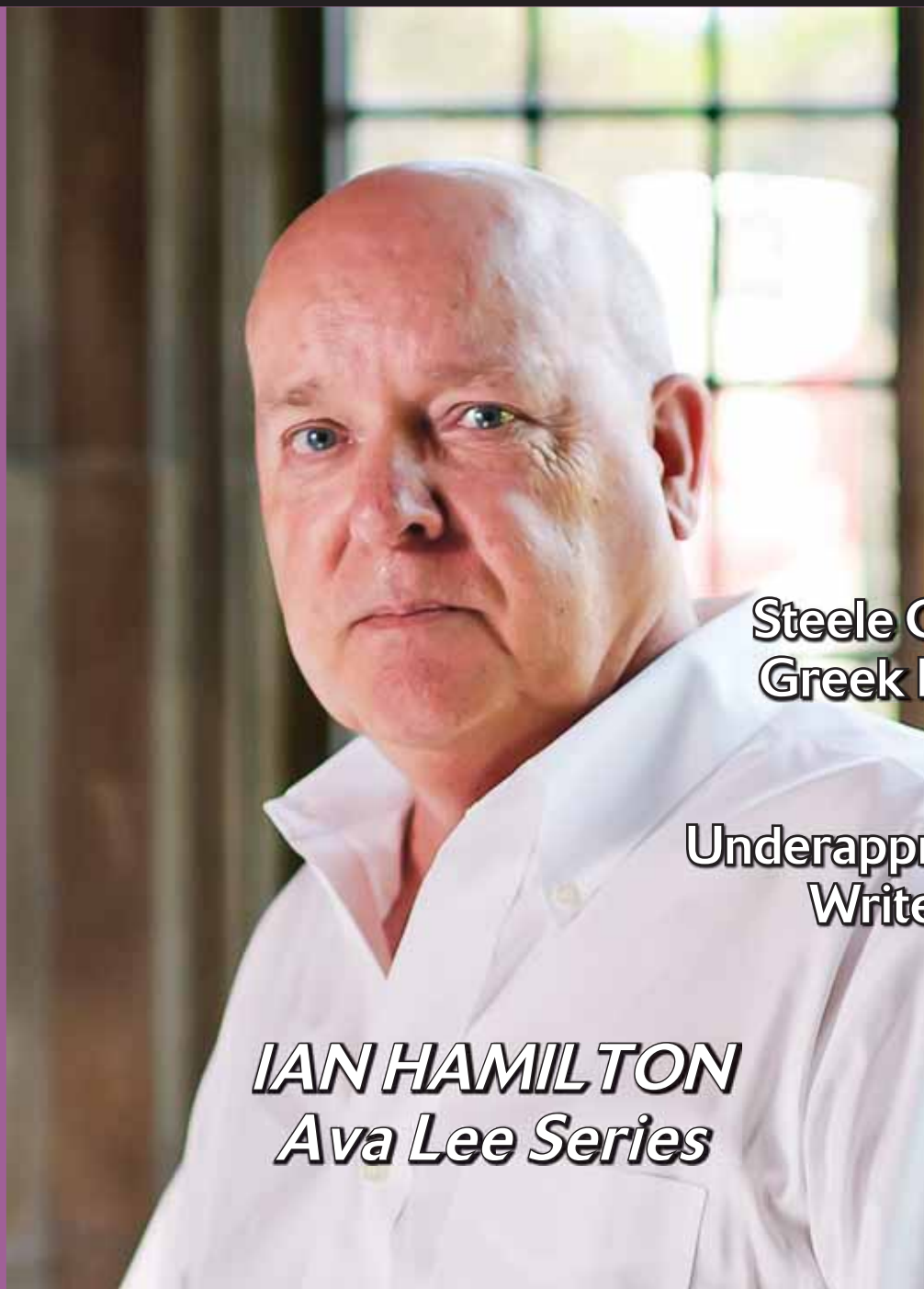


# *Deadly Pleasures* *Mystery Magazine*



**Steele Curry's  
Greek Feast**

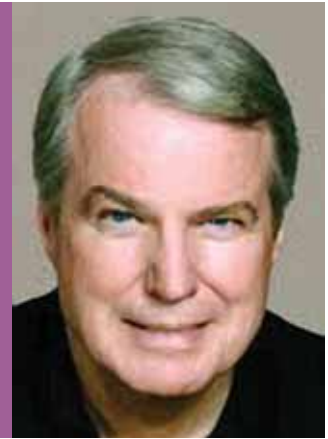
**Underappreciated  
Writers**

***IAN HAMILTON***  
***Ava Lee Series***

# My Greek Reading Feast

## 2019

By Steele Curry



On June 4, my wife Judy and I returned to Skiathos, Greece for our annual three-month summer holiday here. We have been coming to this beautiful island for over 40 years but not always for this long a stay. Skiathos has many gorgeous beaches, the sea is a sparkling blue, and the local restaurants have scrumptious food and excellent Greek rosé wine. The majority of my time, however, at our Skiathos summer home (which we call *Lizard in the Sun*) is spent reading mysteries and thrillers on the terrace overlooking the Aegean Sea. Here are some of the books I enjoyed reading this summer:

