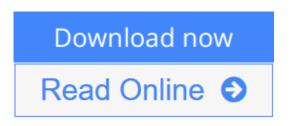


A Death in Vienna (Gabriel Allon Series Book 4)

By Daniel Silva



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Gabriel Allon's nightmares come back to haunt him in this tense thriller from #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Daniel Silva.

Art restorer and sometime spy Gabriel Allon is sent to Vienna to discover the truth behind a bombing that killed an old friend, but while there he encounters something that turns his world upside down. It is a face—a face that feels hauntingly familiar, a face that chills him to the bone.

While desperately searching for answers, Allon will uncover a portrait of evil stretching across sixty years and thousands of lives—and into his own personal nightmares...

From the Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Not one for cookie-cutter cheap thrills, Silva's mastered the art of weaving provocative narrative, espionage and foreign intrigue."—*Chicago Sun-Times*

"A masterful and compelling tale of evil, treachery and revenge...goes to the top of the list of this year's best."—*Rocky Mountain News*

"A masterfully constructed tale of memory and revenge. It demonstrates that thrillers can be more than entertainment."—*The Miami Herald*

"[A] superbly crafted narrative of espionage and foreign intrigue."-Publishers Weekly

"A thriller that's not content to be just a thriller, as it delves into issues involving the Holocaust and its perpetrators and survivors."—*The Kansas City Star*

"[A] world-class practitioner of spy fiction... Silva writes with style, economy and a sure command of the historical record...a skillful novelist who does justice to the often heartbreaking material without exploiting it."—*The Washington Post Book World*

"Reads like an exquisitely suspenseful chess game."-Booklist

About the Author

Daniel Silva is the #1 New York Times bestselling author of The Unlikely Spy, The Mark of the Assassin, The Marching Season, and the Gabriel Allon series, including The Kill Artist, The English Assassin, The Confessor, A Death in Vienna, Prince of Fire, The Messenger, The Secret Servant, Moscow Rules, The Defector, The Rembrandt Affair, Portrait of a Spy, The Fallen Angel, The English Girl, The Heist, The English Spy, and The Black Widow. His books are published in more than thirty countries and are bestsellers around the world.

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The Man From Café central

1

VIENNA

THE OFFICE IS hard to find, and intentionally so. Located near the end of a narrow, curving lane, in a quarter of Vienna more renowned for its nightlife than its tragic past, the entrance is marked only by a small brass plaque bearing the inscription Wartime Claims and Inquiries. The security system, installed by an obscure firm based in Tel Aviv, is formidable and highly visible. A camera glowers menacingly from above the door. No one is admitted without an appointment and a letter of introduction. Visitors must pass through a finely tuned magnetometer. Purses and briefcases are inspected with unsmiling efficiency by one of two disarmingly pretty girls. One is called Reveka, the other Sarah.

Once inside, the visitor is escorted along a claustrophobic corridor lined with gunmetal-gray filing cabinets, then into a large typically Viennese chamber with pale floors, a high ceiling, and bookshelves bowed beneath the weight of countless volumes and file folders. The donnish clutter is appealing, though some are unnerved by the green-tinted bulletproof windows overlooking the melancholy courtyard.

The man who works there is untidy and easily missed. It is his special talent. Sometimes, as you enter, he is standing atop a library ladder rummaging for a book. Usually he is seated at his desk, wreathed in cigarette smoke, peering at the stack of paperwork and files that never seems to diminish. He takes a moment to finish a sentence or jot a loose minute in the margin of a document, then he rises and extends his tiny hand, his quick brown eyes flickering over you. "Eli Lavon," he says modestly as he shakes your hand, though everyone in Vienna knows who runs Wartime Claims and Inquiries.

Were it not for Lavon's well-established reputation, his appearance—a shirtfront chronically smeared with ash, a shabby burgundy-colored cardigan with patches on the elbows and a tattered hem—might prove disturbing. Some suspect he is without sufficient means; others imagine he is an ascetic or even slightly mad. One woman who wanted help winning restitution from a Swiss bank concluded he was suffering from a permanently broken heart. How else to explain that he had never been married? The air of bereavement that is sometimes visible when he thinks no one is looking? Whatever the visitor's suspicions, the result is usually the same. Most cling to him for fear he might float away.

