



The Geneva Trap

Stella Rimington

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At a tracking station in Virginia, U.S. Navy officers watch in horror as one of their communications satellites plummets into the Indian Ocean and panic spreads through the British and American intelligence services. When a Russian intelligence officer approaches MI5 with vital information about the cyber sabotage, he refuses to talk to anyone but Liz Carlyle. But who is he, and how is he connected to Liz? Is this a Russian plot to disable the West's defenses? Or is the threat coming from elsewhere? As Liz and her team search for a mole inside the Ministry of Defense, the trail takes them from Geneva, to Marseilles, and to Korea in a race against time to stop the Cold War from heating up.

The Geneva Trap Details

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Author : Stella Rimington

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From Reader Review The Geneva Trap for online ebook

Don Teale says

There is more plot in an episode of Danger Mouse.

Michael Martz says

I am of two minds on Stella Rimington's Liz Carlyle series. I love her descriptions of the intricacies of the spy game, the excellent tradecraft, the storylines, and the strengths and vulnerabilities of the characters. On the other hand, there's a little too much introspection, the writing isn't anything beyond competent, stereotyping abounds, and the dialogue is often a bit stilted. But the author clearly knows her stuff and this is my favorite genre, so.....

The Geneva Trap, her 7th in the series, is a timely addition that focuses on the 'cyber' activity that seems to be the driving force behind a lot of international incidents in today's news. The story is complicated and the cyber aspect puts a different spin on the action, but Rimington's trademark strengths stand out. The plot revolves around a joint US-UK development related to the drone warfare program and a suspected 'mole' somewhere inside the program that's disrupting development and feeding information to enemies. Liz is called into action when a Russian spy who she'd met long ago demands a meeting with her and advises her of his suspicions about the mole, whom he claims is not Russian. So, who's the mole, who's he (or she) working for, and how can he be caught? And why's the Russian interested in it, anyway?

The remainder of The Geneva Trap answers those questions and more, since other sub-plots are in play. The cyber-warfare aspect is an interesting addition and adds complexity to the investigation. The story wraps up nicely at the end- a bit too nicely, from my perspective, and there's no real repercussions for the 'bad actors'. International diplomacy is like that, I suppose.

All-in-all, The Geneva Trap is a nice addition to the Liz Carlyle series. It won't blow you away with action, writing, or a truly unique story line, but it's well done and worth reading if you're a fan of the genre.

Peter Savage says

Flat, uninspired story telling with two dimensional characters. An espionage novel needs to develop tension and anticipation; the unexpected may happen any time. No excitement, no slow build, no tension..... zip. Stella may know the ins and outs of MI5 but she doesn't know jack about a spy novel. I'll stick to rereading early Le Carre.

Nick Marsh says

A thoroughly researched book, which did not rely exclusively on the author's experience at MI5, but also on her unique capacity to observe places, memorize them, and – most importantly – make them look realistic on the page. It's especially the part taking place in Marseille (towards the end), when hot pursuit is kept under the close-up sharpness of a keen narrator, that Rimington's skill emerges most prominently. But there's a lot

of that in the opening pages too, when the reader is dragged along Swiss roads and motorways, while their curiosity builds up to the point of nervous tapping of feet.

This, we must not forget, is book no. 7 in the Liz Carlyle series, so we feel comforted to encounter characters we know from the previous books, doing what we know they're best at, and participating in furthering up the actions of the protagonist. The Geneva Trap is an interesting book, which doesn't shy away from pursuing side plots, such as the one about a cult intent on performing terrorist acts, and also the life and adventure of Liz Carlyle's friends and relatives, who encounter their own share of suspense and narrative tension.

But the major spot is taken by a Russian spy, Alexander Sorsky, who ignites all action when he speaks to Carlyle to inform her of a plot he'd learnt about, involving infiltration of a British-US drone program. Once this is acknowledged, all hell breaks loose, and the action of the novel goes up notch after notch, involving a range of countries, a number of agents, and significant amounts of narrative complications.

Without giving too much away – this is a book that keeps the reader in its own neighbourhood for a long time. It uses a lot of the customary stratagems of the genre, so that immersing oneself into the story feels at the same time familiar and new.

