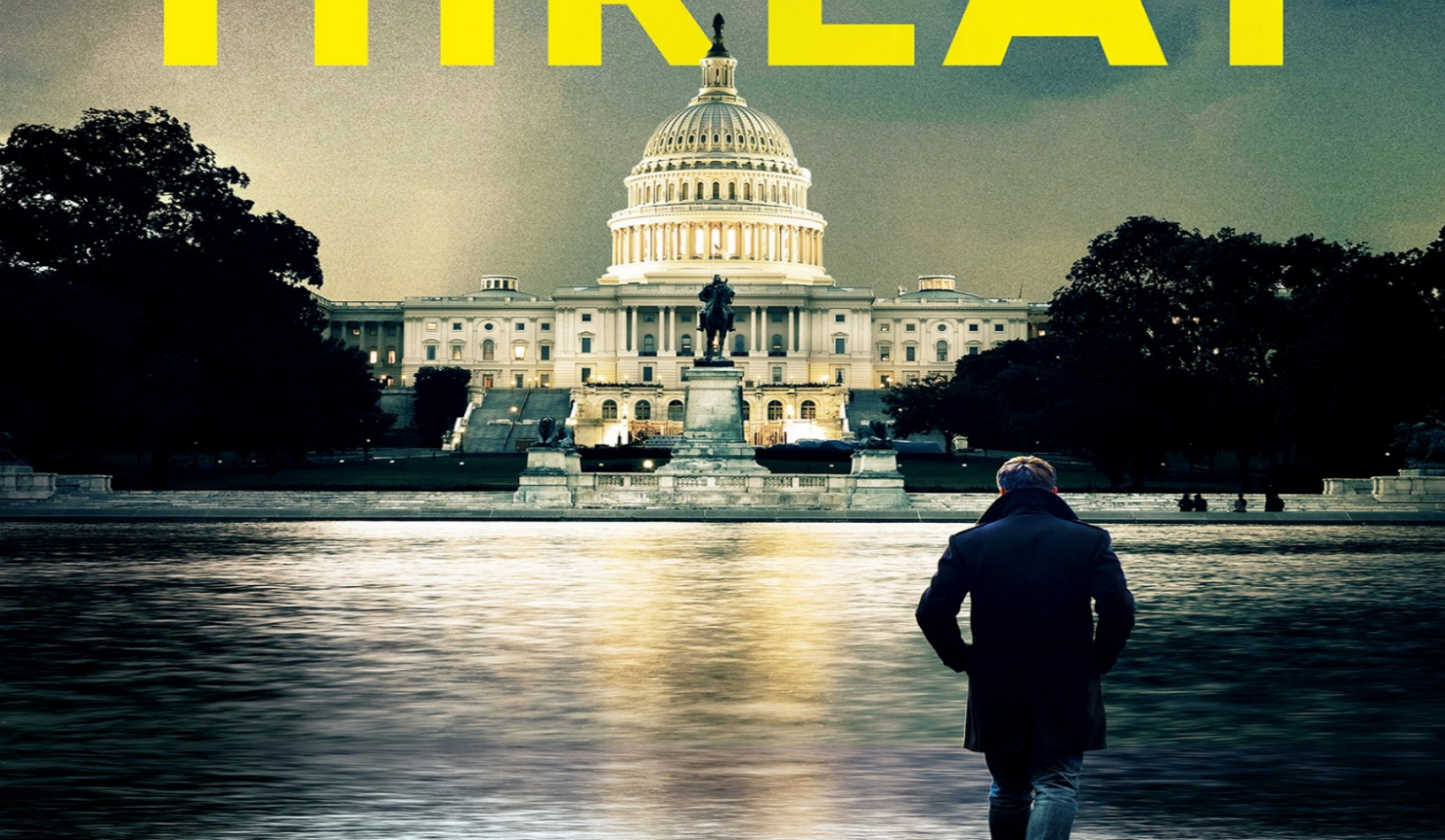
MATTHEW

QUIRK

FROM THE AUTHOR OF *THE NIGHT AGENT*

INSIDE THREAT



INSIDE THREAT

ALSO BY MATTHEW QUIRK

The 500
The Directive
Cold Barrel Zero
Dead Man Switch
The Night Agent
Hour of the Assassin
Red Warning

