



A German Requiem

Philip Kerr

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The disturbing climax to the Berlin Noir trilogy

Philip Kerr's Bernie Gunther novels have won him an international reputation as a master of historical suspense. In *A German Requiem*, the private eye has survived the collapse of the Third Reich to find himself in Vienna. Amid decaying imperial splendor, he traces concentric circles of evil and uncovers a legacy that makes the wartime atrocities seem lily-white in comparison.

A German Requiem Details

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From Reader Review A German Requiem for online ebook

Nigeyb says

With 'A German Requiem' Philip Kerr has saved the best until last, at least in terms of the original Berlin Trilogy ('March Violets'/'The Pale Criminal'/'A German Requiem'). Ten years after this original trilogy Philip Kerr returned to the character and, in 2006, started to write more Bernie Günther books. At the time of writing this review in 2016, there are currently 11 Bernhard Günther books.

'A German Requiem' is superb. Echoes of the 1949 British film noir classic 'The Third Man' directed by Carol Reed are all over this book, including a few explicit references to casting and filming a scene. A book/film double bill of 'A German Requiem' and 'The Third Man' would be a wonderful combination.

As with the first two books, it's the period detail that really elevates 'A German Requiem' and the legacy of Nazism, and the dawn of Cold War international intrigue and espionage, are cleverly and dramatically evoked.

Since we last caught up with Bernie, in 1938, he's got married, reluctantly been employed by the SS, and been a Russian POW lucky to escape with his life. 'A German Requiem' is set in 1947. Most of the action in 'A German Requiem' takes place in Vienna where nothing is quite what it seems. Ostensibly Bernie is there on a murder investigation but he is soon thrown into a complex, murky world populated by duplicitous Russians, Austrians, Germans, and Americans. The less you know about the plot the better, but suffice to say 'A German Requiem' is the most dramatic and surprising book in the trilogy. I'm also pleased to say that the rampant misogyny of the first two books is far more reigned in here, and Bernie emerges as a more rounded, likeable and humane individual, which augers well for the rest of the series.

As a stand alone book 'A German Requiem' is a great read, and would still be for a reader with no prior knowledge of Bernie Günther, however it's when taken as a whole that the achievement of the 'Berlin Noir: March Violets / The Pale Criminal / A German Requiem' trilogy becomes apparent. Read together they form a wonderful tale that covers the rise and fall of the Third Reich which brings home the day to day realities of life for a typical German. Bravo Philip Kerr, a brilliant achievement. I look forward to reading the rest of this series.

5/5

Cudeyo says

En este tercer libro de la serie Berlin Noir, nos encontramos a Bernie en el Berlín de la postguerra; arrasado por las bombas, una isla en medio de territorio soviético, donde el hambre y la enfermedad son los reyes del mambo. Bernie es contactado por un antiguo compañero de la policía para que investigue el misterioso asesinato de un oficial americano en Viena. Y allá se va Bernie, a una Viena que niega cualquier pasado común con Alemania, en la que gobiernan de forma "comunal" los aliados, especialmente Estados Unidos y URSS. Y es que el comienzo de la guerra fría es ya patente; hay un nuevo enemigo, y ya se sabe "los enemigos de mi enemigo son mis amigos".

Una vez más la ambientación del libro es increíblemente realista. Describe perfectamente el ambiente desolador, donde todos son supervivientes en un mundo que acaba de salir de una guerra y teme entrar en otra, y nada es lo que parece.

Jim Mullin says

This is the third book in the Philip Kerr “Bernie Gunther” acclaimed series; and the best so far. To date the series takes place in pre WW2, during WW2 and shortly after WW2 Germany. The books makes it very interesting with regards to day to day life of the Germans coping with victory, defeat, chaos, holocaust guilt. As far as the “mystery/thriller the plot in this book was the top of the three.

Diana Babii says

Not my personal preference.

James says

Another excellent entry in the Bernie Gunther series —#3, set mostly in post WWII Austria.

With every page I was deeply impressed with the late Philip Kerr’s ability not only to realistically set his story in the world that existed in 1947, but to get the reader invested in characters who were, at a minimum, witness to unspeakable barbarism, if not actual participants.

Mark says

to start this book finishes Philip Kerrs' **Berlin Noir trilogy** and while the story starts in Berlin 1947, a city under siege by the communist threat, most of it plays in Vienna. So I would label this last book more Vienna Noir than anything.

