



# Hostage Taker

*Stefanie Pintoff*

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## **Hostage Taker** Stefanie Pintoff

From Edgar Award winner Stefanie Pintoff comes the start of an electrifying new thriller series featuring Eve Rossi, head of a secret division of the FBI - one made up of ex-convicts with extraordinary talents, oversized egos, and contempt for the rules. Perfect for readers of Iris Johansen and Catherine Coulter.

In the hushed quiet of early morning Manhattan, in front of the towering brass doors of Saint Patrick's Cathedral, a young woman holds a sign that reads: HELP ME. For one FBI agent, a madman's terrified hostages, and an entire city, a long and harrowing day is about to unfold.

The hostage taker's identity is unknown. But he knows who FBI agent Eve Rossi is - and everything about her past. Along with her presence, he demands five witnesses: ordinary people with some hidden connection. Defying her superiors, Eve begins a deadly dance with an adversary whose intentions are surely sinister, whose endgame is anything but certain, and whose cunning keeps him one step ahead at every turn.

As Eve manages a taut hostage situation, she relies on the combined skills of her team - a secret unit inspired by France's most notorious criminal and made up of ex-convicts with extraordinary talents, oversized egos, and contempt for the rules.

Eve is up against a rapidly ticking clock. But the dangerous man calling the shots has a timetable of his own - and a searing question for his targets: What are you guilty of? As shocking revelations surface, so does another crisis nobody could anticipate - one not even Eve and her team may be able to stop.

## **Hostage Taker Details**

Date : Published August 18th 2015 by Bantam  
ISBN : 9780345531407  
Author : Stefanie Pintoff  
Format : Hardcover 422 pages  
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## From Reader Review Hostage Taker for online ebook

### HornFan2 (Mike) says

Thanks to netgalley.com, Stefanie Pintoff, and Random House/Ballantine for the advance ATC for my review.

If you saw a crime occurring, say a mugging?

Would freeze, be unable to respond to the situation.

Would you come to the aid of the victim.

Call 911, immediately before you do anything else.

Do nothing, just continue to watch.

Record it, while doing nothing and later post it on social media.

Well strap yourself in, get comfortable and learn just what one troubled person did after witnessing a mugging. Were they we're injured coming to the aid of the victim, even ask for help and all while five others did nothing to help.

Pinetoff puts the reader right there, into the action, you'll feel like you're part of the multi-law enforcement team at a hostage situation and into the mindset of a troubled individual. That's fed up with people not stopping to help victims of crimes, stopping it or reporting it.

'Sometimes it takes a thief to catch a thief', that's what Monsieur Henry, head of the French Prefecture, said about his unusual working arrangement with thief Eugene Francois Vidocq.

I'm hopelessly addicted to the Investigative Discovery channel, watch all the various Police shows. It's always amazed me how much crime happens by chance or just being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

That's what happens to 9 hostages, including one person that's forced to be a bad guy, while trying to save his kidnapped daughters life and it all goes down at New York's historic St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Being a fan of the Police Procedural genre, made me want to read 'Hostage Taker' and it doesn't disappoint. While it's a lengthy read, it's fast paced and done in away to make it seem shorter by its chapter count.

You have multiple storylines intertwined together, they work and they keep the reading interesting.

Agent Eve Rossi, a FBI negotiator is a real likeable character, easily relatable to and makes the storylines work. She does have some personal issues but she's tough, gutsy, genuine and really cares for the victims.

The book makes reference to Videoq. Which was a practice first used by France in 1805, when thief Eugene Francois Vidocq approached Monsieur Henry who was the head of the French Prefecture and formed a relationship that used his crime knowledge to help catch other criminals.

I liked how Pinetoff used this, liked Mace, Eli, Haddox and Garcia a group of four criminals. Each has a special talent, came from different backgrounds, don't always get along and will do anything for their boss Agent Rossi.