INSIDE THREAT

MATTHEW QUIRK

An Aries Book

www.headofzeus.com

First published in US in 2023 by William Morrow,
an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers

First published in the UK in 2023 by Head of Zeus,
part of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

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This is a work of fiction. All characters, organizations, and events portrayed in this novel are either products of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN (PB): 9781035905201
ISBN (E): 9781035905188

Cover design: Simon Michele / Head of Zeus

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For Emily

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The Raven Rock Mountain Complex and the secret emergency presidential powers described in this book are real, though certain details have been changed or omitted.

CHARACTERS

WHITE HOUSE

— James Kline: President of the United States

— Dr. Sarah Kline: First Lady of the United States

— Claire Givens: White House Chief of Staff

— Benjamin Chilton: Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Secret Service Presidential Protective Division

— Eric Hill: Secret Service Agent

— Michael Hardwick: Secret Service Agent

— Laura Leigh: Secret Service Agent

— Liam Walsh: Secret Service Agent

— Samuel Brimley: Secret Service Agent

— Amber Cody: Secret Service Agent

— Tim Navarro: Secret Service Agent

— Matt Byrne: Secret Service Agent

— Joe Cody: Secret Service Agent (deceased), Amber Cody's father

— Major Paul Eubanks: Military Aide to the President

— Will Maddox: President Kline's Personal Aide/Body Man

— Captain Nathan Chen: White House Doctor

— Alexander Braun: Secretary of the Treasury, major fundraiser

— Stephen Reinhart: Former President (fifteen years ago)

— Ellen O'Hara: Communications Secretary

— Thomas Searle: Congressional Aide

RAVEN ROCK MOUNTAIN COMPLEX

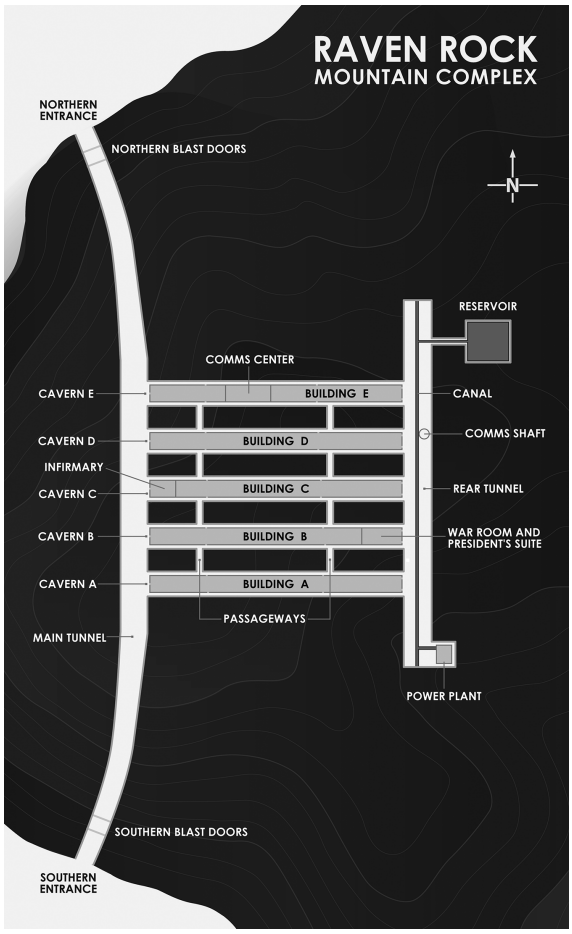
— Lieutenant Colonel Bruce Drumm: Deputy/Acting Commander of Raven Rock

