



Warning Order

Joshua Hood

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In the second book of the explosive Search and Destroy thriller series, Mason Kane—a special ops hero with a questionable past, joins forces with the CIA to neutralize a radical off shoot of ISIS and unravel a conspiracy emanating from the White House's inner sanctum.

After almost losing his life, foiling a terror plot that threatened to draw the United States into another war—Mason Kane, disgraced American soldier, and special operations legend is still on the governments blacklist. To finally clear his name, Mason strikes a deal with the CIA—throwing himself back into the deadly world of black ops.

But when an asset tied to ISIS leads an old friend into a trap, Mason goes off the grid, and finds himself trapped in the middle of a plot involving an extremely violent and highly capable terror cell—with ties to the President's inner circle. With the help of Renee Hart, a DOD operative, and a team of elite special ops soldiers, Mason is determined to stop an attack aimed at crippling the US military before time runs out.

Set in the shadows of the war on terror, and inspired by experiences of 82nd Airborne Paratrooper Joshua Hood, *Warning Order* is an action packed thriller full of shocking twists and non-stop action that throws the reader into the murky world of clandestine operations.

Warning Order Details

Date : Published June 7th 2016 by Atria Books

ISBN : 9781501108303

Author : Joshua Hood

Format : Nook 352 pages

Genre : Thriller, Suspense, Fiction, Mystery Thriller

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From Reader Review Warning Order for online ebook

Douglas Barrow says

This is the continuing terrorist and crooked government official hunt by Mason Kane, Renee, Zeus and Mr. David. It's a real page turner just like Hood's previous novel Clear by Fire. Jihadist terrorist al QATAR wants to blow up the Mosul dam and flood the Americans from their airbase, and certain government officials want an all out war in the middle east regardless of who they kill, enemies and friendlies alike. It's up to Mason and Zeus to hunt down the terrorists, Renee to find the traitors and Mr. David (of the CIA) to put down the government officials.

Beth says

If your first encounter with Mason Kane and Renee Hart wasn't enough, and how could it be, you're probably jonesing to read "Warning Order." And with good cause. It's a fantastic follow-up to "Clear by Fire," and does not disappoint. So not to include any spoilers of the first S&D (Search & Destroy) novel by Hood, "Clear by Fire," I'll just say that the fallout from book one continues to rain down on Kane and his reputation while he teams up with the CIA to not only clear his name, but also to put a hurting on ISIS and uncover a conspiracy that has ties right back to that big white house on Pennsylvania Ave. That can't be good.

Yes, there is a lot of bloodshed ("a blood-splattered masterpiece," wrote one Twitter follower), but it goes so much deeper than just a bunch of killing. Hood gives us full disclosure of what goes on in a warrior's mind. From Renee turning fear into action, to Mason's humanity when he encounters locals who have been brutalized by the men Mason is hunting. The surrounding cast of characters are just as well-defined. You grow to love them and you grieve the ones who don't make it.

Hood definitely knows how to take you to the front line and lace you up in Mason (or Renee's) boots, but you don't need to have gone through basic training to enjoy the read.

Samuel says

YOU WERE WARNED.

"For its Tommy this, and Tommy that, and "Chuck him out, the brute!" But its "Saviour of his country" when the guns begin to shoot". - Rudyard Kipling.

"In war, there is no substitute to victory." - General Douglas MacArthur

"Warning Order". - Notice to be ready for any threats, known or unknown.

An author once said, that "The world's a safer place." An academic boasted, that the 21st century "heralded the end of civilization", with the victory of democracy over its rivals. How wrong they were. In this climate, thriller fiction of the spy and military variety is flourishing like never before. With inspiration for novelists appearing as fast as the 24 news cycle can report, the genre is in its strongest position to date, due to the

tsunami of topics available for authors to pick and choose. A popular topic is Islamic terrorism, a problem that has only gotten worse since the last decade. Presently at the forefront of this problem, is Daesh, an organization which has achieved a victory for the psychopaths who follow radical Islam. With a fiefdom estimated to be around the size of the UK, they've managed to gain power that groups like Al-Qaeda can only dream of. Daesh may not be able to end the world, but they don't have to. Who needs nuclear weapons when you can shake society apart by freezing it with fear? Their continued survival heralds a new era where one doesn't know which threat is coming to kill us or when that threat is coming. Which begs the question. Are we ready, in this day and age, to face familiar, yet dynamic threats which seek our destruction?

That's the topic of "Warning Order", the second book by soldier turned novelist Joshua Hood. A veteran of Iraq and Afghanistan, he served in the legendary 82nd airborne division and knows the territory which he writes about. Having only just started his writing career, with 2015's "Clear by Fire", he faces the common problem which confronts new novelists, that of dreaded second book. After the debut, expectations are running high and if the final product doesn't impress, the risk of being written off as a fluke is terrifyingly common.

