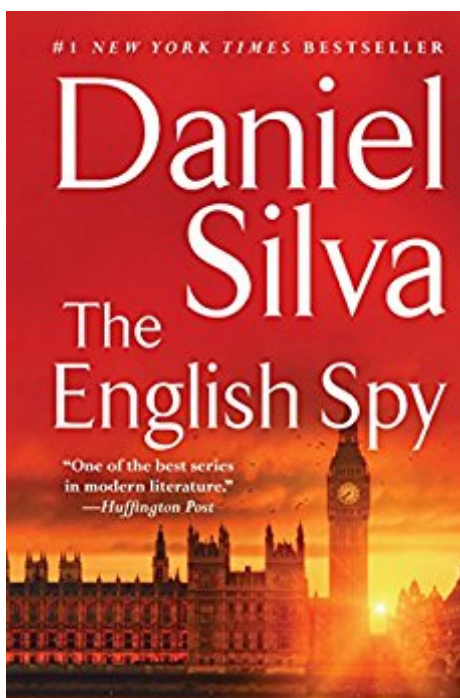


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The English Spy (Gabriel Allon Series Book 15)



Synopsis

#1 New York Times bestselling author Daniel Silva delivers another stunning thriller in his latest action-packed tale of high stakes international intrigue featuring the inimitable Gabriel Allon. First there was THE ENGLISH ASSASSIN. Then there was THE ENGLISH GIRL. Now comes THE ENGLISH SPY . . . Master novelist Daniel Silva has thrilled readers with seventeen thoughtful and gripping spy novels featuring a diverse cast of compelling characters and ingenious plots that have taken them around the globe and back— from the United States to Europe, Russia to the Middle East. His brilliant hero, Gabriel Allon— art restorer, assassin, spy— has joined the pantheon of great fictional secret agents, including George Smiley, Jack Ryan, Jason Bourne, and Simon Templar. Following the success of his smash hit The Heist, Daniel Silva returns with another blockbuster— a powerhouse novel that showcases his outstanding skill and brilliant imagination, and is sure to be a must read for both his multitudes of fans and growing legions of converts.

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Customer Reviews

The English Spy is another multi-layered utterly riveting book from Daniel Silva, who is as knowledgeable about his subject matter as he is deft in telling us the story. The English Spy, the fifteenth book in the Gabriel Allon series is set in a potpourri of cities - virtually all the sites of previous adventures - only a few months after the end of "The Heist," the previous Allon adventure. By doing this, the clever and witty Mr. Silva is buying both us and his main character, Gabriel Allon time before he must leave the field and take over The Office. As a result, we see relatively little of the lovely and intriguing Mrs. Allon, Chiara, who is heavily pregnant with twins conceived two books back, but to make up for her absence, we are reunited with an array of characters good and bad from previous stories. There are twists and turns galore, and with gore, and what you think you are seeing as you read may not be what you've got a few pages further in. Yes, the English Spy is Christopher Keller, who has become a reader favorite, but even the title can be interpreted in more ways than one. Even the opening series of events, though sensational and attention grabbing, is somewhat misleading, especially if the reader thinks this book is going to be about an unhappy English princess. It is not, and before jumping to conclusions, we would do well to think of another much loved British Royal who did die in a boat explosion and not in a car crash in a tunnel in Paris. We also see less of Gabriel's well meshed "Office" team, and more of some old friends and many dangerous enemies from the first fourteen books, but Allon and Keller are an awesome team for which no evil doer can be a match on a permanent basis. First time readers will have no trouble jumping in at level 15 because Mr. Silva does give us back story, written in his usual graceful style, that informs but never bores. The pacing is perfection; the end of chapter hooks make it impossible not to read just one more, and the denouement is everything for which the reader could hope. The scenes with Leah, Gabriel's first wife, who has never recovered from their son's death or her own injuries in a car bombing, and Gabriel's painting of the nursery clouds will stay in my mind forever while Christopher Keller's final scene left me yearning for yet more of him. Gabriel Allon has occasionally been referred to as a 21st century James Bond so I will end with a nod to my previous favorite spy - when it comes to spy fiction nobody does it better than Daniel Silva, and he has done it again.

Much as I hate to say it, I think the formula has gotten tired. This story line didn't feel like Allon's battle and the thread that tied him to it seemed pretty thin. I'm not sure there is anything left to discover about Gabriel Allon, which is too bad because I enjoyed the complexity of this character for so long. The franchise has become predictable. I am glad that the author hasn't sacrificed his characters (as authors often do when they have mined the territory so thoroughly). I'm not sure what

the author can do with Allon. Turning him into a bureaucrat removes him from the action and he has already suffered the worst that can happen to him before being introduced in the first novel. No reader wants to see him suffer any more. The author can't start writing "pre-quals" because so many of Allon's early cases and tragedies have been revisited as he has exacted his revenge over these many novels. It might be interesting to see him evolve into Shamron and start running his own operatives from command central (even though his new responsibilities would place him too high to be involved at that level). First, the reading audience has to care about those operatives and find them as interesting and compelling as Allon's character was when he was introduced.

The English Spy easily crosses the bar for high expectations. Having read all of Silva's novels, I love it when, out of the blue, he invents new plots and twists using settings and characters from 20 books ago and still gets away with it. The English Spy is like that, bringing recognition but not repetition. In Silva's third book, "The Marching Season" of 1999, before Gabriel Allon (the art restorer) appeared, his spy was Michael Osborne. He dealt with IRA "troubles" and everywhere he went everything blew up, except Michael. In The English Spy, Gabriel deals with similar IRA members and MI5/MI6 agents and settings. This novel differs from the usual "Gabriel" story because it is almost totally action-packed. In recent novels, Gabriel faces important life-changes. The suits at King Saul Blvd. want Gabriel to live in Israel and be in charge of Israeli Intelligence. Gabriel prefers the field but understands he must move on, mainly because his wife is expecting twins. What will Silva write next? He might replace Gabriel with his exciting side-kick, Christopher Keller, who also possesses superior field skills. But wait, the Big Dog, Shamron (of the 6-day war), has moved Keller from Corsica to England and installed him in MI6. So, hold your breath!

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