Pinetoff does an excellent job with this part of the story, makes it believable and realistic in how it happens. She masterfully uses trickery, were the real bad person is hidden in plain sight and a fall guy who's merely a

puppet.

Not to give it away, the puppet's a Police Officer, who joined the Marine Reserves after 9/11. He's down on his luck, recently divorced, under investigation and the perfect fall guy to be set up.

I definitely do recommend reading 'Hostage Taker'. Will be adding Stefanie Pintoff to my favorite author list, eagerly awaiting the next Agent Eve Rossi book and check out her Detective Simon Ziele series.

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### **Heather Fineisen says**

A lot of loose ends which will probably come closer together as the series evolves. That said, I would read another one, but found the ending a bit of a mess. Unpredictable, but still messy. The beginning was stronger but left many unresolved points.

Provided by netgalley

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### **Jim Angstadt says**

Hostage Taker (Eve Rossi #1)  
Stefanie Pintoff (Goodreads Author)

Eve Rossi is an FBI hostage negotiator who has been on extended leave. Now called back to duty in NYC at the insistence of the hostage taker. She assembles her old crew, an improbable collection of hackers, ex-military, and those with expert local knowledge, while nominally working for a politically motivated boss.

The characters are improbable stereotypes. One or two in a story might work well. But too many spoil the story. The plot has a made-for-TV feel, yet, at the end, there is an unexpected twist.

This is light fast reading.

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### **Debbie says**

I was literally holding onto my seat while riding the rails on this journey! I'm finally able to breathe now that I've finished the book. Someone takes over St. Patrick's Cathedral holding hostages and why? The reason was totally jacked up, but apparently the hostage taker was as well. And, you will never guess who it is.

This book was entertaining almost from the very first page. I just sped through this one, it was that good.

And the way he would do the hostages was very different and intriguing. They were looking to find one smarter person with this guy. This book kind of reminded me of the TV show "Scorpions", which I love. They are all smart in their own ways and are using their illegal passions to track down other criminals.

Thanks Random House/ Dell and Net Galley for allowing me to read and review this book. I found it very entertaining and highly recommend it!

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## Diane S ? says

Pintoff's last three novels (which I have read) have been historical mysteries, and I enjoyed them all. Was a little apprehensive and maybe a little disappointed when I read that this one was set in current times, but since I love this author's writing, I thought why not give it a try? So very glad I did. This was fast paced, a super charged thriller, tense, suspenseful and thankfully for this reader, the start of a new series.

The Vidocq Unit, headed by Eve Rossi, a hostage negotiator, comes together in response to a crisis situation in St. Patrick's Cathedral. The Cathedral is the true star of this novel, loved reading about the ins and outs of the cathedral, the secret passages, have never been but hope to one day. This is a story where the truth must be uncovered, not only to save the cathedral, which is heavily wired with explosives, but also to save the unknown quantity of the hostages inside. So one by one information is uncovered, pieced together in an attempt to form a picture. What does the Hostage Taker want. What are his motives and first of all who is he?

This lady can write and write well. Fell for this unit of misfits, and look forward to their next case.

ARC from publisher.

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## Judy Collins says

*A special thank you to Random House/Ballantine and NetGalley for an ARC in exchange for an honest review.*

**The HOSTAGE TAKER** by *Stefanie Pintoff*, a new riveting urban contemporary series, featuring Eve Rossi negotiator FBI agent for an intense suspense roller-coaster crime thriller ride.

**What starts as a shooting** outside of Saint Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan revolves into a dangerous and complex hostage situation. At stake are not only the lives of the hostages but the fate of the most iconic church in the country.

**Eve Rossi**, is head of a secret division of the FBI. Most of the eclectic team is a mix of highly intelligent professionals, criminals, and ex-convicts, a secret squad known as the VIDOCQ Unit.

**On the day of the Christmas** Rockefeller Center tree lighting, in New York, a man barricades himself and an unknown number of hostages inside St. Patrick's Cathedral. He requests Eve Rossi, who's on bereavement leave following her stepfather's death, a former a former CIA operative.