Tina Naples says

I love these thrillers by Stella Rimmington - you can tell she used to be head of MI5. It's great to have a female protagonist for a change in this type of book. I thoroughly recommend them all.

Manny says

What an absolutely dreadful book this was. Uninspired plot, slack dialogue, weak characterization, sloppy fact-checking, miserable writing. But it's the latest installment in a successful series. Apparently, the fact that the author used to run MI5 is enough to sell it.

Well, can't I play too? I used to work for NASA - admittedly, in a somewhat less exalted position, but that's also a glamorous organization. I know where the bodies are buried. So, without further ado, here are the opening paragraphs of

The Jupiter Setup: A Manfred Raindrop novel

Susan Higgins read the email again, then glanced at the calendar. She had no idea what to do, and Congress was voting on the NASA budget in less than a month. She was almost out of time. More important, her project, the most advanced unmanned Jupiter mission yet planned, was almost out of time. If she could not put together a convincing demonstration for the subcommittee members who were visiting her on Monday, her idea would be toast. Another piece of junk to throw on the scrap heap.

She clenched her fists in frustration. The software was still not working. Why had she chosen that useless team leader? By now she knew his style backwards: excuses, excuses and more excuses. Worse, as she knew all too well, she was the person who had appointed him. People would remember that. For a moment, she almost succumbed to complete panic. Then the idea hit her.

Susan Higgins breathed out, suddenly seeing a glimmer of hope. Manfred Raindrop. Yes, he was difficult, undisciplined, insubordinate - all of those things. But one hell of a software engineer. And, she couldn't help thinking at times, strikingly attractive under that disheveled exterior. If only he weren't such a pain in the ass. No ability to manage upwards. She'd have to deal with that somehow. She had no choice.

Her chickens were coming home to roost. But maybe Raindrop could save her bacon.

Shelleyrae at Book'd Out says

The Geneva Trap is the 7th book by former MI5 agent Stella Rimington featuring British counter terrorism agent, Liz Carlyle. Set in the present time, Liz Carlyle is approached by a former acquaintance, now a Russian agent, with information regarding the infiltration of a top secret project known as Operation Clarity involving the development of unmanned drones. Despite the vehement denial of any possible unauthorised access, Liz's investigation uncovers a message that seems to have allowed the top secret program to be breached by persons unknown. As Liz and her team attempt to trace the information back to its source, the action moves from Geneva to Marseilles where Liz disappears, leaving her team, and her lover Martin, frantic.

Rimington's experience shows in her intricate plots of investigation and espionage. In the shadowy world of intelligence its difficult to know who to trust so it takes painstaking information gathering to confirm or deny rumours, threats or theories. The Geneva Trap reveals the labyrinth of intrigue where double agents thrive and governments must always be on guard against infiltration. An aspect of the plot I found particularly fascinating was the idea of second generation 'sleepers' utilised by the North Korean government.

A subplot within the novel involves Liz's mother's partner whose daughter has escaped a French protest group but is being threatened by the leader to fund their bid for an arsenal. Liz enlists Martin's help in finding out more about organisation which ends with Martin in danger facing off the thwarted man.

The pace of The Geneva Trap is fair, somewhat slowed by the crowding of various governments and their agents though it does pick up as the story draws to an end and the pieces begin to fall into place. There are some interesting twists and turns and loose ends are tied up neatly in the conclusion.

While I did find some of the characters tended towards the cliché - thuggish hard drinking Russians, smug, boorish Americans and inscrutable Asians, a handful, such as Liz, Martin and Peggy, are well developed as I would expect, given they are long term characters in the series. I liked Liz's no nonsense attitude, the relationship between Liz and Martin is low key but humanises them both. Peggy caught my interest as a neophyte agent finding her feet in her first investigation with any real responsibility.

This is the first of the Liz Carlyle series I have read, though I thought it worked well enough as a stand alone and I did enjoy it. It provides a good mix of action and intrigue with a ring of authenticity I am sure espionage fans will appreciate.

Michael says

This review originally appeared on my blog; <http://literary-exploration.com/2012/...>

The Geneva Trap by Stella Rimington is my first real look into the Liz Carlyle series but this is book seven. So be warned that I've not read the other six books so my opinions of this book are only based as a standalone book. Liz Carlyle is a counter terrorism agent for MI5 who is approached by a Russian intelligence officer with some vital information of a cyber-sabotage plot on an American defence program. Liz now has to determine if this is the Russians sabotaging the West's defences or if this is something much

worse.