This whole book was guided by my internal soundtrack of Orson Welles *The third man* mostly by Anton Karas who played the famous theme on the zither. Which is perhaps not that odd when you consider the story told in this novel and the amount both have in common and not just the same era. Fitting that Kerr lets his book end on a movie set for the same movie.

Bernie Gunther in his post-WWII Berlin finds life violent and difficult after escaping from a Russian Prisoner-of-war-camp. His wife does everything to survive and he has some difficulty with that. It is good that his private detective work sends him off to Vienna where he is asked to prove his former colleague's innocence. Vienna like Berlin is a divided city in which the Russians also have a rather large foothold. In this ancient town there is a whole world of darkness filled by prostitution, black markets, spy-craft and murder. Bernie has to find his way through this maze of deception and is often not sure on whose side he is working and why. And of course the old Nazis have been beaten but are they really down and out?

This book is about the shadowy underbelly of the WWII and how the various parties were dividing the remnants of the Nazi Empire in all its knowledge and resources. Scarily enough the choices made were more often than not so morally sound as we would like to be. Bernie is as always on nobody's side but busy with surviving but not at any cost.

A good book written about the postwar cruelty that existed in Europe after WWII, and the shadows that were at work to build a new world. For anybody who expected the world to become a better place after the gruesome excesses of WWII a bit of unwanted insight in the real world.

A well written book and Kerr did a much better job than in his last attempt where his sexual politics were poor to terrible. In this book he does a much better job and also explained the world after the war which is at no time pretty and does not excuse it.

This book is less of a detective story and far more a spy story and as such Vienna was the right place to set the tale.

I remembered with this book why I liked the Bernie Gunther stories and can only conclude that with his later books he did Bernie justice, as does this one.

David Lowther says

A German Requiem is the third Bernie Günther story and was part of Philip Kerr's trilogy Berlin Noir. It's the second time I've read it and I was not disappointed. Bernie finds himself in Vienna, employed by the Russians to find out who murdered an American captain. Accused of the murder is Bernie's old colleague Becker whom our hero remembers with no fondness at all. However, he needs the money and becomes involved a plot which, despite its twists and turns, unfolds brilliantly with surprise climax.

The narrative ends against the background of the filming of The Third Man, the best ever British movie. The author captures the dark wet feel of Vienna in 1948 where nobody is to be trusted in a city jointly under the control of the victorious allies. Bernie quickly finds this to be true and he appears to be constantly under the threat of violence or imprisonment.

As usual Günther, who narrates the adventure, is cynical but not so much as in later novels. Here he appears to suffer from the collective war guilt that most Germans experienced in the years after the war.

A German Requiem is a very fine and exciting tale.

David Lowther. Author of The Blue Pencil, Liberating Belsen, Two Families at War and The Summer of '39, all published by Sacristy Press.

Ed says

PI Bernie Gunther of post-war Berlin is a Marlowe-type shamus. Lots of Chandler metaphors, quips, and atmosphere. The hard-boiled element is there. Bernie goes to Vienna where he tangles with the Yanks, Brits, "Ivans", French, and Austrians. Shifty alliances and twists drive the plot. Great, intelligent read with first-rate writing. A must for any PI genre fans.

Shari says

It is 1947. Berlin is divided up between the four powers, Russia, England, France, and America. The emphasis is to clean up the country, find the war criminals and bring them to trial, and to clarify and attempt to bring a functional sense of government at work to the region. This would be easier if the powers that be could work together. Each of the four powers has several of their own departments working at odds with each other as well as working at odds with those of the other powers.

Gunther has been sought out by a friend of Emil Becker's (a character in *THE PALE CRIMINAL*) to go to Vienna and try to find the truth of a murder of an American undercover officer whose death has been laid at Becker's door. Awaiting trial -- a tribunal, in fact -- Becker thinks that Gunther is the man who can get to the truth. And what Gunther finds in Vienna is a morass of untruths, the murky environs of too many people playing too many games.

What Kerr does so beautifully is show us this very tangle of conflicting intentions from contrary powers. The search for German war criminals is on and those very war criminals have faked their deaths and are now working for the Russians and the Americans under new names 'legitimately.' The turbulence of post-war attempts to clear things up and get a semblance of order in place allows for all sorts of misrepresentations of the truth. Clarity is the one thing that cannot be found, and the massive disruptions of daily life make the Hitler years look like good order.