So, how is "Warning Order"? Well, I'm delighted to say, that the author has hit a home run, and in my humble opinion, written what looks to be the best military thriller of 2016. Not since Brad Taylor's "All Necessary Force", have I seen an already promising author make dramatic strides in developing his writing abilities. The book is many things. It pulls off the rare achievement of truly capturing modern warfare's brutality, all the sights and smells of death which we mere mortals will never experience. It's a shattered mirror reflecting a distorted reality, featuring one of the finest blends of fact and fiction to grace post 9/11 military novels. Now to the review. What if defeat in the war on terror was imminent? And what price would you pay, to snatch victory, from its jaws?

We start the story in a Syrian town. A night-time operation is underway. Its objective is to search and destroy two terrorists, an Iranian and a commander in Syria's Al-Nursa organization who are meeting each other along with other individuals, to form an alliance which would strengthen them. A trap is baited by an American DIA officer named Boland, who has cultivated a participant at the meeting as an asset. Two of the protagonists, Mason Kane and Zeus link up with their team sniper and have been tasked with covering the DIA officer from a nearby safe house. Their progress is delayed almost immediately by a few unexpected militants whom they swiftly dispatch.

West of them, the third main character, Renee Hart sits nervously in the helicopter transporting her and members of a US Special Forces team into the area saturated with Islamist militants. She's nervous from having discovered information suggesting Boland might not have his eyes on the ball for the op, and her concerns only increase when she receives a radio message from Kane with gunfire in the background. Back on the ground, Boland himself briefs his asset who is escorting him into the terrorist conference, held in the basement vault of an abandoned bank.

It's at this point, things explode. The SF team's helicopter is shot down. Militants begin attacking the safe house Kane and Zeus are in, forcing them to flee and begin hurrying to extract the DIA officer who is unaware that he's been rumbled. They're too late. In the vault, the asset clobbers Boland with a cosh, revealing that he's still a hard-core Islamist, and one of the main players in the Daesh organization. Once securing the DIA officer, the asset, called Al Qatar, casually murders the Al Nursa man and flees with the Iranian, Boland and a black pelican case, the contents of which are critical to a murderous scheme he is executing.

Despite the best efforts of the protagonists who come within meters of intercepting him, Al Qatar slips the

net and gets clear of the maelstrom engulfing the town. With the mission having failed, Kane and Zeus dodge a hellfire missile deployed on their position. Barely managing to regroup with their comrades, Kane theorizes someone in the top brass leaked the details of their operation. He decides to stay in the field, rather than take the extraction helicopter out. Before he does so he asks Renee to conduct a search on her end for the rat. With only Zeus, the sniper and a medic accompanying him, Kane sets out on a journey stretching across Western Syria and North East Iraq, and begins fighting against a conspiracy concealed by the fog of war, one which has the potential to radically bring to life a nightmare no one fighting in the war on terror would see coming.

In terms of plot, “Warning Order” gets top marks. Mr Hood has written an impressive second book, one which paints a mature, terrifying portrait of modern warfare, in all its chilling glory. The author has crafted a haunting saga set against the real life backdrop of a war gone wrong and a world burning to ashes. Focusing on the present day conflict in Eastern Iraq and West Syria, the story of “Warning Order” touches on the most critical geopolitical issue facing the civilized world and some pretty surprising philosophical and moral questions as well, which are explored by characters of the novel. These running threads give this story a lot of depth, and the author bravely tackles the sort of issues which need to be discussed more before it’s too late. Combining all this with very compelling “what if?” situations that twist real life events such as the fall of Mosul and American foreign intelligence’s Iraq activities on their head in some very shocking ways, “Warning Order” has surprises littered like land mines in store for military thriller fans everywhere, ones which will blow even the most cynical reader who claims to have seen it all, clean out of their chair.

Next, the action and setting. There are two areas in which Mr Hood has a particular edge over his peers. Atmosphere and world building. No writer currently operating in the genre can recreate dangerous environments along with the fear and tension that results from entering into them like this author. And in Warning Order, Mr Hood outdoes himself. From the breath-taking first act where a covert operation slowly disintegrates while our heroes shoot their way out of a terrorist filled town, to the ravaged cities of Iraq where Daesh crushes thousands with a bloody fist and finishing with an intricate, explosion littered game of cat and mouse across a chunk of Mosul, the author’s prose will launch you like an artillery shell into a true hell on earth where death is always a bullet away and life is only worth how much you’re willing to endure to find a way back home.

