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After a tour of duty in Afghanistan, Riley Covington is living his dream as a professional linebacker when he comes face-to-face with a radical terrorist group on his own home turf. Drawn into the nightmare around him, Riley returns to his former life as a member of a special ops team that crosses oceans in an attempt to stop the escalating attacks. But time is running out, and it soon becomes apparent that the terrorists are on the verge of achieving their goal: to strike at the very heart of America.

Monday Night Jihad Details

Date : Published December 12th 2007 by Tyndale House Publishers (first published August 13th 2007)

ISBN : 9781414317304

Author : Jason Elam , Steve Yohn

Format : Hardcover 358 pages

Genre : Fiction, Christian Fiction, Thriller, Christian, Mystery, Suspense

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From Reader Review Monday Night Jihad for online ebook

Aaron says

The thing that is remarkable about this story of a football superstar turned covert operative fighting terrorists is that it's somehow even worse than it should have been. Reading it, I got the feeling that Jason Elam's literary background consists entirely of Tom Clancy's oeuvre and the Bible, and co-author Steve Yohn's background was crafting his church's community announcements.

Whatever their background, it's clear they are out of their depths in writing a novel, even a shitty potboiler. At some point, this writing twosome must have heard that details are the key to bringing in a reader. But they never realized that which details you share are actually kinda important. When our hero, Riley Covington (*I know*) goes to a Christmas dinner at his friend's house, this is the description we get "Riley pressed Lock twice on his key fob and followed Ricci in". And Team Elam isn't in some moment of "hysterical realism," throwing every fact and idea they can think of our way. They offer no details of the house, the neighborhood, what his wife looks like, but choose to share how this paragon of humanity locks the door of his car. He's just like us! Awesome. This contributes to a world which is simultaneously cramped and flat. It's filled with little name checks and references to Denver, but none of their language ever evokes anything of the city itself. They tell us that Riley Covington meets with his pastor for lunch at The New York Deli News, but don't describe anything about the place. It's like Elam is saying "Look, I told you its name, you want to know what it's like? Why don't you go their, tell 'em Jason sent ya". *Like I'd ever admit in public that I read Monday Night Jihad.*

These extraneous moments (there is a ton of backstory for the most cookie cutter of heroes) contribute to making the book unreadable in a single sitting, which is the way a book like this should be read. But what ultimately made this book take weeks for me finish was the sheer awkwardness of all the attempts at jokes. I don't know if it's Elam or Yohn that thinks he's funny, but just putting it out there in case either ever see this comment **Jason Elam and Steve Yohn are not funny**. And as eye-rolling as it is to read "Call my anything you like; just don't call me late for afternoon prayers," to have other characters laugh at these not-so-bon mots, sometimes so hard that tears stream down their faces, feels beyond awkward. It's a violation of man's social order and by reading it, I somehow felt complicit and needed to walk away.

And I'm sure there are many moments of gallows humor in instances of terrorists attacks, but if a day after thousands of people get blowed up, the response team is doing Disney character impressions, please fire them. Not because they're being callous, but because they're being retarded. And I don't want anyone so idiotic in charge of avenging my death.

You might also expect the tension of the biggest terrorist attack on American soil in 10 years to cause some ill-thought-out terror sex, but not in this book. Husbands and wives don't even seem to have much romance going on. It is somewhat notable that for these authors a "Christian" book meant essentially no sex but it could have a bodycount in the thousands. I say "essentially" no sex, in that there are two moments of passion: a wife offering to erotically scrub off the bodypaint of her superfan husband, and a wife waxing her husband's back hair on their honeymoon. There is a unique disappointment to a book about NFL life where the only instance of "three way" is a "three way call" between the hero, his father and his grandfather, who lovingly assure him it's God's will for him to take a break from the Air Force and play pro sports.

The acknowledgments for *Monday Night Jihad* begin with "Lord, we start with you. This has been, and will always be, Your project," which makes this book quite possibly the most horrible atrocity ever committed in

God's name.

Sandra Priestino says

I was a little unreal but exciting

Dennis says

Good concept for a book but fell short of the mark. Reminded me of an updated version of 'Black Sunday'. A few of the problems I had were the twist didn't surprise me (I had figured it out 200 pages earlier), the team and league names (obviously, the NFL wouldn't allow the use of their team names or other trademarks) and the character that was brought in for a misdirection that seemed to be dropped mid story. I couldn't help but laugh at the names for the 'PFL' teams that were trying to win the 'PFL Cup'(the Colorado Mustangs, Detroit Wildcats, San Diego Thunder, Bay City Bandits (complete with the over top fans in black and silver) and my personal favorite the Boston Minutemen)that were too close to real team names to take seriously. It would have been better to create completely new names. The action scenes pulled you in but the authors would develop interest in characters who would then simply disappear.

