



## Deadly Communion

*Frank Tallis*

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Detective Inspector Oskar Reinhardt finds that young women are being slain in an unnerving—and ingenious—manner, with a small, almost undetectable, hat pin. For Dr. Max Liebermann, the killer is unique in the annals of psychopathology, one who murders in the midst of consensual love. Is the culprit a patient, one who swears he has a double, a shadow figure that is far more forward (in fact, indecent) with women? As danger mounts, Liebermann must find the answer while struggling with his own forbidden desire for a former female patient.

## Deadly Communion Details

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Author : Frank Tallis

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## From Reader Review Deadly Communion for online ebook

### Sara says

Viennese decadence on full display, beginning with an eerie murder using a hatpin, continues and involves a gritty subplot ranging from pornographic drawings to Secessionist fashion design. This is almost as well-plotted as Fatal Lies, but is not quite as involving. The Zentralfriedhof (main cemetery) in Vienna is actually larger than the entire Innere Stadt, and this fact is used in the novel to support the Viennese obsession with sex and death. So far, this is the eerie-est of Tallis's series, featuring a murderer whose attenuated humanity is profoundly disturbing and another whose motives are more understandable. The Freudian milieu thickens, as does Inspector Reinhardt's waistline -- he is CONSTANTLY eating pastries in this book. And unfortunately, they sound delicious. Gotta go have something to eat...

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### Heidi Gonzalez says

I really enjoyed this book it reminded me of Sherlock Holmes. Inspector Reinhardt and Dr. Liebermann remind me of Sherlock and Watson. This is a great period piece with great characters. The mystery is well written and the characters that are well developed.

There is a great deal of Freud in these pages so if you feel things are too sexualized remember who the psychologists mentor is...Freud was all about sex and sexuality.

I will be looking for more books in this series as I found this in a free little library around the corner from me. I love finding new gems.

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### Deanne says

Maybe I need to read these in order. Did find it hard to believe that as intelligent as the two main characters were they would miss certain things that I spotted.

There was also the moral aspect that I found difficult to believe and in particular Reinhardt's reaction. That said I did enjoy the journey and will be looking out for more.

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### Val Penny says

This was book of the month for my book group recently. It is not a book that I would have picked up of my own accord. The author is a British writer and clinical psychologist. He has held lecturing posts in clinical psychology and neuroscience at the Institute of Psychiatry and King's College, London. Although he has written several self-help manuals, Deadly Communion is the fifth book in a series featuring a psychoanalyst, Dr. Max Liebermann. I do not intend to read more of the series.

This book is a murder mystery, a genre I usually enjoy, but I suppose there are always exceptions. The book is set in Vienna, Austria at the beginning of the 20th Century. Liebermann and a detective, Oskar Reinhardt

battle to catch the criminals who commit the most clever and brutal murders.

Detective Inspector Reinhardt finds that young women are being murdered in an ingenious manner, with a small hat pin. This leaves an almost undetectable mark. Dr. Max Liebermann finds the killer is unique in his experience of psychopathology.

The killer is a person who murders in the midst of consensual sex. The descriptions of the way the women's bodies are left and of the postmortems are disgusting. They are far more explicit than is necessary, as if the writer enjoyed the graphic descriptions. Liebermann must find murderer while struggling with his own forbidden desire for a female patient.

There were some good descriptions of old Vienna. Tallis also offers his reader some excellent descriptions of cafe life, coffee and cakes savoured by Reinhardt. However, sadly the story owed more to the author's psychological training than to the art of literature. It was gaudy and gorey. I will not seek out more works by Dr. Frank Tallis and do not recommend *Deadly Communion*.

