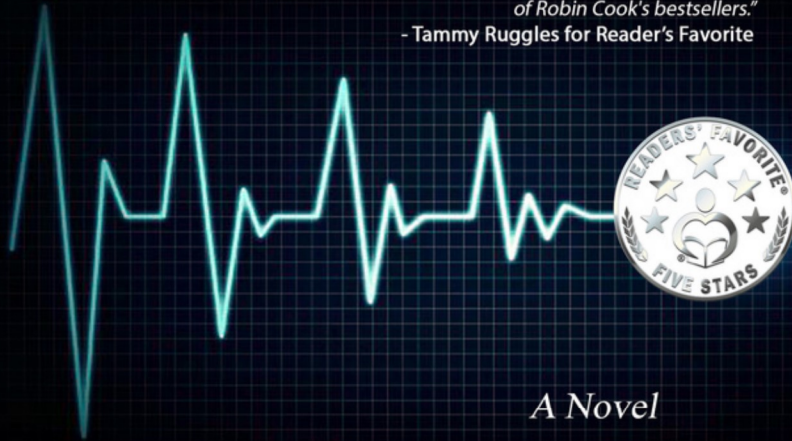


## MEDIA KIT

# DEAD ALREADY

*"...a nail-biter of a medical drama, reminiscent  
of Robin Cook's bestsellers."  
- Tammy Ruggles for Reader's Favorite*



*A Novel*

## MIKE KRENTZ

MIKE KRENTZ

# DEAD ALREADY

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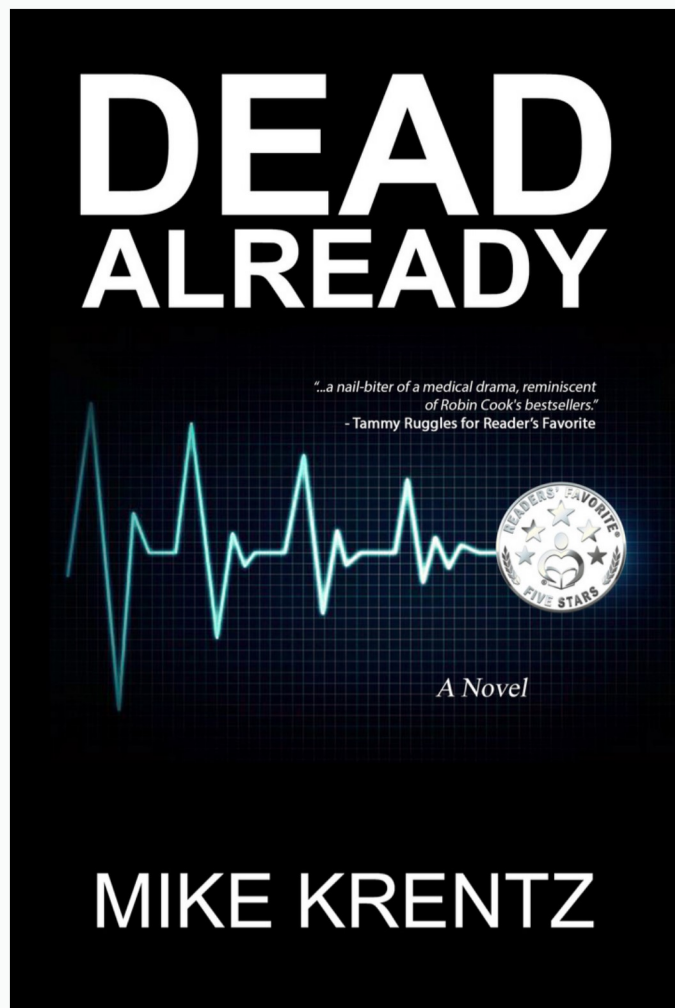
# ABOUT

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## DEAD ALREADY

Suspicious deaths. Broken bonds. Lives in peril.  
Redemption.

Past-haunted emergency physician Zack Winston and case-hardened defense attorney Bridget Larsen battle a malicious malpractice suit. They uncover a medical conspiracy trading in drugs and murder. As they peel back layers of truth, past relationships and current alliances destabilize –threatening both their lives.