Overall, not a bad read if you are interested in action filled military adventures or want a little insight into pro football player's life, but could have been much better.

W. Lattimore says

A combination of sports and international thrills seemed like a good combination, so I bought the book (and the sequels). The one-line review statements on the back cover—by respected celebs, authors, and review sites—truly sold me.

Then I started reading.

First, I must admit that I enjoyed the behind-the-scenes information on what it's like to be a PFL (pseudonym for NFL) player before, during, and after games, written by an author who actually played in the NFL. I also enjoyed the idea that the protagonist, Riley Covington, was a former Spec Ops Air Force officer turned PFL player. Covington, overall, was a well-written character.

Second, the author, Jason Elam, is passionate about Jesus. His story isn't preachy, rather it's caring and informative as it pertains to Riley's desire for his friends and acquaintances to know the Savior. This appealed to me, as well.

However ...

While the storyline is definitely interesting, several of the characters do not match the realness that Elam gave to Covington. I found a lot of the stress-related & good-natured banter sounded contrived. The humor, most of the time, fell flat. It was either not funny or it was out of place. This led to the feeling that the side characters didn't really live in the world that Elam created. This happened throughout the book, especially as it applied to characters named Scott & Hicks.

Scott was very one-dimensional and kept saying ridiculous things at the worst possible times. It was obvious that the author wanted this character to break up some of the tension that was taking place, but it was ill-timed (not to mention, not funny most times). The tension should have been maintained.

Hicks, the "boss" of the anti-terrorist operations, was someone that I wanted to like, but just couldn't believe. I can tell that the author wanted to show a man with a gruff exterior that actually had a sensitive, human side, but the dialogue in several instances just didn't come across as real.

OK, that said, two things:

1. This is the debut novel of Jason Elam. I know that as an author, after my first novel, I continued to mature in character development and the ability to convey human emotion and humor. Maybe book 2 for Elam is going to reflect that same thing. If so, I think this guy is going to have a great writing career.
 2. The storyline was compelling enough for me to want to finish the book and the ending was very solid and intense. Would I recommend this book? Maybe not. But I didn't feel like it was a waste of my time either. If I read book 2 and enjoy it, then book 1 will become a necessary starting point for a series that I would want to recommend. Time will tell.
-

karl says

The author is a well-known NFL kicker (Broncos most recently), who just retired after many years. He has a co-author. This book combines three themes: NFL Football players/teams/stadiums/playoffs (but authors have made-up names for the teams), a small group of Jihad Muslim folks hell bent to wreck havoc in the US with suicide bombers, and a hero who is a Christian/war hero/football star/good guy. Unlike some novels where you at the end are shocked to find one of marginal characters you thought was turns out to be bad, their writing was too obvious who that would be and it spoiled some of the suspense for me. At the end of the book Elam emphasizes that he found salvation. The book drips a bit too much for me with the Christianity v. Muslim discussions and sidebars. I thought the final climax ending was good - the guy we suspected was bad faked he was blowing at the Super Bowl, so the "posse" is all over that venue, the wrong place. But, ah, at the very last second... you can guess it: Christianity beat Muslim.

Marian Tustison O'Connor says

This was just okay. The ending wasn't satisfying it felt unfinished

Nicole says

I read this 10 years ago at a time that I devoured anything with a counter terrorism theme. Now I am more picky about writting quality and character depth, so I don't think I would read it now. But if you enjoy christian suspense, and alot of football you might enjoy tgis book more than I did. I rated it three stars because I did enjoy it at the time.

Jeremy Barker says

To be honest, I told myself that I wasn't going to read this book. I first saw it this summer and kind of laughed at the title. I just thought it would be too cheesy. Also, if you look at my reading from the last year (reading list) I've read quite a few books in this genre. So I just wasn't going to read it, but then I started it and about 3 days later I was finished.

