



Deception: A Mac Daniels Novel

Gene Boffa

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Fast-paced and timely, this thriller will leave readers wanting more of CIA agent Mac Daniels.

Gene Boffa's *Deception* is an exciting, action-packed adventure that tells the story of Mac Daniels, a CIA agent who travels to North Korea and confesses to stealing weapons-grade uranium. While he's there, Mac learns that ISIS has brokered a deal with the North Koreans for surface to air missiles and sarin gas. Daniels must stop the plot with the help of his media mogul girlfriend, Astrid. Though Astrid is able to get close to Kim Jong Un, the dictator of North Korea, for an interview, Daniels is left in danger, with the North Korean police on his trail.

Excellent written, *Deception* is consistent and entertaining. The book is fast-paced, with Daniels constantly getting in and out of precarious situations. Fighting scenes between Daniels and his terrorist enemies are described in vivid detail.

The plot is complex, with many different characters on multiple continents. Themes of deceptive diplomacy between nations in the name of patriotism are intriguing. Each scene is carefully set, making accessible sometimes complicated plot developments. The story is also timely, analyzing the very real tensions between North Korea and the United States.

While the story is engaging, characters are less well developed and do not evolve over the course of the novel. Daniels is presented as a one-dimensional good guy getting revenge on bad guys; any complexities related to his role with the CIA are absent. Astrid is a physically strong character; she beats up the bad guys just as hard as Daniels does. However, Astrid is often just a foil for Daniels; she is overly sexualized, even though she's an accomplished woman.

Heavy on action, the novel is short on nuanced dialogue. Its discussions may be an accurate reflection of a male-dominated world of spies and secret agents, but they still read as off-puttingly simplistic and sexist. While Daniels respects Astrid, he mentions her breasts as often as her work.

The story has a satisfying resolution to the conflict between Daniels and the nefarious international agents who chase him. However, *Deception* also has a cliffhanger ending that will leave some readers wanting more.

Deception will appeal to readers who love Tom Clancy thrillers or novels where powerful American men save the United States from global dangers. Gene Boffa's Mac Daniels is an agent with a future, who should be featured in many more novels to come.

ELLA VINCENT (January 6, 2017)

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