**THE MYKONOS MOB** by Jeffrey Siger (Poisoned Pen Press 2019 hardcover/trade paperback). To launch myself into a Greek frame of mind, I always begin my Skiathos summer reading with the newest novel by Jeffrey Siger in his impressive Chief Inspector Andreas Kaldis series. Kaldis is in charge of the Greek Police's Special Crimes Unit responsible for cases of national concern and corruption. While Kaldis is based in Athens, each of the author's ten thrillers in this series is set in a different Greek region or location of historical and cultural significance.

First of all, **THE MYKONOS MOB** paints an extremely unflattering picture of Mykonos in the summer season – exorbitant prices, mobs of noisy partying people everywhere, rampant commercialization, and criminals preying on the island's tourists and summer residents. The novel also describes the corruption that exists at all levels in Greece.

Kaldis brings his wife Lila and children to a family home on the island of Mykonos while he and his right-hand man Detective Yianni Kouros investigate three murders that are likely connected to two senior crime bosses. Somehow these murders appear to be related to the development of a large new casino and hotel complex on Mykonos. Meanwhile Lila and a friend get involved in trying to rescue two young girls from a life of drugs and prostitution. Can Kaldis protect his family from retaliation and avoid a war between competing crime families on Mykonos? Even though we might guess the answer to that, this is another highly entertaining book by an author who is extremely knowledgeable about Greece.

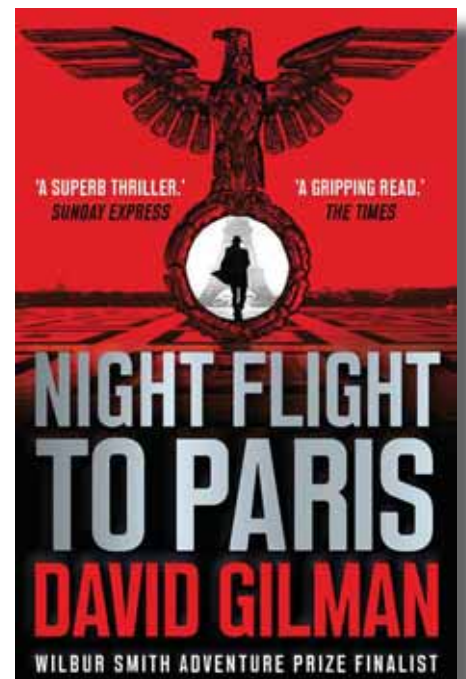
**THE HONEY GUIDE** by Richard Crompton (Weidenfeld & Nicolson 2013 hardcover/trade paperback). The author's first novel in his series featuring Nairobi Policeman Mollé, a former Maasai warrior. Mollé is investigating the vicious murder of a prostitute at the time of Kenya's disputed national election in 2007, putting his family at risk in doing so. A high profile preacher, a powerful businessman and his superior officer all want Mollé to drop the case.

**THE HONEY GUIDE** brilliantly describes the chaotic character, political tensions and tribal rivalries at play in the metropolitan area of Nairobi which has a population of some 10 million. The second book in this excellent series is titled **HELL'S GATE** and the third **NIGHT RUNNERS**. **THE HONEY GUIDE** was also published as **HOUR OF THE RED GOD** by Picador in 2014.

**NIGHT FLIGHT TO PARIS** by David Gilman (Head of Zeus 2018 paperback London). SOE Agent Harry Mitchell returns to occupied France and Paris in 1943 with a mission to find and exfiltrate a high value German scientist back to London. At the same time, Mitchell is intent on rescuing his daughter from German captivity in Paris. Two years earlier, Mitchell's wife was murdered by the Nazis when trying to escape with her husband and daughter.

Out in the French countryside, Mitchell is able to take over the leadership of a small band of partisans who help him sabotage a critical railroad facility.

Mitchell not only has to avoid detection by the German SS, the Gestapo and the Abwehr, Paris is riddled with



French informers, corrupt officials and collaborators willing to betray anyone to gain favor with the occupying Nazis. Even the French Resistance is comprised of many competing factions that greatly hamper its effectiveness. Mitchell discovers that the Germans have a high level informer who is placing his band and himself at risk of capture.

Gilman is an excellent storyteller. I hope he writes a sequel to **NIGHT FLIGHT TO PARIS**

**TWISTED** by Steve Kavanagh (Orion 2019 trade paperback London). I'm normally a big fan of this author, especially his Eddie Flynn series. Not sure what to think about his latest book, **TWISTED** It's got an inventive plot with many twists and surprises. The pace is fast but I just couldn't get into the characters. Part of the reason may be that I'm weary of serial killer mysteries.

