Clarion Review

General

FBI Fly Team
Ali Myers
BookSurge
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Three Stars (out of Five)

In 2003, the Marriott Hotel in Jakarta, Indonesia was bombed, killing twelve people and wounding 150. In 2009, the Marriott was bombed again, but this time Jakarta's Ritz-Carlton was also attacked. Nine people lost their lives and more than fifty were injured. These events, as well as other assaults and uprisings, led Ali Myers to devote her debut novel to a fictionalized version of terrorism in her native land.

The novel features a highly trained, counter-terrorist unit, the FBI Fly Team, which is sent to Indonesia to investigate the suicide bombing. By agreement with the Indonesian government, their intervention is justified by the fact that Americans were killed and wounded in the bombing. However, they are careful to coordinate their activities with the local police, turning over any evidence they collect as well as a copy of their analysis. The American investigators also work closely with the United States embassy.

A highly detailed account is given of the metal, glass, papers, and pieces of clothing that are collected. Also recounted are the autopsies of the victims and the visits they make to the hospitalized survivors. While the presentation of all this data slows the action of the story, it provides an incontrovertible air of authenticity.

The emphasis on the investigators alternates with chapters devoted to the activities of the terrorists whose base is a three-hour flight and a two-hour motor trip north of Jakarta. Fifty "students" are "studying" there, some of whom will be selected for advanced training in Afghanistan. They are preparing to serve Allah so as to be rewarded in the after life. These potential suicide bombers figure importantly in the story when they participate in the inevitable battle between the FBI Fly Team and the terrorists. It becomes increasingly clear that more is at stake than bringing to justice the perpetrators of the hotel bombing, since the ruthless killers are plotting further attacks throughout the free world.

The final fight between the FBI Fly Team and the terrorists is described with some vivacity even though it is clear that the "good guys" will win and the "bad guys" will lose. There is tension as efforts are made to enlist the assistance of native villagers and their eventual cooperation guarantees success. Readers will inevitably be caught up in this battle, especially since it is a microcosm of the war being waged by the United States against terrorists.

Myers was educated in Vancouver, Canada, and San Francisco, California. She now lives in Orlando, Florida, where she is an independent marketing consultant, specializing in Asia. Her book, thinly disguised as fiction, is essentially a warning against the dire threat of terrorism. Some of its effectiveness is diminished by the rather wooden prose in which it is written. Myers plans *FBI Fly Team: The Rim on Fire* to be the first novel in a series of at least three. She will hopefully benefit from her experience and demonstrate greater literary skills in future volumes.