Kerr always gives concise Author's Notes at the ends of his stories to explain where the implications of his stories are found. His historic conscience is obvious and he also tells us how the particular details of each story have managed (or not) to work out in the present day. Too much of the brutality of those years made the truth impossible to determine in far too many cases. Gunther might even find the answers he is looking for, but that doesn't necessarily mean that all ends well. I think that is what gives his Gunther series so much power. The mystery of espionage, 'top secret,' and 'confidentiality' too often mean that the answers are never found even though it might be implied that they cannot be shared with the public. Perhaps definitive answers simply do not exist. War. We always pretend that it is an answer -- but no one ever really wins now, do we?

Mal Warwick says

It's 1947. Berlin is a shambles. The meager amount of food available is rationed, leaving the surviving German population on the verge of starvation while the occupying forces eat their fill. The city is sharply divided between the eastern, Soviet-occupied zone and the rest governed by the three Western Allies. In the western zone, German women known as "chocoladies" sell sex for food, cigarettes, and alcohol. In the east, rape by Russian soldiers is nearly inescapable. As Bernie Gunther reflects, "These days, if you are a German you spend your time in Purgatory before you die, in earthly suffering for all your country's unpunished and unrepented sins, until the day when, with the aid of the prayers of the Powers—or three of them, anyway—Germany is finally purified. For now we live in fear. Mostly it is fear of the Ivans, matched only by the almost universal dread of venereal disease, which has become something of an epidemic, although both afflictions are generally held to be synonymous."

Berlin in the wake of World War II

These are the conditions under which former Berlin homicide detective Bernie Gunther and his wife Kirsten stagger from day to day. Though she was a schoolteacher in the past, she now works as a waitress in an American bar open only to servicemen. Because she frequently arrives home late he suspects she is sleeping with an American officer to obtain the coffee, butter, and chocolate that's obviously from the American PX. To flee the unpleasantness, Bernie accepts a strange and lucrative job offered by a colonel in the Soviet MVD (precursor to the KGB), he agrees to accept it even though it will require him to travel to far-off Vienna and probably spend a long time there.

A treacherous assignment in post-War Vienna

On the surface, the job appears straightforward. A German black marketer, one of Bernie's colleagues years earlier on the murder squad, has been imprisoned by the Americans on a charge of murdering one of their officers. But quickly the assignment proves to be anything but simple. As Bernie digs into the details of the case, he becomes convinced that the man is innocent of the crime he's charged with, even though he has done a great many terrible things in his life. However, attempting to prove that leads Bernie into a tangled affair involving American counter-intelligence, the MVD, the recruitment of German intelligence officers by the USA, and an organized campaign to protect former SS war criminals from exposure. Two high-ranking, real-world Nazi war criminals—Heinrich "Gestapo" Müller and Arthur Nebe—play crucial roles in the tale. Like other novels in the Bernie Gunther series, Kerr skillfully builds suspense while digging deeply into Bernie's complex personality.

Philip Kerr on "collective guilt"

Bernie has a great deal to answer for, having been dragooned from the Berlin homicide squad into the service of Josef Goebbels and later Heinrich Himmler and commissioned as an SS officer. He had refused to participate in the mass killing of Jews in Latvia, been reassigned to the Eastern Front, and was later imprisoned in a Soviet POW camp, never having stooped to the arrogance and cruelty of those he served with. But Bernie feels distinctly uneasy whenever he encounters cold, disdainful treatment at the hands of the Americans he encounters. Although "it is certain that a nation cannot feel collective guilt," Bernie notes, "that each man must encounter it personally. Only now did I realize the nature of my own guilt—and perhaps it was really not much different from that of many others: it was that I had not said anything, that I had not lifted my hand against the Nazis."

About Philip Kerr

In 1989-91, Philip Kerr wrote the first three novels in the Bernie Gunther series. *A German Requiem* concluded the trilogy. Fifteen years later he resumed the series, adding an additional ten novels to date (the last of which, *Greeks Bearing Gifts*, is scheduled for publication in 2018).

