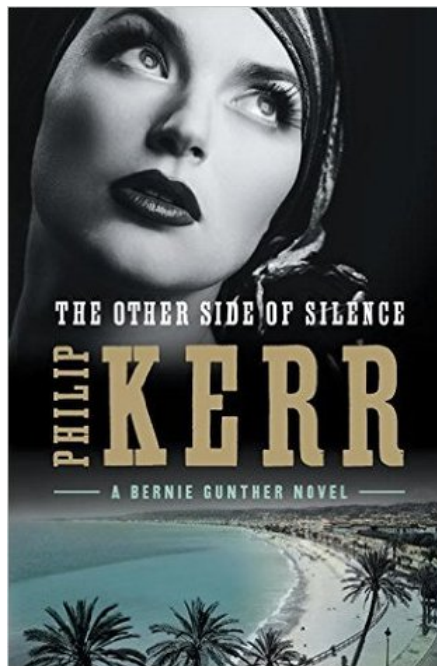




The Other Side of Silence

Philip Kerr

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Once I'd been a good detective in Kripo, but that was a while ago, before the criminals wore smart gray uniforms and nearly everyone locked up was innocent." Being a Berlin cop in 1942 was a little like putting down mousetraps in a cage full of tigers.

The war is over. Bernie Gunther, our sardonic former Berlin homicide detective and unwilling SS officer, is now living on the French Riviera. It is 1956 and Bernie is the go-to guy at the Grand-Hotel du Cap-Ferrat, the man you turn to for touring tips or if you need a fourth for bridge. As it happens, a local writer needs just that, someone to fill the fourth seat in a regular game that is the usual evening diversion at the Villa Mauresque. Not just any writer. Perhaps the richest and most famous living writer in the world: W. Somerset Maugham. And it turns out it is not just a bridge partner that he needs; it's some professional advice. Maugham is being blackmailed—perhaps because of his unorthodox lifestyle. Or perhaps because of something in his past, because once upon a time, Maugham worked for the British secret service, and the people now blackmailing him are spies.

As Gunther fans know, all roads lead back to the viper's nest that was Hitler's Third Reich and to the killing fields that spread like a disease across Europe. Even in 1956, peace has not come to the continent: now the Soviets have the H-bomb and spies from every major power feel free to make all of Europe their personal playground.

The Other Side of Silence Details

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Author : Philip Kerr

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From Reader Review The Other Side of Silence for online ebook

Judy Lesley says

For readers who anxiously await each new installment in the Bernie Gunther series, grab some quiet time and just start reading this one, but have your seatbelt buckled because you are going on a corkscrew twisty ride. Readers new to the series can certainly begin here, I'm not going to tell you not to, but you need to understand that Bernie has a huge amount of backstory and this author loves to bring back characters from several books back and it might get a little confusing. In this story Bernie is really, really bored. So bored with his life that he goes so far as to try to end it. I say he couldn't have been very serious in the first place to have failed so completely. However, that was good news for me - and you.

Imagine living on the French Riviera and being bored. Most of us would have a hard time contemplating that but then Bernie has lived a life chock full of life threatening and death defying experiences so he doesn't look at things the same way you or I might. He's in his position as concierge of the Grand Hotel du Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat, it's 1956, he's changed his name to Walter Wolf, nobody knows about his past in Germany during World War II, he has found a regular group to play bridge with, all is not well but he's getting along. Then, looking across the hotel lobby he spots someone from his past and everything changes in the blink of an eye. That's the last time you will ever be completely certain in this novel that there isn't another plot twist waiting in the next paragraph.

Filled with absolutely fascinating information concerning the British Intelligence community during World War II and how they interacted with first the Germans and now (in 1956) with the Russians - with the Americans lurking on the periphery - this novel is almost a history lesson of how these systems came to impact the war. Secrets don't remain secret because someone always has access to the information to use as blackmail against a target to make them do exactly what you want. Somerset Maugham and his nephew Robin play a large role in this story along with other true historical figures from the times. The double crosses come at a race-track-fast rate. Bernie is even more moody and depressed in this novel than in others. Maybe he will learn at some point to stay clear of the type of woman he gravitates toward? There is a murder which Bernie solves almost in an off-hand manner without having the criminal brought to justice. Later in the novel he explains his thinking of the difference between revenge and vengeance and that's all it took for me to cheer Bernie's decision at the conclusion of the novel.