Research? Having seen combat serving in one of the most legendary units of the US Army, and presently serving as an officer of the law when he’s not writing, the author demonstrates his aptitude with the tactics of modern combat, something which many authors who are overly concerned with the hardware side neglect. The characters in “Warning Order” don’t charge forward with only a gun and no plan in mind. They’re much more calculating than that. Whether it be the heroes trying to wipe out a team of Islamist war criminals before they can react, or the villains assaulting a city located on the Iraq border, every action is properly thought out to gain the most success and efficiency while inflicting maximum devastation.

I’m also relieved to say Mr Hood still strikes the perfect balance with the kit. He’ll name the guns, but he doesn’t devote entire chapters to explain what the various components do, instead keeping his descriptions under perfect control. In this book, he treats us to two scary, plot relevant items which I can’t give away. Suffice to say, I commend him for doing homework on the proper target area when sinking large sea vessels, and what the repercussions of a certain river dam bursting would be. Another highlight Mr Hood gives us readers is a look into paratrooper operations. Being a former paratrooper himself, the section where an airborne infiltration comes into play is one of the best sections of the book. Understandable for us mere mortals, allows us to appreciate the process and most importantly, captures the thrills and feeling of danger that one would get when dropping out of a plane. The author even throws in a nugget regarding safety hazards and problems on the decent, something which nearly spells the end of a main character.

Now, to the characters. There were so many standouts in this book that covering them all would require another review. So, I'll focus on our three musketeers and a bad guy who almost stole the show. Let's start with Mason, Renee Hart and Zeus. Unlike many of his peers, Mr Hood avoids the trap of resetting the clock after each story. Instead, there are major and minor repercussions that linger, which our protagonists struggle to try and work through.

Case in point, Mason. After the events of book 1, you would expect him to have gotten a pat on the back, a medal pinned to his lapel and a welcome home party. Surprise, none of these happen. With no friends in high places, he's let himself be cultivated as an asset for a CIA officer in order to end the sanctioned hunt for him, and gone back to work, hated by his colleagues. Such unjust problems have had a big impact. His character arc in this novel is about beginning to get justice, for himself and his friends who have suffered along with him. Seeing him try to guard that last bit of humanity he has left as his obsession consumes him on his journey through a real life heart of darkness which ruins those who try do the "right" thing, is one of the highlights of the novel. Kane is a man who has lost it all and yet resists totally surrendering to his worst instincts despite having every excuse to, and instead tries to rise above the circumstances he's become trapped in. Another aspect I liked about his plotline is the reality of repercussions as mentioned previously. Is Mr Kane a badass killer? Yep. Is that enough to solve all problems? Nope. For example, throughout much of the book, he's dealing with a busted knee, something which catastrophically ruins his reflexes and nearly gets him killed three times, over the course of the novel. A lesser author would have given Mr Kane a clean bill of health. Not Mr Hood whose willingness to give his protagonists those extra little problems enriches the narrative significantly.

Secondly, we have Zeus. A former officer of the Mukhabarat el-Jamahiriya, he's an outsider like his fellow protagonists, if not more so. As a remnant of a regime loathed by both Islamic terrorists and the West, he's a man without a country. While Kane still has a small ember of idealism left, Zeus is the amused cynic disguised as an ice cold realist. But despite his reluctance, when push comes to shove, he steps up to the plate and goes off to war for his friend. The interactions between him and Kane are where much of the book's humour comes from and are a treat to watch, especially in a bleak tale like this. His character arc for "Warning Order" can be summed up as trying to save his too clever by half younger brother from getting himself killed. At several points in the story, it's Zeus' knowledge and tradecraft which win the day, events, which without him, would have led to a premature end to the novel by a hail of bullets. It could be said, he's the brains of the group, and being a spy by trade allows him to catch details which the others miss. But when the bullets start to fly, Zeus can take a beating like a boss. For starters, he takes a near direct hit by a hellfire missile and after getting helped out of the rubble, shoots his way across several blocks, leaving a trail of dead terrorists behind him.

