

Raven's Resurrection: A Cybertech Thriller

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ISBN: 978-0-9978052-8-4

Dedication

I dedicate this novel to Jerry Pournelle (1933-2017), the novelist, scientist, technology pundit, columnist, and blogger who mentored me and endorsed my novels.

Jerry was one of the giants of science-fiction literature with an emphasis on both the science and the literature. He had a column in *Byte Magazine* for years and was a key contributor to the Star Wars program that helped end the Cold War.

The masthead for Jerry's blog included these:

"Being intelligent is not a felony. But most societies evaluate it as at least a misdemeanor." - **Robert A. Heinlein**

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." - **George Santayana** [Worth pondering at a time when the radical left is frantic to erase American history, culture, and monuments.]

"Freedom is not free. Free men are not equal. Equal men are not free."

I dedicate my novel to "**We the People**," to all Americans (regardless of gender, ethnicity, or political party) who upset the political elites, media hacks, and Washington insiders to foil a rigged election and elect an outsider to the highest office in the land.

America is coming back. It is not over of course. Good versus evil is forever.

Communists and others from the radical left (see <http://revcom.us>) now target police, the Thin Blue Line that protects us. They urge violent revolution in our streets. "Kill the Pigs" from the Bill Ayers 1960s is back. "Fake News" is now a meme, and propaganda is unrelenting.

Finally, I dedicate this novel to my wife Pat. Without her patience and bright spirit, this book would not exist. She is a saint.

Acknowledgements

Ernest Hemingway said, "There is no such thing as writing, only rewriting." He also said, "You never finish a book, you just let it go." He was right.

I could not write at the level I do without my team of critical readers, content experts, and editors who take the time to scan my drafts with eagle eyes, amazing insight, and brutally honest criticism. Each time they touch my words, my novels get better. Kay Jewett deserves special credit.

It is uplifting to get validation. One of my critical readers is an expert on Western mythology and history, which he taught for years. Part of this novel that prompted a lot of discussion was the Epilogue, where I expanded the scope to pay homage to 24/7 diversionary ranting in the fake news media about "the Russians," enemies with some common interests. Here is what he said:

"The bridge exchange in the fog was high art, as was your comment about Russians losing children at Beslan being far worse for them than our 9/11 for our culture, which opens a whole new direction for your next book."

Chuck Moody

My novels bring me into contact with exceptional people who have sacrificed to keep America safe from our enemies both foreign and domestic. You know who you are. I honor your service and your personal stories inspire me.

*Finally, you, my readers, are most important of all. **Thank you for your support.***

ACRONYM INDEX

ADS-B: Automatic Dependent Surveillance – Broadcast	ISIS: Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant: <i>Daesh</i>
APC: Armored Personnel Carrier	JCS: Joint Chiefs of Staff
ATC: Air Traffic Control	KGB: Soviet spy and state-security machine
CBSA: Canada Border Services Agency	MI5: Counter Intelligence (British FBI)
CIA: Central Intelligence Agency	MI6: Secret Intelligence Service (British CIA)
COMs: Communications	NRO: National Reconnaissance Office
COMSEC: Communications Security	NSA: National Security Agency
Covfefe: It literally means covfefe	NSC: National Security Council
CSR: Counter Surveillance Route	NVG: Night Vision Goggles
DOD: Department of Defense	NWO: New World Order
DOJ: Department of Justice	OP: Operation, a mission, usually covert
ECM: Electronic Counter Measures	PSD: Personal Security Detail
EMP: Electro Magnetic Pulse	Quds: Special Forces unit of Iran's Revolutionary Guards
ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival	ROE: Rules of Engagement
EU: European Union (NWO, writ small)	SAM: Surface to Air Missile
FAA: Federal Aviation Administration	SITREP: Situation Report
FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation	SOCOM: Special Operations Command
FEMA: Federal Emergency Management Agency	TANGO: A target
FSB: Replaced the KGB	TFR: Temporary Flight Restriction
GPS: Global Positioning System	TSG: Transnational Services Group
HE: High Explosive	UN: United Nations
HQ: Headquarters	UNCTAD: UN Conference of Trade and Development
HVT: High Value Target	WMD: Weapon of Mass Destruction
IED: Improvised Explosive Device	

"We have to start with the premise that the goal is to defeat the enemy."

Jim Woolsey, former CIA Director

"People sleep peaceably in their beds at night only because rough men stand ready to do violence on their behalf."

George Orwell

"The object of war is not to die for your country but to make the other bastard die for his."

George S. Patton

"So much of left-wing thought is a kind of playing with fire by people who don't even know that fire is hot."

George Orwell

"Political Correctness Is Fascism Pretending To Be Manners."

George Carlin

"In 1940, we knew who we were, we knew who the enemy was, and we knew the dangers and the issues.... It is different today. We don't know who we are, we don't know the issues, and we still do not understand the nature of the enemy."

