



The Magician's Accomplice

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An indigent student has been shot and killed in an upscale hotel in the center of Bratislava. It appears to be a professional assassination, but who would want to kill a starving student? After examining the crime scene, Jana Matinova pays a visit to her lover, a government prosecutor. But when she arrives at his office, she learns that he's been killed by a phone bomb. Jana is devastated but determined to find his murderer.

Professional killings aren't common in Bratislava. Could the two deaths be connected? Before Jana can even begin investigating, she is transferred to The Hague, headquarters of the international police force of Europol. On the flight, she encounters a retired magician who turns out to be the dead student's uncle. He wants to help Jana investigate his nephew's death. And his help is needed, as Jana is soon confronted with an international conspiracy emanating from Europol itself.

The Magician's Accomplice Details

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Author : Michael Genelin

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From Reader Review The Magician's Accomplice for online ebook

Daniel says

Suspenseful

I picked this up not knowing what to expect. I was delightfully surprised at how fast paced, intelligent, and twisted it was.

Jim says

I Rate this 4.0

This is my rating that is more detailed...

5.0 - Amazing

4.5 - I loved it

4.0 - I liked it a lot

3.5 - I Liked it

3.0 - It was OK

2.5 - Just

2.0 - I wouldn't bother

1.5 - I didn't like it much

1.0 - I disliked it

Calzean says

The dust jacket described a couple of murders, a meeting with a magician and a posting for Matinova to The Hague. The book took 120 pages to get to this point. A slow and agonising start. Matinova goes about solving a crime others have been grappling with. In the process she shots various bad guys, escapes various traps and has an old magician tagging along for who knows what reason. There are various illogical and unlikely threads with Matinova never being surprised by what is happening. I hated it.

Ruth says

Strong woman character as detective, yet vulnerable also. I will look for other books by this same author.

Andrew Macrae says

“Trust no one” should be Slovakian Police Commander Jana Matinova’s

motto as she finds herself both the hunter and the hunted in a rollercoaster of an adventure that takes her from her home city of Bratislava to The Hague and elsewhere. This is the third novel by Michael Genelin featuring Jana Matinova, and this review coincides with its release in paperback just as a fourth novel, “Requiem for a Gypsy” is release in hardcover.

The story begins with the shooting death of a student trying to cadge a free breakfast at a swank hotel, an event quickly followed by the murder of someone very close to Jana. The two crimes appear unrelated, but no sooner has she begun her investigation than she is pulled off the case and sent into exile, tasked with serving as the new Slovak representative on a multi-country team at Europol’s (The European Police Office) headquarters in The Netherlands. It seems someone with high political connections wants Jana out of the way and out of the investigation.

But what has happened to her predecessor on the Europol team? Martin Kroslak appears to have walked away from his job, his lover, and his apartment without a word of warning—and why is there so little official curiosity about it? But of more immediate concern to Jana is the problem of staying alive. It seems that no day is complete without someone trying to kill her. Fortunately, in addition to being a capable detective, Police Commander Jana Matinova has a talent for sensing danger—nor is she reluctant to use deadly force when it is needed.

In his previous novels Michael Genelin proved himself adept at making real modern life in countries once hidden behind the Iron Curtain, skillfully mixing mystery and intrigue with the routine of daily life. In “The Magician’s Accomplice” he continues his success as he tells a tale of double-cross, deception and death.

Reviewed by Andrew MacRae for Suspense Magazine

Diane says

I hope Genelin continues writing more novels in the Jana Matinova series. This is the second one I have read and there are only 2 more. His background in Anti-Corruption Investigation and Prosecution is reflected in these stories. Matinova is a police commander in Bratislava. This book takes her to The Hague where she is on temporary assignment to Europol. Later her investigation takes her to Vienna.

Genelin's writing is somewhat uneven. He could do more with character development nad sense of place. But it is a fascinating glimpse into parts of Europe that don't figure prominently in English language literature.

Matinova is a smart, capable, compassionate mature woman. There is a sadness in her character. She has suffered losses in her life. Her fiance is murdered in a bombing at the beginning of this book. Although she is taken off the case she continues to search for the powerful evil behind his killing. I enjoyed the relationship that she developed with the old magician in the course of their investigation together. And I found the bittersweet ending very touching.