Stella Rimmington brings all her knowledge to this book as a former MI5 agent and she tries to tangle a story of intrigue and suspense in this novel. But does it work as well as it should? For me I haven't had much experience with espionage novels so I don't know what most people would expect from one. For me I often think of James Bond or George Smiley when looking for an espionage novel. The Geneva Trap isn't as far fetched as an Ian Fleming book and is not as complex as a John le Carré novel, it sits somewhere in the middle which is where I'm lacking in experience with these types of books. I often look for a light high-energy read or something that will make my head hurt when I read spy thrillers. So I'm not too sure I like having a book that falls in the middle.

The Geneva Trap has its fair share of moles and shady intelligence practices but in the end I found the book to feel a little too clichéd and predictable. I also felt like most of the characters in the book were too flat and I never really got to see any dimension in them; this could be a simple fact that this is book seven in the series but I still expect a book to be able to be read as a standalone as well so I would of liked more character development within this one.

Rimmington has put together a good mix of intrigue and action in this spy thriller, I would like to see less predictability and more character development in the future but The Geneva Trap was still an enjoyable book to read. I will definitely be looking to read another one of her books, maybe even in the same series because I did enjoy reading this book even if this review sounds like my issues with the novel outweighed my enjoyment of it. It might have been just my lack of experience or that I should have read the other six first.

Jeffrey says

In The Geneva Trap, Stella Rimington's 7th Liz Carlyle espionage novel, the spycraft shares time with a subplot involving Carlyle's mother's boyfriend's daughter, who is being harassed by a cult for money to use in some terrorist scheme. Its a strange marriage for a spy book, but seems to be part of the story because the spy story is fairly thin.

In the Liz Carlyle portion of the story, Alexander Sorsky, a Russian spy, who used to know Carlyle when she was a student in university, approaches the English and asks to speak to Carlyle. When Carlyle meets with Sorsky in Geneva, he tells her that he has learned of a plot to steal secrets from a US-British drone program. Sorsky says its a third nation that is involved in the plot, and not his own. Carlyle immediately informs Geoffrey Fane, her colleague, and Andy Blokus, the chief American spy in England of the plot and each nation starts the work of trying to find out who has gotten a hook into the drone program, which appears to be having outside technological interference during tests.

Carlyle, however is barely involved in the initial internal investigation part of the story as she is meeting with Sorsky - so she sends her protege, Peggy Kinsolving, to do the footwork of interviewing members of the drone program. Kinsolvings soon finds a security breach because of an amorous couple who are using an internal "drone only computer system" to send messages to each other. It seems the computer system may have been hacked.

After a meeting in which Sorsky reveals that a colleague mentioned while drunk that he knew of a third power involved in the plot, Sorsky is caught snooping and hustled out of Geneva by the Russians.

Meanwhile the Swiss are investigating the murder of one of their top spies, who was killed in an apparent car

accident. It seems to be connected to the spy plot and may be someone who worked with Sorsky.

At the same time as this plot is unfolding, Liz is informed by her mother's boyfriend Edward, an old soldier, that his daughter Cathy and grandson seem to be in danger from members of a French cult. Carlyle asks her lover Martin, a member of a French security force, to look into the cult, and it turns out that it is already being investigated by the French for suspected terrorist aspirations and there are agents in place. Even though the French go after the cult leaders, one does escape and a real confrontation occurs in England between the cult's enforcer and Edward, where Edward must defend his daughter and grandson.

At the same time, as the English and Swiss close in on the spy plotters, Liz is kidnapped and threatened. Can the English save her before she is killed?

Although its interesting to read about the lives of the characters in Liz Carlyle's world and see how there are tie-ins between her life and her family, I found this book wanting. The spy story was a little too linear and the family drama just not that believable or compelling.

James Wattengel says

Quick modern spy read.

Bree T says

In Geneva, a Russian spy approaches an employee of MI5 and requests to speak to only one person: Liz Carlyle of MI6. After they figure out precisely who he is and what his connection is to Carlyle (and how he even knows about her) a meeting is arranged between the two of them in Geneva.