**Eve is called back to work;** however, the mysterious hostage situation is complex and so many elements are on the line. He wants five individuals brought to the scene to act as "witnesses" to the events. As the terror

and intensity heats up, as the clock ticks, getting close to the deadline-- *things do not go as planned*.

**I enjoyed the news breaks** by the hour, with new correspondents, and the visual classified VIDOCQ files listing the individual's expertise, age, and criminal record, (along with their strengths and weaknesses), etc. -- adding to the drama. The Author's Note was a nice addition with, master-of disguise, Eugene Francois Vidocq.

**A fast-paced**, suspense, with a strong and compelling protagonist heroine, pulling you into the terrifying drama unfolding with a deadly standoff; dark secrets, and special talents from the team.

My first book by Pintoff, spinning a twisted well-developed crime thriller page-turner-- *Hope to see more of Eve Rossi!*

Fans of *Lisa Gardner and Tami Hoag* will enjoy this new thriller, **HOSTAGE TAKER**.

JDCMustReadBooks

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### **Maureen says**

This book is a solid 4.5 stars. Engaging and suspenseful throughout. The cast of characters is a likeable group of ruffians but I found their backstories just made the book more interesting. Just when you think you have it all figured out- bam! there is a new twist! I have the second in the series checked out from the library and hope to get to it soon. Definitely recommend!

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### **Debbie Oxier says**

This was a wild roller coaster ride of twists and turns from the very beginning and I sure didn't see that ending coming! Someone has taken hostages at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York and has no problem killing them if his demands aren't met. One of them is that FBI Agent Eve Rossi be the one he talks to. He's also demanding five "witnesses", as he calls them. But witnesses to what? What does The Hostage Taker want them to witness? What is their connection to the man! Exactly what is the motive behind his actions? And what of the people he's taken hostage? Were they simply in the wrong place at the wrong time or are they there for a reason too? Little by little Eve begins to uncover the answers to her questions, along with her team, a very unlikely group of people.

While the plot is complex, it's fast paced and easy to follow. I liked the characters but would have enjoyed knowing more about what made them tick and hope more will be revealed in future books. If you like a taut thriller with plenty of suspense and nail-biting tension then you might want to give this a try.

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### **\*Avonna says**

Hostage Taker is the latest book by Stefanie Pintoff and the first in a new series featuring Eve Rossi, Profiler and Hostage Negotiator for the FBI and her VIDOCQ team. From the very start, this book had my complete and total attention. The suspense of holding a historic landmark, St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City, during the holiday season and the balance of an unknown number of hostages for unknown reasons makes me want to continue on and find the answers. I thought I knew who and what was going on, but I was so wrong!

Eve is requested by the hostage taker for unknown reasons and must work against a ticking clock to find out why. Eve and her team of ex-criminals, the VIDOCQ team, must work to find out what the hostage taker's timetable is and why the hostages and witness must all confess to 'What are you guilty of?'

This book was an interesting read in every way. The characters were three dimensional and I wanted to know even more about them and can't wait to continue to follow them in future stories. The ticking clock kept the suspense and anxiety level high to solve the hostage taker's motive as soon as possible. The ending had me rereading certain passages throughout the book because it threw my preconceived conclusions out the window! This book is a great suspenseful read and I can't wait for more in this series!

Thank you so much to Random House Publishing Group – Bantam, Dell and Net Galley for allowing me to read a free uncorrected proof of this book in exchange for an honest review. It was truly my pleasure and I can't wait for the next book in this series!

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### **Tanya Eby says**

Seriously. This is SUCH a great book! I love the colorful characters, the action, the complexity. One of my favorite narrating experiences.

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### **Jen says**

This was a shot of adrenaline. Nothing like a little action thriller to launch the new year.

It's New York City, nearing Christmas at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Someone has locked its doors before the 7am mass and has taken hostages. First demand is that Special Agent Eve Rossi, be the negotiator. With her own life in the midst of unravelling, so unfolds the negotiations to release the hostages.