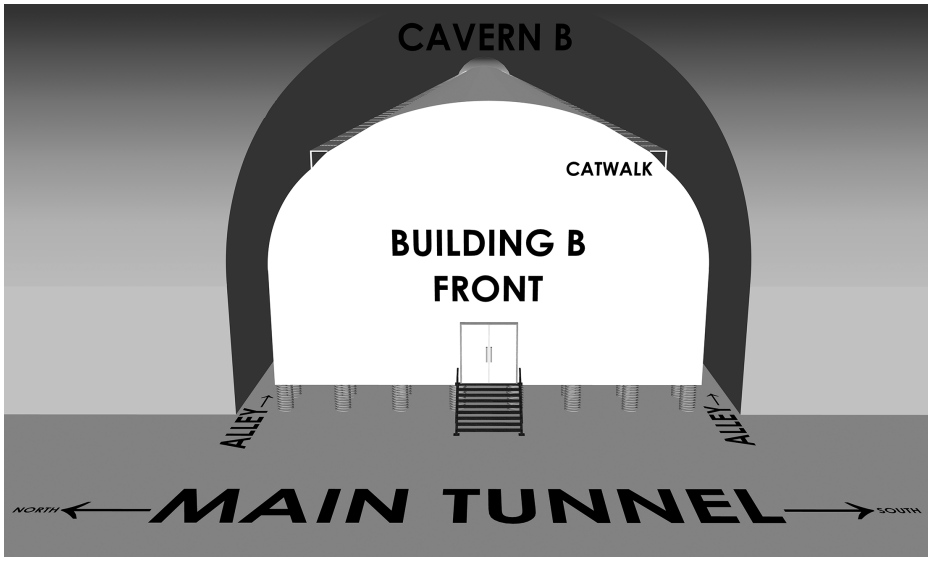
— Major Ashley Moro: Executive Officer

— Major Rebecca Vaughn: Communications Officer

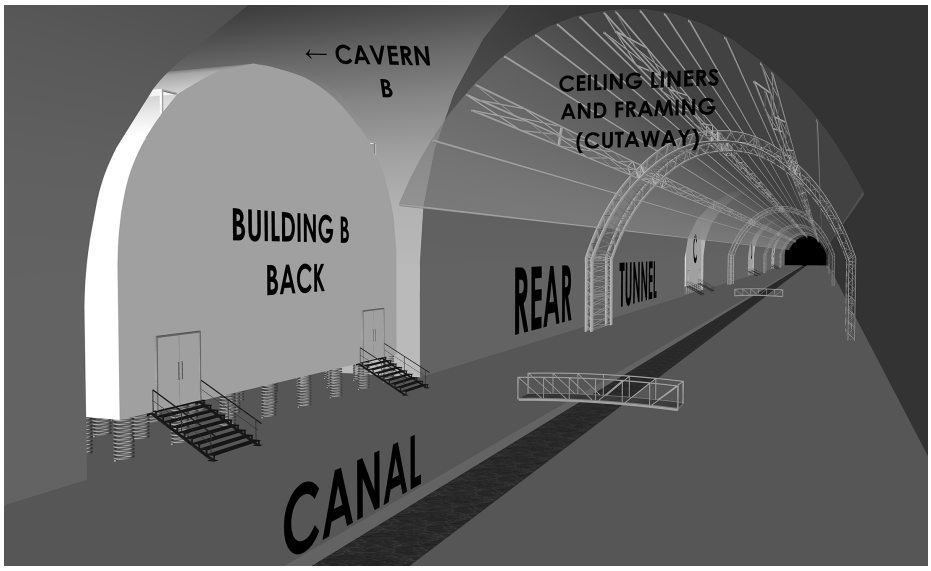
— Captain Kevin Foster: Security Officer

MAPS


RAVEN ROCK
MOUNTAIN COMPLEX
NORTHERN ENTRANCE
NORTHERN BLAST DOORS
N
RESERVOIR
COMMS CENTER
CAVERN E
BUILDING E
CANAL
CAVERN D
BUILDING D
COMMS SHAFT
INFIRMARY
CAVERN C
BUILDING C
REAR TUNNEL
CAVERN B
BUILDING B
WAR ROOM AND PRESIDENT'S SUITE
CAVERN A
BUILDING A
PASSAGEWAYS
MAIN TUNNEL
POWER PLANT
SOUTHERN BLAST DOORS
SOUTHERN ENTRANCE



The view inside the main tunnel looking at the front of Building B in its cavern. The main tunnel ceiling liners and framing are omitted for clarity.