**A DYING BREED** by Peter Hanington (Two Roads hardcover/paperback 2016 London). This is an outstanding debut novel featuring William Carver, an old-school, run-down journalist, and his rookie BBC Radio producer Patrick Reid assigned to control Carver "in the field." Carver doggedly investigates a bombing in a Kabul tailor shop across from a wedding. Three persons were reported killed in the bombing but Carver discovers that one of them was shot in the head afterwards. He senses that the bombing may lead to uncovering a big story but there are a number of powerful parties that want him to drop it.

The author acutely depicts Afghanistan's dystopian mood, political tensions and countervailing forces while the British and American military struggle in vain to impose some semblance of peace to parts of the country, especially Kabul. The book's memorable characters include "the General," one of the country's most feared mujahideen warlords and drug dealers. He also is seeking the truth behind the tailor shop bombing.

Hanington's second William Carver novel, **A SINGLE SOURCE**, was published in May 2019. Mike Ripley thinks it's even better than **A DYING BREED**.

**THE FEW** by Nadia Dalbuono (Scribe paperback 2014 London). **THE**

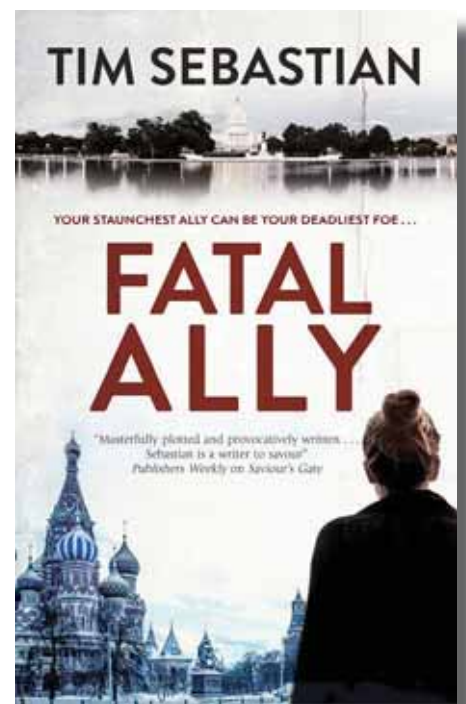
**FEW** is first novel introducing Detective Leone Scamarcio, a member of the Roman Police's elite Flying Squad and the son of a former Mafia crime boss. Scamarcio's boss has been tasked by the Prime Minister to look into the murder of a rentboy. He asks Scamarcio to follow up on the case on a confidential basis. Scamarcio discovers that it is somehow linked to the kidnapping of a seven-year-old American girl on a beach on the island of Elba. At least four other murders follow that may also be connected. Soon, the Italian Foreign Secretary is implicated in the original murder and a high-level criminal enterprise.

While most of the novel is set in Rome, Scamarcio's investigation takes him over much of Italy. He knows this case is putting his police career in jeopardy, but Scamarcio also realizes that the Prime Minister may oppose any sense of justice from being done even if he is successful in his investigations.

Dalbuono is a truly gifted storyteller. The next three books in this series are **THE AMERICAN** (2016), **THE HIT** (2017) and **THE EXTREMIST** (2018) – all available in paperbacks from Scribe.

**THE DIVINITIES** by Parker Bilal (Indigo Press trade paperback 2019 London). As a big fan of the author's Makana series, I was apprehensive when I heard he was turning to a new series featuring Detective Sergeant Cal Drake and forensic psychologist Rayhana Crane working together on cases in London. The first book in the new series, **THE DIVINITIES**, takes the author's writing to a whole new level of depth, intensity and virtuosity. This is a searing, authentic portrait of today's multi-faceted London, especially its dark side. Drake is a powerful character with baggage. Crane is a force on her own. Get a copy ASAP. This is great stuff.

**FATAL ALLY** by Tim Sebastian (Severn House hardcover 2019 London/New York). It's been some 22 years since Sebastian's last novel. To say that the wait has been well worth it is a considerable understatement. **FATAL ALLY** is a powerful shot to the gut. Not a word wasted. World weary but wise in many respects. Unfortunately, not grounds for



optimism about the future.

Strong-willed principled women. Arrogant amoral men. The hopeless futility of the Middle East. The utter wanton destruction of Syria. The total breakdown of anything resembling civilized behavior in Russia. American treachery. The tenuous position of Israel. The betrayal of allies without accountability. All this in only 236 pages of diamond-edged prose. A remarkable achievement that few of today's thriller writers could equal.

