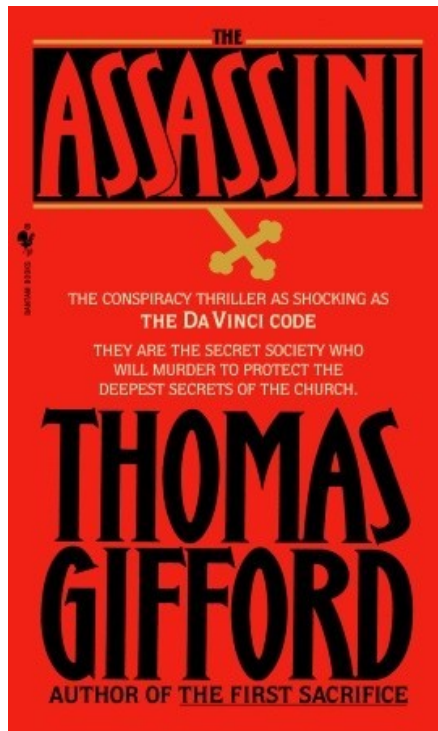




The Assassini

Thomas Gifford

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The Assassini

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The Assassini Thomas Gifford

It is 1982. In the Vatican, priestly vultures gather around the dying Pope, whispering the names of possible successors. In a forgotten monastery on Ireland's gale-swept coast, a dangerous document is hidden, waiting to be claimed. And in a family chapel in Princeton, New Jersey, a nun is murdered at her prayers. Sister Valentine was an outspoken activist, a thorn in the Church's side. When her brother, lawyer Ben Driskill, realizes the Church will never investigate her death, he sets out to find the murderer himself--and uncovers an explosive secret.*The Assassini*. An age-old brotherhood of killers. Once they were hired by princes of the Church to protect it in dangerous times. But whose orders do they now obey?

The Assassini marks the triumphant return of a master at the peak of his powers--the first novel in more than a decade from the acclaimed author of *The Wind Chill Factor*.

The Assassini Details

Date : Published August 1st 1991 by Bantam (first published 1990)

ISBN : 9780553287400

Author : Thomas Gifford

Format : Paperback 688 pages

Genre : Fiction, Thriller, Mystery, Suspense, Crime

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From Reader Review The Assassini for online ebook

Armin says

Vorurteilsschwangere Weitschweifigkeit im Whisky-Nebel

Es haben ja schon etliche Leute ihre Begeisterung über diesen Thriller kund getan, und nicht weniger ihrer Fassungslosigkeit über die Weitschweifigkeit dieses Wälzers freien Lauf gelassen. Setze hier trotzdem mein ceterum censeo auf den ganzen Haufen:

Der Erfolg von Assassini wird mir wohl immer ein Rätsel bleiben, der unverhoffte Höhepunkt von Thomas Giffords literarischen Schaffens ist sein Bestseller jedenfalls nicht. Dieses Prädikat kommt wohl tatsächlich Protector zu, trotz aller, vergleichsweise verzeihlichen Weitschweifigkeiten.

Eine Geschichte auf Tempo bringen und dort halten, gehört nicht zu den Stärken dieses Autors, rein erzähltechnisch ist Thomas Gifford immer im Kindergarten geblieben. Derartige Defizite nerven über 800 Seiten eher mehr, wiewohl auch seine 300-Seiten-Romane mindestens 250 Seiten zu lang wirken. Dafür hält er in seinen anderen Büchern wenigstens eine Perspektive durch. Die Gründe für den Wechsel zwischen den Driskoll-Partien in Ich-Form und den Kapiteln in dritter Person sind für mich nicht erkennbar. Ein fähigerer Autor hätte den Roman locker in Ich-Perspektive erzählen und ein paar echt anrührende Szenen voll Austausch der unabhängig voneinander gefundenen Geheimnisse zwischen dem Ex-Jesuiten und der Nonne auf die Seiten zaubern können, in denen die Faszination füreinander wächst, statt ständig zu schreiben: „Elizabeth erzählte Ben...“ „Ich erzählte Elizabeth alles, was ich seitdem in Erfahrung gebracht hatte.“ Aber auch ungeschickte Erzähler können ja mit einer Geschichte die Leser in ihren Bann ziehen, und ein Papst als Mörder und ein Attentat auf den Papst, das sind schon dankbare Themen. Allerdings handelt es sich bei den Assassini nur um eine ausführlichere Ansammlung von Giffords Klischees:

