

Alibi: A Novel

By Joseph Kanon

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Winner of the Hammett Prize

It is 1946, and Adam Miller has come to Venice to visit his widowed mother and try to forget the horrors he has witnessed as a U.S. Army war crimes investigator in Germany. But when he falls in love with Claudia, a Jewish woman scarred by her devastating experiences during World War II, he is forced to confront another Venice, a city still at war with itself, haunted by atrocities it would rather forget. Everyone, including his mother's suave new Venetian suitor, has been compromised by the occupation, and Adam finds himself at the center of a web of deception, intrigue, and unexpected moral dilemmas. When is murder acceptable? What are the limits of guilt? How much is someone willing to pay for a perfect alibi?

Joseph Kanon's *Alibi* is at once a murder mystery, a love story, and a superbly crafted novel about the nature of moral responsibility.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
It's late 1945 at the start of this atmospheric historical thriller, and G.I. Adam Miller, officially assigned to ferret out Nazi war criminals in Germany, joins his widowed mother, Grace, who has recently arrived in Venice from New York to resume her life as a wealthy American expatriate. Together, they flow into the social eddies of the upper class, determined to pick up where they left off in 1939. Grace has met an old flame, Gianni Maglione, a distinguished doctor whom Adam suspects of gold-digging. Meanwhile, Adam himself meets Jewish Claudia Grassini, who survived the Nazi pogroms by becoming the mistress of a powerful Italian Fascist. The novel's languid pace picks up when Claudia meets Maglione, whom she accuses not only of being a Nazi collaborator but also of having condemned her own father to Auschwitz. Further complications arise with the appearance of Rosa, an Italian operative and former partisan. Kanon (*The Good German*, etc.) keeps his complex plot—involving murder, elaborate alibis, false accusations and a web of secrets spinning back to the war—on track, although the various entanglements aren't always neatly unraveled. Adam and Claudia's love affair provides the requisite romance, but there's no sense that they find much to like in one another. More interesting is Kanon's portrait of a pathetic and hopelessly naïve group of wealthy people out of touch with the postwar world's reality. *Agent, Amanda Urban. Author tour. (Apr.)*
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From Booklist
In *The Good German* (2001), Kanon superbly evoked the post-apocalyptic, pockmarked moonscape of 1946 Germany. Now he turns to postwar Venice, where there are no pockmarks but the survivors are equally shell-shocked by the nearness of evil. Adam Miller, fresh from a stint as a war crimes investigator in Frankfurt, arrives in Vienna to visit his globe-trotting mother, who is holding tenuously to the remains of her fortune and embarking on an autumnal romance with a Venetian doctor whose wartime associations with the Nazis remain troubling if obscure. Miller begins a tumultuous romance with a Jewish woman whose own wartime experience has left her with deep psychic wounds. Soon enough the past can no longer remain hidden as a stunning murder leaves Adam torn between righting wrongs and protecting those he loves and himself. In a world where alibis are the currency of the era--everyone was "somewhere else when the air-raid sirens covered the sounds of people being dragged off"--Adam attempts to tread lightly through a landscape loaded with moral land mines. As before, Kanon juxtaposes a powerful love story and a gripping thriller against a palpable historical moment, but this time his hero can't quite shoulder the burden, his naive American assumptions about right and wrong leaving him ill-equipped to respond and never quite able to garner our full sympathy. And, yet, the novel holds us completely, with its vision of a sadly inadequate hero striking deep at our worst fears about ourselves. *Bill Ott*
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Review

“Burrowing deeply into Patricia Highsmith territory, Kanon has crafted an absorbing tale. . . . [Kanon] is frequently compared to the likes of John le Carré and Graham Greene. With *Alibi,* he shows that he's up to the comparison.” ?*San Francisco Chronicle*

“Kanon's richest, most full-blooded work to date . . . [He] has mastered the art of the historical thriller.” ?*The New York Times Book Review*

“Disturbing and hypnotically readable, *Alibi* is a mystery, a love story, and a work of philosophy--and a

perfect companion for the thriller reader who wants a philosophical challenge, as well as entertainment." ?*Richmond Times-Dispatch*

"Joseph Kanon is a specialist in superior historical thrillers. . . . Moody, deeply atmospheric, and as labyrinthine as the streets of Venice." ?*The Seattle Times*

"*Alibi* is a thriller with a slide-rule perfect plot. . . . Wholly engrossing and one of the finest thrillers you will read this year--up there with the classics of the genre." ?*The Daily Telegraph (London)*

"If you want to explore life, love, death, beauty, and moral confusion--all glimpsed from a gondola, so to speak--you won't do much better than this." ?*The Washington Post*

"Once again Kanon has written a novel set against the backdrop of World War II that is evocative and sensitive, moody and thought-provoking." ?*Arizona Daily Star*

"*Alibi* is an absorbing and fast-paced book." ?*New Mystery Reader Magazine*

"Kanon keeps us turning pages. . . . His best book yet." ?*The Winston-Salem Journal*

"Kanon juxtaposes a powerful love story and a gripping thriller against a palpable historical moment. . . . The novel holds us completely, with its vision of a sadly inadequate hero striking deep at our worst fears about ourselves." ?*Booklist*

"You will admire this book for its descriptions of the theatrically beautiful Venetian cityscape and for its engrossing rendition of the city's postwar hangover-party mood--plus the inclusion of a cracking good murder mystery." ?*The News & Observer*

"Extraordinarily well-crafted and well-written . . . Kanon's storytelling talents for intrigue may be unparalleled." ?*Deseret Morning News*

"Kanon offers such vivid sensory detail that a reader emerges as steeped in atmospherics as a seasoned diplomat with a passport full of visa stamps. You feel initiated, as if you've been let in on some dark and well-kept secrets from some of the twentieth century's most pivotal moments. . . . In Kanon's eclectic cast of policemen, soldiers, revolutionaries, and ex-pat socialites, no one is spared the deep, dark smudges offered by war and its aftermath." ?*Baltimore Sun*

"If you want to explore life, love, death, beauty, and moral confusion, you won't do much better than this." ?*San Jose Mercury News*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Edward Torres:

This Alibi: A Novel book is just not ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you have by reading this book will be information inside this book incredible fresh, you will get facts which is getting deeper anyone read a lot of information you will get. This Alibi: A Novel without we know teach the one who reading it become critical in considering and analyzing. Don't be worry Alibi: A Novel can bring once you are and not make your bag space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it with your lovely laptop even mobile phone. This Alibi: A Novel having fine arrangement in word along with

layout, so you will not truly feel uninterested in reading.

Jose Bell:

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Carol Reck:

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James Waddell:

On this era which is the greater particular person or who has ability to do something more are more treasured than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple approach to have that. What you need to do is just spending your time not very much but quite enough to possess a look at some books. One of many books in the top list in your reading list is definitely Alibi: A Novel. This book that is certainly qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in becoming precious person. By looking up and review this reserve you can get many advantages.

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