A special unit, Vidocq, is set up. It's a group consisting of ex-criminals-each with their own area of 'expertise' to bring the hostage taker down. Except the hostage taker has his own agenda -to act as God. He wants witnesses and confessions and he will be the judge of what is sinful and what is not. Personal justice? Vigilantism? Or a pawn in a psychological labyrinth?

A compelling read with a wicked twist jacks this up to 4+ read. Way to Go, Pintoff. I can't wait for the sequel.

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### **Esil says**

After requesting and being approved for Hostage Taker by Netgalley, I had "buyer's remorse" -- reading the description again, I thought the last thing I need is another mediocre book to read when there are so many good books I want to get to. But this was a surprisingly good read -- a light but tight and well crafted suspenseful book. The title does a good job of describing what this book is about. An unspecified number of

people are taken hostage at Saint-Andrews Cathedral in New York by an unknown hostage taker. FBI's Eve Rossi -- an expert negotiator -- is called in to negotiate and her task is to figure out what is going on, who the hostage taker is and what's motivating the hostage taking. Rossi brings in a small group of experts to help -- all people she has worked in the past who are somewhat unconventional because their expertise comes from their own criminal pasts. Eve and her team make for a good group of characters -- smart and idiosyncratic. The hostage taking and hostage taker's motivation make for a good fast paced story. There's an excellent unexpected twist at the end. And to say anything more would really be to give too much away. My only criticism is that we're only given a glimpse into Rossi and her team's pasts, and it would have been nice to know more. But as I understand that this is meant to be the first in a series, I expect there may be more background to come. Regardless, I'm glad I read Hostage Taker -- it was good vacation book and I will definitely look for the next in the series. Thank you to the publisher and Netgalley for an opportunity to read an advance copy.

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### **Pat says**

Good book, great characters that I look forward to reading about again, intense storyline and an ending that I did not see coming. But, I took off a star due to the length of the book. 430+pages that were just too long. I realize the author is setting up a series and is introducing all the characters as well as solving a complex crime but for me, a few things could have been shortened and maybe told in subsequent novels.

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### **Paul says**

4.5 stars

luckily I don't feel obliged to summarize the plot(which I suck at doing in my reviews) because the synopsis is almost in the title.

this is a taut thriller and Pintoff is great at pacing and characterization.

also when the reader seems to breathe a sigh of relief at a successful conclusion the author throws another twist just to put you back to the edge of your seat. I am impressed at how much showing and little telling there is in this novel, yet the writing style doesn't interfere with the reader getting to know the antagonists and protagonists.

bravo!

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### **Linda says**

I received an ARC copy from Goodreads for an honest opinion. My thanks to Stefanie Pintoff and Goodreads.

Hostage Taker by Stefanie Pintoff starts off with a bang and grabs your interest from the get-go. If there is ever to be the possibility of such a hostage situation, you know it would be in New York City. One wouldn't necessarily think that it would take place at St. Patrick's Cathedral, but it certainly works here. A little architectural history by the author rounds out the setting and evokes a visualization of the complexity of this

hostage fortress.

Chapter after chapter, I found myself lining up favorite actors to play the lead roles.....truly a movie in the making. One concern, however, was the amount of characters that were introduced. A backstory was given for each in between phone calls by the Hostage Taker. In real time, I don't believe that the Hostage Taker would have waited so long between phone calls to Eve so that the plot had adequate time to flow. I'm sure if this would be made into a movie, they would hold those strings in a more taut manner. Each member of the team possessed a certain talent necessary to pull this off, although necessary, still kept the reader sifting through their quirks and their actions.

I've read other books by Stefanie Pintoff and found them to be satisfying and engaging. Ms. Pintoff can really draw you in with her stellar writing ability. She knows that a sip of intrigue and excitement from the onset keeps the reader coming back to quench that thirst for more. I'm looking forward to future offerings with the Pintoff name emblazed on the cover.

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