Carey Combe says

This was a good enough read, with decent characters (although Jana, was just too perfect for words) and an interesting setting in Bratislava. The plot was interesting and ultimately very believable. However, in the

end, I found it ludicrous - she was the worst judge of character ever, not realising that all the people she decided to trust were in fact 'baddies'. I would try another one though.

Beth says

Denis Macek is a student, a student with very little money. With the help of a friend, Denis creates a plan which will allow him one excellent meal in the best hotel in Bratislava.

Friday morning, Denis, dressed in his best clothes, sits in the lobby of the Carleton Savoy hotel. Mr. Fico is a guest at the hotel and Denis knows his room number. Denis also knows that Mr. Fico never eats breakfast in the hotel dining room. On this day, Denis, dressed in his best but somewhat shabby suit, watches until Mr. Fico leaves the hotel at his usual time. Denis walks to the dining room, tells the maitre d' his name is Fico, gives the room number and is shown to a table by a window. The Royal Breakfast has anything and everything a person could want to eat at the start of the day. Denis fills his plate, returns to his table, and, before he can eat a mouthful of food, he is shot by a man standing outside the hotel, shooting through the window.

Commander Jana Matinova is notified that Colonel Trokan, chief of police and Jana's mentor, wants her to take charge of what should be a low level crime. But Trokan thinks the murder is an assassination and it took place at the city's premier hotel, the choice of the wealthy and powerful of Slovakia as well as the equally wealthy and powerful of other countries who come to do business in Bratislava.

When Jana is convinced that all that can be done at the hotel has been done, she decides to visit Peter Saris, her fiance, at his office. Peter is a prosecutor and he and Jana have been romantically involved for a year. They have kept it quiet so they couldn't be accused of collusion on a case but they recently decided to be open about the relationship everyone knows about anyway. Jana arrives at the Ministry of Justice building to find it surrounded by police and fire investigators. There has been a bombing. Peter Saris is dead, killed by a device planted into his office phone.

Jana is devastated; her future gone in a second. Trokan knows that Jana will insist on being involved in the investigation so he assigns her to Europol in The Hague. Martin Kroslak, a fellow officer, has been assigned as the representative from Slovakia but he has disappeared. Jana knows she must comply or lose her job and now, without Peter, all she has is her job. She will do the job required at Europol headquarters, she will try to discover what happened to Martin Kroslak, and she will, most definitely, be doing what she must to find out who killed Peter.

On the flight to the Netherlands, an elderly man sitting across the aisle begins a conversation with Jana. He is a magician, retired now, but still enjoying whatever chance he gets to ply his art. He tells Jana to call him "professor". When the plane lands in Amsterdam, Jana asks to see the passenger list; she is not surprised to see that the professor has the same name as the murdered student. The professor knows Jana is a commander in the police and he is determined to walk a step behind her, determined that he will play a part in discovering why his nephew was murdered.

From the moment Jana arrives at Europol, the body count increases. She is assigned to the same unit Martin

Kroslak was in and gradually Jana becomes convinced that he is alive and deliberately avoiding the international police unit at The Hague. Oddly, the only person Jana can trust is the professor.

Magicians depend on smoke and mirrors to accomplish their ends, to confuse, to make people believe something is what it is not. Most magicians have an apprentice to whom they teach their tricks. But in Slovakia, the magician needs an accomplice. Jana finds that the events that led to Peter's death began at some of the highest levels of government in more countries than Slovakia. Magic is the art of distraction, of presenting a small lie in such a way that no one notices the deception behind the big lie. "The accomplice aids and abets the lie". In this story, Jana needs to discover who is the magician and who is the accomplice.

This is the third book in the Commander Jana Matinova series. The stories are becoming tighter. Jana is always the commander in the Slovakia police. She has yet to be more than an outline; her personality has not been revealed. Her life has been marked by the deaths of all the people with whom she was close. She is a Slovak, learning along with her countrymen what that means in a nation that is no longer a police state.

The setting is unusual, the main character is unusual, and the stories are the similar to those in other police procedurals but with a different twist. Genelin is worth reading.