The feeling of being in this place at this time is wonderfully shored up with mentions of Bernie seeing the yacht of Aristotle Onassis moored in the harbor. Somerset Maugham receives an invitation to the wedding of Prince Rainier and Grace Kelly in Monaco. All kinds of neat little tidbits are scattered throughout the book to place you firmly in the location and the time frame. Positively recommended for readers who want to know more about World War II from the viewpoint of those who did the day-to-day dirty work for their respective governments. Plus, it just happens to be a darn good reading experience too.

I received this novel through the Amazon Vine Voices program, NetGalley and Penguin Group.

Yanper says

Η τριλογία του Βερολίνου μου έρεσε πολύ και αγάπησα τον Μπέρνι και τον κυνισμό του. Μετά απ' αυτές μωσ περιπτειες νομίζω τι έρχισε να γίνεται κουραστικός και να μεταμορφώνεται σε έναν σ' γχρονο σο'περ ήρωα που καμμά γυνάκα δεν μπορεί να του αντισταθεί ακμή και σε

προχωρημένη ηλικία, ενώ ταυτόχρονα κανένας δεν μπορεί να συγκριθεί μαζί του σε εξυπνίδα και διορατικότητα. Νομίζω ότι μάλλον ήθελε η Ραο Κερ να συνταξιοδοτήσει τον ήρωά του πριν τον απομυθοποιήσει εντελώς. Κατ' τ' άλλα η ιστορία είναι καλή και ο συγγραφέας για μια ακόμη φορά καταφέρνει να μπλξει με επιτυχία τον μύθο με ιστορικό γεγονός.

Vaso says

Ο Μπέρνι βρίσκεται στη Γαλλική Ριβιέρα και δουλεύει σε ένα ξενοδοχείο. Κάποιος παλιός του γνώριμος από το παρελθόν, τον εμπλέκει σε μια υπόθεση εκβιασμού. Η υπόθεση δεν έχει να κάνει αποκλειστικά με τη ναζιστική Γερμανία, παράλα αυτό γίνονται αναφορές σε περιστατικά εκείνης της περιόδου.

Η αλήθεια είναι ότι περιμένα περισσότερα.

3,5 αστέρια

Mark says

Another tale from the Bernie Gunther adventures and as his author writes them in no chronological order this one takes place in 1956 in the South of France. Bernie is a concierge in a French Hotel, made me watch Richard E Grants "hotel secrets" episode about the fantastic hotels in the South of France, to give me a feeling for the surroundings.

Bernie gets invited by the great W. Somerset Maugham and gets thrown into his world because the great writer gets blackmailed by a Nazi that twice made a damaging impression or trespass in Gunthers life. That said we get two stories of Gunthers experiences with this man that are moments from a Nazi Germany that give new insight for people into matters of WWII that are generally not that well known. This time the man has decided to blackmail the writers private life which involves a lot of his homosexual lifestyle which was not accepted in those days and could still get you landed in jail or worse. How many homosexuals did die in the Nazi concentration camps? - Like a lot of groups in Germany and occupied territories that were not considered the moral norm they were gathered and slaughtered or used as a working force.

Gunther gets involved in the murky world of spies this time as well and his role is the one of sacrificial lamb which he has no clue of until it is way to late. Bernie has got himself tangled into the Cambridge spy-ring and the games spies seem to be up to.

Will Bernie's survivor skills get him through this adventure when it seems that his wartime history will not leave him in peace.

Another great tale of postwar Europe in which we can feel the cold war becoming more of a reality and a Europe only a decade away from a devastating war. A well written period piece and a splendid story about Bernie Gunther. looking forward to the next installment: Prussian Blue. Wondering at what time in history this Gunther tale takes place.

Kay says

I have read all ten previous books in Philip Kerr's Bernie Gunther series, and this may well be the most brilliant and my favorite. The writing is topnotch, even better than usual, and the heavily ironic Berlin-style

humor is hot and heavy coming out of Bernie's mouth.

