my head: right into one of the kidnapers' pickup trucks. The driver tried veering at the last moment, but all he succeeded in doing was tipping the vehicle as the grenade hit. It toppled over impressively. I scrambled to my feet and began running to the south, trying to get behind as much of

the drifting cloud of haze and smoke as I could. A second grenade flashed overhead, exploding a little closer than the other.

Murphy,4 or his close cousin, Dumb Luck, smiled on me at that moment, sending a tourist bus down the highway. The bus driver, driving like the attentive, cautious man most are, was doing close to ninety and didn't realize the truck wasn't going to get out of the way until he was too close to stop. He hit the horn, slammed on the brakes, and then power-steered off the road, trying to swerve around it. He nearly made it ... until the rear quarter panel of the bus came back and clipped the front fender of the truck.

The bus tumbled and the trailer slammed sideways just as the grenadier fired another round. I jumped up and ran, heading toward a wide ditch a hundred or so yards off the road. Sliding in, I took as long a breath as I dared, then started down it to the east, trying to put as much distance between me and the artillery as possible.

Unfortunately, the plan to have myself kidnapped had left me without a personal weapon; even businesslike kidnappers tend to think the worst when they spot a gun. There was a small radio device in my belt transmitting my location, and I also had a special phone imbedded in the heel of my boot.5 But aside from my fists and my...

Other Books

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