

DIANN MILLS

DEEP
EXTRACTION

AN FBI
TASK FORCE
NOVEL

PRAISE FOR DIANN MILLS

DEADLY ENCOUNTER

“Crackling dialogue and heart-stopping plotlines are the hallmarks of Mills’s thrillers, and this series launch won’t disappoint her many fans. Dealing with issues of murder, domestic terrorism, and airport security, it eerily echoes current events.”

LIBRARY JOURNAL

“[Mills] has the ability to sweep you off your feet and into the middle of an adventure in a matter of paragraphs. . . . If you are looking for a little bit of action, romance, intrigue, and domestic terrorism (and a happily ever after!), then this is the book for you.”

RADIANT LIT

“Fans of clean romantic suspense will enjoy this well-plotted winner.”

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

DEADLOCK

“DiAnn Mills brings us another magnificent, inspirational thriller in her FBI: Houston series. *Deadlock* is a riveting, fast-paced adventure that will hold you captive from the opening pages to the closing epilogue.”

FRESHFICTION.COM

“Mills’s newest installment in the FBI: Houston series will keep readers on the edge of their seats. For those who love a good ‘who-done-it,’ *Deadlock* delivers.”

CBA RETAILERS + RESOURCES

“Mills does a superb job building the relationship between the two polar opposite detectives. With some faith overtones, *Deadlock* is an excellent police drama that even mainstream readers would enjoy.”

ROMANTIC TIMES

DOUBLE CROSS

“DiAnn Mills always gives us a good thriller, filled with inspirational thoughts, and *Double Cross* is another great one!”

FRESHFICTION.COM

“Tension explodes at every corner within these pages. . . . Mills’s writing is transparently crisp, backed up with solid research, filled with believable characters and sparks of romantic chemistry.”

NOVELCROSSING.COM

“For the romantic suspense fan, there is plenty of action and twists present. For the inspirational reader, the faith elements fit nicely into the context of the story. . . . The romance is tenderly beautiful, and the ending bittersweet.”

ROMANTIC TIMES

FIREWALL

“Mills takes readers on an explosive ride. . . . A story as romantic as it is exciting, *Firewall* will appeal to fans of Dee Henderson’s romantic suspense stories.”

BOOKLIST

“With an intricate plot involving domestic terrorism that could have been ripped from the headlines, Mills’s romantic thriller makes for compelling reading.”

LIBRARY JOURNAL

“[A] fast-moving, intricately plotted thriller.”

PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

“Mills once again demonstrates her spectacular writing skills in her latest action-packed work. . . . The story moves at a fast pace that will keep readers riveted until the climactic end.”

ROMANTIC TIMES

“This book was so fast-paced that I almost got whiplash. . . . Heart-pounding action from the first page . . . didn’t stop until nearly the end of the book. If you like romantic suspense, I highly recommend this one.”

RADIANT LIT

“Fast-paced and action-packed. . . . DiAnn Mills gives us a real winner with *Firewall*, a captivating and intense story filled with a twisting plot that will have you on the edge of your seat.”

FRESHFICTION.COM

“*Firewall* is exciting, thrilling. . . . DiAnn Mills draws her readers in, holding them breathlessly hostage until the very last page. She is a master at her craft and her genre.”

BOOKFUN.ORG

“*Firewall* should come with a warning! Be prepared to lose your breath and a lot of sleep with this exhilarating read.”

LYNETTE EASON, BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE DEADLY
REUNIONS SERIES

“*Firewall* is an up-until-2 a.m. book. . . . I had no idea who the mastermind was until the last two or three pages. Mills keeps getting better and better. Can’t wait for the next one!”

LAURINE SNELLING, AUTHOR OF THE WILD WEST WIND
SERIES AND *WAKE THE DAWN*

“*Firewall* is a gripping ride that will keep your blood pumping and your imagination in high gear.”

DANI PETTREY, AUTHOR OF THE ALASKAN COURAGE SERIES

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**TYNDALE HOUSE PUBLISHERS, INC.
CAROL STREAM, ILLINOIS**

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Deep Extraction

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Cover design by Faceout Studio, Tim Green

Interior design by Dean H. Renninger

Edited by Erin E. Smith

Published in association with the literary agency of Books & Such Literary Management,
52 Mission Circle, Suite 122, PMB 170, Santa Rosa, CA 95409.

Deep Extraction is a work of fiction. Where real people, events, establishments, organizations, or locales appear, they are used fictitiously. All other elements of the novel are drawn from the author's imagination.

For information about special discounts for bulk purchases, please contact Tyndale House Publishers at csresponse@tyndale.com or call 800-323-9400.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Mills, DiAnn, author.

Title: Deep extraction / DiAnn Mills.

Description: Carol Stream, Illinois : Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., [2017]

| Series: FBI task force

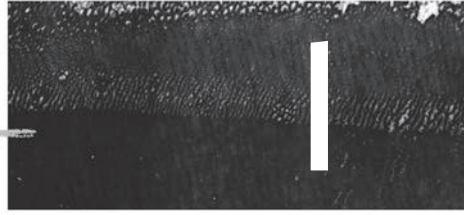
Identifiers: LCCN 2016048469 | ISBN 9781496410986 (sc)

Subjects: | GSAFD: Christian fiction. | Suspense fiction.

Classification: LCC PS3613.1567 D44 2017 | DDC 813/.6—dc23

Printed in the United States of America

23 22 21 20 19 18 17
7 6 5 4 3 2 1



ANYTHING COULD HAPPEN while the dead slept. Which was why some would say a woman shouldn't tread alone through a cemetery at 2:55 on a Tuesday morning in April. But possible danger had never stopped Houston FBI Special Agent Tori Templeton, especially when her mind marched with determination. Her body refused to give in to rest, but it wasn't a violent crime robbing her of sleep.