Part of what was so compelling for me was that I think I am like THE demographic this book was written for. First, I have been a huge fan of Jason Elam since he started his career as kicker for the Denver Broncos when I was 6 and gave me lots of happy moments growing up. All of the areas he describes around Denver are my own stomping grounds. So it is always enjoyable to read about that. I could have been one of the characters in the book: carrying concessions up and down the stands at games, stopping at Chick-Fil-A for Dr. Pepper even more than the great chicken. It was a book that I just identify with! So that made it fun to read. I was also pleasantly surprised with how they handled some of the issues in the book.

This book is explicitly Christian fiction. The authors are both committed followers of Christ, I don't know for sure but expect they would identify themselves as Evangelical Christians, and that informs their writing. Unfortunately, there have been some Evangelical Christians who have been extremely misguided in their understanding of and approach to Islam. I was afraid this book would fall into that category but I don't think that it does. The author's intentionally show the vast difference between the majority of Muslims and those who engage in terrorism under the banner of Islam. They also show some of the reasons why terrorism happens beyond "the Sword verses and Islam is about violence" explanation, there are often political reasons and personal loss that drive many to do what they do.

I was grateful for the way the authors handled this subject. While there are certainly major differences between Christianity and Islam and the authors do not shy away from them and attempt to articulate why it is they believe Christianity is true and Islam is false, they do not resort to the hate-mongering, Islamophobia that some have done.

As far as the plot and character development itself, the book is somewhat predictable. The characters are likable and I just genuinely enjoyed the book. The descriptions of PFL (not to be confused with the NFL *wink wink) life are great and knowing they are coming from a 17 year veteran gives it credibility (even still I wondered if there is really THAT much puking??). The descriptions of military and law enforcement are plausible at least.

If you are looking for Christian fiction for a teenage+ guy this would be a solid choice. It's got a lot of the things guys love (football, guns, violence) and is plenty of fun. I got this for free a few months ago but there are now 4 books in the series so we'll see if I am able to keep away from reading the rest of them!

Conrad says

This book sounds so utterly devoid of merit that it loops all the way around the literary continuum, past the Chicken Soup books and late-era Dean Koontz, curving back into Awesome. I'm torn between wanting to read it, and remembering that vis-a-vis the continuum, it is literally *beyond crappy*.

"...But in a novel with a body count in the thousands, where suspects are interrogated with knives at their

throats, federal agents are decapitated, and the hero is tortured with electrodes on his nipples, the absence of a simple 'ass' or 'dammit' causes massive meta-cognitive de-centering for the reader..."

<http://footballoutsiders.com/walkthro...>

Ross Heinricy says

I am not a big fan of fiction, but this book had a special appeal. Jason Elam was a member of the Denver Bronco football team, and he is one of my all time favorite Bronco's. This book is both exciting and intriguing and is from the concept of a special ops soldier who is a professional football player (linebacker) who gets caught up in a terrorist plot involving another teammate. Very easy read - finished in two days :) If Jason writes another I am in!

Kathy says

Great, great book! I didn't get to read it as often as I wanted and all I could think about in between readings was, "What was going to happen?" In the beginning, I was sure I knew who 'it' was but then got thrown completely off! It was a great, book!

Glen says

It seems so long ago, but it was really only about a year ago that the NFL and patriotism were perceived as being hand in hand. Now ratings have fallen and the perception of the NFL is a lot different. Even though this was written just a few years ago, it seems as dated as a hippie.

Riley Covington is a Spec Ops soldier who plays in a professional football league (PFL to prevent any copyright lawsuits). A starting All-Star Linebacker, he's a team leader. Terrorists bomb a game, killing athletes and spectators alike.

Because his former lieutenant now works for a super double secret agency, he is recruited to fight terrorists. This leads to a long sequence of "We're not so different, you and I" speeches, but also some pretty good action.

A weird mash-up of Christian, sports, and adventure novels that worked better a couple of years ago, but is still entertaining today.

Neil says

Overall, I enjoyed reading this book. It was most definitely a first-time novel for the two authors, and perhaps they would have done better to have had some people read it first before publishing it. It had some misses in it, and some parts that could have been expounded on further, better. Overall, though, I enjoyed it. I

may or may not read the 'second book' in the series [if it sold enough to become a series after the first book], but then again, I might.

The 'humor' in it was really hit-and-miss. Some of it was good; some of it was not so good. Some of it seemed juvenile/childish. At other times, it seemed forced. But there were times when the jokes worked, and it was genuinely funny. Those were some of the rare gems in the book [unfortunately, none of them come immediately to mind].

