



# Agents of Treachery: Never Before Published Spy Fiction from Today's Most Exciting Writers

*Otto Penzler (Editor)*

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**Agents of Treachery: Never Before Published Spy Fiction from Today's Most Exciting Writers** Otto Penzler (Editor)

For the first time ever, legendary editor Otto Penzler has handpicked some of the most respected and bestselling thriller writers working today for a riveting collection of spy fiction. From first to last, this stellar collection signals mission accomplished.

Including:

- \* Lee Child with an incredible look at the formation of a special ops cell.
- \* James Grady writing about an Arab undercover FBI agent with an active cell.
- \* Joseph Finder riffing on a Boston architect who's convinced his Persian neighbors are up to no good.
- \* John Lawton concocting a Len Deighton-esque story about British intelligence.
- \* Stephen Hunter thrilling us with a tale about a WWII brigade.

Full list of Contributors:

James Grady, Charles McCarry, Lee Child, Joseph Finder, John Lawton, John Weisman, Stephen Hunter, Gayle Lynds, David Morrell, Andrew Klavan, Robert Wilson, Dan Fesperman, Stella Rimington, Olen Steinhauer

## Agents of Treachery: Never Before Published Spy Fiction from Today's Most Exciting Writers Details

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## From Reader Review Agents of Treachery: Never Before Published Spy Fiction from Today's Most Exciting Writers for online ebook

### Alice says

Although I call myself a fan of spy stories, I mostly mean tales of, and written during, the Cold War. This collection was a good way for me to find out what's going on in modern espionage fiction. A lot of terrorism, it turns out, and a lot of tales set in the deserts of the Middle East, as well as some historical settings. Some of these stories play the genre completely straight, others are humorous. A *lot* don't end well.

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### Jacki (Julia Flyte) says

This is a collection of fourteen original short stories written by some of the best thriller writers in the business, including Lee Child, Joseph Finder, Charles McCarry, Olen Steinhauer and Stella Rimington. They span a range of timeframes and countries, from 1940s Switzerland to the current war in Iraq.

The standard is somewhat uneven. I thought a few of the stories were outstanding, some were just good and a few left me cold. I enjoyed the way that each one reflected the author's writing style and I look forward to exploring some of the authors whose work was previously unknown to me.

Stand-outs for me included Charles McCarry's account of an African dictator which was reminiscent of the film *The Last King Of Scotland*. The characters are so well developed that they really come alive. Joseph Finder writes a very accessible and clever story about a man who harbours suspicions about his next door neighbours. John Weisman writes about a CIA agent on the frontline in Iraq, working for a boss who values climbing the ladder ahead of retrieving hostages.

Lee Child's story was probably the biggest disappointment and I wondered if it was included for the value that his name adds to the collection rather than on its own merits.

Overall a mixed bag, but with some stand-outs that made it well worthwhile.

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### Joyce says

Apparently there has never been a collection of purpose-written espionage short stories, and you can see why because the degree of difficulty here is immense. International thrillers take a buttload of mise-en-scene, tradecraft, atmosphere, sometimes historical exegesis, and especially character motivation -- a lot to cram into 30 pages or less. I think with only one exception none of these authors chose to use a series character, and that one barely appeared, so they really did all start from scratch.

This isn't your triumphalist James Bond and Tom Clancy type of thriller fiction, but in almost all cases more the "heirs of Graham Greene" type -- you really aren't going to want to reach for this collection when you're feeling sad. Every story is suffused with... not nostalgia exactly, but a sense that the spy trade might now be so limp and tatty that it can't even support fiction set in the modern era. Almost all of the authors chose an explicitly or implicitly 20th century era, and even the post 9-11 tales are oddly backwards-looking.

As always, the pick of the litter is Charles McCarry hands down. Robert Wilson's cinematic outing is as bracing as a shot of neat bourbon, and Andrew Klavan turns in a haunting yet woozy nocturne that reads almost more like contemporary science fiction than a spy thriller.

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### **Rachel Cotterill says**

I picked this book up in the Kindle sale, and I think I'm glad I didn't pay full price. There were a couple of really good stories, and the collection as a whole was mildly diverting, but it was a real mix of quality and I was disappointed too many times. However it was an interesting taster of a genre I don't really read, and I may look for longer works by the writers of my favourite pieces.

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### **Giovanni Gelati says**

Fourteen short stories written by some of the thriller genre's best authors: Gayle Lynds, Joseph Finder, Lee Child, David Morell, John Weisman....., are contained in this novel. I am not sure what it took to get this done, but every page is like gold. I have made a point on this in a previous post about the digital shorts, this is perfect: A very nice way to get a little fix of one of your authors before they put out the main course, their newest novel.

I read the printed version of the novel, but it can be purchased in an ereader form and read just as a series of digital shorts. I am a bit surprised they didn't also break them up and sell them individually, why not? Everything is in place to do so. Picking up one of these well written pieces would be a bargain for any fan of this group of authors. I had a difficult time trying to figure out where to start with it. I am a big fan of most of the authors in the group and didn't want to disrespect any of them so I wrote all the names down put them in one of my ball caps and picked out the names and wrote down the order. It added to the fun and the excitement of the novel. Having choices is fun and this type of format gives the reader that and so much more.

Digital shorts, short stories, they are a wave that is beginning to cause a current and an undertow that I think is exciting. Having access to something like this is amazing. Picking up a novel, pulling up the file on the ereader, getting that quick hit, that satisfaction immediately is just a win-win for the author and their customer, the consumer/their fan. I hope that more novels like this hit the market because this is like holding lightning in a bottle. The power, the sheer force of having such skill and storytelling ability in one novel, fourteen well-crafted shorts by some of the industry's best authors shouldn't be passed up. I don't hesitate to say not just to put this in your Goodreads/Shelfari –to read- list, but to get it a.s.a.p.