Melinda says

Book 3 is "Requiem", which takes place after the war, mostly in Vienna. In many ways it is the least sexist and yet somehow falls flat to me. Again a lot of intricate plotting, but It's not hard to follow. This one moves right into Dashiell Hammett's nameless detective, even referring to various of his books again.

Here's a quote that feels to me much like a rewrite of the end Sam Spade speech from "The Maltese Falcon" where he tells the girl why he has to do things the way he does. This is from "Requiem":

"I'm no knight in shining armour. Just a weather-beaten man in a crumpled overcoat on a street corner with

only a grey idea of something you might as well go ahead and call Morality. Sure, I'm none too scrupulous about the things that might benefit my pocket, and I could no more inspire a bunch of young thugs to do good works than I could stand up and sing a solo in the church choir. But of one thing I was sure. I was through looking at my fingernails when there were thieves in the store."

Overall, I guess I don't find Kerr a very good writer. He's sexist and derivative, and while he can do some good plotting and physical descriptions of places- actually very good-to me, the bad outweighs the good.

HBalikov says

For those of you who are not familiar with Kerr or his P.I., Bernie Gunther, I will provide this background. A German Requiem is book three in an ongoing series by Kerr that he started writing about thirty years ago. The series arc begins before World War II and continues long after it. Kerr, unlike many other authors, does not write his stories in chronological sequence. This places a lot of challenge on him to keep the back references consistent and Gunther's character in line with what he has, at that moment, experienced. Kerr is up to the task. Whether a police or private investigator, Gunther takes a traditional view of crime and criminals. This puts him at odds with the Nazis and later with others who see political crime and scapegoats as more important. He is troubled by injustice and has no "coping mechanism" that allows him to shrug-off his failures...they eat at his soul. Several things emerge from Kerr's writing and I will note only two here: First is that "his" Berlin is as much a character in many of the stories as any person; second, he (through Gunther) attacks evil as assiduously as gardener attacks invasive plant species. For all the comparisons to other "detectives," this makes him quite different from most writers of detective fiction.

Let us now begin with the fact that this book's plot is not centered in Berlin but in Vienna. Berlin has not fared well post-WW II. Divided among four countries for administration, little has been done to clear away the rubble. Prostitution and black-marketing seem the only occupations that can put food on the table. Gunther having been reunited with his wife sees their relationship eroding with the desperation of everyday needs. He works for coal to heat their apartment; she encourages U.S. soldiers for access to their PX foodstuffs. Can this marriage be saved?

This situation is interrupted by an opportunity to make some money by investigating the circumstances of an old Berlin acquaintance who is now being held for murder in Vienna by the American authorities. Gunther, with mixed emotions, accepts the job. Kerr's confident descriptions of:

Berlin (where a woman is found surviving by eating the fungus off the wall of her apartment);

Rail travel in the Soviet zone (where Gunther is set upon by a Russian soldier); and,

Vienna (where, if you have ever seen the movie, *The Third Man*, everything is for sale is a world of spy versus spy).

This world is so offensive to Gunther that he can barely carry on. Here is a scene where a taxi-driver attempts to fix him up with a prostitute:

"He chuckled warmly at the thought of it all. 'I could arrange something for you, sir. In the back of the car. For a small commission of course.'

"I leaned forwards on the seat. I don't know why I bothered with him. Maybe I just don't like garter-handlers. Maybe I just didn't much care for his Trotsky-lookalike face.

"'That would be just great,' I said very tough. 'If it weren't for a Russian table-trap I found in the Ukraine. Partisans put a tension-release trap behind a drawer that they left half-open with a bottle of vodka in there,

just to get your attention. I came along, pulled the drawer, the pressure was released and the grenade detonated. It took the meat and two vegetables clean off at my belly. I nearly died from loss of blood. And when finally I came out of the coma I nearly died of grief. I tell you if I so much as see a bit of plum I'm liable to go mad with the frustration of it. I'd probably kill the nearest man to me out of plain envy.' "The drive glanced back over his shoulder. 'Sorry,' he said nervously, 'I didn't mean to...'"

This is an example of a grim joke (nothing like this happened to Gunther) that he resorts to in order to cope. Here is another example of Gunther's quick retorts:

"(He) smiled thinly, 'Some people keep savage dogs to protect me. I have Rainis.' " "Yes, well I hope he's house-trained.' I took off my hat and wiped my brow with my handkerchief. 'Me, I wouldn't let him past the front door. I'd keep him on a chain in the yard. Where does he think he is? Treblinka? The bastard couldn't wait to shoot me....'"

