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CLARION REVIEW ★★★★☆ THRILLER

## All the Targets: A Novel of International Intrigue

**Noah Bond**
Mission Investments
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*All the Targets* packs several novels' worth of international intrigue into one breathless story. Noah Bond's inspired novel includes nuclear warfare, a hostage crisis, airline hijacking, and a clandestine operation to remove the North Korean leader.

The initial focus is on Marco Redondo, a senator from Texas who witnesses the impending devastation of the United States' West Coast through a computer screen at Cheyenne Mountain in Colorado. This horrific scenario leads to an undercover world of agents, doubles, assassination, and mayhem in the Middle East. A dubious liaison between Meghan, an American agent, and Hassim, her Muslim captor and protector, offers a subplot. Though their relationship is not developed, this romantic interest adds an intriguing spark to the story.

Bond's meticulously conceived tale will appeal to readers seeking pulp fiction that bewilders as much as it entertains. However, the book's outstanding pacing and editing are undermined: too much high-stakes activity takes the novel in too many directions.

Woven into the narrative, contradictory attitudes about the Western world are expressed through different characters. Certain passages have a classic, combat-the-crusader tone that foreshadows impending doom. "Abdul returned, brandishing the sword triumphantly in his remaining hand. It was truly a thing of beauty, with Koranic verses inscribed into its curved, gleaming blade. Yusef had been right. This would impress the infidels more than any mere knife."

Other perspectives divulge a genuine affection for America's liberated culture: "The smiling women with their uncovered heads and their revealing Western fashions returned his smiles and captured his eyes. Women with stylish hair you could actually see. Women with long, naked legs… . How he enjoyed this stimulating display of pulchritude. He loved them all."

The book's promotional packaging includes an attention-grabbing front cover with a provocative blurb, but an unexpected statement appears on the back cover: "No profanity or foul language." For a book that contains graphic violence, this statement seems unnecessary.

The contrasting viewpoints in *All the Targets* offer a perceptive glimpse into a range of individual Muslim beliefs. Bond's credible portrayal of different cultures enhances the quality of a work overloaded with subplots.
JULIA ANN CHARPENTIER (April 6, 2012)

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