**UNDER THE NIGHT** by Alan Glynn (Faber & Faber trade paperback 2018 London). The author's sixth novel, both a sequel and a prequel to his debut **THE DARK FIELDS** which was also published as **LIMITLESS**. The CIA is conducting a covert study of psychoactive drugs on unsuspecting individuals in the 1950s. One of the guinea pigs was an ad man whose mental capacities were dramatically enhanced as a result until he committed suicide by jumping out of a high-rise Manhattan window. Over sixty years later, his grandson is told that this was not a suicide. He goes on a quest to uncover what actually happened.

The author is a terrific storyteller. This novel should be sub-titled *The Power of the Mind*. It's a cautionary tale.



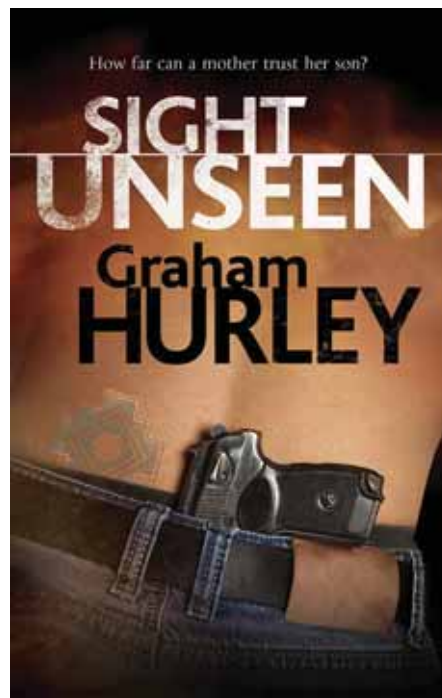
**THE BURNING HILL** by A. D. Flint (Unbound trade paperback 2018 London). An intense, gritty debut novel set in Rio de Janeiro and its favelas, far from where the tourists go. A former British soldier gets robbed and shot on Copacabana Beach but ends up befriending his young assailant when they both become the target of one of the dominant favela gangs. A female lawyer takes on corrupt cops over their murder of a teenage boy. One of the most vivid scenes is an “Anything Goes” mixed martial arts fighting match involving one of the cops. This novel is not for the faint hearted.

**THE SILENCE** by George Brown (Socciones trade paperback 2019 London). Brown has been one of my favorite British thriller authors since his first novel, **RINGMAIN**, was published in 1991. **THE SILENCE**, his seventh thriller, is a high-octane political novel set in current day England featuring Ralf Tasso, a former SAS member, who uncovers a covert Brexit-like conspiracy that calls for the liquidation of virtually the entire British establishment. Tasso needs nine lives and a few close resourceful associates to survive in an environment of widespread treason and double dealing.

**DEAD-END ROAD** by Richard Kunzmann (Macmillan trade paperback 2008 London). South African author's third novel in his series featuring Detectives Harry Mason and Jacob Tshabalala of the South African Police Service. This is a blistering hard-boiled rampage of life and policing in Johannesburg and the surrounding townships in post-apartheid South Africa. Vigilantes, corrupt cops, bombings, lawless squatters, crooked security organizations, assassinations – Mason and Tshabalala face a whirlwind of brutal challenges to just survive.

Kunzmann is a compelling storyteller. His two earlier books in this series are **BLOODY HARVESTS** and **SALAMANDER COTTON**, which were published in the U.S. by Minotaur.

**SIGHT UNSEEN** by Graham Hurley (Severn House hardcover/trade paperback 2019 London). The author's second book in his series featuring the



actress Enora Andressen. After undergoing treatment for a brain tumor, Enora learns that her son Malo's Columbian girlfriend has been kidnapped. Malo's natural father, a former big-time drug baron, wants to deal with the kidnapers himself rather than involve the police. Enora decides to go off on her own to track down the kidnapers and ends up in grave danger.

**SIGHT UNSEEN** vividly describes the misery that the drug trade is bringing to England with narco-gangs taking over almost every corner of the country. While Enora is a sympathetic character, she is prone to bad judgment while her son Malo comes across as seven days of bad news. The relationship between Enora and Pavel, her blind film associate and sometimes lover, is one of the highlights of this book.

**PEOPLE WHO WALK IN DARKNESS** by Stuart M. Kaminsky (Forge hardcover 2008/Forge trade paperback 2009). The 15<sup>th</sup> novel in the author's outstanding 16-book series featuring Moscow-based Inspector Porfiry Petrovich Rostnikov. This time, Rostnikov and his right-hand subordinate, Detective Karpo, are sent to investigate a murder at one of the oldest diamond mines in Siberia that may be connected to a ring of diamond smugglers in Kiev and Moscow. They hear stories about

a young girl who appears as a ghost whenever a murder is committed in this diamond mine.

Every book in Kaminsky's Rostnikov series is a polished gem. The author must have had some Russian blood in him.