The violence is raw, though not as frequent as in some noirs. The sex isn't very warm, when it occasionally appears. Kerr's gift is to make it all believable. Of his first three novels, I think this is the best. We see some real growth in the character of Bernie Gunther. Kerr masterfully blends the historical figures with the four-power intrigue and the mystery. If we don't have all the clues in advance, neither does Gunther. The ending is logical and the entire experience (as Nero Wolfe might say) satisfactory.

Giannis says

Η Τρ?τη περι?τεια του Χερ Γκο?ντερ, μας βρ?σκει σε ?να μεταπολεμικ? Βερολ?νο, ?να Βερολ?νο κατεστραμ?νο, απομονωμ?νο απ? τους Συμ?χους και με τους κατο?κους του να ζουν πληρ?νοντας τα αποτρ?παια εγκλ?ματα που δι?πραξαν οι Ναζ?. Ο Μπ?ρνι θα καταφ?ρει να μπλεχτε? ξαν? σε μ?α υπ?θεση φ?νου η οπο?α θα εξελιχθε? διαφορετικ? απ? ?τι συν?θως, κ?τι που με ξ?νιζε ορισμ?νες φορ?ς και ?λλες μου ?ρεσε. Δεν μπορ? να καταλ?ξω αν ?ταν «σοφ?» επιλογ? του συγγραφ?α να κινηθε? σε διαφορετικ? μονοπ?τια απ? τα κλασσικ? του «φ?νου», αλλ? σ?γουρα μου κρ?τησε το ενδιαφ?ρον μ?χρι τις τελευτα?ες σελ?δες.

Αυτ? που συνεχ?ζει να μην μου αρ?σει, ε?ναι το π?σο «τ?λειος» ε?ναι ο χαρακτ?ρας. Απ?στευτο λαγωνικ?, οι γυναικες να π?φτουν στα π?δια του, οι εχθρο? του να τον «θαυμ?ζουν», και το πιο μεγ?λο αρνητικ? για εμ?να ε?ναι η ε?κολη λ?ση του Kerr να λαμβ?νει μ?ρος ?να γεγον?ς το οπο?ο θα αλλ?ξει πλ?ρως την τ?χη του πρωταγωνιστ?! Ε?ναι πολ? «ξεν?ρωτο» να συμβα?νει κ?τι «τυχα?ο» που βγ?ζει απ? τη δ?σκολη θ?ση τον πρωταγωνιστ? μας. Θα προτιμο?σα κ?τι πιο ρεαλιστικ?, εφ?σον και το γενικ?τερο ?φος των βιβλ?ων του βασ?ζεται σε αληθιν? ιστορικ? γεγον?τα και την πραγματικ?τητα. ?νας ντεντ?κτιβ-εξολοθρευτ?ς φαντ?ζει εκτ?ς κλ?ματος των ?διων των βιβλ?ων...

Κατ? τα ?λλα, π?ρασα ευχ?ριστα διαβ?ζοντας το και εκτ?μησα δε?ντως τις πολλ?ς πιστ?ς πληροφορ?ες που μας ?δωσε ο συγγραφ?ας για εκε?νη την περ?οδο!

Vasilis Kalandaridis says

Το Βερολ?νο είναι πληγωμ?νο,σάκατεμ?νο σχεδ?ν διαλυμ?νο.Το ίδιο ακριβ?ς είναι κι ο Bernie.Μάλλον γ'αυτ? αποδρ? στη Βι?ννη ?που με το δικ? του ξεχωριστ? και επ?πονο τροπο βρ?σκει τελικ? τη λ?ση και τη λ?τρωση.Ο Kerr ε?ναι μεγ?λος μ?στορας.

Richard White says

Wow! What an amazing series. Part historical fiction with a great protagonist. A must read if your interested in the inner workings of Nazi Germany. Finally a book from the viewpoint of a German during this troubled time in history. Best book on this subject hands down.

