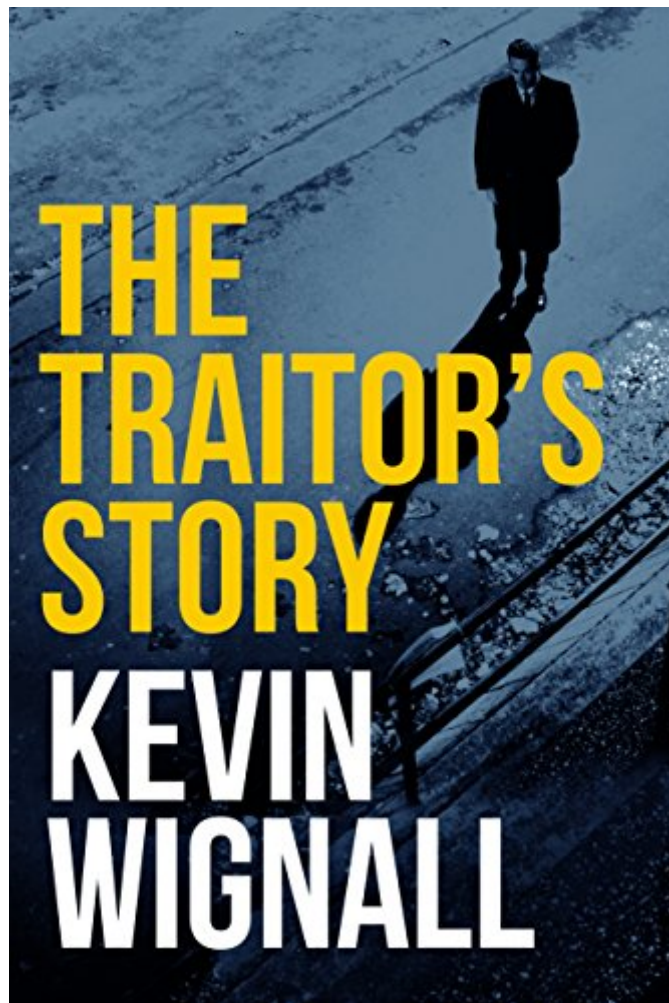


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The Traitor's Story



Synopsis

When fifteen-year-old American Hailey Portman goes missing in Switzerland, her desperate parents seek the help of their neighbor, Finn Harrington, a seemingly quiet historian rumored to be a former spy. Sensing the story runs deeper than anyone yet knows, Finn reluctantly agrees to make some enquiries. He has little to go on other than his instincts, and his instincts have been wrong in the past—sometimes spectacularly wrong. But he gets involved anyway, never imagining that Hailey's disappearance might be linked to the tragic events that ended his career six years earlier, drawing him back into a deadly world that has neither forgiven nor forgotten.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I grabbed this one after recently reading Wignall's "A Death in Sweden," which was pretty good. This one is much better. Both are fairly bloody thrillers with introspective and emotionally complicated protagonists. The plotting in this book really sets it apart, though. There are a couple of plot lines, spaced six years apart, and the interplay between those plot lines builds the suspense terrifically throughout the course of the book. The book has a few little spots that don't ring quite true,

and there are a couple of writing slip-ups (bad parallelism I noticed a couple of times), but the quality of writing is much higher than most of the thrillers you'll find on . I have to read through probably ten books in the genre to get to one that's this good.

This is an exciting and very different spy story. Finn Harrington believes he has successfully retired from clandestine operations, but he is shaken when his neighbor's daughter goes missing and he discovers he has been the subject of surveillance by a mysterious company with ties to his old agency. The story is less about spies and more about people. As action takes place in the present, flashbacks reveal the many people involved and how they have contributed to the present. The action is thrilling, and the suspense grows as Finn is forced to confront the issues from his past. Definitely worth reading.

One of the better authors in the genre, Wignall doesn't clutter things up with a lot of unnecessary characters, mindless dialog, endless paragraphs of boring narrative describing the scenery at each and every locale in excruciating detail, along with the obligatory (and often pointless) romantic interludes. Nor does he make us suffer the company of the precocious rug rats and pets that all too often litter the pages of far too many spy novels. I've yet to be disappointed with any of his books.

I chose the book based on the low price, high reviews and number of reviewers. I was not disappointed. Good read. Pro tip: The reader needs to pay attention to the chapter titles as there are two threads through the story, one in the past and one in the present. Many of the same characters are involved in each thread; if you don't know you're in the past, it can be a bit confusing. (I normally ignore chapter titles, so it took a while before I caught on).

I was surprised how good this book was! I had never heard of this author but with 's continual advertising of good books, I found this one. They were right. I couldn't put this down. I warmed up to Finn Harrington quickly and also quickly distinguished between the chapters about the past and the present. Jonas stole my heart! All of the characters were good. I enjoyed traveling between London, Helsinki, Tallin and Kaliningrad. I loved the ending. I found that I had to wait a couple of days before starting another book because I wanted to savor this one.

The title's misleading but the story is unusual and good. There are several twists and turns that the reader does not see coming. The author does throw out a small clue that the reader does not realize

until the twist occurs in the story. The book does have one aspect that makes the continuity hard to follow because there are two stories. One story is under the chapter titles "History" and the second is the chapters dealing with our hero trying to locate a missing teen. The History part can be somewhat confusing but the overall narrative makes it easy to regroup and follow the two major plots: redemption and understanding one's limitations.

One thing usually runs into another. Finn certainly finds that out when he agrees to hunt for a daughter of a neighbor, who has disappeared. Finding the neighbor's daughter he can't believe it would all tie into his old career & would smack him in the face. He was a book writer and doing pretty good thank you. This was a smooth running story with a little excitement included, enough to keep you glued. In fact he reacts differently than what you think and you see a side of Finn you can't imagine. A great read!

The idea of a traitor as a hero had some potential. The two stories, past and present, running in parallel could have added a dimension of suspense. But no; nothing worked well. The past story was not described with enough detail and the characters from that story not developed enough for it to have satisfactory coherence. Even the ultimate crisis scene from the "history" was never explained. We knew so little about the villains, especially the friend-villain, that the conflict did not pull the story along. We don't know what the team was doing or why it failed. But the biggest problem was that the traitor-protagonist had no personality and his dialog was written terribly. He was totally uninteresting. He said things that were ridiculous. And the resolution of many of the situations left me rolling my eyes and saying "oh, come on!"

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