The worn path below a black sky ended at Kevin's gravesite. She was here to visit the one person who could help her make sense of a puzzling world.

Tonight, like many nights in the past, she made her way to Kevin's final resting place to talk to him about work, life, problems, and victories. Maybe someday she'd figure out his intrigue with God.

Her brother. Her friend. The one she looked up to and treasured.

Tori didn't stalk a cemetery because of some superstition that he lay beneath a marble stone and could communicate with her. She

visited the site because it signified peace. Maybe by a weird osmosis, she'd find what had given Kevin strength. She wanted to believe he lived pain-free with his God. No cancer. No side effects of chemo and radiation. An eternal home with a God he embraced tighter than life. At least he'd claimed those beliefs before he breathed his last.

"Special Agent Templeton?"

At the sound of the voice, a twinge of annoyance filled her spirit. The man greeting her was a friend, except she wanted to be alone. No need to face him. "Yes, Officer Richards."

"Saw your car, thought I'd check on you."

"I'm a creature of habit."

"I noticed. Nothing's stirring, so I'll leave you to your thoughts."

The sadness in his voice drew up a well of compassion, and she turned to him. "Wait. How's your family?" The man walked the graveyard shift—literally—and he might need a listening ear more than she should ponder the existence of a good God in a world plagued with unrest.

"The same. Ups and downs mixed with hardheads and love." He sighed and scanned the area. "Nice night."

A familiar insect's call reached her ears. "We have a choir." She smiled into the shadows, where a light, twenty feet away, illuminated his stocky frame and highlighted his silver-gray hair, giving him a halo effect. She stared above his head at a slice of the moon resting on a canvas of stars.

"Cicadas are to the night as robins are to the day."

"Well stated," she said. "I never pay attention to them until it's dark and quiet." She brushed aside a leaf on Kevin's gravestone. "We haven't talked in over a week. Did your son join the Navy?"

"Yes. A good choice. I pray he learns discipline and respect for himself and others."

He said the *pray* word. Not what she wanted to hear, and she drew in a breath. “Your daughter?”

“Agreed to rehab. Another prayer answered.”

Kevin had used the same language, and look where it got him. Was her brother’s confidence in a divine being a way to endure the devastation of cancer? A crutch in the midst of excruciating pain? Always the same questions as she searched for the why of tragedies. “How’s your wife?”

“Good, thanks. She told me you were welcome to—”

Her phone alerted her to a call. “Excuse me a minute.” She yanked it from her shirt pocket and confirmed it was Assistant Special Agent in Charge Ralph Hughes before answering.

“We have a possible homicide,” the ASAC for violent crimes said.

Her mind spun into agent mode, her job, the only part of her life where she sensed purpose. “Who and where?”

“Nathan Moore, owner of Moore Oil & Gas, died in his home this evening.”

Distress rambled through her, though she did her best to overcome it. She’d known Nathan since college days. “What happened? Why suspect murder?”

“Due to the threats on his life and a call made to his attorney prior to his death,” the ASAC said.

“What was said in the call?”

“Moore suspected someone was trying to kill him and getting close.”

Tori stared at Kevin’s tombstone and recalled the day she and Mom selected the blue-gray granite. Now Nathan’s widow faced the same dilemma. “Are we thinking the environmental activists are responsible?” Five days ago, one of Nathan’s drill sites had been bombed—possibly part of a retaliation move for winning a lawsuit

filed by environmentalists who believed he was illegally dumping backflow water from fracking. But a bombing was unlikely in his home. “Was he gunned down? A break-in?”

“Moore’s death appears to have been a heart attack, the result of natural causes. A medical examiner is on it.”

“Why?”

“Too coincidental for my take. I want to know who threatened him, and I need you and Max at the Moore residence. He’s been notified and will meet you there.” He texted her the Moore address at Lake Pointe Estates in the Katy area west of Houston, but she had it memorized.

The call ended and Tori rose to her feet. “Officer Richards, I need to go.”

“Sure thing. See you again soon.”

“Count on it. Best to you and your family.” She hurried to her car while the devastating news played havoc with her mind.

Why hadn’t Sally contacted her about Nathan’s death? They were closer than sisters, weren’t they? Tending to her grieving sons could have her emotionally spent. Even Tori was finding it hard to accept Nathan’s death.

She shoved aside personal sentiments that ushered in disbelief. Her investigative skills were needed. The ASAC had assigned her to investigate a potential crime.

Nathan possibly murdered? He had sainthood stamped next to his name. Charity work. Generous donations to worthy causes. Incredible husband and father.

Who could possibly want him dead?



A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Reader,

Deep Extraction is more than a romantic suspense tale about solving a man's murder. This novel shows how people can grow and become better people from their circumstances or sink into the depths of degradation. We are all seeking something, and I pray your search is a quest for truth.

In my story, Tori longed to please her beloved brother, even when he was gone. When she found God, life finally held purpose and meaning.

Cole struggled with bitterness when he nearly died in the line of duty for the US Marshals. Later, when he reached out to God, the things of the world that had stalked him held less importance.

Nathan was a man to be pitied. Despite his worldly success, he failed as a husband and a friend. Unfortunate but true.

All of the characters were faced with choices. Some decisions met with positive results, and others resulted in challenges. Just like us.

The gift of love is powerful. Tori and Cole accepted the joy it offered with gratitude and hope. Can we all meet its zeal with the same commitment? Do we have the courage to reach within ourselves to love and face what *unconditional* means?

Be blessed, my friends, and may your journey lead you to God.

DiAnn