He gives Carlyle some valuable information: he tells her of a secret joint operation between the UK and the US that has been infiltrated by someone from a third country (but that third country isn't Russia). At first the information seems pretty out there – after all no one has even heard of this joint mission. But once Carlyle does some digging she finds out that it does indeed exist. The Russian has said that the leak is coming from the London end of the operation even though all of the people working on the project have the utmost highest clearance in the land and have been strenuously checked by security.

In Nevada, a man operating a drone aircraft for testing is horrified when the drone suddenly begins ignoring his commands and taking on a life of his own. This happens once and everyone is on high alert but believe it to be a technical glitch. When it happens a second time and the drone goes down, the information the Russian has given appears to be correct. Someone has cracked the encrypted coded software that controls the drones and can now give the drone commands. This kind of cyber terrorism could be catastrophic.

People are torn as to who exactly is behind this. Their Russian contact swore that it wasn't his own country but there are some that aren't willing to believe that – who else could it be? How do Russia even know about it if they aren't involved in some way? As Liz and her team race to hunt down the mole inside the secret project they uncover a plot of money laundering and designs of cyber terrorism that could change the superpowers of the planet entirely.

The Geneva Trap is the seventh novel in Stella Rimington's Liz Carlyle MI6 series dealing with international espionage. It's the first I've read, which is unusual for me as my preference is to read a series in order but

given this is the seventh installment I didn't have enough time to track down the previous six and get them all read before this one's release date! However I do believe these can easily be read stand alone. Characters are explained, roles are explained, country relations are explained. I never felt lost or confused and although there are a lot of characters here and quite a few organisations (a lot of which are abbreviated) it's quite easy to follow what's going on.

Liz is quite a capable character, obviously you don't get where she is by not being good at what you do. She's calm, measured and tolerant even when she needs to deal with people you can tell that she doesn't particularly like and unlike others she seems to try not to show this and also attempt not to let it affect working relations. She's someone that interests me, it seems that this novel is the first time that why she joined MI6 is stated, as it has to do with the person that needs to speak to her. I don't know much about how her career progressed so obviously there are some gaps but the book doesn't concern itself a huge amount with her life away from the particular investigation at the time. You do meet her family and she does get involved in a mystery there and you do deal with her partner but that seems to be very much a supporting plot to the one about the cyber terrorism. The book doesn't get bogged down in familial life and dramas away from the one that's threatening world security.

The cyber terrorism idea I found utterly fascinating, probably because in such an age as the one we're in, you can do just about anything so long as you have a computer. You can work a lot of jobs, you can pay your bills, order your food, clothes and entertainment. Some people could probably get by just fine never leaving the house so long as they had a computer and an internet connection so why not be able to control drones from a different part of the world? In the future any wars may be fought from remote locations using a variety of weapons manned in such a way as these drones. The idea that other countries could hack into these secure, encrypted systems and use that as a base to serve their own agendas is quite frightening!

I do think that sometimes the characters were a little cliched depending on their nations but overall I found this a very enjoyable way to pass an afternoon, immersing myself in international espionage. I do intend to keep up with this series.

Joan says

Really glad to see that Liz is still with Martin!

Computer security plays a central role in this one, and it's handled pretty well. Technical things are explained accurately but at a general level -- the author knows that she's writing a novel, not a textbook.

The one weak spot in this one was the Russian bad guy, who was not really a fully drawn character. I wasn't able to hate him the way one wants to hate a bad guy, because I didn't find the story of what he was doing believable.

Keith Johnstone says

A pretty good story, with a nice bit of suspense - wish there was slightly depth given to the characters - several books in now and Liz Carlyle is still a little unknown to me...

notgettingenough says

This is so badly written, I'm astonished to find it is a late number in a series. People tried one and came back for more.

On the back cover the Wall Street Journal is quoted as saying the author makes a bid for the ranks of Le Carre, Greene etc. That's like saying McDonalds is making a bid for a Michelin star.

Read twenty pages, each more excruciating than the one before.

Clearly the woman doesn't know Geneva. She has the dude who kicks the book off wondering whether to stay home to have defrosted pizza for dinner or go out to a local cafe for **something more interesting**. Everybody knows there is nothing more interesting to eat in Geneva than defrosted pizza.

Kylie D says

An ok read, enjoyable, but forgettable.
