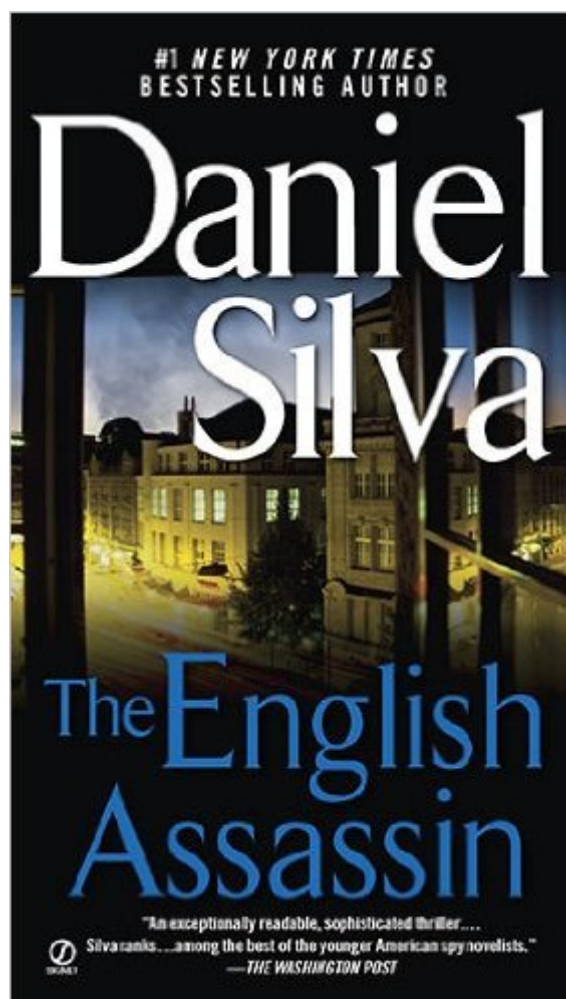


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The English Assassin (Gabriel Allon)



Synopsis

The Unlikely Spy, Daniel Silva's extraordinary debut novel, was applauded by critics as it rocketed onto national bestseller lists. Now Silva has outdone himself, with a taut, lightning-paced thriller rooted assuredly in fact: Switzerland's shameful WWII record of profiteering and collaboration with Nazi Germany. When art restorer and occasional Israeli agent Gabriel Allon is sent to Zurich, Switzerland, to restore the painting of a reclusive millionaire banker, he arrives to find his would-be employer murdered at the foot of his Raphael. A secret collection of priceless, illicitly gained Impressionist masterpieces is missing. Gabriel's handlers step out of the shadows to admit the truth-the collector had been silenced-and Gabriel is put back in the high-stakes spy game, battling wits with the rogue assassin he helped to train. Tense, taut, expertly crafted, and brimming with unexpected reversals, The English Assassin is Daniel Silva at his storytelling best. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

When I first picked up The English Assassin, I almost did not buy it. I like Silva's earlier novels, but I did not like the level of violence described in the cover leaf. It sounded like a mindless adventure but not in the complex, intricate manner of Silva's earlier works. I had underestimated Silva, or his publisher had misdescribed him. This is a delightful, deep tale of Swiss abuse of Nazi victims, a generation of Swiss cover-up to keep possession of the stolen goods, the Israeli effort to locate and

track down the valuables from pre-World War II European Jews, and the level of violence some people will go to in order to keep what they have even if it was gained illicitly (or maybe even because it was gained illicitly). Once you have entered the journey of the former Israeli agent turned art restorer and you have encountered the violence and mysteries which surround what should have been a simple trip to look at some art in need of repair, I think you will be as hooked as I was. The larger tale of what happened to Jewish and other goods during the Nazi era will also set you thinking and will put a human face to the stories several years ago of Swiss bank accounts and secrecy about the Second World War period. This is a fascinating book and fully up to Silva's standards.

My only problem with Daniel Silva is that he doesn't write books fast enough. The wait for *The English Assassin*, though, was more than worth it. Silva's a first-rate writer who has taken the well-worn concept of the international thriller and turned it into something compellingly new. *The English Assassin* is a perfect example of his skill: he throws together the reluctant, tormented spy Gabriel Allon with a temperamental violin virtuoso grappling with her own dark secrets and sends them off to investigate the Swiss collaboration with the Nazis in the theft of priceless art. It is an utterly fascinating story, brought to life with the help of a cast of superbly crafted supporting characters, including a vicious English assassin who is a bit more complex than your usual villain. Along the way Silva masterfully draws us into the worlds of art and music and gives us a tempting tour of some out-of-the-way European locales. I started *The English Assassin* the other night and finished it in one sitting. My only disappointment? It'll be another year before the new Silva pops up on the shelves.

The English Assassin is another fine novel. Daniel Silva provides the reader with his usual blend of action, excitement, intrigue, and plot twists -- all set within the historical context of the secret world of the Swiss banking system from WWII to the present. In a reprise of Gabriel Allon, the art restorer and sometimes Israeli spy from the *Kill Artist*, Silva spins a tale of a secret Swiss society, long-ago collaboration with Nazi Germany, and a quest to recover art treasures plundered by the Nazis in WWII. Gabriel is drawn into the plot when he is sent to restore a painting belonging to an elderly Swiss banker. Finding the banker dead, Gabriel is quickly forced to match wits with the mysterious English Assassin and members of the clandestine Swiss organization that seeks to keep the past of Switzerland buried. This book is thoroughly entertaining. A must read for fans of Silva's previous works.

With apologies to Tom Clancy and the late Robert Ludlum, I must say that Daniel Silva has assumed throne among international thriller writers. His latest novel, *The English Assassin*, centers around Gabriel Allon, the art-restorer-by-day, silent-killer-by-night from his previous work, *The Kill Artist*. The book begins with a flashback to the past centering around an unknown woman killing herself upon her discovery of one of her husband's dark secrets. The reader is then taken to the present day when Allon is sent to meet a client to restore a painting. He enters the client's home following a series of strange instructions and finds the man dead. The breakneck plot of the novel follows Gabriel on his quest to determine why the man was killed and how he himself is involved. At the same time, he must protect the man's estranged daughter while he and those with whom he comes in contact are being stalked by the shadowy figure known only as the Englishman. Silva's writing is some of the most eloquent you will find in a book of this genre. His prose is clear and thoughtful and his characters take on dimensions that make the story all the more meaningful. Allon is a fine protagonist with many layers. The Englishman is a most worthy villain with both flaws and redeeming features that are capable of evoking sympathy from the reader. Silva's attention to detail for the settings of this book and the knowledge he possesses regarding the world of espionage make the reader feel totally enveloped in this book. This is a novel that can be read in a single sitting. Highly recommended to anyone interested in international thrillers, spy or espionage related plots, or simply a well-written novel that will keep them interested.

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