**THE BREAK LINE** by James Brazon (Michael Joseph hardcover 2018/Penguin trade paperback 2019 London). The author's first novel is an exhausting, non-stop, macabre action-filled tale of Max McLean, a black ops British sniper-killer on an impossible mission in West Africa's Sierra Leone. He finds a vast, underground, secret bio-lab there. The number of casualties is uncountable. Need it be said that McLean is almost indestructible. Lee Child blurb'd the book cover with “Breathless, complex, and seriously hardcore - don't plan to sleep tonight.” Once again, Child got it right. How does he read all these books?

The author's second Max McLean novel is **ALL FALL DOWN**, scheduled for publication in January 2020. I'm going to have to rest up for it.

**LAW OF RETURN** by Rebecca Pawel (Soho Press hardcover/trade paperback 2004)

Author's second novel in her atmospheric four-book series featuring Lieutenant Carlos Tejada Alonso y León of the Spanish Guardia Civil in post-civil war 1940 Spain. He is stationed in Salamanca investigating the disappearance and possible murder of a parolee. In the process, he becomes enamored with the daughter of another parolee who is suspected of committing the crime.

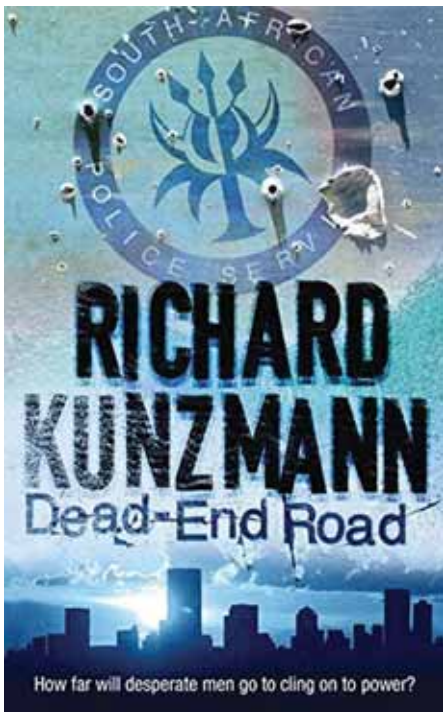
Pawel's first in this series, **DEATH OF A NATIONALIST**, won the Edgar Award for Best First Novel.

**THE DEAD SIT ROUND IN A RING** by David Lawrence (Michael Joseph trade paperback 2002 London/St. Martin's hardcover 2004). “David Lawrence” is a penname for the distinguished British poet David Harsent who also wrote six thrillers under the name of “Jack Curtis.” I say distinguished as Harsent has won some 16 awards for his poetry, including the prestigious and lucrative Griffin Poetry Prize.

**DEAD-END ROAD** by Richard

Kunzmann (Macmillan trade paperback 2008 London). South African author's third novel in his series featuring Detectives Harry Mason and Jacob Tshabalala of the South African Police Service. This is a blistering hard-boiled rampage of life and policing in Johannesburg and the surrounding townships in post-apartheid South Africa. Vigilantes, corrupt cops, bombings, lawless squatters, crooked security organizations, assassinations – Mason and Tshabalala face a whirlwind of brutal challenges to just survive.

Kunzmann is a compelling storyteller. His two earlier books in this series are **BLOODY HARVESTS** and **SALAMANDER COTTON**, which were published in the U.S. by Minotaur.



**THE DEAD SIT ROUND IN A RING** is the first in a series of four hard-boiled thrillers featuring Detective Sergeant Stella Mooney of the London Police Service. Mooney is a senior member of the London Area Major Investigation Pool (“AMIP”) or murder squad on a case of a fatal knifing that appears to be connected in some way to one of London’s top crime families, a string of other killings, and possibly a Serbian war criminal.

Every few years I reread the four Stella Mooney books as I regard them as one of the best British police series

on a par with those by John Harvey (Resnick), Graham Hurley (Faraday) and Ian Rankin (Rebus). The other three books are **NOTHING LIKE THE NIGHT** (2004/2005), **COLD KILL** (2005/2006) and **DOWN INTO DARKNESS** (2007). It’s a shame that Har-sent didn’t write more of them. Stella Mooney is a dynamite character.

**THE MOUNTAIN MASTER OF SHA TIN** by Ian Hamilton (Spiderline/House of Anansi Press trade paperback 2019 Toronto). The author’s 12<sup>th</sup> Ava Lee thriller thrusts his protagonist into the middle of a vicious triad war in Hong Kong where she becomes the target of the new Mountain Master of Sha Tin. With her silent partner and head of the Shanghai triads, Xu, incapacitated by illness, Ava is forced to assume the leadership in defending his interests in Hong Kong against a take-over by ruthless local triad chieftains. Fortunately, Ava can call on a number of supporters, connections and friends prepared to wage battle at her side.

As is the case with his previous books, the author’s description of Ava Lee’s meals of Chinese food, especially those at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Central Hong Kong, are guaranteed to make one ravenous. Suitably fortified by them, Ava never shirks from any dangerous confrontations.