Dave says

In Kerr's Bernie Gunther series, he successfully tells a historical narrative through the means of a hardboiled detective with the dark world of 1930's Germany forming almost a hardboiled character of itself. The first three books of what later became a dozen novels form what is referred to as the Berlin trilogy, tracing Gunther's passage through the 1930's into a dark chapter of evil. The second novel leaves off as Chamberlain loses his last chance to stand up to Hitler and hands over a third of Czechoslovakia without a shot being fired and Kristallnacht , the night of broken glass rages in the German cities. The gates of hell are about to blow open.

Book three picks up the story many years later in 1947 as the few survivors pick their way through the ruins of Berlin and the West begins to realize just what they are facing in Soviet occupied Eastern Europe. The story now is not just surviving in the face of a totalitarian regime, but of different factions betting on the outcome. It's still a dark dreary world but it's different and you really need a scorecard to figure out whose on your side. And the scars of the past are hard to hide.

There's a complex murder case that Gunther is hired to investigate. It's in Vienna and the story for the most part takes place there. In many ways, this part of the story has all the hallmarks of a classic hardboiled mystery from the explosive violence, the coarseness, the women in the nightclubs, and the late night rendezvouses. But, it's the historical background that elevates this story to something more than just another murder mystery.

Pamela says

Bernie Gunther takes on an assignment in Vienna, where a former colleague from the Kripo is facing a death sentence for the murder of an American soldier. Gunther soon concludes that both his colleague and the American were involved in shady dealings, maybe the flourishing black market or perhaps some kind of espionage, but the further he digs, the more loose ends and contradictions he uncovers.

I found this book less enjoyable than the previous two in this series (originally a trilogy which Philip Kerr later extended). Its main strength lies in its skilful use of well-researched period detail, and the depiction of post-War Vienna is fascinating. Likewise the comparison of its decay and ruin with Berlin, the similarities and differences in the fate of these two great cities being woven brilliantly into the narrative. There are also clever references to the film industry, Orson Welles and the film 'The Third Man'.

However, the plot is rather convoluted, sometimes unnecessarily so, and I found myself thinking at the end that it was all rather pointless. With the previous books, I quickly became intrigued and then engaged and then totally engrossed, with this book I read cheerfully to the end without really caring too much what the solution was.

With Bernie Gunther, I also personally find it's best to read his accounts of his sexual encounters as quickly as possible and then put them out of my mind - somehow they are more brutal and unpleasant than the scenes of violence and less easy to accept in the context of the plot. I appreciate that Gunther is an anti-hero figure, but there's a lack of subtlety in this aspect of Kerr's writing that jars with how he demonstrates his skill elsewhere.

Overall, not a bad read and I will definitely continue with the series, but not my favourite.

Chrissa Vasileiou says

Το "Γερμανική Ρέκβιεμ" είναι το βιβλίο που κλέβει την "Τριλογία του Βερολίνου" του Philip Kerr και η ιστορία του διαδραματίζεται το 1947, στη Βιέννη. Ήχουν περσει 10 χρόνια από τις τελευταίες περιπτειες του Μπέρνι Γκόντερ, και τόσο η δική του ζωή όσο και ο κόσμος πώς τον ξέρε ως πρώος κι έμε ως αναγνώστες, έχει αλλάξει. Ο πόλεμος έχει τελειώσει, ο Χίτλερ έχει ηττηθεί και οι Σοβιετικοί με τους Αμερικανούς κάνουν τράκουμντο.

Τα 3 αστέρια δεν σημαίνουν πως δεν μου έρεσε γενικά το βιβλίο - απλ' μου έρεσε λιγότερο από τα υπόλοιπα που έχω διαβάσει. Και δεν το περίμενα! Περίμενα να διαβάσω με ενδιαφέρον μια υπόθεση που θα εξελισσόταν στην λατρεμένη μου Βιέννη, κάτω από εντελώς διαφορετικές συνθήκες, χωρίς την ναζιστική Γερμανία του Χίτλερ και του Χμλερ αυτόν τη φορά στο προσκήνιο. Και είχε πράγματι ενδιαφέρον να διαβάζει κανείς το πώς η άλλοτε πανσχυρή και 'ψηλομύτα' Γερμανία μετρεί τώρα τις πληγές της. Πώς πάντα, ο Kerr παρουσιάζει (ταυτόχρονα με τη μυθιστορηματική του δράση) και το ιστορικό υπόβαθρο της εποχής, κι πώς πάντα καθ'λου ωραιοποιήμνο.

