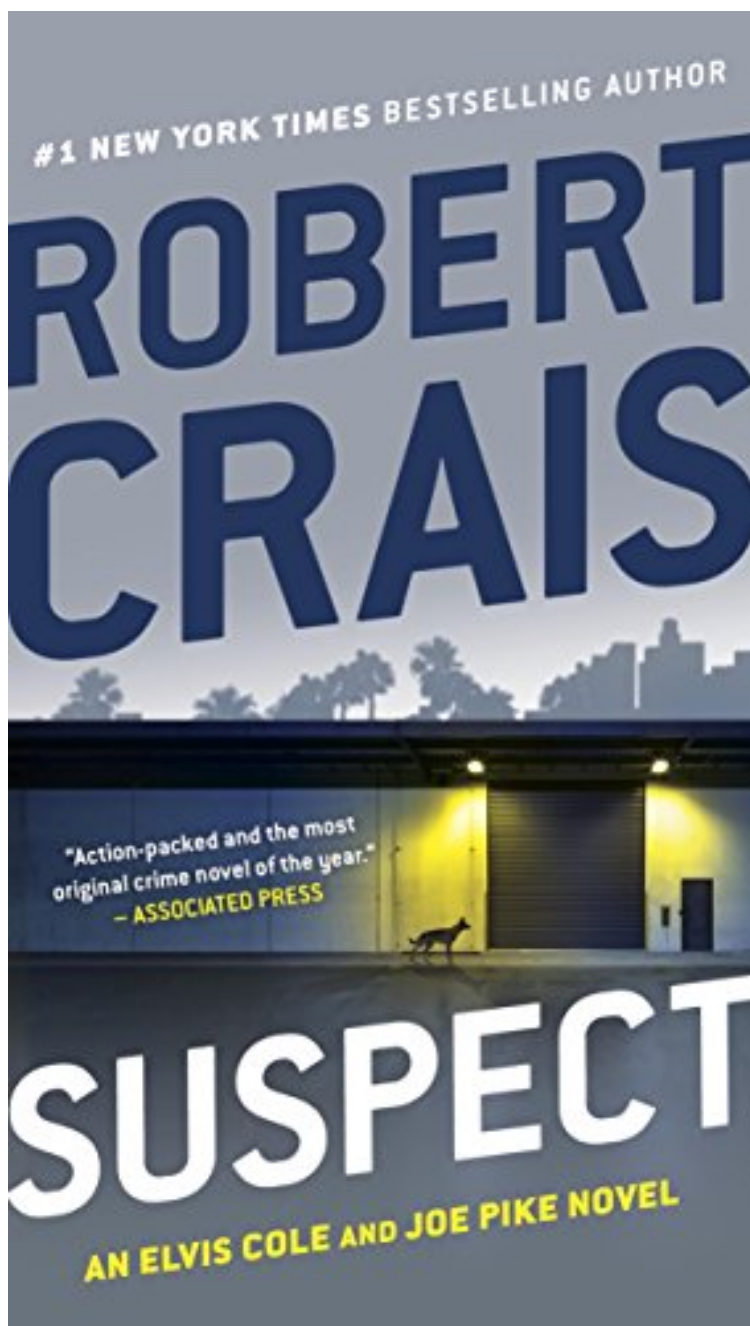


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# Suspect



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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurFrom the #1 New York Times bestselling author of the Elvis Cole and Joe Pike series comes a thrilling novel featuringLAPD K-9 Officer Scott James and his German shepherd, Maggie.Nine months ago, a shocking assault by unidentified men killed Scott James' partner, Stephanie, nearly killed him, and left him enraged, ashamed, and ready to explode. He is unfit for dutyuntil he meets his new partner.

Maggie is not doing so well, either. A German shepherd who survived two tours in Afghanistan sniffing explosives before losing her handler, her PTSD is as bad as Scotts. They are each others last chance. And theyre about to investigate the one case no one wants them to touch: identifying the men who murdered Stephanie. But what they find could ultimately break them both.