**ALL THE WAY DOWN** by Eric Beetner (Down & Out Books trade paperback 2019). One of 2019’s best thrillers. A fun read from start to finish. The ultimate rescue mission of all time. Bodies piling up everywhere. Bad guys galore. Crooked cops and politicians. Snappy dialogue. Eric Beetner demonstrates once again that he is a marvelous storyteller.

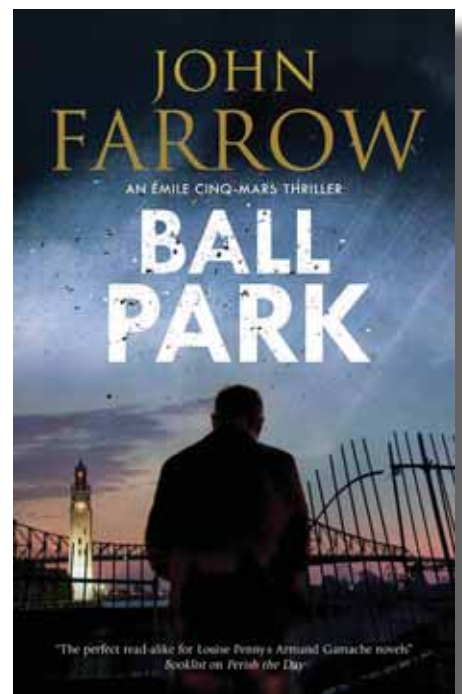
**TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY** by John Le Carré (Hodder & Stoughton hardcover 1974/Sceptre trade paperback 2017 London). Every summer, I like to reread a few of my all-time favorite books. In my view, le Carré’s finest novels were **THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD** and his “Karla” trilogy of **TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY**, **THE HONORABLE SCHOOLBOY** and **SMILEY’S PEOPLE** set at the height of the Cold War. This is the *crème*

*de la crème* of espionage fiction.

In **TINKER TAILOR SOLDIER SPY**, George Smiley is covertly brought out of retirement to attempt to uncover the Russian mole working in a senior position in the British Secret Service. Karla, the top Russian spymaster, is having great success in using this mole to destroy the spy networks of the British and undermine their relationship with the Americans. Smiley has to peel back the layers of an onion to get at the truth.

**MR. CAMPION’S VISIT** by Mike Ripley (Severn House hardcover 2019). For fans of Margery Allingham’s *Campion* series, this is another treasure by author Mike Ripley who has written five entertaining novels extending the life of Mr. *Campion*. In **MR. CAMPION’S VISIT**, *Campion* is thrust into university life investigating the murder of a charismatic Chilean professor at the new University of Suffolk Coastal. In the process, he must contend with academic backstabbing, blackmail, betrayal and a phantom trumpeter. Ripley’s portrayal of *Campion* is flawless.

**BALL PARK** by John Farrow (Severn House hardcover 2019 London). Caution – since the author dedicated this book to me, the following comments may have a slight bias. John Farrow’s **BALL PARK** is just outstanding, a pleasure to read from beginning to end.





Nary a wasted word nor an unpolished phrase. The seventh novel in a series featuring legendary Montreal Detective Émile Cinq-Mars has a plot that surges along with non-stop momentum, an impressive cast of strong well-drawn characters, crackling dialogue, and the setting of Montreal, a multi-faceted cosmopolitan city of many highs and lows in 1975.

Teenager Quinn Tanner robs a residence but discovers that her get-away driver has been murdered. Cinq-Mars has just transferred from the Montreal Police's notorious Night Patrol to the day shift where he and his new partner Yves Giroux take over the investigation of Quinn's robbery. Quinn's fence and mentor Ezra Knightsbridge realizes that Quinn stole something that Montreal's most powerful crime boss Joe Ciampini badly wants to recover. How all this plays out is a terrific read.

A follow-up book, **ROAR BACK**, by this masterful storyteller is scheduled to be published by Severn House next January. Please permit me a gross understatement – I can't wait to read it.

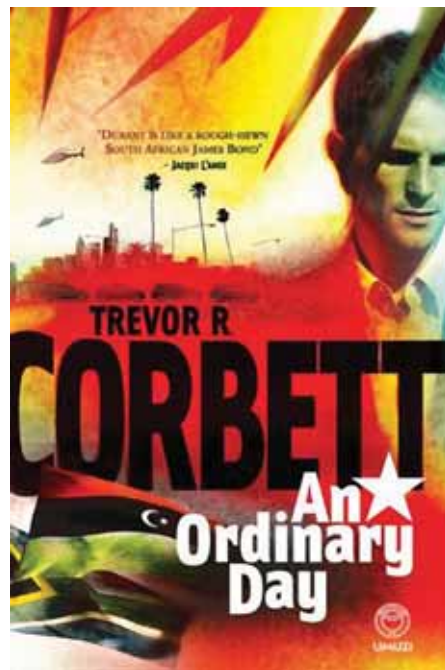
**ONLY TO SLEEP: A PHILIP MARLOWE NOVEL** by Lawrence Osborne (Hogarth hardcover/trade paperback 2018 New York). Commissioned by the Raymond Chandler estate to write this reincarnation of the Marlowe character, the author did quite a good job of staying true to Chandler's style of storytelling. Imagining what Chandler would have thought of **ONLY TO SLEEP** I suspect he would have enjoyed it apart from perhaps too much prose devoted to the weather and descriptions of the Mexican landscape.