### Product Information

**GENRE:** Medical Thriller  
**PUBLICATION DATE:** Nov 27, 2020  
**SHOP:** Wholesale from Ingram and TouchPoint Press.  
**PAGE COUNT:** 340 pages  
**RETAIL PRICE:** ebook \$5.99,  
paperback \$16.99  
**ISBN:** 978-1-952816-18-5  
**PUBLISHER:** TouchPoint Press



# EARLY PRAISE

"A heart-pounding thriller. Krentz taps his richly lived experience as an emergency physician and takes the reader on a deep dive into the medical challenges, legal battles, and lingering emotional wounds of Dr. Zack Winston. A page turner, with twists that surprise – and satisfy."

— **DEBORAH SERANI, AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR OF *THE NINTH SESSION*.**

"*Dead Already* opens on the adrenaline rush of emergency room action and never slows down. Murder, nuanced characters, and deadly secrets make for a roller-coaster thrill ride. The push-pull relationship between ER doc Zack Winston and defense lawyer Bridget Larsen rings true all the way to their plunge into life-threatening danger."

— **JAYNE ANN KRENTZ / AMANDA QUICK, NYT AND USA TODAY BEST-SELLING AUTHOR.**

"Absolutely stunning! This is the heart-stopping medical thriller I've waited for."

— **STELLA CAMERON, NYT BESTSELLING AUTHOR.**

"Krentz applies his insider's knowledge of the ER in a taut thriller that will rivet fans of medical dramas."

— **KIMMERY MARTIN, AUTHOR OF *THE QUEEN OF HEARTS* AND *THE ANTIDOTE FOR EVERYTHING*.**

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# MIKE KRENTZ

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**AUTHOR**

## Meet Mike

Following his successful civilian emergency medicine career, Dr. Mike Krentz served the nation as a US Navy physician and fleet surgeon. Upon retirement, he continued his service as a navy public health consultant. After completing that mission, he returned to his earliest life passion as a full-time writer of character-based fiction.



## Contact Information

**AUTHOR EMAIL:**

[mjk@mjkrentz.com](mailto:mjk@mjkrentz.com)

**WEBSITE:**

<https://mikejkrentz.com/>

**PUBLISHER EMAIL:**

[media@touchpointpress.com](mailto:media@touchpointpress.com)

## Social Media

**FACEBOOK:**

[@MikeJKrentzAuthor](#)

**INSTAGRAM:**

[@mjkrentz](#)

**TWITTER:**

[@MikeJKrentz](#)



# INTERVIEW

WITH MIKE

**How did you, a successful emergency physician and naval officer, decide to become a writer?**

I've wanted to be a writer since high school English classes. In college, I took the unorthodox route to pre-medical studies by majoring in English and taking the required science classes as electives. My medical and US Navy careers exclusively provided non-fiction opportunities: academic articles, reports, briefings, and such. Near the end of my navy career, when I was 7th Fleet Surgeon on board the flagship, USS Blue Ridge, a colleague and I thought about writing a TV series about navy life. That never came about, but the concept morphed into my Flagship Series of character-based military thrillers. After I retired from the navy, I did some consulting in public health, then took the plunge into writing full-time.

**Why did you write *Dead Already*?**

I wanted to do something besides military thrillers, and I felt I'd reached the logical end of *The Flagship Series*. Medical thrillers set in the dynamic specialty of emergency medicine seemed the perfect niche. It turned into a labor of love as I thought about all the ER docs I've known and respected through the years, the patients I met and had the honor to treat, and the privilege of having a vocation I enjoyed.

**How would you describe the themes of *Dead Already*?**

The primary theme is redemption. The main character, Dr. Zack Winston, suffers from psychological and professional trauma following tragic life events. He becomes the perfect foil for the villain's nefarious conspiracy. Zack must face down his own inner demons if he's to survive the threat to his career and ultimately his life. Another theme is the value of friendship, trust, and vulnerability to one's personal growth. The relationship that develops between Zack and his lawyer, Bridget Larsen, portrays those dynamics. Then there's the core theme of good against evil, truth against lies, life against death; and the frequent difficulty of figuring out which is which.