Ein naiver Held, der gern viel trinkt und in eine Frau verliebt ist, die er (eigentlich) nicht bekommen kann. Diese Konstellation verfolgt er seit seinem Debüt Windchill Faktor (1975), wo ein sturer Held dieses Zuschnitts die Errichtung eines Vierten Reichs verhindern will. Als er am Ende über das Böse obsiegt, bekommt er auch noch seine leibliche Schwester als Geliebte zum Siegespreis.

Am Anfang von Assassini steht der Tod von Ben Driskills Schwester, die Bösen sind wieder Nazis, Driskill betreibt wider jede Vernunft seine Ermittlungen rund um den Globus und entkommt auch aus den brenzlichsten Situationen bis zum finalen Moment der Wahrheit in Papas Ferienhaus. Am Ende sind alle Bösen oder böse gemachten tot und der Held bekommt sogar noch seine Nonne aus dem Nichts.

Nun gut, jeder Autor hat seine Lieblingsthemen und Stereotypen, aber seine Einblicke in den Vatikan kann Gifford wohl nur auf dem Grund der vielen Gläser Laphroaig getan haben, die samt und sonders in die Schilderungen der einsamen Abende des gesamten Personals eingeflossen sind, wenn man mal den schrecklich nüchternen Meuchelmörder außen vor lässt. Aber anscheinend versteht Gifford sehr viel mehr von Scotch und Malts als von allen anderen Themen in seinem Hauptwerk, lediglich die Theater-Szenen in Avignon scheinen eigener Anschauung entsprungen.

Am meisten an den Assassini nervt aber die politische Naivität des Autors, der einfach unterstellt, sämtliche Akteure hätte im zweiten Weltkrieg so handeln müssen wie es heute gängiger Geschichtsauffassung entspricht. Als wären Faktoren wie Opportunismus, Fehleinschätzungen oder zeitgebundene Vorurteile nicht existent. Von Reue, Einsicht oder späterer Korrektur ganz zu schweigen. „Einmal Nazi, immer böse“ so die simple Moral. Dieses Buch trieft jedenfalls nur so von Vorurteilen und von Whisky natürlich auch, wie so gut wie alle Bücher von Thomas Gifford mit einem männlichen Helden. In diesem Sinne ein Prosit auf alle Trunkenbolde dieser Welt mit Weltverbesserungsanspruch.

Mahdi Lotfi says

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Brian Turner says

More of a 3.5 stars book... the author starts by explaining how it took eight years to write this novel. At times I felt it might take me that long to read.

A Catholic reporter is murdered after being on the track of a story involving the church and World War 2. Her brother and her best friend come together as they try to pick up her clues and see what she was killed for.

Bit of a slow burner, the last third is when it starts to pick up as more is revealed and it heads toward the final reveal. (Which you'd probably guess by half way through).

Good characters, you're kept guessing about whose side they are on and what their motives are.

Rita says

This was a book written in the late 80's and that was a precursor to the Dan Brown novels and I didn't too much.

I liked more the name than the whole book- is suspense thriller about the intrigues and secret happenings of the church.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

The Assassini, (1990), Thomas Gifford (1937 - 2000)

The Assassini is a 1990 thriller novel by American author Thomas Gifford, published by Bantam Books. Set in 1982, while the Roman Catholic Church is preparing to elect a successor to the dying pope, Callistus IV, the book describes the attempts of lawyer Ben Driskill to solve the murder of his sibling, Sister Valentine, a nun who was an outspoken activist and a thorn in the Church's side. Driskill's world-spanning investigation

leads him to the discovery of a document from a forgotten monastery in Ireland, which proves the existence of the Assassini, an age-old brotherhood of killers, once hired by princes of the Church to protect it in dangerous times; and the person who now controls them in his Machiavellian bid for power.

