



## Jihadi John: The Making of a Terrorist

By Robert Verkaik



### Jihadi John: The Making of a Terrorist By Robert Verkaik

It was a defining moment, the first time ‘Jihadi John’ appeared. Suddenly Islamic State had a face and the whole world knew the extent of their savagery. Weeks later, when his identity was revealed, Robert Verkaik was shocked to realise that this was a man he’d interviewed years earlier.

Back in 2010, Mohammed Emwazi was a twenty-one-year-old IT graduate who claimed the security services were ruining his life. They had repeatedly approached him, his family and his fiancée. Had they been tracking an already dangerous extremist or did they push him over the edge?

In the aftermath of the US air strike that killed Emwazi in November 2015, Verkaik’s investigation leads him to deeply troubling questions. What led Emwazi to come to him for help in the first place? And why do hundreds of Britons want to join Islamic State? In an investigation both frightening and urgent, Verkaik goes beyond the making of one terrorist to examine the radicalisation of our youth and to ask what we can do to stop it happening in future.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"Verkaik has a unique perspective on the evolution of Jihadi John. To his own astonishment, the writer discovered that he knew Emwazi from interviews conducted in 2010, before the radicalized Brit gained global notoriety for sawing off the head of journalist James Foley – and at least half a dozen others. He's the only journalist known to have spoken face-to-face with Emwazi. Yet so unmemorable were the encounters around London, so unprepossessing a subject, Verkaik had forgotten all about Emwazi, even when his balaclava was stripped away and his real name revealed by the BBC."

— *Rosie DiManno, The Toronto Star*

**"This book is more than just the story of Mohammed Emwazi. Verkaik delves into the broader issues of marginality and the fluid identity of young people such as Emwazi to provide an enthralling account of the rootlessness of many second-generation European immigrants."**

**'Verkaik gives a fascinating if frightening picture of the jihadists in our mist'.**

#### Mail on Sunday

**'No detail is too small in Verkaik's quest to work out how a "misfit schoolboy" turned into a "psychopathic mass murderer".'**

#### Independent

—*Library Journal*

#### About the Author

Robert Verkaik is a freelance security editor who writes for the "Sunday Telegraph, Sunday Times, Mail on Sunday, Daily Mail" and the "Independent." He was longlisted for the Orwell Prize in 2010 as home affairs editor of the "Independent, " later becoming the only journalist to interview Mohammed Emwazi in his lifetime. Verkaik lives in Surrey.

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**Louis Hudson:**

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**Mario Davis:**

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