**Will there be a sequel?**

Yes. Writing it now. The working title is *Warm and Dead*. Hint: "In cold-water drowning the victim is never dead until they are warm and dead." - Dr. Zack Winston



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# PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **“Dead Already” Expertly Infuses Danger and Suspense into an Already Enthralling Legal Medical Drama**

Norfolk, VA - November 27, 2020 - “Dead Already,” which is slated for a November 27 release, is the first in Dr. Mike Krentz’s thrilling “Dr. Zack Winston” series. This gripping tale showcases Krentz’s abundant first-hand knowledge of both medical and military experience. Such an intimate understanding lends an overwhelming sense of authenticity to the medical mystery and characters of this story. As a result, readers will feel as though they were an integral part of team that is Dr. Zack Winston and Bridget Larsen as they uncover a dangerous medical conspiracy.

Krentz’s “Dead Already” weaves a twisted narrative that features a combined medical and legal, emotionally invested team that overcomes a nefarious plot while also redeeming the troubled lives of its main characters. As such, this exciting adventure will appeal to a myriad of readers, whether they be mainstream audiences, or those who enjoy commercial fiction, mysteries, thrillers, suspense novels, legal thrillers, or medical fiction. Readers who enjoy complex, flawed characters, compelling character arcs, and complicated relationships will especially find this narrative a treat. As explained by Jayne Ann Krentz/Amanda Quick, a NYT and USA Today bestselling author, “DEAD ALREADY opens on the adrenaline rush of emergency room action and never slows down. Murder, nuanced characters, and deadly secrets make for a roller-coaster thrill ride. The push-pull relationship between ER doc Zack Winston and defense lawyer Bridget Larsen rings true all the way to their plunge into life-threatening danger.”

The enthralling tale of “Dead Already” follows the past-haunted emergency physician Dr. Zack Winston and case-hardened defense attorney Bridget Larsen as they battle a malicious malpractice suit that ends up being far more than either of them bargained for. This malpractice lawsuit was brought against Zack by the widow Janice Barnett after her husband, Carl Barnett, died after being discharged from the ER by Zack the day prior to his death. A loss of professional credibility soon knocks over what reputation he had rebuilt after a disgraced navy medical career, which had him spiral into alcohol abuse and clinical impairment. Two suspicious deaths in the ER further damage Zack’s reputation, and soon after Zack is forced to admit his prior history to Bridget and the court which



allows the prosecutors to paint him as an impaired physician. Things go from bad to worse, however, when while treating a patient in the ER, Zack suffers from sudden cardiac arrest apparently caused by a planted empty packet of cocaine. But as luck would have it, it doesn't stop there. While Zack faces criminal charges for alleged drug use while on duty, both Zack and Bridget end up uncovering a medical conspiracy trading in drugs and murder which puts both of their lives in grave danger.

### **About the Author**

Born and raised in Arizona, Dr. Mike Krentz earned a classical degree in English from the University of San Francisco, a Doctor of Medicine degree from the Medical College of Wisconsin, and a Master of Public Health Degree from Johns Hopkins University. Following his successful civilian emergency medicine career, Mike served the nation as a US Navy physician and fleet surgeon. Serving in hospitals, ships, and air wings, he earned ten personal decorations, including five awards of the Legion of Merit. Upon retirement, he continued his service as a navy public health consultant. After completing that mission, he returned to his earliest life passion as a full-time writer of character-based fiction.

### **About the Publisher**

TouchPoint Press is a traditional indie publisher of fiction and nonfiction. Our staff is comprised of professionals whose collective experience in publishing, editing, journalism, design, and marketing set the stage behind our growing list of published titles. We are proud to work with talented authors and strive to be as innovative and energetic as possible from acquisitions to promotion before and after publication.

For interview and review requests, contact Chelsea Pieper at [media@touchpointpress.com](mailto:media@touchpointpress.com).

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# BOOK EXCERPT

## CHAPTER ONE

IN THE YEAR HIS HEART STOPPED, Dr. Zack Winston checked his watch as he headed to the ER suture room for his next patient. Four p.m. Two hours left.

Strident blare from the EMS radio stopped him in mid-stride. His experienced ear caught the gist of the paramedics' report.