It's 1988 and Marlowe is retired, living in Baja, California. At 72 years old, Marlowe decides to take on what will likely be his last case – investigating a suspicious death in Mexico for an American insurance company. The beautiful widow of the deceased has received a rich payout from the insurance company and is living somewhere unknown in a remote part of Mexico. Marlowe soon concludes that the husband is probably alive and enjoying his ill-gotten gains with his fellow con artist wife. Marlowe endeavors to track them

down but is uncertain about what is really motivating him to do so. Naturally, a certain amount of violence, duplicity, chicanery and hard drinking follow.

Normally I'm not a fan of such pastiches but this one was a pleasure to read.

**AN ORDINARY DAY** by Trevor R. Corbett (UMUZI/Random House Struik trade paperback 2010/2011 Cape Town, South Africa). This is an author that none of you will have ever heard of. Too bad because Corbett writes a great spy thriller. Unfortunately, to the best of my knowledge his two novels have only been published in South Africa and are hard to find. The first one, **AN ORDINARY DAY**, introduces agent Kevin Durant of South Africa's National Intelligence Agency who is leading an investigation of Ali, a corrupt Durban businessman suspected of being the middleman in the sale of parts for weapons of mass destruction. The story includes CIA agents, a female senior Libyan procurement officer, a mysterious Israeli and various local nefarious characters.



Corbett is a terrific storyteller and Kevin Durant is a compelling central character. The author's second Durant novel, **ALLEGIANCE**, was published in 2012.

**ROCCO AND THE PRICE OF LIES** by Adrian Magson (Dome Press

trade paperback 2019 London). The seventh book in the author's splendid Inspector Lucas Rocco series is set in rural France and Paris. In close succession, three high officials from the Finance Ministry, the national police force and the judiciary commit suicide with nothing linking them apart from the fact that each possessed a copy of a different expensive painting by well-known artists. In Paris, the Interior Ministry requests that Rocco investigate the circumstances surrounding these three incidents despite him being posted to a police station in a small French rural community.

Nothing stands in the way of Rocco uncovering the truth other than a vicious mob boss, a crooked big-time lawyer, a hitman and a bunch of other assorted criminals. Rocco is in a race to complete his investigation before the Interior Ministry orders a cover-up or he himself is assassinated.

**THE ASSASSIN** by Stephen Coonts (St. Martin's hardcover 2008/paperback 2009). The author's third thriller featuring both Admiral Jake Grafton and Tommy Carmellini. A group of American and European wealthy business tycoons want to underwrite a private campaign to eradicate senior Islamic terrorists to save Western civilization. Grafton is recruited to be in charge of this undertaking with the tacit unofficial approval of the U.S. president. Soon afterwards, the most deadly international al Qaeda terrorist leader is tipped off regarding the identities of the members of this group and targets each them, plus Grafton and the U.S. president, for assassination. Carmellini is tasked with helping Grafton make sure this doesn't happen. They are not entirely successful in doing so.

Coonts is masterful at writing thrillers about grave international threats that are tackled and more or less thwarted by Grafton and Carmellini in an entertaining, reasonably fast-paced manner. Readers are left with a heightened sense of anxiety about such threats, especially as they know Grafton and Carmellini are not available to protect them.

**STALIN'S GOLD** by Mark Ellis

(Matador hardcover/trade paperback 2014 U.K.). The second book in the author's excellent series featuring Detective Chief Inspector Frank Merlin of the London Police Service. Merlin's investigations of a missing Polish fighter pilot and lootings during the Blitz in 1940 London lead him to a large amount of disputed gold bullion involving Poles and Russians. Stalin and Beria are following the case closely.

**HELL'S GATE** by Richard Crompton (Weidenfeld & Nicolson hardcover 2014/trade paperback 2015 London). Nairobi-based author's second novel featuring Detective Mollel. This time Mollel has been demoted to a posting at a small police station on the edge of Kenya's Hell's Gate National Park. It's commonplace knowledge that the local police are engaged in extortion and likely other more serious crimes.

Torn between thinking of himself as a policeman seeking justice and a traditional Masai warrior, Mollel investigates the death of a flower seller and backs into a large-scale illicit Chinese operation involving the poaching of rhinos for their ivory. Meanwhile, the country of Kenya is still experiencing the bloody aftermath of its disputed 2007 election as various tribal factions fight against each other for dominance and survival. It's a tough time to try to be an honest policeman in Kenya.

