

Kill Artist Discussion Questions

by Daniel Silva

Author Bio: (Daniel Silva Books & Fantastic Fiction)

Daniel Silva started as a journalist, became a CNN TV executive, and then a bestselling novelist whose first book “The Unlikely Spy” was sold in 14 countries. He is married to Jamie Gangel, a NBC Today National Correspondent, and has twins.



His books have been translated in to more than 30 languages and are published around the world.

Characters:

Israelis and allies

- **Gabriel Allon** – Art restorer and Israeli spy. Wife Leah and son Dani (in a car bombing at beginning of book).
- **Ari Shamron** – “The Phantom.” Israeli Spymaster. Runs the “Institute for Coordination” which is known as “The Office.” Retired and was brought back to clean up The Office. Repairs old radios for relaxation. Alias is Herr Heller.
- **Jacqueline Delacroix** – (nee Sarah Halevy.) French Model. Israeli agent. Had an affair with Gabriel Allon during an operation.
- **Ambassador Zev Eliyahu** – Israeli Ambassador. Wife Hannah.
- **Julian Isherwood** – Art Dealer. Shamron’s link to Gabriel Allon.
- **Randal Karp** – American audio technician. Working for Gabriel Allon.
- **Lev** – Israeli intelligence Chief of Operations working for Shamron. Wants Shamron’s position as head of The Office.
- **David Morgenthau** – Jewish American. Eyeglass factory owner. Visiting Amsterdam. Wife Cynthia. Assassinated by Tariq.
- **Uzi Navot** – Israeli intelligence agent working for Shamron.
- **Rami** – Israeli Head of Shamron’s personal security.
- **Benjamin Stone** – Publishing company mogul. Helps Shamron with operative placement and gives money for operations.
- **Zvi Yadin** – Israeli intelligence agent in charge of Montreal.

Palestinians and allies

- **Tariq** – Palestinian assassin working for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). Gets migraines.
- **Yasir Arafat** – Palestinian leader in charge of the Gaza strip and a portion of the West bank. Involved in the peace talks.

- **Kemel Azouri** – Head of Sales for Schloss Pharmaceuticals. Palestinian refugee. Works for Tariq in PLO. Chief of operations in Tariq's group. Tariq's money guy.
- **Leila** – Agent for Tariq. Prepares rooms and women for Tariq.
- **Mahmoud** – Tariq's older brother. PLO terrorist. Killed by Gabriel Allon.
- **Yusef al-Tawfiki** – Agent for Tariq in London.

Others

- **James Beckwith** – U.S. president.
- **Adrien Cutter** – Executive director of the CIA.
- **Inge van der Hoff** – Amsterdam. Female bartender. Drug user. Living on brother's boat. Killed by Tariq in Morgenthau assassination.
- **Emily Parker** – American post college student. Killed by Tariq in Israeli Ambassador's assassination.
- **Timothy Peel** – 11 year old boy. Lives with his mother and her boyfriend, Derek. Lives next door to Gabriel Allon.

Discussion Questions:

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not?
2. Did you find the characters in this story believable?
3. The narration (point of view) in the story constantly rotates between the main characters. Was it successfully done? Did it help or harm the story?
4. In what ways do you think being an art restorer is like being an intelligence agent or assassin? (Hint: Did you notice the titles of each part of the story? Part 1: Acquisition, Part 2: Assessment, and Part 3: Restoration.)
5. The goal of the art restorer is to restore a painting so well that it's nearly impossible to tell the difference between the restorer's work and the original artist's. How is a similar kind of deception and layering of identity a part of intelligence work?
6. Which secondary character did you like the best? Which did you like the least? Why? Did you change your opinion of these people as the novel progressed and more information was revealed about them?
7. If you were approached to be a spy, would you do it?
8. One of the epigraphs of the book is the motto of the Israeli secret service, the Mossad: "By way of deception, thou shalt do war." How does Shamron employ this method through the course of the plan to assassinate Tariq? What are the negative consequences result from this method?

9. How does Shamron deceive Gabriel and vice versa, and how do their deceptions affect their relationship, both professional and personal? What can one say about their relationship by the novel's end?
10. Gabriel says to Ari Shamron, "When you look into a man's eyes while pouring lead into his body, it feels more like murder than war." Shamron replies, "It's not murder, Gabriel. It was never murder." What lines of reasoning might one follow in support of Gabriel's position? And Shamron's? What is it in each of their characters and/or life experiences that causes them to disagree?
11. Part of Gabriel's reason for agreeing to help Shamron assassinate Tariq is that it may help him get past his family tragedy. Do you think that in the end he succeeds in this? Why or why not?
12. Gabriel feels Israel can never be his home, yet for Jacqueline (Sarah), it becomes her home and brings her a measure of peace. Why so for her and not for Gabriel?
13. Shamron says that if there had been an Israel during the Second World War many Jews might still be alive. And that it is his job to ensure the survival of the state so that the next time people will have a place to take refuge. What do you think of this statement?
14. Yusef al-Tawfiki says the Palestinians were driven from their homes by the Israelis after WWII. Who do you believe? Can both sentiments be true?
15. Why do you think Tariq did not kill his primary target even though he had the opportunity?
16. In the end, was the operation a success or a failure? From Shamron's point of view? Gabriel's? Tariq's?
17. Revenge is one of the main motivations seen within this story. Which characters eventually achieve their revenge? Do they find completion/satisfaction from the results of their actions?
18. What do you think was the purpose of the Timothy Peel character in the story?
19. In what ways was this book like "Mr. Churchill's Secretary"? In what ways was it different? Which did you like better? Why?
20. There are currently 16 books in this series. Will you read them?

References:

- Daniel Silva – <http://danielsilvabooks.com/>
- Fantastic Fiction – <https://www.fantasticfiction.com/s/daniel-silva/>
- Goodreads – http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/93794.The_Kill_Artist
- Novelist Plus – <http://web.a.ebscohost.com/novp/detail?vid=2&sid=f6ee6b77-7783-43b1-ac77-8d4bf8fe05b%40sessionmgr4007&hid=4104&bdata=JnNpdGU9bm92cC1saXZl#UI=055751&db=neh>
- Penguin Random House - <http://www.penguinrandomhouseaudio.com/discussion-guide/167167/the-kill-artist/>

Daniel Silva's Books

Michael Osbourne series

1. The Mark of the Assassin (1998)
2. The Marching Season (1999)

Gabriel Allon series

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| 1. The Kill Artist (2000) | 9. The Defector (2009) |
| 2. The English Assassin (2002) | 10. The Rembrandt Affair (2010) |
| 3. The Confessor (2003) | 11. Portrait of a Spy (2011) |
| 4. A Death in Vienna (2004) | 12. The Fallen Angel (2012) |
| 5. Prince of Fire (2005) | 13. The English Girl (2013) |
| 6. The Messenger (2006) | 14. The Heist (2014) |
| 7. The Secret Servant (2007) | 15. The English Spy (2015) |
| 8. Moscow Rules (2008) | 16. The Black Widow (2016) |

Novels

The Unlikely Spy (1996)

If you liked Kill Artist, try...

- Foreign Agent – Brad Thor
 - The Innocent – David Baldacci
 - Gypsy in Amber – Martin Cruz Smith
 - Rain Fall – Barry Eisler
 - Plum Island – Nelson DeMille
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