Thirdly, we have Renee. She goes through the grinder in this story. After the disaster in book 1, she's been kicked down to the bottom of the ladder, deliberately relegated to a particularly nasty position which belittles her experience. While struggling to help Mason, she also deals with relentless bullying by a sadistic team leader and a commanding officer who loathes her with a passion. Without the power which came from being in command of her own team, Hart's in a much more vulnerable position in this novel. Some of the more tense portions of the book involve moments with Walker walking on a knife edge when interacting with her persecutors who are sharpening their knives and waiting for the moment to plunge them into her back. Does she take all this lying down? Hell no. Back in the day, the only serious major female thriller fiction character was Greg Rucka's fictional SIS officer Tara Chace. Joshua Hood's Renee Hart is, I feel, the only one who has been able to equal the benchmark. Beautiful? Yeah. Smart. Oh yes. Badass. Hell yes. Renee doesn't make many mistakes when she's at war, and the ones she does, she learns from. Mr Hood also portrays her realistically. While she's highly trained in combat, others still have advantages that she lacks, like body mass for instance. So she makes up for it by identifying and going for the smart play. The final act of the novel

demonstrates this grandly when she gets into a scuffle with a secondary antagonist. She realizes she can't beat him senseless, so when a simple, permanent solution to her problem arises in the form of a Glock 23, she doesn't hesitate.

Next, we have the bad guy, Mr Al-Qatar. For a thriller subgenre which mostly focuses on terrorist related matters, I despair at the quality of the monsters which post 9/11 thriller protagonists have to do battle with. This is due to many authors being guilty of bad characterization and instead of creating madmen who should have you scared in your seat, come up with paper tigers who are as dull as dishwater and don't back up their bark with a decent bite. With the first proper fictional Islamist terrorist in his series, I'm very delighted to say Mr Hood has instead created by far the most compelling fictional antagonist the genre's going to see this year. So, Al Qatar. An Iraqi whose brother once served Saddam's Republican Guard, he watched his sibling die back in "03" and was imprisoned by the US occupation forces. In jail, he decided to be cultivated as an asset for US foreign intelligence, working hard and becoming a good little minion. But unbeknownst to his handler, Al Qatar remained a hard core Islamist and rose to become essentially the operations director of the Daesh organization. In Warning Order, while assisting with a scheme hatched by the opposition of the first book, he's also running his own plot in order to get even with America.

Why is Al Qatar a cut above his fellow fictional Islamic Extremists? Well, he's by far the most depraved terrorist put to paper. All that hatred he's stored up over the years had done a number on his mental state. But it also allows him to commit actually terrifying crimes. For him, shooting is just the appetizer if you happen to fall into his hands. For the main course, he'll break out rope, knives and nails and even get those around you to participate in your messy demise as the cherry on top. His segments of the book at times border on psychological horror, and put many Post 9/11 thriller writers' sorry attempts at making compelling antagonists to shame. At one point, we even get a demonstration of his H.R employee motivation techniques. The results aren't pretty and would make the fanatical Soviet commissioners of last century feel honoured. In all of Al-Qatar's segments, I felt a blanket of dread fall over me, fear which had me checking over my shoulder every few minutes just to be sure he wasn't waiting to plunge his knife through my throat.

Secondly, he's competent to a nightmarish degree. Another problem I have with the military/counter-terrorist thriller subgenre is that many authors fail to capture the more intelligent Islamic Terrorists. Sure, the majority of them aren't the sharpest tools in the shed and the real life cases where their incompetence led to their undoing should be laughed at. Thing is though, we in the West have a nasty habit of underestimating the true level of talent among the terrorist groups. One must acknowledge, that with the terrorist problem lasting for more than a decade, there are some clever chaps out there who have kept the bloody maw of Islamism continuing to chew.

And Mr Al Qatar is a embodiment of these people. In his establishing character moment when he's introduced, Al Qatar neutralizes his arrogant DIA handler before the man can get off a shot, and doesn't make the typical bad guy mistake of bringing along a tracking device. And that's only the start of a very well executed reign of terror he conducts as he blazes a trail from Syria to Iraq. For 3 of the four acts of the novel, he stays five steps ahead of his hunters, relentlessly gathering the components for which to execute his scheme. And when he's finally cornered, he doesn't crash down like a house of cards. Instead, he turns the entire city of Mosul into a well-planned death trap, then defiantly holds his own against Mason Kane despite not having the latter's combat training.

So now for the constructive criticism. This is going to be a problem, because, I really don't have any. I've read "Warning Order" multiple times and am satisfied. But the only little complaint I actually have is that the word "cordite" slipped in. We're no longer in the 19th century and the term has been discontinued due to the rise of more advanced propellants. All I can say to the author is don't get complacent or arrogant, keep

striving to improve your craft and you will go far in your career as a writer.

My verdict on Warning Order is this. Joshua Hood has written the best crafted, if not the best military thriller that we'll see in 2016. A blood soaked masterpiece par excellence, the writing is as cutting as Mason Kane's custom made knife and the cast of compelling characters will yank you into a world where the barbarians have crashed through the gates and only a few good men and women are left standing to fight back.