Μως, το βιβλίο μου φάνηκε κάπως... μπερδεμένο. 10 χρόνια γεμτά κεν? είναι πολλά, ιδιαίτερα όταν αυτό τα κεν? πετγόνται εδώ κι εκεί μέσα στην υπόθεση και δεν είναι πλήρως ανεπτυγμένα. Ο Μπέρνι κουβαλάει φαντάσματα που παραμνούν άγνωστα στον αναγνώστη... σως στα υπόλοιπα βιβλία της σειράς, που δεν έχουν εκδοθεί στα ελληνικά, μαθαίνουμε περισσότερα για την δεκαετία 1938-48. Δεν το έχω ψξει, αλλά το ελπίζω. Κι η ίδια η ιστορία είναι επ?σης μπερδεμένη, και θα λέγα με ναν τρ?πο χι και τόσο γοητευτική. Κοινός, θα λέγα πως απλ? περίμενα να ξετυλιχτεί επιτ?λους το κουβ?ρι της υπόθεσης για να δώ τι γίνεται, αλλά δεν έχω καμ?α ρεξη να το ξετυλξω η ίδια! Κακ? αυτό!

Προσωπικά, πιστέω πως από το βιβλίο λείπε μια 'σπ?θα' που έχω βρει σε άλλα. Σγούρα οι εξελξεις τρ?χουν και οι ανατροπές διαδ?χονται η μ?α την άλλη, αλλά δεν σκεφτ?μουν το στ?ρυ ακ?μα κι όταν δεν έχω το βιβλίο ανοιγμένο μπροστ? μου, πώς άλλες φορές. Δεν με ενοχλόσε να το άψω στην κρη για λίγο, πώς άλλες φορές. Δεν με τρώγαν τα χ?ρια μου να γυρσω γρήγορα τις σελ?δες, για να δώ τι θα γίνει παρακ?τω, πώς άλλες φορές...

Αγαπ? τον Μπέρνι Γκόντερ κι αγαπ? τον Kerr και αναγνωρίζω πως όλοι μας έχουμε και τις λιγότερο δυνατές στιγμές μας. Για μ?να, μια τ?τοια στιγμή είναι και το "Ρέκβιεμ". Οπωσδήποτε χρηκα να μ?θω τα μεταπολεμικά ν?α του Μπέρνι, αλλά επ?σης οπωσδήποτε τα προπολεμικά ν?α του και αυτό που ακολο?θησαν τις επ?μενες δεκαετίες και παρουσιζονται στα επ?μενα βιβλία μου φ?νηκαν πολύ πιο ενδιαφέροντα.

Tfitoby says

This one felt more like a history lesson than a noir thriller, Bernie Gunther basically behaving like a tour guide through post war atrocities than as a German Marlowe.

There's some kind of convoluted plot involving multiple parties with dubious morals and an elastic sense of who is working with/for whom, there's so much back stabbing and double crossing going on simply serving as a stream of red herrings and the padding out of the book to it's longer than previous entries page count.

The blurb talks about a legacy of dirt and horror beyond anything Gunther had previously experienced and I spent the entire novel waiting to be shocked or appalled or horrified or...somebody get me a thesaurus? I wasn't, and Bernie didn't seem to be. In many ways it had a similar plot to Graham Greene's *The Third Man* which was referenced both directly and indirectly multiple times throughout this trip to Vienna but it replaced the sparse nature with an unwarranted bloatedness and class with a more honest vulgarity and *A German Requiem* comes off looking worse for it.

I sure hope the 4th Bernie Gunther installment returns it to it's previous glory, especially the fun hard boiled aspect of *March Violets* or I may not read the rest of the series.

Lynne Premo says

Mysteries have always been one of my favorite forms of historical fiction because of their ability (when well written) to provide a glimpse of life in another time, place, etc while still being entertaining but not insulting your intelligence. Kerr does so wonderfully here with post-WWII Berlin/Vienna, slipping in additional information about the Soviet POW camps, postwar espionage and hypocrisy among the governmental bodies involved, and the atrocities on all sides that came at the end of the war. Because of what happened during the war, the view of German civilians after peace was declared has been overlooked to a large extent by all but academics. Kerr does an admirable job in rectifying that gap via private investigator Bernie Gunther.