If you've read all his previous misadventures, then you understand how he got so jaded and depressed. He has every right to feel that way. In fact, in the early pages of this book, he even recounts that he tried suicide. How he is still standing beats me...and I fear for his future--I am afraid he will end soon. He is in his early sixties in this book, set in 1956 in the French Riviera. While some reviewers didn't like the absence of Hitler-era detail, I loved how the brilliant, well-researched author Philip Kerr shows the aftermath of the Nazi regime. Bernie is a former Berlin policeman who was used by the Nazis and pressed into doing their bidding, flung into the gulag by the Soviets after World War II, and escaped with the aid of a sinister old acquaintance (who becomes the real-life East German head of the Stasi, Erich Mielke. Find his photo on Wikipedia.com and shiver from the evil shooting out his eyes at you, not kidding). In this book Bernie "hides out" as a concierge at a swish French hotel, tangles with famed British author Somerset Maugham, and runs into Cold War spies from both sides, getting squished in the middle. Of course there is his usual dalliance with a femme fatale--one who may or may not be just what she seems.

If I could give this book more stars, then I surely would. And I do not even like noir as a rule, and this historical thriller reeks of it...it is world-weary and wonderfully well done. There is a phrase "Prussian blue" worked into the conclusion, and after that, the end papers note to readers says that the next Bernie Gunther book is called PRUSSIAN BLUE and publishes in 2017. I believe the text gives us a tiny hint of what we can expect, and as usual, I suspect it will not be pretty. Poor, sad Bernie Gunther. I want him to go on forever so I can wallow in Philip Kerr's historical research and complex plots.

Hanneke says

So, that was the 11th Bernie Gunther! I do not read many thrillers, but will always read a Bernie Gunther. They are well researched, full of real historical persons and you get treated to truly witty wise-cracks, so what else would you wish for in a historical thriller.

Contrary to the other Bernie thrillers, which can move through the 1930th, '40th and halfway '50th in one story, it is the first one which had only one flashback to Bernie's life in Nazi Germany and in particular the timeframe when the Russians are approaching at the beginning of 1945. For the rest, the entire story of the book is set at the Cote d'Azur in 1956. As usual, Bernie's past is catching up on him in the person of a former SS officer who caused Bernie much harm in the war. The story evolves around Somerset Maugham. I always enjoy how Philip Kerr chooses his main characters for his Bernie books. Who would ever thought Bernie would be a house guest of Somerset Maugham! Maugham is a very enjoyable persona, a splendid man in a splendid mansion, delivering his devious views on mankind in a constant flow of words. There are some very excentric officers of MI5 and MI6 to enjoy as well. Bernie survives, but barely, as he always does. He is not getting any younger and is more weary in this novel, but another Bernie novel has been announced, so I am confident he will be forced into trouble again. I will patiently await his further exploits.

Lisa says

I seem to be in the minority here but I can't get on with this book and have decided not to finish at 65% (so many books, too little time).

I like Bernie and find him funny and interesting but the story involves wayyyyyy too many characters.

Set in a really interesting period/place and with plenty of spy shennanigans but it just descended into a list of

who's who and who did what in the war that I became completely flumoxed...then bored.

Such a shame as all the elements are there for a book I would enjoy.

It could be it was particularly hard to follow on audio (and Bernie has a strong American accent which didn't seem to fit) so if you're going to give it a try go for a real book so you can go back and remember who everyone is!

I would consider starting at the beginning of this series in book format (I think this is number 11) as I do like Bernie and maybe it would be clearer from the beginning?!?

Debbie says

This was my first book by Phillip Kerr so I wasn't sure what to expect. I thought that he did old time detective novels. However, this one was about former spies, German, English and Russian. For the most part, I enjoyed it. There were a few times when it sort of slowed down a little. I really enjoyed the ending. Throughout the whole book, you really didn't know who you could trust and that was definitely proven with the ending. I would read this author again.

I really liked the fact that the main character was fictional but a lot of the supporting characters were real. I didn't know that until after I read the book and read it at the end. I think if I had known that beforehand, it would have made my reading more entertaining.

Thanks Penguin Group Putnam for approving my request and Net Galley for providing me with a free e-galley in exchange for an honest review.