Valerie Penny

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### **Paul Weiss says**

***“He was humming the Andante con moto, from Schubert’s B-flat Piano Trio”***

Did you enjoy the pairing of gay LAPD detective Milo Sturgis with psychologist Alex Delaware when they debuted in 1985 in Jonathan Kellerman's best-selling thriller, **When the Bough Breaks**? Do you enjoy a clever police procedural, soiled with a bit of grit and grime or even a touch of sleaze, but with a plot that is a little more linear than the typical byzantine, tortuous path plowed by today's best-selling suspense thrillers? Do you enjoy historical fiction that lifts you out of today's tiresome here and now, transports you, and drops you into the centre of the sights and sounds or smells and tastes of another place, another time, perhaps even another country or culture? Do you enjoy a novel that eschews that slam-bang action pace of today's modern novels and unfolds the story with more cerebral dialogue and carefully constructed, evocative scenery and atmosphere? Do you enjoy the occasional detour of a slight touch of pedagogy when an author ventures into the realm of informational side-bars and essays on topics of interest related to the main story?

Then it's a sure bet that **Vienna Twilight**, the 5th entry in Frank Tallis's successful Max Liebermann and Oskar Reinhardt series, set in fin-de-siècle Secessionist Vienna, will be right in your wheelhouse. Gustav Mahler is the director of the Vienna Court Opera and the cultured population of music mad Vienna walks the streets humming melodies composed by the rock stars of the day - Schumann, Schubert, Liszt, Beethoven and Wagner. The popular and somewhat erotic art of Gustav Klimt at the forefront of the Secessionist movement is the talk of the town in the coffee houses that are the place to see and to be seen. The magnificent facades of art nouveau architecture dominate the Viennese streetscape.

Even so, in the midst of all of this beauty, culture and sweetness, murder stalks the unwitting ladies who stroll the boulevards.

For a significant part of the novel, three concurrent story lines seem to be shoehorned together and unrelated to one another. The first is Reinhardt's desperate search for a serial murderer whose freakish MO involves dispatching his victims by driving a hatpin through the base of their skull and directly into the brain during

the heat of consensual sex. The second is Liebermann's psychoanalysis of a deeply disturbed patient who is convinced that he is going to die at any moment because he has seen his doppelgänger. The final story tells of a talented artist who daubs nude paintings and drawings of underage girls in compromising, revealing positions. He sells them to wealthy clients – well, there really is only one word for it – wealthy pedophiles who in today's words would be characterized as buying child pornography. But, fear not. The three skeins are ultimately woven together into a clever, complete whole and not a single thread is left dangling for even the most pedantic reader to cavil at.

People who like a little extra dollop of realism in their historical fiction will particularly enjoy a handful of cameo appearances by maestro Sigmund Freud himself as Liebermann consults with him on matters of the psycho-analysis of dreams, sexual perversions and how a mere mental disturbance over time may mutate into a full blown psychopathology.

Highly recommended. (And do NOT read this book when you are hungry. The descriptions of the Viennese pastries, cakes and desserts will drive you wild!)

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Paul Weiss

### **Melissa says**

Do not read this book!!! I am sincerely bewildered how this got so many stars on Goodreads. Every once in a while I come across a book that is so disturbing I have to quit. The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo was the worst. This is in my top five.

Without going into what the book is actually about (go read other reviews) I will tell you this: the murdered females in this book are described too sexually during their autopsies. This is not normal. I have read books that go into detail and it's purely scientific and anatomical. This author likes to focus on the genitalia in particular and it's creepy. I feel like a perv just reading it. The detective in the story also finds himself slightly aroused by the corpse of first victim during her autopsy. Really?! How weird and gross and abnormal is that? Based on those facts alone I had to quit the book. None of the writing merits dredging through such grossness either. Don't waste your time. And a note to the author: leave the sexuality of the dead alone. It's gross.

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### **Vivienne says**

Probably the best to date in this series. It was a complex plot that wove together aspects of psychology, criminal investigation and philosophy.

As before there are strong characterizations and believable development.

Tallis creates a powerful sense of turn-of-the-century Vienna, celebrating the culture yet also pointing out the dark undercurrents.

I love the descriptions of the rich desserts that they indulge in, but it is a kind of torture too.

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### **Phil says**

I love discovering a new writer especially one who is an excellent writer and storyteller and has written several books in a series.