"Warning Order" is a beautifully drawn portrayal of the shadow world that sometimes creeps into our own, a portrayal that few authors could hope to equal. I'm impressed at how Joshua Hood has grown as a writer. With this book, which leaves the competition dead tired six feet under, before they've even started, Mr Hood has decisively planted his flag in this most competitive of thriller subgenres and will be here to stay. I don't know where Mason, Renee and Zeus will be going, but they continue their walk into the darkness I'm content in knowing that they're in the capable hands of a new talent who I know will take them on a path to glory.

COMPLETELY RECOMMENDED.

Scott Bell says

In Mr. Hood's second book, he keeps the pressure turned to high, and the volume cranked up to maximum. Evil baddies and stalwart heroes, pitted against each other in a no-holds-barred contest from page one through to the ending. Add in some treacherous Washington-types and a spy who has a handy new use for a blowtorch, and you have a page-turning read.

Great technical detail saturates the book and gives it authenticity. If I had to complain, I'd say the dialogue at times came off stiff and the non-combat scenes could use some work.

Overall, a fast summer-read for those who like the smell of gunpowder drifting off the pages.

Chris (Norseman) Miller says

Joshua Hood's Warning Order, the follow up novel to Clear By fire finds Mason right back in the thick of things and gives you every bit of action and battle you could want. Joshua does a great job of giving you plenty of details but not too many, giving you the opportunity to create your picture of the battlefield and the situations that Mason and Renee find themselves in.

Joshua's dedicated time to our country in the 82nd Airborne definitely helped shaped his understanding and thought process of men and women in battle. Mason finds himself in a very similar situation battling not only the enemy but the same people who want him to fight. Renee is still trying to define herself as a combat soldier while living in the world of war, that most people do not see fit for women.

I was fortunate enough to have read Clear By Fire and then was able to receive an ARC of Warning Order (Thank You!!). Not taking anything away from CBF, but you can tell that Joshua has really embraced his characters and taken them to the next level in Warning Order. 2015 was a big year for me and I honestly thought CBF was the best book I read (I did read more than 1 book). I firmly believe that in 2016, Warning

Order will compete with the likes of Thor, Taylor and Bell.

The experiences that Mr. Hood has been through while serving the ole Red, White and Blue has definitely allowed him to make you feel like the rifle rounds and mortars are flying right by your head and exploding all around you. His ability to draw you in and keep the pages turn made my heart beat a little harder and feel like I was right in the thick of it. Although I have never been in battle, I feel like I have now because of Warning Order. The only negative with this book is that we must wait a little while for book three, the spoils of an ARC are brutal (haha).

You will not be disappointed in this one, and you haven't read the first, pick up Clear By Fire (2015) and enjoy. There is not reason not to go ahead and pre-order this one and have on your doorstep on pub day! Happy Reading!

Roslyn says

Warning Order starts with a comprised mission, that leads the heroes and heroine into further thrilling good story line filled with twists and turns.

This book is not for the weak faint of heart. Taut and suspenseful, written with realistic gritty action and battle scenes because Hood has been there. He succeeds in throwing the reader right into the fighting combat zone, tasting and smelling the horrific results of combat. This is the front lines in America's war on terror.

Hood pushes his characters to their breaking point in a realistic way while continuing to keep you engaged in the story. Mason Kane is a killing machine. His best buddy Zeus, is a Libyan and ex-intelligence officer who speaks Arabic. The relationship between Renee Hart, a DOD operative, has potential for romance in the future.

The non-combat characters go all the way from the President of the US, through highest ranking Cabinet officers to field officers to a CIA agent, David Castleman. The military missions are supposed to be either off-the-books or flying under the radar of media.

Mealy mouth people who still think the administration has it under control, will protest the fiction scenes that describe the incompetence and ruthlessness of politicians more concerned about their careers than the lives of men sent into battle.

Hood takes war so close to the readers with action ripped from today's headlines, but so much more realistic.

Judy Lesley says

I received an e-ARC of this novel through NetGalley and Touchstone.

This book probably falls more into the 3.5 star rating for me because I liked it but I did have some problems with it. It is positively a military action thriller with the emphasis on the action almost to the exclusion of all other elements usually expected in a novel. I read a lot of action adventure novels set within the military community. I like those types of books so this isn't the first novel of this type I've read. Therefore, when I say the novel was too heavily oriented toward violence, I say that from having other novels to compare it with. There was little, I'm almost tempted to say no, character development. This is the second book of the series and I did not read the first book so it's always possible that the characters were explained in the previous novel. If so, including some of that information for those of us who missed the first book would not have gone amiss. Several sentences placed almost at the end of the novel just wasn't enough. Mason Kane is obviously not in the military, nor is his warring best buddy Zeus, a Libyan and ex-intelligence officer who speaks Arabic. That comes in handy since the story opens in Syria in 2014. The non-combat characters go all the way from the President of the US, through highest ranking Cabinet officers to field officers to a CIA agent, David Castleman. The military missions are supposed to be either off-the-books or flying under the radar of media.