Lisa says

My 2 stars reflect the tedious experience I had reading the novel - but take them with a grain of salt. I am not a fan of noirish, hard-boiled, tough-guy, spy thrillers. So if this is a genre you enjoy, you may like "The Other Side of Silence." Plus, as a wise Goodreads friend commented, it doesn't make sense to start with #11 in a series: because I've missed "20 years of chronological character development, beginning in 1936-37, and thousands of pages of backstory progression."

The novel had too much exposition and not enough action. It was about a complicated blackmail plot against W. Somerset Maugham, which became more and more convoluted, involving multiple characters and countries and time periods... and I just didn't care. Bernie Gunther left me cold along with his view of women: "she looked smart in her double-breasted naval uniform, blond and buxom, which is just the way I like them" and of lovemaking: "she was bent over in front of me like the keenest entomologist." Really?

I did learn (or-relearn) a new word from Phillip Kerr that summarizes my reading experience of "The Other Side of Silence." **Sepulchral**.

Robert French says

Previously I used to wait in anticipation for the next Bernie Gunther book by Philip Kerr. No longer. The Other Side of Silence is the 11th novel of Philip Kerr's Bernie Gunther series. I was quite disappointed. The cynical attitude and dark wit is sadly weak or missing. In his earlier books, when Philip Kerr was writing

about the horror of life under the Nazis, he excelled. But he has lost his touch. Having read, many years ago, the major novels and most of the short stories of W. Somerset Maugham, I was initially intrigued by his life and his life style. I had no idea and knew little about Maugham. It is not that I am going to give up on Philip Kerr and I will likely try his next novel Prussian Blue. I will give The Other Side of Silence 2 stars primarily because of what I learned about Maugham, not because of the convoluted plot surrounding British Intelligence. That is frightfully boring.

Paromjit says

This is a brilliant, erudite and lucid thriller with a weary Gunther as Walter Wolf working as a hotel concierge in the South of France. This is the first book I have read of the series and it works as a standalone. We encounter Gunther trying to commit suicide but thankfully failing. His wife has left him to return home. Gunther finds himself helping W. Somerset Maugham, a writer and one time spy, who is being blackmailed by an old and loathed foe of Gunther, Harold Henning. He has a photograph which has Maugham with Guy Burgess, and others in compromising acts in a gay sex orgy party.

However, nothing and no-one is as they seem. The blackmail plot turns out to be more complex and far reaching than first envisaged, there is a bigger target than just Maugham. It appears that the British Intelligence Services would prefer not to have their gross incompetence aired in public and more specifically to the Americans. There are tapes which suggest there are a greater number of traitors who are leaking state secrets to Russia. Gunther's bridge partner is murdered and he begins a sexual relationship with Anne French. French is writing a biography of Maugham and wants Gunther to get her access to the notoriously reclusive Maugham. In a tale littered with heightened tension, Gunther discovers that he does want to live and draws on his phenomenal gift for getting out of exceedingly tight corners and handling the deepest betrayals.

Philip Kerr has an unerring eye for this historical period, like the Cambridge Spy Ring and British Intelligence and its failures, to spin a superb atmospheric Cold War tale of spies and intrigue. The piece de resistance is the cynical and world weary Gunther. His dark humour and history make him at ease with dealing with Maugham and the grim world he lives in. This twisted and beguiling tale located in actual history and real characters is superb and has the feel of credible authenticity. A memorable and compelling read which i recommend to others. Many grateful thanks to Quercus for an ARC via netgalley.

Manray9 says

The weakest Bernie Gunther novel yet. The plot stretches credulity and the final third, with its hectic and disjointed resolution, seems forced. Perhaps it's time for Kerr to put ol' Bernie out to pasture?