The view looking north up the rear tunnel from behind Building B. The ceiling liners and framing are shown in cutaway.

INSIDE THREAT

1

Friday. 7:14 p.m.

KILLER. TRAITOR. HERO. The man strolling toward the White House would be called many names by the time this operation was over, but among his accomplices he went by the alias Marcus. It was a nod to Marcus Brutus, the Roman assassin.

With his navy suit and crew cut, he looked like any other Washington bureaucrat, one of dozens on their rounds near Pennsylvania Avenue this evening, though his expression was a little brighter than most. He strode through Lafayette Park, eyes on the portico of the White House residence with its great black hanging lantern.

A group of protesters shook signs—“Tyrant” and “Killer-in-Chief”—and shouted slogans on the brick sidewalk, facing off with a row of Secret Service agents behind a steel barricade. One demonstrator stepped onto the barrier, and the agent shoved him back. The country was a tinderbox. All it needed was a spark.

Marcus surveyed the new thirteen-foot-tall black perimeter fence and the grounds just beyond it, noting the subtle variations in the grass—signs of pressure sensors beneath—and the well-hidden laser, microwave, and infrared motion detectors. Triggering any of them would bring out the black-clad emergency response teams and Belgian Malinois attack dogs.

He slipped across Pennsylvania Avenue, turning slightly to stay just out of frame of a school group’s selfie, his eyes tracing the rooftops of the buildings surrounding the White House.

He picked out the sniper team on the eastern edge of the residence roof, a spotter and a shooter with a silenced custom Remington 700.

Glancing back to the office buildings towering to the northwest, he checked the parapet that concealed the Avenger system—a battery of eight Stinger missiles along with a computer-aimed machine gun firing six-inch-long bullets that could blow a plane out of the sky from a mile away.

As he neared the main guardhouse to the north of the West Wing, his heart drummed harder. His skin was warm despite the autumn breeze.

Marcus carried a SIG Sauer P229, two extra magazines, a SureFire flashlight, and a Benchmade folding knife. It was all he needed to bring this place down, to start a war.

He waited for a staffer to clear security and stepped up to the guardhouse window. The sentry inside, uniformed Secret Service, stared at Marcus as he pressed a blue badge to a scanner near the gate.

The guard's eyes went down. Marcus shifted his weight onto his right foot, his hand drawing closer to the SIG on his waist.

He knew what was on that guard's screen. Two words: Yankee White. It went beyond the normal security clearances. It was the highest access you could receive in the American government.

A green light flashed. The gate unlocked and Marcus pushed through with a smile and a nod to the officer.

He walked down Executive Avenue and passed the Marine guard standing at attention outside the West Wing's covered entrance.

The president was in the Oval Office, working late. Marcus moved on without slowing, turning past a copse of elms, the rolling grass of the South Lawn to his side.

The clouds stacked in the sky, bruised blue and purple with sunset. He walked slowly, his eyes on the windows of the Oval, six-inch-thick bulletproof glass. Behind them, the air in the room was kept at a slightly higher pressure than the outside to prevent biological and chemical attacks. A small wooden block marked with the presidential seal sat on the Resolute Desk, one of a half-dozen innocent-looking items—called knockdowns—that, when tipped over, would summon the counterassault boys with their heavy artillery.

President James Harrington Kline strode past the window, then stopped and looked out. He had dark brown hair, gray near the

temples, and straight-line posture—he always held himself like he was having his portrait taken.

Marcus clocked his target and kept moving, wary of the three roving patrols. He knew their patterns down to the minute.

The government had invested hundreds of millions of dollars to protect that one man. The inner sanctums of the White House were unbreachable unless you knew their secrets. Marcus did. He was an insider. His orders came from the highest levels. Operation V was about to start.

The White House was just the beginning. Marcus knew where it would all end—fifty miles from here in a facility whose existence was one of the most well-guarded secrets in government.

His eyes went to the flag, twisting slowly in the night above the residence. To rebuild a nation, you must first destroy it.

Hero. Traitor. If he survived the next twenty-four hours, the world would understand which side he was on.

He pressed his hand to his jacket, felt the weight of the gun underneath, and marched toward the West Wing.