I do not know how well it works for a former USAF SpecOps soldier to retire from the military to play pro football only to voluntarily enlist and become the leader of an anti-terrorist group/force attempting to stop a second attack on American soil. I suppose it could happen; it just seemed far-fetched. I guess other similar-type plots have worked [the nearest that comes to mind is Alistair MacClean's *Circus*, but that is about it], but it just did not seem believable to me. I had a hard time seeing the hero, who was a retired combat vet, being able to shift back into 'special ops' mode for this novel. Perhaps it is 'easier' [more natural] than I realize; it just seemed fake/forced.

The whole 'love interest' with the Iranian-American sniper also seemed far-fetched. I am not saying opposites cannot attract; it just seemed to be another 'forced factor' in the book. The book laid the groundwork for a future relationship for the two characters; it just did not feel natural to me. I still liked the idea of an Iranian-American woman who was a covert ops sniper and worked on an anti-terrorist team. I thought it was a nice touch.

The authors tried to replace actual team names with fake names that were similar to the originals. I do not know how well that worked; perhaps if they had not named actual athletes in respect to some of the teams it might have worked better. Who knows. I know it was supposed to be the NFL, but it seemed more like the teams were pro teams that were one or two levels below the NFL.

There were some mildly interesting discussions about radical Islam versus 'normal' Islam as well as Christianity versus Islam. Even though there might be a peaceful majority of Muslims that want to live and let live in perfect harmony with the rest of the world, it is the violent minority that is the 'problem', that continues making waves and threatening the lives of those around them who are 'different.'

It was nice to not have the American government be the 'villain' in this piece. It seems like the majority of the novels I have read recently had the United States set up as the go-to villain of choice.

I think there were parts that could have used more descriptions. For instance, Riley [the hero] arrives at a friend's house for dinner. I do not recall any description of the friend's house. I do remember the authors specifically mentioning that Riley had to click his fob twice to lock the door on his car before entering the house. Not once do we get any kind of mental picture of what the friend's [Sal] looks like. There are other inconsistencies like this, where the authors seemed to forget what they were talking about when they helped write the book.

I did like the twist at the end of the book. I did not see that coming. It was a nice touch, and is what relegated this book to the 'second shelf' and possibly one I would come back to to read again on a rainy day.

I did select my 'shelf' of 'military-fiction' as I feel that is what this novel is, very loosely. It involves a tight-knit group of men that are called back to active duty to be a part of a team that takes down a military threat to the security of the United States. Perhaps that is more of an explanation than what was needed, so there you go.

Considering the nature and topic of the book, it was almost odd to not come across any 'sex scenes' / immorality or foul language in the book. I do not think it necessarily took away from the book, not having any graphically illicit behavior or vile curses in the course of the narrative, but it was still odd. The 'two love scenes' that were in the book were mentioned as afterthoughts, and not very lurid or enticing, either.

I did enjoy this book.

Michael says

I tried to like this one but, after a while, I had to put it down and delete it from my Kindle. There was too much of an emphasis on football – not surprising, considering one of the author's background – but I just couldn't get into the characters as they weren't very believable and stopped reading at the 8% mark on my Kindle. Luckily, I picked this up for free during a Kindle promotion vs. its normal price of 99 cents. If it becomes free gain, I'd say give it a chance but even at 99 cents I would recommend you give this one a pass.

Carla JFCL says

This is a book from the “Christian Thriller” genre, so I'm not sure how/why I had it on my Kindle; it's not a genre I normally read. It was probably a freebie I nabbed somewhere down the line. It was actually pretty entertaining, although I can't say there were many - if any - plot surprises. I even figured out the one major twist pretty early on, and I'm a notorious dolt about that. To me, it was basically “Black Sunday” post-9/11, as it involved a terrorist attack on a professional football stadium during a big game and its aftermath.

I give the authors a few extra points for the entertaining “close enough” names of the football teams in this book (from the PFL instead of NFL) since they either didn't want to write about actual teams or were unable to do so for whatever reason. Some examples: Colorado Mustangs (Denver Broncos?); Bay Area Bandits (Oakland Raiders?); Baltimore Predators (Ravens?); Twin Cities Norsemen (Minnesota Vikings?). There are more, but you get the idea ...

The Christian aspect of this book wasn't overpowering, which I did appreciate. I don't like being preached to in my novels, and the authors really didn't do that; they just threw in enough for the reader to know where they're coming from, but not enough to offend those who are, well, offended by too much religion.

An enjoyable - if predictable - fast read.