These books are set in the Victorian era and full of interesting historical detail. The time is set as the period Freud's ideas are just taking hold. Dr. Max Liebermann, a psychiatrist uses the theories of Freud with whom he holds discussions to help his friend Inspector Oskar Reinhardt (a most fascinating literary creation) find a serial killer while solving two other murders along the way. What a fine tale it was!

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### **Rebecca says**

I have to admit, the "mysteries" in in the Max Liebermann series are never very mysterious. What keeps me coming back is Frank Tallis' evocative descriptions of fin de siècle Vienna. The pastries alone are worth the price of admission.

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### **Bibliophile says**

A bit darker and seedier than the usual Liebermann cases. The book's theme of love & death unfortunately make both Liebermann & Reinhardt out to be a pair of creepos. The pastries remain delicious though.

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### **Anne E. Nicolson says**

I found this one more full of psychoanalytic jargon than others in the series. It also seems that Liebermann is more prescient about what will happen in Vienna a few years hence. In other novels, the growing Anti-Semitism is more present, this one seems bleaker, and makes me fear for Reinhardt's daughters.

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### **Peter says**

Frank Tallis offers readers an outstanding package, or better yet let's call it a traditional Viennese dessert. Rich with the flavor of early 20th century Vienna—the city itself, descriptions of the political, cultural and economic conditions, add in the music, the emerging scientific advances in medicine and technology, such as battery operated flashlights whose light only lasts a few seconds, topped by the food, oh, and did I mention the story itself! Vienna Twilight is another well-wrought cleverly plotted mystery featuring detective Oskar Reinhardt and doctor Max Liebermann. If you love historical novels and enjoy mysteries, you won't be disappointed with any of Tallis' Vienna stories.

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### **Kátia Cristina says**

This one was darker than the others, but a masterpiece nevertheless. I read it in one day!!

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### **Christine Cody says**

This beautiful series continues to enchant. In Belle Époque Vienna, a detective and his best friend, a brilliant psychoanalyst (who visits with his mentor, Sigmund Freud, at least once in each novel) work together to solve psychologically confounding murders. Tallis brings historic Vienna to life, as Oskar Rheinhardt (the cop) and Max Leibermann (the doctor) move about the city, always stopping to enjoy coffee and pastries (or beer and sausage, depending on the time of day) in various cafes in all strata of Viennese society. I love the friendship between these men. In addition to their crime-solving collaboration, the two regularly get together to play music: Leibermann plays the piano to Rheinhardt's beautiful voice. Both of them freely express their emotions; during these moments, Tallis lets the reader see the unabashed romanticism in each of them.

Along with an always well-crafted murder investigation, Tallis provides an enlightened tour of early 20th-century Vienna, including just for starters, the architecture, the growing women's movement (during this time, women are beginning to give up the binding corsets and wearing soft, flowing dresses that finally allow them to breathe -- referred to as *reform dresses*), advances in crime solving (e.g., blood typing), art, and music. Towards the end of this book, the two men attend a Mahler-conducted production of Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde* at the Vienna Court Opera (Wiener Hofoper). They are both entranced and moved to tears by the performances, especially the opera's soprano. After reading the book, I wanted to learn more about this soprano. I learned the performance they attend is historically accurate. Mahler brought the opera to Vienna with soprano Anna von Mildenburg as Isolde in 1903.

That's how everything in this series is, which makes the books even more interesting. I seldom read historical fiction, but this kind of writing certainly piques my interest. With our knowledge of the fast-approaching war, it's impossible to read these books without knowing the kind of horror that will soon rain down on Vienna and the rest of Europe. Max refers often to recognizing the society he knows as disappearing. But for now at least, we can enjoy the bliss of Vienna as it was before any of the world wars changed the landscape forever.

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### **Sonia Cristina says**

Foi o caso que menos me interessou, não consegui apreciar. Valeu pelos personagens queridos, Liebermann e Reinhhardt, pelo ambiente de Vienna no início do século XX, aquela cultura tão rica em tantos aspectos. Foi interessante ver como o médico legista fazia o seu exame aos cadáveres, as técnicas que usavam na altura. Tremi ao imaginá-lo (e a Amelia Lydgate, que o ajudou) a usar as mãos desprotegidas, sem luvas.

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