One of Booklist's 10 Best Crime Fiction Books of the Year

ExtraitNormal0falsefalsefalseMicrosoftInternetExplorer4st1:\* {behavior:url(#ieooui) }/\* Style Definitions \*/table.MsoNormalTable {mso-style-name:"Table Normal";mso-tstyle-rowband-size:0;mso-tstyle-colband-size:0;mso-style-noshow:yes;mso-style-parent:"";mso-padding-alt:0in 5.4pt 0in 5.4pt;mso-para-margin:0in;mso-para-margin-bottom:.0001pt;mso-pagination:widow-orphan;font-size:10.0pt;font-family:"Times New Roman";mso-ansi-language:#0400;mso-fareast-language:#0400;mso-bidi-language:#0400;} They were on that particular street at that specific T intersection at that crazy hour because Scott James was hungry. Stephanie shut off their patrol car to please him. They could have been anywhere else, but he led her there, that night, to that silent intersection. It was so quiet that night, they spoke of it. Unnaturally quiet.

\*Stephanie frowned. You sure you know where youre going? I know where Im going. Just hang on. Scott was trying to find an all-night noodle house that a Rampart burglary detective had raved about, one of those pop-up places that takes over an empty storefront for a couple months, hypes itself on Twitter, then disappears. Scott was trying to figure out how he had screwed up the directions when he suddenly heard it. Listen. What? Shh, listen. Turn off the engine. You have no idea where this place is, do you? You have to hear this. Listen. Uniformed LAPD officer Stephanie Andress, a P-III with eleven years on the job, shifted into park, turned off their Adam car, and stared at him. She had a fine tan face, with lines at the corners of her eyes, and short sandy hair. Scott James, a thirty-two-year-old P-II with six years on the job, grinned as he touched his ear, telling her to listen. Stephanie seemed lost for a moment, then blossomed with a wide smile. Its quiet. Crazy, huh? No radio calls. No chatter. I cant even hear the freeway. Stephanie reached to start the car, but Scott stopped her. Lets sit for a minute. How many times you hear silence like this? Never. This is so cool, its creeping me out. Dont worry. Ill protect you. Stephanie laughed, and Scott loved how the streetlights gleamed in her eyes. He wanted to touch her hand, but didnt. They had been partners for seven months, but now Scott was leaving, and there were things he wanted to say. Youve been a good partner. Are you going to get all gooeey on me? Yeah. Kinda. Okay, well, Im going to miss you. Im going to miss you more. Their little joke. Everything a competition, even to who would miss the other the most. He wanted to touch her hand again, but then she reached out and took his hand in hers, and gave him a squeeze. No, youre not. Youre going to kick ass, take names, and have a blast. Its what you want, man, and I couldnt be happier. Youre a stud. Scott laughed. He had played football for two years at the University of Redlands before blowing his knee, then spent four years as an MP in the United States Marine Corps. He joined LAPD after the Marines, and took night classes for the next four years to finish his degree. Scott James had goals. He was young, determined, and competitive, and wanted to run with the big dogs. He had been accepted into LAPDs Metro Division, the elite uniformed division that backed up area-based officers throughout the city. Scotts transfer to Metro would come at the end of the week. Stephanie was still holding his hand, and Scott was wondering what she meant by it when an enormous Bentley sedan appeared at the end of the street, as out of place in this neighborhood as a flying carpet. At the moment the Bentley reached the intersecting street, a deep throaty growl shattered the perfect silence, and a black Kenworth truck exploded from the cross street. It T-boned the Bentley so hard the seven-thousand-pound sedan rolled completely over and came to rest right side up on the opposite side of the street. The Kenworth skidded sideways, and stopped blocking the street. Stephanie said, Holy crap! Scott slapped on their flashers, and pushed out of the car. He was three paces ahead, and closer to the Bentley. I got the Batmobile. You get the truck. Stephanie broke into a trot, and the two veered apart. No one and nothing else moved on the street except steam hissing from beneath the Bentleys hood. They had gone less than a car length when bright yellow bursts flashed within the truck, and a hammering chatter echoed between the buildings. Scott thought something was exploding within the trucks cab, then bullets ripped into their patrol car and the Bentley with the thunder of steel rain. Scott instinctively jumped sideways as Stephanie went down. She screamed once, and wrapped her arms across her chest. Im shot. Oh, crap. Scott dropped to the ground and covered his head. Bullets sparked off the concrete around him and gouged ruts in the street. Move. Do something. Scott rolled sideways, drew his pistol, and fired at the flashes as fast as he could. He pushed to his feet, and zigzagged toward his partner as an older, dark gray sedan screamed down the street. It screeched to a stop beside the Bentley, but Scott barely saw it. He fired blindly at the truck as he ran, and zigged hard toward his partner. Stephanie was clutching herself as if doing stomach crunches. Scott grabbed her arm. He realized the men in the truck had