What are you reading today? Check us out and become our friend on Facebook, Shelfari, and Crimespace. Go to Goodreads and become our friend there and suggest books for us to read and post on. You can also follow us on Twitter, Book Blogs, and the Gelati's Scoop Facebook Fan Page; also look for our posts on Amazon, Borders, Barnes and Nobles, and the Bucks County Library System. Did you know you can shop directly on Amazon by clicking the Gelati's Store Tab on our blog? Thanks for stopping by today; we will see you tomorrow. Have a great day.

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### **Cindy says**

A great variety of spy stories by some stellar authors.

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## **Sirbriang2 says**

According to the introduction, there are precious few short stories in the spy/espionage genre, and even fewer written by top talents in the field. That makes sense, given the complexity of most spy stories. It also makes this collection more impressive for achieving such high quality.

Not all of the stories were in my preferred styles, but they were all pretty good. My main complaint is that the stories I liked most tended toward cuteness or playing with the genre's tropes instead of telling a gripping tale. There were other good ones, but telling bleak tales without the space to make the reader identify with the characters limits the payoff. Perhaps that is the trade-off for the brevity of these stories.

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## **Elli says**

Really enjoyed this book! The editor, Otto Penzler, offered a first rate sampling of chosen authors' short stories as well as a brief history of writings, related careers and such meaningful data to persons interested in espionage themes. And he used quite a number of situations where espionage can be a part...and methods used....and the actions and reactions of the many personalities involved in spy-type work. For instance, I never knew that Joseph Finder's first choice would have been as a spy to which he started, but found the bureaucratic setting not to his liking. At times I do like short story collections, and I think this is one of the best and most organized for the reader's benefit that I've read.

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## **Angela says**

I returned this one after reading 3/4 of it because I agree with a point that the editor concedes in the introduction--spy fiction doesn't lend itself to short fiction. It's too hard with this genre to develop the atmosphere, incorporate the twists and turns, craft the characters, etc. in a short story so, with two exceptions, I found these very unfulfilling. In all honesty I also prefer modern-day espionage (with a few exceptions) to WWI or WWII stuff and this was a blended collection.

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## **Rev. M. M. Walters says**

The stories are from both sides of the Cold War divide but primarily from the West. There was an uneven quality to them. Obviously, in any anthology, some stories would be more interesting than others, but it seemed to me that it was more pronounced in this collection than in others that I've read. I prefer my spy fiction to have a clear understanding of who the good guys are, even if the story is told from the bad guys perspective. This was not always the case here.

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## **Tuxlie says**

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## Sandra Riverol says

La reseña completa en:

<https://unavidaentrepaginasyletras.bl...>

Creo que algo que le voy a destacar a esta antología es que tira el estigma de que los libros que hablan de espías, policías y novelas negras se escriben exactamente igual o tienen el mismo cliché de "policía borracho, engreído, que se acuesta con señoras híper sensuales y se lleva a la rubia volando en su coche maravilla hacia el atardecer", así que:

¡Gracias Otto, gracias!

Como se narra en la sinopsis el libro nos presenta 14 relatos de uno de los mejores escritores de novela negra, thriller y relatos de espías; autores como: Lee Chile, Joseph Finder Charles McCarry (cuyo relato me encantó), pero no se dejen engañar, son sólo unos de los tantos nombres destacables que se encuentran aquí.

Tenemos un abanico enorme de personajes, elaborados de forma excelente y específica por cada escritor, pasando por un hombre retirado en su última misión, un agente de barbas largas muy astuto que engaña a todo el país enemigo, hasta un vecino común en un pueblo de las afueras con sospechas infundamentadas sobre los nuevos residentes de la casa de enfrente (o eso se cree). Ver como cada autor construye a cada personaje ha sido un espectáculo magnífico y tienen la profundidad suficiente para que en ningún relato te sientas perdido.

Hablando del espacio debo decir que los autores no han reducido el cuadrante de trabajo, ya que damos vueltas por el mundo: desde un complot para liberar un pueblo africano, pasando por una bella y mística Venecia dónde los secretos se revelan entre las sombras, sin olvidar dar un paseo en un Londres lleno de intrigas; entre muchos otros lugares.

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## Dan Downing says

The volume I read has many things to recommend it beyond the stories: it is a beautifully bound, 3/4 marbled cover limited edition with a drop in the signature page before each story and from the editor. The paper is heavy; in lieu of a dust jacket is a heavy clear plastic protector.

This came about because Otto Penzler likes to edit unusual books. His idea here was to offer the first collection of espionage/international thriller stories by a variety of established authors. The seemingly simple task becomes more difficult once one realizes the difficulty of presenting complicated, layered stories in a short form. The challenge has been met wonderfully well. The fourteen tales all are top flight, albeit different from each other; there are no guarantees that the 'good guys' will win, no singular theme geography or time period.

Altogether a highly satisfying and rewarding reading experience, even without the beauty of my particular copy.

Highly Recommended.

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## Tom says

This is great fun. Short stories about spies. From WWII thru the Cold War to modern Europe and Iraq. I've found them all very interesting in their way; only have a few left.

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## Gary says

What a disappointment this book was! I've enjoyed the novels of several of the authors whose short stories are contained in this anthology, and was looking forward to taking pleasure in the stories of those whom I had not yet read. But mediocrity infused this collection through-and-through. It took me forever to finish the book, since none of the stories stoked my enthusiasm to go on to the next one. If there's one reason I'm glad I hung on, however, it's that Olen Steinhauer's contribution--the last in the book--managed to hit his usual high standard.

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