Michael says

This is a cool thriller set in the French Riviera in the mid-50s which features writer Somerset Maugham as a victim of blackmail. Our sardonic, cynic hero (and closet romantic) is Bernie Gunther, whose exploits as a Berlin homicide detective and reluctant participant in various SS schemes during World War 2 are featured in previous entries in this series, is trying to live a quiet life as the concierge of a fancy hotel in Cap Ferrat, a peninsula between Nice and Monaco. Playing bridge is the highest level of excitement he craves. But all that

changes when the town's most famous resident, Maugham, now age 82, invites him to a bridge game and then presses him to serve as an intermediary in blackmail negotiations over some damaging photos of a naked pool party at his villa from just before the war. The infamous spy, Guy Burgess, is featured in the photos, a former MI6 and KGB double agent who did propaganda with BBC during the war and later served in sensitive sites with the Foreign Office before defecting to Russia in 1951. That Maugham served a long time with MI6, starting with running a network of agents in Petrograd in World War 1, the exposure would put him under suspicions.

It turns out that a particular nemesis of Bernie's, Otto Hebel, is a key player in the threat, a former SS officer who caused him great personal pain and loss with blackmail schemes during the war and now serves with the brutal security force of East Germany, the Stasi. Bernie is particularly vulnerable because he is tainted with his collusion with famous war criminals of the Nazi regime and is living under false name, using papers ironically procured for him as part of a deal with another former Nazi, now the current head of the Stasi. When the blackmail escalates to a larger threat to undermine confidence in British intelligence services, right when trust among its allies was critical for teamwork on dealing with the Suez Canal crisis, a lot of their spymasters show up in town with aggressive doubts about Bernie's role. So you can see Bernie is between a rock and a hard place.

The challenge of surviving this nexus of dangerous forces actually has the effect of stirring Bernie out of a suicidal depression. Instead of running, he can't resist acting from his growing friendship with Maugham and doing his best for a man who has a similar combination of cynical outlook and viciously playful humor. Bernie is also awakened to supreme craftiness by the murder of a friend and his deep desire to stay in Cap Ferrat due to a love relationship that blossoms with a woman working on a biography of Maugham. Though he has sworn off killing enemies, he has to find a way to achieve vengeance against Hebel, who in a long flashback to his time in Konigsberg, East Prussia, in 1945 features a suspected role for the SS agent's greed in mistakes that led to the Russian torpedo sinking of an evacuation ship, the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, with the loss of 9,000 civilians (a real event that still stands as the largest maritime death toll in history).

The blend of historical fact and figures with an intricate and plausible espionage yarn makes this a fun ride. The attempt to portray Maugham's personality and details of his lifestyle at his fabulous Villa Mauresque made for an extra treat. Here is a sample of some of the banter there:

A Brit asks Bernie:

Do you think he could be a Russian agent? He wouldn't be the first communist to own a fucking Picasso."
"Including Picasso".

A point where Bernie notices a the Gauguin's painting of a Tahitian woman has seven toes brings up some of Maugham's misogyny:

"You know why I bought her? To remind me how ugly I find women. ..."

I looked at the picture and nodded. "She's not my type ...That's why high heels were invented, isn't it? To stop women looking like us."

"And you wonder why your relationships go wrong? Take it from Gauguin. You can't trust Western ideals of beauty ...Every angel is really a devil. And every woman is a whore."

"Not every woman. Only the ones who ask for money."

And here we get Bernie's response to Maugham's comment the "Love is just a dirty trick that's played on us to achieve continuation of the species.":

Love and hate, human feelings and emotion, they're all the same God-given illusion. It's what convinces us that we're here and that we count for something in this universe. When we don't. Not for a second.

Everything we feel and that we think—it's all the same cosmic joke. You should know that more than most people, Mr. Maugham. You've been playing God and inflicting cosmic jokes on your characters for sixty years.

The book was provided by the publisher for review through the Netgalley program and is due out on March 29th.

Chrissa Vasileiou says

Η ?ποψ? μου για το βιβλ?ο στο site "Book City": Η ?λλη πλευρ? της σιωπ?ς

Nigeyb says

From mid-October 2016 through to early January 2017 I read all eleven of the Bernie Gunther series - at least until April 2017 when the 12th instalment, 'Prussian Blue', is due to be published.

An unpleasant blackmailer named Harold Heinz Hebel, who Bernie encountered back in 1938, and then during the winter of 1944/45, who we learn about in flashback, is the catalyst for another absorbing and surprising tale. The present day narrative takes place in 1956 with Bernie working at a hotel on the French Riviera.