As odd as it may sound, the characters I connected with the most were Renee who is serving in the military and definitely knows how to hold her own within her elite unit and Zeus. The main character, Mason Kane, has the appearance of being nothing more than a highly inventive killing machine, impervious to any and all major wounds. I didn't get any sense of his humanity and didn't like him at all. I don't feel I was given a reason to like him.

Perhaps if the author could have scaled back some of the time spent on the warrior scenes if he was pushed for space and added depth to the characters in the novel so I could understand their motivation more fully, then I would have enjoyed his novel more completely. The first fighting scene of the book was still not fully completed by the 30% point in the book. From there the story simply moved into a different fighting scene. I understand from reading the biography of this author that he has the credentials to write with authority about the types of face-to-face combat and military infrastructure found in this novel. I simply feel spending some of his writing time making the characters in his novel more understandable and even sympathetic for the reader would result in a more well rounded story. It will always be violent, because that is the nature of the story, but it would at least be nice to be given a reason to like the lead character.

Slaven Tomasi says

I was fortunate enough to be one of the few Joshua Hood fans to receive an ARC of Warning Order, the highly anticipated sequel to Hood's debut thriller, Clear by Fire. In CBF, Hood came out swinging, earning in my opinion, the title of the best debut of the year. With just one book in his catalog, Hood has grown so much as a writer. Warning Order starts off with heart-thumping action and does not let off for a second. I literally could not put this book down and finished it in 2 sittings. All of the main characters from Clear by Fire are back, including the very captivating Renee Hart who I am hoping will get her own book series one of these days. In WO, she is as stunning as she is vicious in her pursuit for the truth. David's minor role in CBF is significantly increased in WO, without spoiling anything, he isn't afraid to get his hands dirty. And of course Mason Kane & Zeus. I'm talking about both of them together because their dialogue throughout the entire book is so natural and entertaining, from them sitting at the beach enjoying a drink together to the most lethal combat situation, it never feels forced or out of place. As a former Marine, with three combat deployments, I can appreciate the dialogue because during the absolute worse times in the suck, humor is what gets you through the day. In Warning Order, we get a little more details into Mason's history, mostly from other people's perspective when talking about how ferocious he is as a warrior/operator. As the reader,

you see Mason's skills from every aspect, including gun fights, knife fights, and leading troops into combat. This page turner will definitely be one of the best books of 2016, with so many options to pick from, my advice is to pick up Clear by Fire if you haven't yet and pre-order Warning Order ASAP.

Thad David says

Warning order is without a doubt one of the best military thrillers you will read in 2016.

Joshua Hood straps you to a rocket, writes Warning Order on the side of it, and shoots you directly to the front line of battle. The story opens with an explosion of action that continues seamlessly throughout the entire story. The realistic descriptions of the sites, sounds, and smells will bring you up close and personal with what war on and off the battlefield is really like. Many of the scenes gave me goosebumps and I found myself re-reading them because they were that good. One scene in particular from this story resonates with me still even a week after reading it. It is one of the best action scenes I have ever read. I won't spoil the story but you should do yourself a favor and read this book.

Another thing that really stood out to me was Hood's growth as a writer which surprised me because I loved his debut novel Clear by Fire. It was an action packed thrill ride and honestly I wasn't expecting a huge difference in the writing because I didn't think he needed it. That said, I was pleasantly surprised when I opened Warning Order to find another great story line with even better writing.

As someone who has seen a few rounds down range I look for two things when reading this genre, excitement and most importantly realism. If I don't believe something can happen then I don't believe in the story and I just don't read it. This is one thing I love most about Hood's writing; he pushes characters to their breaking point in a realistic way while continuing to keep you engaged in the story.

I expect to see the name Joshua Hood consistently mentioned next to Flynn and Thor in the near future.

Justin Boyer says

I've never read this genre before, the genre of military thriller, though I absolutely love thrillers as a whole. These types of books excel in the craft of writing intense scenes, filled with just as much depth and nuance as any other genre, but with far fewer words. Therefore, I consider thrillers to be one of the top-notch genres, even though all genres (from an egalitarian view) all have their distinctive strengths and weaknesses.

Two words that aptly describe Joshua Hood's writing: realistic/visceral. His visuals are extremely well-captured, to the point where you can feel the agitation of a soldier's adrenal rush in the midst of a chaotic battle sequence. You can feel the psychological tug-of-war, the subtle touches of despondence battling against that very real, tenuous pull for survival.

