Vicious Circle



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An Israeli government minister is assassinated in the home of his mistress. Days later, Elihu, an aging and decorated Mossad officer, leads his final combat mission, killing a Hamas leader in his bed—and barely escaping with his life. Out of this familiarly cyclical scenario emerges what is perhaps Robert Littell's most heartfelt and suspenseful novel. The action moves into the near future, when the global community, united under the leadership of a visionary female president of the United States, brokers a major compromise between Israel and the Palestinian authority in the hopes of snuffing out the violent flashpoint that fuels the flames of global terrorism. But then, Isaac Apfülbaum, a well-known fundamentalist Rabbi, is taken hostage by Dr. al-Saath, a legendary Palestinian terrorist, who demands the release of scores of high-level Palestinian political prisoners in exchange for his captive. Elihu, now directing the interagency intelligence team hunting for Apfulbaum's captors, finds himself tracking a familiar and elusive enemy. As the Israelis'slowly close in on their pray, the hostage and the hostage taker—sparring through grueling all-night interrogation sessions—become caught up in an extraordinary relationship; parallels between these battle-scarred partisans evolve in to bizarre bonds and a terrifying alliance. Israel, Palestine and the international community are united behind the effort to end the hostage crisis, but has the vicious circle already been closed? Ferociously suspenseful

and brilliantly topical, Vicious Circle is a thriller that, like The Company before it, exposes the heart of an entire culture of violence by probing the corrupted consciences of the men and woman ensnared within it.
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