Bernie's involvement in the blackmail case continues his dark, brooding character development. Pushing 60 years of age he already considers himself a dead man. His dark philosophising is truly the stuff of legend. Can it get any worse? Oh yes. Even when you're down there's the chance of a few more painful kicks.

There are rich rewards for anyone who follows Bernie through this series and these continue in 'The Other Side of Silence'. This time out it's Burgess and Maclean, or at least a tape of Burgess talking to KGB officers which incriminate W. Somerset Maugham and, more significantly, the British intelligence services. Bernie's interactions with Maugham are one of the many pleasures of this novel.

Wonderful, as always. I eagerly await 'Prussian Blue'.

Nikos Tsentemeidis says

Σταθερ? αξ?α.

Χρ?σιμες ιστορικ?ς πληροφορ?ες και σε αυτ? το βιβλ?ο. Η πιο σημαντικ? ε?ναι τα εγκλ?ματα των σοβιετικ?v λ?γο πριν το τ?λος του πολ?μου (1944-45), ?ταν οι Γερμανο? κ?τοικοι της ανατολικ?ς Πρωσ?ας ?φευγαν μαζικ? για την Γερμαν?α, λ?γο πριν φτ?σουν οι Ρ?σοι, οι οπο?οι β?θισαν υπερφορτωμ?vα πλο?α, με μεγαλ?τερο το Γκο?στλοφ, με 10,000 περ?που επιβα?vοντες. Θεωρε?ται ?να απ? τα μεγαλ?τερα εγκλ?ματα πολ?μου, αν και σχετικ? ?γνωστο ακ?μα και σ?μερα. Ο καπετ?νιος του υποβρυχ?ου Marinesko, παρασημοφορ?θηκε σαν ?ρωας πολ?μου στη χ?ρα του.

Αρκετ?ς πληροφορ?ες επ?σης για ?γγλους κατ?σκοπους της KGB.

Tom Mathews says

Readers who aren't familiar with Bernie Gunther have missed out on a classically cynical detective living in a time and place where there is much to be cynical about. Those who have read Philip Kerr's engaging series know that, if nothing else, Gunther has served as an engaging tour guide to life in Germany during the years that the Nazi party was in power.

In this eleventh book in the series, one war is over and another, colder war has begun. Kerr's Berlin gumshoe is in hiding, changing his name and career. Life is hard when you are forced to hide out on the French Riviera, working as concierge at a hotel for the soon-to-be-called jet set. Try as he might, though, trouble soon finds Bernie. British author and former intelligence operative W. Somerset Maugham, living nearby is being blackmailed and wants Gunther to coordinate the payoff. This brings him into contact with an old nemesis, Harold Henning, with whom he has crossed paths before with tragic consequences. From there, the story evolves into a twisted tale of Byzantine spycraft, involving anonymous agencies from multiple countries. Gunther, ever the rogue agent, is deeply in trouble and has to rely on all of his skills to make it to the end alive.

It might be wise to wear a neck brace when reading this book. I'm still not sure if this is a story of double agents, triple agents, quadruple agents, or something even more Machiavellian. Bottom line, I loved it.

Be advised, this book is part of a series that does have a significant back story with recurring characters. For this reason I assigned this a series rating of 3.5* and recommend you consider starting the series at the beginning. Bernie Gunther first appears in the Berlin Noir: March Violets / The Pale Criminal / A German Requiem trilogy.

*[Some people insist on reading series in order starting at the beginning. I believe that this is absolutely necessary with some series and unnecessary in others. In my reviews I assign books in a series a score of one to five in which the higher score denotes increased importance of reading the book in order. A series with returning villains, an ongoing story arc, and evolving family dynamics will rate higher than one where the plot in each book is totally unrelated to the others. As an example, a Nancy Drew book would be a one. There is no evolving story arc. Nancy hasn't grown any older in fifty years and, face it, Ned is never going to propose to her. The Lord of the Rings, on the other hand, is a five. Reading the trilogy in order is essential to fully understanding and appreciating the story. One book picks up right where its predecessor leaves off and Fellowship of the Ring contains information that readers of The Two Towers really need to know. Besides, Tolkien originally wrote it as a single volume.]