Bernard Lewis, Historian

Chapter One -- It's a New Game

Private House, South of Monterey, California, Late Afternoon

Josie seemed pensive. The woman was sensitive, empathetic, and usually eager to share her visions and perceptions with him. She was a bright spirit, chasing rainbows and butterflies in strange dimensions.

Not today.

It was Josie's unique perceptions that made her so valuable. She was a remote viewer, a paranormal. She sat brushing her long brown hair, silhouetted against the low sun, watching a gentle wind rustle the branches outside through the sliding patio door on the raised deck.

She had the door open and was listening to the birds. She'd put feeders out to attract them.

Raven watched her silently. Not wanting to interrupt. His world was so much darker than hers.

"You're staring at me," I said.

I had not turned my head. I didn't need to.

Raven chuckled, "Bet your ass. You brighten the entire room. You look good, Babe. Just watching the sunlight on your hair. It turns gold when you stroke it and flip it up."

He made me smile. He'd always said the safe house was too dark with its solid walls, massive rock fireplace, small windows, and the dense forest that surrounded it.

I loved forests. I drew comfort and serenity from them. It was probably my Celtic heritage. I didn't mind a bit of visual gloom. The sense of life all around me was calming.

Except for the kill teams, of course.

Raven saw the deep dark as a danger zone. Even with the sensors and security cameras, he wanted to personally see what was coming at him. He'd said, "*The problem with walls and doors is that you can't see what's on the other side.*"

It didn't matter. Our safe house was compromised. We would be leaving soon.

I said, "Are you going to tell me what's going on?"

"What's to tell? Out there in the world, President Blager is alive, recovering, doing well, and America is rejoicing. Here, in our small corner, we're on stand-down and you're safe."

"They found us here." I left the *again* unsaid. We both remembered Durham.

"Uh-Huh. They did. Incidentally."

"Incidentally? What does that mean?"

He gave a short laugh. "Who knows? It's just what Goldfarb said. He's on the National Security Council now. Apparently they talk that way."

I turned and looked at him. "How is he?"

"Recovering. They kept us off the grid, thank God, but some media person noticed Goldfarb's name on logs for visiting the President in the hospital. He is staying out of Washington until things cool off."

"What things?"

"High level policy issues at the National Security Council level. President Blager wanted to give him a voting seat on NSC, but that would have to be announced. Instead, Goldfarb is to be an Ad-hoc member, like Bannon under Trump was after he was 'removed.' Powerful people oppose that."

"Can you put that in plain English?"

"Goldfarb came to us from the land of broken toys at CIA. He is a relic of the Cold War, a patriot. He has been our main support. Without him, neither of us would still be alive."

"I know."

"He's being promoted. The President wants him present at NSC. He can sit in whenever he wants as a guest. The bad news is that Goldfarb now leaves footprints. He casts a shadow, one that is about to get bigger and more noticeable. He's not happy about that."

"He exposed us, Raven."

"Yes. It wasn't poor tradecraft, it was something more subtle. There is a lot of 'shit happens' in our world. He's working to get us better protection."

"Where is he?"

"Not sure. Don't you know?"

"I know you met with him...."

Raven took a deep breath and let it out slowly. "Yeah."

"Are you going to tell me what he wants?"

"You don't know?"

"Something is wrong. I've done several remote viewings, but I can't tell. We seem to be at a nexus."

"I don't see any big threats on the horizon. From a great distance, the world seems to be healing. The Abyss is gone as if it never existed. The President is good. His lifeline is strong into the future. He's loved and respected."

"Except by our enemies," Raven said. "But...."

"I can't see the close-up details. When I try to see our future – yours and mine – the trail gets lost in a probability cloud. It's fuzzy. Not a fog exactly, but there is no clarity. Things are shifting and changing. The future is uncertain, like it's trying to figure out what it wants to be."

"That's about what Goldfarb said too. Our mission is being redefined. There will be new rules. They are trying to sort it out...."

"Is this about the Blager Codicil?"

"That's the big picture. It's stated policy. America is putting it into treaties."

"Going back to the tactics of General Blackjack Pershing? Extreme punishment for Islamic terrorism?"

"Not extreme. **Appropriate** would be a better word, I think. More effective."

"You need to explain that."

"Trump wanted to destroy ISIS and he pretty much did."

"Yes."

"Blager wants more. He plans to totally eradicate radical Islam. The Arab Spring rejuvenated the ancient horrors. *Hijrah*. Migration *jihad*. Blager wants to put that Genie back in the bottle and hammer the cork down before they get Nukes and other WMDs."

"By killing more Islamic terrorists." Josie shuddered. "You do know that there are millions of them? Millions! Before we met, I saved you in Iran. I had to give up those missions. It was killing me."

Raven nodded. "Reality sucks. Intelligence services estimate that 15-25% of Muslims are *jihadists*, perhaps 180 to 300 million people. The Blager Codicil is an effort to trim the percentage **without** having to kill them all.