I haven't read too much of the author's biography or background beyond the back-flip-jacket "About the Author Section," but the scenes which take place on the battlefield itself, involving fairly well-shaped, interesting soldier characters have a very strong sense of realism, possibly stemming from the author's military background. It is this element that makes the various battle scenes have a fairly surreal element, meaning you wonder half-the-time as the reader with suspended disbelief, whether you're in the throes of war or not. You can actually feel the racing heart-beat of trying to work against the clock to diffuse a

potentially dangerous situation, the adversarial/though tight-knitted bond or relationship between the soldiers, and how they behave differently in either a war scene versus breaks from the war scenes. Then there is the intriguing role power that information plays in these types of stories. If there was one way to define a military thriller, it is a two-tiered structure; in one way it is about the primal scene of survival in the war scene, and the other is the pivotal role information plays in war. Bad or good leads could contribute, to a greater extent, to whether a mission fails or not, more-so than pure physical prowess and ability. Also, the definition of power, and who ultimately has it sometimes is far more impacted by the amount of intel one has than anything else.

Also, I really loved the way the author incorporated an interesting female character into the story, portraying her in a realistic light that allows her to be featured as seamlessly as any of the other characters. This means she is not devalued to the role of a “strong,independent, woman who needs no man;” she’s just like any of the other characters within the context of a highly tense, sometimes frenetically-paced situation where quick-thinking, cunning, and tenacity are more highly valued in the end than your goddamn gender..Renee is pretty damn awesome in the end, and she has equal footing with Mason and all the other characters, as it should be. I think you’ll find any skilled writers have an acute awareness of the equality of the human experience or struggles, so this really isn’t too hard of a challenge...but you’d be surprised how many books I’ve read just don’t quite succeed with this easily achievable goal.

Some situations and characters,though felt a little hackneyed and contrived, one of the two biggest potential flaws with any thriller type writing. The strongest parts of the novel were surprisingly the action sequences, a part of any book that I tend to become bored by fast, except in the thriller genre, mostly because thrillers focus strongly on the suspense elements inherent to any action sequence more-so than the interminably-paced exposition of some fantasy genre battles...

But I really appreciated the opportunity, above all, to read outside of my genre comfort zone. I tend not to read military thrillers, but I am glad that I read a perspective that I often enjoyed being developed and analyzed in novels like the Outlander series (the Outlander books are filled to the brim with eighteenth century European war history). The author’s own background in the military contributed to the realism of the many situations described in the novel, which helped a newbie like myself to this genre easily get engrossed by the novel. It was a fast, compelling, mostly competently-written book, which I recommend for anyone, particularly train-commuters like myself, or those trying their very first military thriller. Personally, I liked it enough to read the first book in a series, if that counts for anything..That’s saying something, since I seriously have never read any book in this genre before, this is far outside my genre comfort zone.

The Real Book Spy says

See this review and more at www.TheRealBookSpy.com

Last year Joshua Hood kicked the doors to the military thriller genre off the hinges with his explosive debut novel *Clear by Fire*. This year, Hood has topped himself with *Warning Order*, the second book in his gritty, action-packed series following elite super-soldier Mason Kane.

THE STORY

Hood opens with Mason and Zeus, both returning from *Clear by Fire*, running an operation near the Turkish-Syrian border. Mason, who is once again trying to clear his name, has agreed to a deal with the CIA that is supposed to be a simple smash-and-grab job. And then things go wrong.

It takes just two pages for Hood to turn up the heat, after the team's sniper announces that he has no shot at a roving enemy threat. Mason, the ex-Special Forces soldier who was originally part of the Anvil Program—a blacker-than-black-ops squad of elite operatives—neutralizes the threat himself. The bodies keep falling from there as the action kicks into high gear and never lets off the pedal.

Also back is fan-favorite Renee Hart, the DOD operative who is by all accounts the strongest female character in the genre today. Renee is smart, good-looking, and absolutely lethal. Essentially, she's a knockout who can actually knock you out, in the same vein as UFC star Ronda Rousey.

Renee is rushing to connect with Mason, believing he and Zeus are about to walk into a trap. It turns out that an old Army buddy of Mason's, a man named Boland, may in fact be a traitor who is secretly working with the enemy. Worse, Boland is the one currently leading Mason and his team on the ground.

Renee hops on a chopper with her own team, hoping to make it to Mason in time to warn him. As she nears his location, she loses all communication with the soldiers on the ground. Suddenly, a series of gunshots ring out, and Renee realizes she is too late. Boland had led them right into an ambush.

