

Deadly Codes

Contributed by John Manhold
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Deadly Codes, ISBN 9780595514113, iUniverse, Paperback, 206 pages, \$15.95 by JP O'Donnell is a modern murder mystery that has all of the elements required to make a fast moving thriller.

Gallagher, a Boston based Private Investigator, is called in to investigate a car bomb murder. The victim is the wife of a high-level member of the National Security Agency responsible for cryptographic analysis in their counterintelligence division. The belief is that the bomb is the work of an al-Qaida operative. The person hiring the detective is the victim's sister who is not so sure that the blame has been properly placed. The sister suspects the husband and/or a mysterious woman who recently befriended her sister.

The plot becomes even more complicated when it is discovered that the strange woman who is the wife's new acquaintance not only was acting under an assumed name, but is a CIA agent, as well. The action shifts rapidly back and forth between Boston and Washington, D. C. with Gallagher gathering information from old buddies and some new ones. We also are given a short vignette of a meeting in Milwaukee between a Las Vegas Mob Boss and some Chicago Hitmen who become relevant to a counter plot in the story. Gradually, more agents from NSA, the CIA and the FBI, local police, a Monsignor of the Catholic Church, a convict, and others appear, all contributing to the story's plots.

My only question with regard to the book is a matter to do with Massachusetts gun laws. However, such a matter will be a most minor consideration that will not even produce a hiccup to the flow of the book for the average reader.

I am not going to provide any further description of Deadly Codes, because I believe that providing more details would spoil the intriguing plots of this story. So, to conclude, JP O'Donnell has provided a romp through a modern day combined world of international and underworld intrigue that the reader will find difficult to put down.