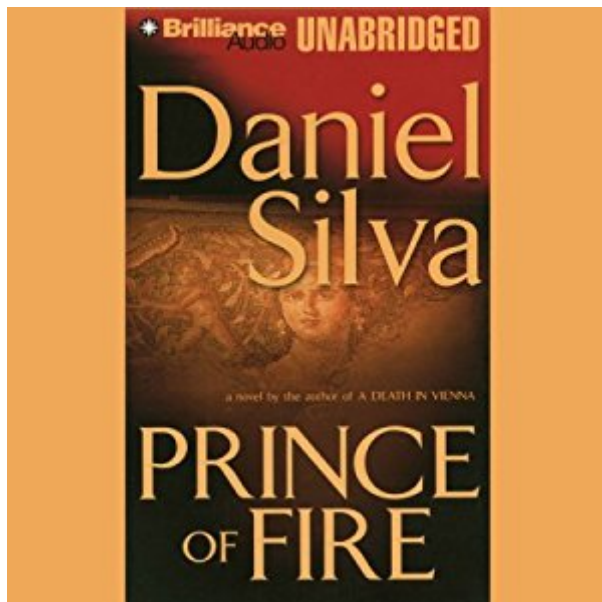


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Prince Of Fire



Synopsis

A New York Times Bestseller A knife-edged thriller of astonishing intricacy and feeling filled with exhilarating prose, this is Daniel Silva's finest novel yet. Art restorer and sometime spy Gabriel Allon is back in Venice, when a terrible explosion in Rome leads to a disturbing personal revelation: the existence of a dossier in the hands of terrorists that strips away his secrets, lays bare his history. Hastily recalled home to Israel, drawn once more into the heart of a service he had once forsaken, Gabriel Allon finds himself stalking an elusive master terrorist across a landscape drenched in generations of blood, along a trail that keeps turning in upon itself, until, finally, he can no longer be certain who is stalking whom. And when at last the inevitable showdown comes, it's not Gabriel alone who is threatened with destruction - for it is not his history alone that has been laid bare. Silva's first novel, *The Unlikely Spy*, went on to surprise bestsellerdom and critical acclaim. Since then, he has written *The Mark of the Assassin*, *The Marching Season*, *The Kill Artist*, *The English Assassin* and *The Confessor*, all of which followed suit and hit the bestseller list. Daniel Silva lives in Georgetown in Washington, D.C. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Silva knows how to write, but he may have fallen into the trap here of having a protagonist for whom he is running out of ideas. There are some interesting relationship twists, especially involving his wife and mistress, but the overall story isn't as complete or complex as in previous books. Gabriel Allon seems to be playing the role of Gabriel Allon, not actually being him. Michael Connelly has run

into this problem with his protagonist Hieronymus Bosch, as did Barbara Hambly with Benjamin January--maybe it happened here too. Unfortunately, some of Silva's political views also mar the book's overall balance. There's nothing wrong with having an opinion on the Arab-Israeli conflicts, and those conflicts of course form the heart of most of Silva's plots. But while he makes a show of trying to be open-minded, with Gabriel Allon questioning the need to evict the Palestinians from what is now Israel, Silva just can't help pushing the idea that most of the Arabs' problems are their own fault. He even has an Arab man at one point blaming the Arabs for their ruinous situation -- a classic manipulative stance. If an Arab writer were to set this up, then I might believe it, but from a writer who converted to Judaism, it's just too convenient and ignores way too much. Since mystery and suspense novels depend so much on solid reason and practicality, for me as a reader that's a problem. I hope it doesn't continue in later novels.

Daniel Silva's Gabriel Allon is one of my favorite characters....the Israeli James Bond. I picture him as a cross between Sean Connery and Daniel Craig. This book doesn't disappoint. I am ready to read the next book. If you like espionage, read this series in order.

I find Daniel Silva's Gabriel Allon series very dependable entertainment. Silva weaves intricate tales, but usually with similar themes - the state of Israel is under attack in some way and only one person can get them through it. But the writing style, the description of the various locales and the emotional complexity of the characters makes each one unique. Unlike other authors, like David Baldacci, whom I also like, these novels are not a whole lot of work to read - just really good entertainment. I always enjoy learning some aspect of Israel's history that is woven through these books, too. Allon is a very complex character in his personal beliefs, his loyalty to his seriously disabled wife as well as his love of his new interest, Chiara. Also mix that in with his love of country and his realization that he is the best person for certain jobs and you have a protagonist that takes you on a very emotional ride. His competence, focus on his tradecraft, intelligence and ruthlessness paint him as someone you definitely want on your side. I do agree somewhat with Miriam that the ending was a bit abrupt given the complexity of the rest of the book. It was satisfying, but seemed like the author got to a point and said, "I need to be done," and wrapped it up quickly.

The fifth novel in the continuing Gabriel Allon series is historical fiction at its best.....never straying far from actual history while creating lifelike fictional characters and events. Starting number six soon!

I particularly like how Silva manages to write spy fiction with compelling characters, the most notable being the spy Gabriel Allon, the one person at the heart of each book, a quirky but also riveting personality. While this newest book shouldn't disappoint fans of the author, it contains a bit more complexity and history than some of his other books in the series. Still, I enjoyed it. One's viewpoint may well be affected by how much one agrees or disagrees with the political issues brought up in the book but the plot and story is suspenseful, structured to engage the reader's attention. Also, Silva doesn't condescend to his readers and seems to assume they'll follow along, sticking it out through all sorts of plot twists. This is POPULAR fiction, the type that appears on bestseller lists and so it may not appeal to elitists. But it certainly appealed to me.

I read this in bits and pieces over several weeks so my review won't do it justice. It's definitely the best of the Allon series so far, and they've all been excellent. On one hand, it's predictable. Allon pursues a truly despicable terrorist, comes close to catching him, is trapped instead, then fights his way back. But it's very poignant as well, with internal personal conflicts, and sublimely moralistic, with examples of Allon's deep-rooted and fundamental values. And I love the background history that is so complementary to the story.

In *Prince of Fire*, Daniel Silva starts already in the middle of the action and what follows is not only a great detective story but a tale of betrayals, rebellions, murders and double-crosses. Despite being an adrenaline ride is not as intense as it should be given the topic. Still, Silva knows his history and makes ample use of it to deliver a very convincing case against Arafat and company. There is plenty of material in *Prince of Fire* to fuel a smart political discussion or two; I particularly liked when Gabriel poses the questions to Eli Lavon and Ari Shamron "Did we drive them [Palestinians] out?" and Shamron being the tough cookie he is says why is convinced it was the best course of action. In *Prince of Fire* Gabriel assembles a formal team for the first time. Those four people and a few more added later will partake on the adventures which come later in the series. Also in this installment Gabriel is asked for the first time to take charge of the "Office" as Director. And the foundation of Gabriel and Chiara's relationship is put to the test. Will Gabriel assume control of the "Office"? Will he marry Chiara?

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