#### **THE PRICE OF DARKNESS**

(Orion hardcover 2008/Paperback 2009 London) & **NO LOVELIER DEATH** (Orion hardcover 2009/trade paperback 2010 London) by Graham Hurley. A pair of Detective Inspector Joe Faraday novels, #8 and #9 respectively in this superb series set in the historic naval city of Portsmouth, England. Amidst murders, drug dealing, violence and competing crime lords, former detective Paul Winter switches to the dark side when he goes to work for Bazza Mackenzie. Hurley excels at his character development and depicting the unraveling of civil society in current day Britain. Faraday and his police colleagues must overcome a multitude of challenges in pursuing their investigations. I'm greatly looking forward to reading the remaining three Joe Faraday novels.

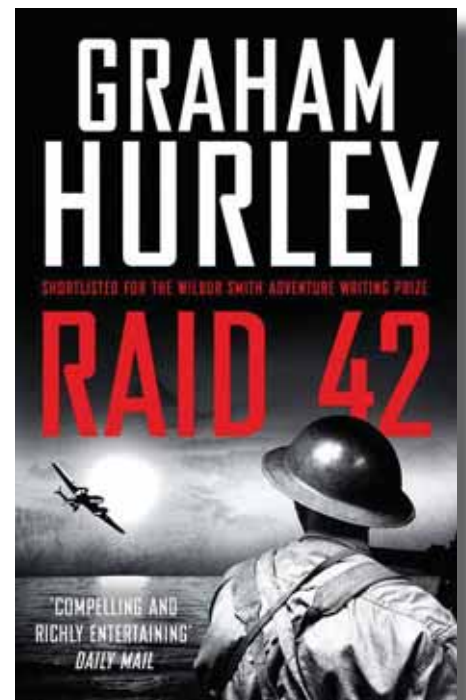
**THE DARK FIELDS** by Alan Glynn (Little, Brown hardcover 2001/trade paperback 2002 London). Don't know why it's taken me so long to get around to reading this prize-winning author's first novel as I've immensely enjoyed reading all of his subsequent books. **THE DARK FIELDS** was also published as **LIMITLESS** and made into a movie and a TV series with that title.

Eddie Spinola gets hooked on taking the black market experimental drug MDT-48 that dramatically boosts his intelligence and drive. The good news is that it enables him to make a great deal of money in the stock market. The bad news is that MDT-48 produces dangerous side effects and Eddie discovers that other users are dying from taking it. Meantime, Eddie finds his dealer source of supply murdered and gets on the wrong side of a Russian loan shark. This is not a happy tale.

Glynn is an accomplished storyteller.

**RAID 42** by Graham Hurley (Head of Zeus hardcover 2019 London). Author's fourth book in his impressive Wars Within series is set in the spring of 1941 after Nazi Germany has conquered most of Europe while in a non-aggression pact with Soviet Russia. The Luftwaffe is bombing London but Hitler knows that it has failed to gain air superiority over the British Royal Air Force, hence ruling out an invasion of Britain. In a brave but reckless feat, Rudolf Hess flies to Scotland to meet with members of the English establishment who are thought to support entering into a peace pact with Germany which would lead to the ouster of Churchill as Prime Minister. Hess's plane runs out of fuel and he is forced to land by parachute in the Scottish countryside.

**RAID 42** is the code name that the British Secret Service assigns to Hess after he has been arrested and incarcerated. Both the German and British governments officially claim that Hess is "mad." But he steadfastly maintains that his purpose in coming to Britain was to present the proposed terms of a peace treaty to the King and certain members of the British elite. This fact is suppressed by MI5 and Churchill. Kim Philby, then with MI6, also was involved in undercut-



ting Hess's mission.

**RAID 42** highlights Hess's mission, the rivalry between Britain's MI5 and MI6, the role played by some of the senior members of the Nazi hierarchy, and the exploits of two of Germany's ace fighter pilots. As is the case with all of the author's novels, the relationships between the key characters are treated masterfully.

Hurley is an outstanding writer at the top of his game. He makes WW II history come alive with authentic characters, rampant duplicity, and atmospheric depictions of wartime Berlin, London and Lisbon.

The fifth novel in Hurley's Wars Within series, **BLOOD OF THE WOLF**, is scheduled for publication in June of 2020.

Confession – the books included in my Greek reading roundup are usually just those that I enjoyed reading. Books that failed to hold my interest or didn't appeal to me were omitted, admittedly something that is highly subjective

More information on Steele's passion for books and his favorite current mystery/thriller authors can be found in the *Meet Steele Section* of his youth mentoring Web site at [www.COTWguides.com](http://www.COTWguides.com).