Hood, a decorated combat veteran and former member of the 82nd Airborne, who is currently a full-time SWAT team member in Memphis, has already made a name for himself by writing some of the most realistic and authentic action scenes in print today. His books are gritty, often providing insight into the mind of a soldier and the transformation they go through as they evolve from civilians to trained operatives. By doing so, Hood provides a glimpse behind the curtain that most people never get an in-person look at themselves—and it's riveting.

As the plot charges forward, Mason ends up taking on the most savage, barbaric group of terrorists currently walking on the face of the earth: the Islamic State. *Warning Order* is a bloody, heart-pounding thriller that stings with authenticity from top to bottom. Joshua Hood continues to make a name for himself, taking one more step towards joining the likes of Brad Taylor, Ben Coes, and Mark Greaney as the best military thriller authors alive today.

WHY I LOVED IT

It's hard to describe the feeling I got when I first discovered Joshua Hood and his debut novel, *Clear by Fire*, last year. A rush of excitement and anxiety coursed through my veins, as I knew I'd just stumbled upon a diamond in the rough. I couldn't wait for the next installment in the Mason Kane franchise, and had high expectations for *Warning Order* from day one. In fact, my expectations may have been unfairly high, but still Hood surpassed them by a mile.

There is nobody like Mason Kane in the genre right now, and here's why: to some extent, even on a small scale, Mason is Joshua Hood. By that I mean Hood draws on his own combat experiences to shape Mason, and he doesn't shy away from controversy. In fact, Hood's first two books read like a character study into mindset of a soldier, and it's oftentimes as heartbreakingly compelling as it is compelling.

Mason is damaged, and a very different man than he was before joining the Army. Somewhere between being trained to kill people and then being betrayed by his country and brothers who were part of the Anvil program, Mason becomes hardened. Like a dog who's left tied up and alone in the wilderness to survive on its own, he may live, but he will never be the same again.

It's fascinating to read, and those are just the undertones of the book! I haven't even mentioned the plot, which is spectacular, by the way, and a giant leap forward from *Clear by Fire*. Hood is growing in leaps and

bounds as an author, and his career is going to be a lot of fun to watch for many years to come.

WHY YOU SHOULD READ IT

Hood knows his stuff, and he's managed to develop his cast of characters rather brilliantly over the course of two novels. Renee Hart remains the strongest female in the genre, and some may even prefer her to Mason. I'd expect to see her get her own starring role in a spin-off novel someday, and hope that happens sooner rather than later.

Bottom line: If you're looking for nonstop, authentic action and an original story concept involving ISIS, Joshua Hood's *Warning Order* should be at the top of your must-read list heading into this summer.

Dawn says

Perfect for the action junkie that I am! Also, a bit scary to think about. A conspiracy, a well planned attack, and higher ups pushing their own agenda to go the US back into Iraq while it hunts one of its own that was framed. WOW! This is a lot of military action!

I received this ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Larry Loftis says

"Joshua Hood has been to Hell and back—Ramadi, Tora Bora, Jalalabad—and it shows. Every page of *Warning Order* throbs with the beat of battle—REAL battle—and Hood pulls no punches in this white-knuckle grinder. Steel yourself!"

dennis barron says

Warning Order. Joshua Hood

This is book two in the series. This is an action thriller of nuclear proportions!! Mason Kane, ex delta, must stop an elite group from his former unit who have gone rogue. Treachery and deceit all the way to the Secretary of defense. The want POTUS to totally destroy ISIS and all of its counterparts. The will stop at nothing. They want to return to Iraq and finish the job. This is a powerful and very believable scenario. I hope there is a book three!! Enjoyed tremendously!!!

J.T. Patten says

Warning Order Let's Readers Become Part of an Elite Family

Josh Hood has completed the second novel, *Warning Order*, in his authentic Search and Destroy thriller series. For newcomers, the Search and Destroy books literally strap a parachute onto a reader forcing them

out of the plane and onto the battlefield. This new gripping military thriller lines up all other combat tomes from the sub-genre, sweeps them off the bookshelf into a freshly dug grave, then double taps them face down before air support is called in to bombard competitors into oblivion. Quite simply, no one can write a balls to the wall down-range novel like Hood can that gives the reader the full experience of war's sights, smells, and sounds. He mixes knowledge of special operations, general purpose forces, and policy makers that result in a perfect blend of how this country wages war while giving a nod to brotherhood bonds and barriers in combat. In Warning Order, the beloved core cast of characters are back with Mason and Renee leading the charge in Syria and Iraq to stop a series of U.S. supported ISIS attacks. That's right. Anvil is back! And Hood hammers all that stand in its way while still giving a mature caricature of the power vacuum of politics, intelligence, and operations that happens today in Middle Eastern conflicts. Hood takes war so close, readers earn jump wings and an Airborne tab.
