



Plotters

The UK Terrorists Who Failed

By Lizzie Dearden

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'Dearden paints a disturbing portrait of today's terrorists, but even more chilling is her account of the near-misses, where only good intelligence and smart policing has saved us from further tragedies.'

— *Sir David Omand, former UK Security and Intelligence Coordinator*

'Excellent reporting and analysis that puts the threat of terrorism in perspective by revealing its often hidden dimension: the many plots that fail on their own, or are foiled by the authorities.'

— *Martha Crenshaw, Senior Fellow, Center for International Security and Cooperation, Stanford University*

An eye-opening account of the British terror attacks you've never heard of—because the perpetrators were caught in time.

Since 2017, the UK has seen fifteen terrible terrorist attacks. But the atrocities on our evening news are the tip of a vast iceberg. Security services are striving to contain a staggering 3,000 jihadists, far-right extremists and other potential threats. We are in a new age of terror, with self-radicalising, hard-to-categorise individuals planning violence—but each one caught by the British state tells us something about British society.

For every successful plot in the five years since Westminster Bridge, more than twice as many have been foiled. Some were thwarted by nerve-wracking undercover operations; others were narrowly averted by heroic citizens, or ruined by the absurd mistakes of would-be attackers. Invariably, the all-too-human stories of these failed terrorists reveal the true picture of UK extremism.

Through interviews with senior counter-terror figures and astonishing court testimony, *Plotters* unpacks how and why British terror attacks happen—and don't. From dating websites and prison cells to Telegram networks and Tesco knives, Lizzie Dearden's deep dive offers one disturbing certainty: the plotters will keep coming. To confront them, we need to understand them.

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About the Author

Lizzie Dearden is *The Independent's* Home Affairs Editor. She has been covering terror attacks, prosecutions and extremism of all kinds in the UK, in depth, since 2017. Lizzie is also a long-term observer of global terrorism trends; she previously reported on Isis-inspired attacks in Europe and elsewhere.