stopped firing and thought he and Stephanie might make it even as she screamed. Three men wearing black masks and bulky jackets boiled out of the sedan with pistols and shotguns, and lit up the Bentley, shattering the glass and punching holes in its body. As they fired, two more masked men climbed from the truck with AK-47 rifles. Scott dragged Stephanie toward their black-and-white, slipped in her blood, then started backward again. The first man out of the truck was tall and thin, and immediately opened fire into the Bentley's windshield. The second man was thick, with a large gut that bulged out over his belt. He turned away from the Bentley, swung his rifle toward Scott, and the AK-47 bloomed with yellow flowers. Something punched Scott hard in the thigh, and he lost his grip on Stephanie and his pistol. He sat down hard, looked at his thigh, and saw blood welling from his leg. Scott picked up his pistol, fired two more shots, and his pistol locked open. Empty. He pushed to his knees, and took Stephanie's arm again. Im dying." Scott said, No, you're not. I swear to God, you're not. A second bullet slammed into the top of his shoulder, knocking him down. Scott lost Stephanie and his pistol again, and his left arm went numb. The big man must have thought Scott was done. He turned to his friends, and when he did, Scott left Stephanie, and pushed toward their patrol car like a broken crab, dragging his useless leg and pushing with his good. The car was their only cover. If he made it to the car, he could use it as a weapon or a shield. Scott keyed his shoulder mike as he scuttled backward and whispered as loudly as he dared. Officer down! Shots fired, shots fired! One-adam-sixty-two, were dying out here! The men from the gray sedan threw open the Bentley's doors and fired inside. Scott glimpsed passengers, but saw only shadows. Then the firing stopped, and Stephanie called out behind him. Her voice bubbled with blood, and cut him like knives. Don't leave me!

Scotty, don't leave! Scott pushed harder, desperate to reach the car. Shotgun in the car. Keys in the ignition. DONT LEAVE ME! Im not, baby. Im not. COME BACK! Scott was five yards from their patrol car when the big man heard Stephanie. He turned, saw Scott, then lifted his rifle and fired. Scott James felt the third impact as the bullet punched through his vest and ribs on the lower right side of his chest. The pain was intense, and quickly grew worse as his abdominal cavity filled with pooling blood. Scott slowed to a stop. He tried to crawl farther, but his strength was gone. He leaned back on an elbow, and waited for the big man to shoot him again, but the big man turned toward the Bentley. Sirens were coming. Black figures were inside the Bentley, but Scott couldn't see what they were doing. The driver of the gray sedan twisted to see them, and pulled up his mask as he turned. Scott saw a flash of white on the man's cheek, and then the men in and around the Bentley ran into the waiting gray car. The men from the Kenworth climbed inside with them. The big man was the last. He hesitated by the sedan's open door, once more looked at Scott, and raised his rifle. Scott screamed. NO! Scott tried to jump out of the way as the sirens faded into a soothing voice. Wake up, Scott. NO! Three, two, one. Nine months and sixteen days after he was shot that night, nine months and sixteen days after he saw his partner murdered, Scott James screamed when he woke. *Revue de presse* "a touching relationship between man and dog." (THE SUN) Robert Crais is, without question, one of the very best mystery writers of all time. And in *Elvis Cole* and *Joe Pike* he has created two of the most iconic figures in any genre (David Baldacci) Maggie is one gorgeous girl, altogether worthy of playing a leading role in *SUSPECT*, Robert Crais's heart-tugging novel about two wounded war veterans who nudge each other back to life after suffering a traumatic loss . . . [Maggie] holds us captive, enthralled by Crais's perceptive depiction of her amazing capabilities. (NEW YORK TIMES) Thoroughly involving and skillfully presented . . . A read-in-one-sitting thriller, plot- and character-driven in equal measures (BOOKLIST) It takes a brave writer to try not to have animals upstage his story, and Crais makes it work almost immediately; the prologue in Afghanistan is superbly judged. He makes Maggie a real character with some of the most touching writing I've read in the crime field in ages. Using animal point of view is equally risky, but again, Crais pulls it off... a bravura piece of writing. (IRRESISTIBLE TARGETS) "Not only exciting but also deeply moving." (Mark Sanderson SUNDAY TELEGRAPH) An intriguing stand-alone thriller... Crais has created an unsentimental, page-riffling read that grips the reader. (Myles McWeeney IRISH INDEPENDENT) Another heart wrenching read from Crais which makes you want more. (LIFESTYLE NORTH EAST)