He points you toward the comfortable couch. He asks the girls to hold his calls, then places his thumb and forefinger together and tips them toward his mouth. Coffee, please. Out of earshot the girls quarrel about whose turn it is. Reveka is an Israeli from Haifa, olive-skinned and black-eyed, stubborn and fiery. Sarah is a well-heeled American Jew from the Holocaust studies program at Boston University, more cerebral than Reveka and therefore more patient. She is not above resorting to deception or even outright lies to avoid a chore she believes is beneath her. Reveka, honest and temperamental, is easily outmaneuvered, and so it is usually Reveka who joylessly plunks a silver tray on the coffee table and retreats in a sulk.

Lavon has no set formula for how to conduct his meetings. He permits the visitor to determine the course. He is not averse to answering questions about himself and, if pressed, explains how it came to be that one of Israel's most talented young archaeologists chose to sift through the unfinished business of the Holocaust rather than the troubled soil of his homeland. His willingness to discuss his past, however, goes only so far. He does not tell visitors that, for a brief period in the early 1970s, he worked for Israel's notorious secret service. Or that he is still regarded as the finest street surveillance artist the service has ever produced. Or that twice a year, when he returns to Israel to see his aged mother, he visits a highly secure facility north of Tel Aviv to share some of his secrets with the next generation. Inside the service he is still referred to as "the Ghost." His mentor, a man called Ari Shamron, always said that Eli Lavon could disappear while shaking your hand. It was not far from the truth.

He is quiet around his guests, just as he was quiet around the men he stalked for Shamron. He is a chain smoker, but if it bothers the guest he will refrain. A polyglot, he listens to you in whatever language you prefer. His gaze is sympathetic and steady, though behind his eyes it is sometimes possible to detect puzzle pieces sliding into place. He prefers to hold all questions until the visitor has completed his case. His time is precious, and he makes decisions quickly. He knows when he can help. He knows when it is better to leave the past undisturbed.

Should he accept your case, he asks for a small sum of money to finance the opening stages of his investigation. He does so with noticeable embarrassment, and if you cannot pay he will waive the fee entirely. He receives most of his operating funds from donors, but Wartime Claims is hardly a profitable enterprise and Lavon is chronically strapped for cash. The source of his funding has been a contentious issue

in certain circles of Vienna, where he is reviled as a troublesome outsider financed by international Jewry, always sticking his nose into places it doesn't belong. There are many in Austria who would like Wartime Claims to close its doors for good. It is because of them that Eli Lavon spends his days behind green bulletproof glass.

On a snow-swept evening in early January, Lavon was alone in his office, hunched over a stack of files. There were no visitors that day. In fact it had been many days since Lavon had accepted appointments, the bulk of his time being consumed by a single case. At seven o'clock, Reveka poked her head through the door. "We're hungry," she said with typical Israeli bluntness. "Get us something to eat." Lavon's memory, while impressive, did not extend to food orders. Without looking up from his work, he waved his pen in the air as though he were writing—Make me a list, Reveka.

A moment later, he closed the file and stood up. He looked out his window and watched the snow settling gently onto the black bricks of the courtyard. Then he pulled on his overcoat, wrapped a scarf twice around his neck, and placed a cap atop his thinning hair. He walked down the hall to the room where the girls worked. Reveka's desk was a skyline of German military files; Sarah, the eternal graduate student, was concealed behind a stack of books. As usual, they were quarreling. Reveka wanted Indian from a take-away just on the other side of the Danube Canal; Sarah craved pasta from an Italian café on the Kärntnerstrasse. Lavon, oblivious, studied the new computer on Sarah's desk.

"When did that arrive?" he asked, interrupting their debate.

"This morning."

"Why do we have a new computer?"

"Because you bought the old one when the Hapsburgs still ruled Austria."

"Did I authorize the purchase of a new computer?"

The question was not threatening. The girls managed the office. Papers were placed beneath his nose, and usually he signed them without looking.

"No, Eli, you didn't approve the purchase. My father paid for the computer."

Lavon smiled. "Your father is a generous man. Please thank him on my behalf."

The girls resumed their debate. As usual it resolved in Sarah's favor. Reveka wrote out the list and threatened to pin it to Lavon's sleeve. Instead, she stuffed it into his coat pocket for safekeeping and gave him a little shove to send him on his way. "And don't stop for a coffee," she said. "We're starving."