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Amin Dashti says

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C.D. Field says

This convoluted plot about the inner workings of the Vatican is compelling and intriguing. Definitely a book for those who enjoy a very complex plot. I liked the detail about how church politics works; a subject most people will know nothing about. The characters are well developed and the many subplots do not overshadow the primary theme. Who dun it? Quite shocking revelations at the end but I think this novel would make as good a film as those by Dan Brown. It gets better, the more times you read it, as there is so much detail to absorb in one sitting.

Eileen Souza says

Once again, I wish there was a 3.5 star option. This was a book written in the late 80's that was a precursor to the Dan Brown novels - suspense thriller about the intrigues and secret happenings of the church - murder mystery and many twists and turns.

The story is of Ben Driskill, son of a super rich string puller, who was an OSS officer during WWII working with the Catholic Church. His sister (a nun) is killed in their family chapel, and overwhelmed with grief and anger, he goes on a hunt to try to learn what she had been researching and to try to find her killer.

I enjoyed several of the characters of the book - specifically the less conservative clergy, and there were definitely some haunting scenes. It was a good story, kept me captivated, and had a satisfying ending.

Tannaz says

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Elizabeth A says

I can never resist a Vatican thriller. There are so many skeletons buried in their closets, and the more I learn about the history the more shocked I am. Well, this fun read is a fictional story about the intrigues in the Church as the Pope nears his death. This is an old school thriller - one that moves slowly. Not a wham bam thank you ma'am kind of a thriller, and I enjoyed losing myself in this world for a while. This is the first book I have read by this author and I would read more of his work.

Vismitha says

When I say that all I want to do is curl up on my favourite sofa with a 'good old' murder mystery- This is what I mean. Plenty of suspects, a past, a present and the blurred lines enough to keep me guessing- my type of comfort reading.

Jeane says

The assissini is one of those books you haven't heard about, don't look that special but something makes you try it out anyway. For me it was the name of the book and in some way the story, the places.

The story spreads itself around Rome, Princeton, the Donegal coast in Ireland and even Paris and Alexandria. The church is in the middle of everything, but is full of secrets ...in the past and now. And, the Pope is dying and Rome and the rest of the world wants to know who will become the new Pope.

A document exists telling who the assissini are, but luckily for the church it is hidden and the church can keep its secrets inside. Until sister Valentine gets murdered in the chapel of her powerful family.

Her brother Ben, a lawyer, realizes that the murder of his sister won't be investigated by police or the church like any other murder would. His sister wasn't a nun either. So he starts to investigate himself and gets involved more and more in the history and present of the church, while more murders happen.

With everything that happens and gets discovered in this story, it can't be boring. But the beginning of the book was a bit too long, slow and would have been written maybe a bit shorter. Besides that, it went fast, it was interesting. The story happens in 1982 and without knowing how to explain, it leaves behind a bit the feeling of how the world, the people seem to have been in the eighties.

Marion says

The first half of the book is a little bit boring. So much people and names. I do understand, that you need to introduce the characters but, even after some murdered people in the beginning, it seems like to book is on a standstill.

After the half, everything goes blow after blow, with surprising twists and more dead people. That part is well written.

For my taste, there are too much "catholic" characters. Well, there are only catholic characters. That's excatly the problem. No police, no outsiders, no one who isn't wrapped into the catholic system, in one way or the other.

And I can't follow the characteristics of one of the responsible party. The character is not well enough written. I don't get the feeling of "fanatic" there, to make it plausible, that it is one of the main manipulators. Conclusion: so much possibilities, so much wasted opportunities. It's ok for a summer holiday read but not a book I'll think about again or read again.

AliciaJ says

Not what I was hoping for. The writing was overblown and dramatic (and not in a good way), the plot was boooooorrrrrring, and all the characters were old. This just wasn't my thing.

Paul says

A very slow start, which had me infuriated at times, but the plot builds well with a mixture of twists and predictable bits. Sound character development and great location descriptions (ie of the Borghese Gardens).