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Marva says

Petty good thriller/mystery set in Slovakia and The Hague. Nice to have a different setting to see the sights.

The MC is a good character and the plot reasonably well done. Just didn't blow me away.

Hari Tulsidas says

The story set against corruption in Slovakian administration and the Europol weaves through Bratislava, The Hague, Prague and Vienna. Oil field development dealings in Slovakia, dating back to World War II, forms basis of anti-corruption champaign, in which a student and the prosecutor are killed. The case is investigated by Jana Matinova, who is quickly taken off the case and is transferred to Europol in The Hague. She persists with the case to the annoyance of others and escapes elimination attempts several times. Assisted by an unlikely accomplice, a retired magician, she ultimately get to the roots of corruption.

The story is fast paced, with the exotic eastern European cities - and The Hague too - revealing their mysteries and narrow cobbled lanes. A thick shroud of mystery hangs down everywhere. The old magician amplifies the effect. Light humor and melancholy intermingles here and there.

The finale could be a let down, as the main plot is not strong enough to create a sense of 'wow'. More research into the murky dealings of oil politics and cartels could have strengthened it. The same goes to the Europol dealings, where some background could have helped. Editorial failings too, as described by most other reviews, has taken some sheen out of this otherwise excellent book.

Monica says

Jana Matinova is starting to investigate the shooting death of an impoverished university student when her prosecutor lover is assassinated by a bomb attack. Colonel Trokan, her crusty boss sends her off to Europol to divert her from a case with too many personal implications. The young student's uncle, a middling magician, is determined to help Matinova find out what happened to his nephew even though she has been taken off all cases in her home area.

I enjoyed the interactions between Jana and the uncle, and Jana and her boss, and the dynamics of the Europol relationship, but the plot got a bit too convoluted for my taste at the end.

Sara says

Jana Matinova is the top investigator in Slovakia. She is put on a case of an assassinated student and on the same day, loses her fiance in a horrific murder. She is transferred to The Hague to work in the recently opened Slovak position. The new job soon sends Matinova to several countries trying to find clues to her multiple cases. This is a quick read that is full of action on every page. Even skimming one paragraph will make you miss vital clues and actions.

Jim says

A terrific detective/mystery story! Well conceived and written. It was my first experience with this author and I look forward to reading more of his books.

His heroine is Slovakian police commander Jana Matinova. It starts with a mysterious killing: A professional hit man has gunned down a university student, who sneaked into the dining room of a swanky Bratislava hotel to get free food. Then later the same day, her friend and lover, a prosecutor investigating a corruption case, is killed in an explosion in his office.

To prevent her from interfering in the investigation, her supervisor transfers Matinova to Europol headquarters in The Hague, where her predecessor as her country's representative has vanished. Of course, it does not stop her from investigating all three mysteries. And of course, they are all related.

It is a roller coaster ride of intrigue and trying to figure out who is on her side and who is out to kill her. Highly recommended to lovers of detective fiction.

Larry says

The ever-reliant Commander Jana Matinova of the Slovakian police is challenged by two crimes: the murder of a student out to cadge a meal at an expensive hotel buffet and the assassination of a federal prosecutor, who happens to be her lover. It soon becomes clear that both crimes are somehow related, and that both

happened when the victims discovered (one while doing research for a dissertation and one as part of a prosecution) something alarming. Jana herself becomes a target even after she is taken off the case and transferred to a job as a liaison with a European-wide police agency in the Hague. Resentful of the transfer, seeking why her predecessor to the police agency disappeared, she too becomes the target of more than one attempt on her life. (she's pretty tough, as the attackers learn.)

Jana and the elderly uncle of the dead student, who forces his way into the case, soon are both on the run and determined to penetrate the shadowy organization behind the killings by finding the missing policeman. It's an exciting novel and tells us much about life in a former Soviet-dominated country. It is the third of five novels.

Susan says

Slovakian police commander Jana Matinova has close to superhero abilities. So in this story, the author gives her a plot that is close to a supercrime. Although she tries to get rid of him, she is accompanied in the investigation by the first victim's uncle, who happens to be a retired clown magician. Jana is a great heroine and the suspense is nonstop.