It was almost as difficult to leave Wartime Claims and Inquiries as it was to enter. Lavon punched a series of numbers into a keypad on the wall next to the entrance. When the buzzer sounded, he pulled open the interior door and stepped into the security chamber. The outer door would not open until the inner door had been closed for ten seconds. Lavon put his face to the bulletproof glass and peered out.

On the opposite side of the street, concealed in the shadows at the entrance of a narrow alleyway, stood a heavy-shouldered figure with a fedora hat and mackintosh raincoat. Eli Lavon could not walk the streets of Vienna, or any other city for that matter, without ritualistically checking his tail and recording faces that appeared too many times in too many disparate situations. It was a professional affliction. Even from a distance, and even in the poor light, he knew that he had seen the figure across the street several times during

the last few days.

He sorted through his memory, almost as a librarian would sort through a card index, until he found references to previous sightings. Yes, here it is. The Judenplatz, two days ago. It was you who was following me after I had coffee with that reporter from the States. He returned to the index and found a second reference. The window of a bar along the Sterngasse. Same man, without the fedora hat, gazing casually over his pilsner as Lavon hurried through a biblical deluge after a perfectly wretched day at the office. The third reference took him a bit longer to locate, but he found it nonetheless. The Number Two streetcar, evening rush. Lavon is pinned against the doors by a florid-faced Viennese who smells of bratwurst and apricot schnapps. Fedora has somehow managed to find a seat and is calmly cleaning his nails with his ticket stub. He is a man who enjoys cleaning things, Lavon had thought at the time. Perhaps he cleans things for a living.

Lavon turned round and pressed the intercom. No response. Come on, girls. He pressed it again, then looked over his shoulder. The man in the fedora and mackintosh coat was gone.

A voice came over the speaker. Reveka.

"Did you lose the list already, Eli?"

Lavon pressed his thumb against the button.

"Get out! Now!"

A few seconds later, Lavon could hear the trample of footfalls in the corridor. The girls appeared before him, separated by a wall of glass. Reveka coolly punched in the code. Sarah stood by silently, her eyes locked on Lavon's, her hand on the glass.

He never remembered hearing the explosion. Reveka and Sarah were engulfed in a ball of fire, then were swept away by the blast wave. The door blew outward. Lavon was lifted like a child's toy, arms spread wide, back arched like a gymnast. His flight was dreamlike. He felt himself turning over and over again. He had no memory of impact. He knew only that he was lying on his back in snow, in a hailstorm of broken glass. "My girls," he whispered as he slid slowly into blackness. "My beautiful girls."

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robert Prather:

Have you spare time for a day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Yes, you can choose the suitable activity to get spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a stroll, shopping, or went to the particular Mall. How about open as well as read a book allowed A Death in Vienna (Gabriel Allon Series Book 4)? Maybe it is to get best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can cleverer than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have different opinion?

Frances Wiggins:

What do you ponder on book? It is just for students since they're still students or it for all people in the

world, exactly what the best subject for that? Merely you can be answered for that issue above. Every person has diverse personality and hobby per other. Don't to be obligated someone or something that they don't would like do that. You must know how great in addition to important the book A Death in Vienna (Gabriel Allon Series Book 4). All type of book could you see on many options. You can look for the internet sources or other social media.

Barbara Fontenot:

Nowadays reading books become more and more than want or need but also become a life style. This reading habit give you lot of advantages. Advantages you got of course the knowledge the particular information inside the book that improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of reserve you read, if you want have more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want feel happy read one along with theme for entertaining like comic or novel. Typically the A Death in Vienna (Gabriel Allon Series Book 4) is kind of reserve which is giving the reader erratic experience.

Tessa Krieger:

Reading a book being new life style in this calendar year; every people loves to learn a book. When you go through a book you can get a lot of benefit. When you read books, you can improve your knowledge, because book has a lot of information in it. The information that you will get depend on what sorts of book that you have read. In order to get information about your analysis, you can read education books, but if you want to entertain yourself you are able to a fiction books, these us novel, comics, along with soon. The A Death in Vienna (Gabriel Allon Series Book 4) offer you a new experience in examining a book.

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