** review was based on an advanced reading copy obtained at no cost from the publisher in exchange for an unbiased review. While this does take any 'not worth what I paid for it' statements out of my review, it otherwise has no impact on the content of my review.

FYI: On a 5-point scale I assign stars based on my assessment of what the book needs in the way of improvements:

-5 Stars – Nothing at all. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

-4 Stars – It could stand for a few tweaks here and there but it's pretty good as it is.

-3 Stars – A solid C grade. Some serious rewriting would be needed in order for this book to be considered great or memorable.

-2 Stars – This book needs a lot of work. A good start would be to change the plot, the character development, the writing style and the ending.

-1 Star - The only thing that would improve this book is a good bonfire.

Susan says

I love books and there are many series that I follow, but I think that Bernie Gunther is possibly my favourite fictional character – so a new Gunther novel is a reading highlight for me. This is a series I have read, and re-read, a lot over the years and I am delighted to say that this is one of my favourite books so far.

As always, we jump around in Bernie's life and, in this novel, it is 1956 and he is living on the French Riviera. Pushing sixty, working as a concierge at the Grand Hotel de Saint-Jean, he is nestled between Nice and Monaco and living under the assumed name of Walter Wolf. It is not an exciting life and he has taken up bridge to help stave off the thoughts of suicide that plague him, especially at night. For, with Bernie, his history is always pressing on him and those memories just never leave him alone...

Of course, many Germans must have been living under false passports at that time and Bernie's was given to him by the deputy head of the Stasi. However, when a guest checks in under the name Harold Heinz Hebel, Bernie immediately recognises him as Harold Hennig – former Captain in the SD and a known blackmailer. Indeed, blackmail is central to this novel, as Bernie is introduced to the author, W. Somerset Maugham, who asks Bernie (or Mr Wolf...) for help as he is being blackmailed himself.

In this novel, we will travel back to 1938 and 1945 as well as an exciting and involved story set firmly in 1956. The author invokes the world of W. Somerset Maugham (also a favourite author of mine) wonderfully well. This storyline also involves the Cambridge spy ring and we have the involvement of Guy Burgess, Donald Maclean and Anthony Blunt. Kerr juggles the different threads so well, including a side story involving the theme of playing bridge, plus the beautiful Anne French, who is pressing Bernie to introduce her to Maugham, as she wants to write a biography of the reclusive writer's life.

Although saddened to reach the end of this novel, I was thrilled to read that there will be another in the series, planned for next year. I look forward to meeting up with Bernie Gunther once again and reading more of his adventures. Wry, clever, pragmatic, intelligent and resourceful – I hope that, wherever and whenever, we meet him again that he will continue to thrill his many followers.

Minas says

ψογος,οπως παντα,Φιλip Κερ.

Maria Bikaki says

Η πιο κοσμοπολιτική περιπέτεια του αγαπημένου μας Μπέρνι. Αττικής των ιστορικών αναφορών και της σχολαστικής έρευνας ο Κερρ μας δίνει να ακυμα δυνατά βιβλίο με όλα εκείνα τα στοιχεία που μας κάνουν να αγαπούμε τα βιβλία και τον κεντρικό του ήρωα, Αυτή τη φορά η ιστορία μας δε μεταφέρεται στα χρόνια της ναζιστικής Γερμανίας όπως μέχρι τώρα μας είχε

συνηθ?σει αλλ? δ?κα χρ?νια αργ?τερα. ?νας π?λεμος ?χει τελει?σει και ?νας ν?ος Ψυχρ?ς π?λεμος ?χει ξεκιν?σει εν? ν?οι χαρακτ?ρες ?ρχονται να προστεθο?ν στο προσκ?νιο και να τον βγ?λουν απ? τα βαρετ? και μοναχικ? του βρ?δια μακρι? απ? την αστυνομικ? δρ?ση. Καλογραμμ?νο, κοσμοπολ?τικο, ?κρως διαβασμ?νος για ακ?μα μια φορ? Φιλip Kerr. ?να βιβλ?ο που ξεχωρ?ζει και μας θυμ?ζει γιατ? αγαπ?με τ?σο πολ? τον Μπερνι. Εις αναμον? της νεας του περιπ?τειας.