"Three minutes out . . . Full code . . . Fifty-two-year-old male . . . Seen in your ER yesterday."

Zack's heart plunged. Who? He turned from the suture area and hustled to the resuscitation room.

Paramedics burst through the doors, wheeling their patient on a narrow gurney. Zack recognized Carl Barnett, even with a plastic LMA tube protruding from his mouth. A medic squeezed air into the tube from a green football-shaped neoprene bag. Another medic straddled the gurney, performing vigorous chest compressions. Another held an IV bag aloft, its tubing plugged into a catheter in the patient's arm.

Carl's skin looked waxy, pale gray-blue, and mottled. He'd had a healthy pink complexion when Zack saw him in the ER the previous day.

A medic spoke into Zack's ear. "Wife found him in full arrest on the floor in their home. She's a nurse, doing good CPR when we arrived. No pulse or rhythm on scene or during transport. Down time at least twenty minutes. Unknown how long he went without CPR."

A strong grip on Zack's arm swung him into the florid face of Janice Barnett, Carl's wife, ICU head nurse.

"Do not lose him." Stern. A swallow. Softer voice. "Please."

"We'll, uh, do our best, Jan."

Zack followed the paramedics into the resuscitation room. The cardiac monitor showed a wavy horizontal line with an occasional bump that resembled an inverted U. Agonal rhythm. Dying heart.



*Odds of save, zero to zilch.*

Zack recalled a favorite saying: A thin line separates cardiopulmonary resuscitation from assault on the already dead. His gaze swept from the monitor to the patient. Carl Barnett, already dead.

From behind, Janice bumped into Zack, scowled, and moved to pass. He blocked her path. "You shouldn't be in here."

She flipped a frizz of frosted platinum hair off a sweat-dotted forehead. Hazel eyes pierced him. Her tone pleaded. "I must be with Carl."

Zack nodded to Monica Harris, ER head nurse. She steered Janice to a corner from where she could watch without interfering. Zack turned to his patient, his back to the man's wife.

Carl's skin color had not improved from arrival. The monitor displayed the same wide bumps, at a more ominous rate of thirty. Zack had never seen anyone recover from prolonged agonal rhythm—not to useful life. He started the protocol for managing pulseless electrical activity. *The algorithm for the already dead.* Protocol. Routine. They needed an outlier, something to reverse the man's status from already dead to almost died. *When you hear hoofbeats, think horses not zebras.* Zack needed a zebra. "Continue CPR," he said. "Get the ultrasound machine."

Zack performed a quick cardiac ultrasound, looking for heart-wall motion, contractions—maybe a dilated right ventricle to suggest massive pulmonary embolism. Maybe cardiac tamponade. Zebra hunting. The test showed ineffective heart contractions, nothing more.

He recalled his interactions with the Barnetts the previous day. Fit and healthy, with no cardiac risk factors, Carl had come in with chest pain that began at rest. The pain had resolved in the ER without treatment. Zack had run a gamut of standard tests and calculated a low probability for acute heart disease. He had explained everything to Janice, whose subtle mistrust had never waned, even when she agreed to take her husband home. What happened in the interim?

Zack could not accept defeat. He went off protocol and tried other medications. Atropine. High dose epinephrine. The entire arsenal.

"Asystole," a nurse said. An undulating line snaked across the EKG screen. No bumps.

"Respirations?" The tech paused the ventilator. A minute passed. No breaths. Zack felt over the carotid arteries in the neck. No pulse. He listened over the chest. No heartbeat.

He turned to look at Janice Barnett weeping in the corner. "I'm sorry," he said.

Tears ran down her face. "I know."

He looked at the clock. "Time of death, 1536." *Already dead, around 1425.*

Monica Harris seized Janice's arm and led her toward the door. "Let's go to the quiet room while the staff cleans up, then you can come back and say good-bye." Her grip tightened until Janice winced.

As the two women left the resus room, Zack froze. His feet refused to move. His mind lurched far away from the familiar milieu of Bethesda Metro Hospital ER. A young woman's body lay lifeless on an operating table in front of him. Blood ran down the sterile sheet and dripped onto his shoes.

He took a few seconds to return to the present, then headed to the suture room.