"In any case, wars and battlefields are a job for our military. We're being tasked with key small-group strategic threats, defending the homeland. That's what we've been doing. This will just formalize it."

"What about me? They came for **me**."

"They did. Because you are a national asset. Goldfarb wants to shift us from defense to offense. He wants a narrow, focused, preemptive elimination of top-level strategic threats."

"It sounds like he is talking about playing God. Do you want any part of that?"

"I don't and he's not."

"What then?"

"He's talking about identifying and removing a few specific major cancer cells. America has done that before in wartime. We are talking about small numbers."

"How many?"

"Single digits. This is about killing Grendel, not slaughtering an endless wave of zombie armies. That's the job of our military, God bless them."

"It's still killing *jihadists* without due process...."

"Spies, saboteurs, and illegal enemy combatants have never had Geneva Convention protection, Josie. Not ever. The norms of conventional warfare or law enforcement simply don't apply."

I shook my head. "You are talking crazy."

"Islam is an ideology of conquest. The death penalty doesn't work against *jihadists* who want to kill and die for Allah. Death is not a deterrent for Islamic *jihad*. Instead, it's an incentive, an added reward.

"All Pershing did was to tailor punishment to accommodate the customs and culture of Islam in the treatment of captured terrorists. History shows that it worked for him."

"That's disputed."

"What isn't? Muslims have been killing each other for a thousand years over different interpretations of the Quran. The vast majority of them disagree with radical *jihad*, but if they dare speak out they become apostates who can be killed.

"The word Islam means, 'Those who submit.' If you don't submit, the good Muslims can murder you."

"Murder," I said. "Goldfarb wants you to kill someone, doesn't he?"

"Not yet."

"There are monsters stalking me. Please tell it to me straight. When my senses come into focus, I'll know."

"I don't want to scare you. 'Fear is the mind killer.' You know that."

"Talk to me."

"Must we? You know the threats. You know the horrors. You know my skills. You know what I do. I won't lie to you. If you insist, I'll tell you what he said, but...."

"I'm waiting."

"They are still sorting things out. There will be new rules, new policy. He doesn't know what exactly will result, but he does know what President Blager wants us to do. I think we can live with it."

"I'm listening...."

"We have support. President Blager wants to keep you alive. He said that's job number one."

I blinked. "**What?**"

"You saved the President's life. So did Goldfarb. He's grateful."

"There have been persistent efforts to kill you and one to assassinate him. He sees them as clear and present dangers to the United States, as top-level threats. Objective one is ensuring that it stops. He wants to get those involved in these operations and eliminate them. Objective two is to focus primarily on the human components of Objective number one that have touched American soil."

"There is a list of names?"

"There will be, yes. It will be short. There are constraints. Details. Rules. Limits."

"Which are?"

"I don't know yet. I expect there will be bright red lines to prevent Constitutional breaches, like killing American citizens and targeting political opponents."

"For example?"

"Goldfarb was explicit that neither he nor President Blager will tolerate a Police State. America got dangerously close to it under Obama, Susan Rice, and the rest of that gang. Blager won't."

"Do you have a list of names?" I asked again.

"I do not."

"What do you have?"

"He did ask me about a name, but it wasn't a targeting. We can discuss it if things go that way."

"No," I said. "That's bullshit and you know it."

Raven frowned.

"We're a team."

"Goldfarb **knows** that. This person might be behind the attacks on you. I would take that personally."

"I thought it might be something like that. Goldfarb sucks you in, doesn't he? You told him you were going to quit, but he talked you into getting me out of the hospital instead."

"He saved your life, Josie. He wanted to save you. I'd given up hope. I wanted to avenge you."

"You got me out. **You** saved me. I still want the name."

He frowned and shook his head. "Bad idea. Very bad idea."

"Is this person a threat or not?"

"Goldfarb asked me the same question. He could be. At present, he's just a person of interest that the FBI has flagged."

"We need to find out. This is what I do."

"Why bother? The FBI is all over it."

"So why not just do it? We'd need to research this thoroughly **ourselves** before we agree to anything. We'd need to get it right. Not just for operational reasons, for morality. For my sanity."

Raven sighed deeply. "Why don't we just let the FBI do its job? Their record is less than stellar when it comes to traitors, moles, and *jihadists*. They could use a win. They can put him on trial or something."

"Good for them. Then maybe you and I could still do an interesting and peaceful assignment together without leaving a trail of bodies. The working vacation we were promised."

Raven thought for a long moment. National Security was a harsh mistress. He started to speak, thought better of it, shook his head, and said, "You know that's not our call."

I nodded, but didn't speak, setting the silence lengthen.

Finally Raven said, "Marco Ricci."

"He was on our list to investigate. The *jihadist* you almost fed to the pigs mentioned him."

"Kamal. Yes, he did. It seems the FBI and others have noticed."