

Best Alan Furst Books

The Best Alan Furst Books: A Spy Thriller Fan's Guide

Are you a fan of atmospheric espionage thrillers, steeped in the shadowy world of pre-World War II Europe? Do you crave meticulously researched narratives that transport you to smoky bars, clandestine meetings, and the perilous dance of double-crosses? If so, you've come to the right place. Alan Furst is a master of the genre, crafting stories that are both thrilling and intellectually engaging. This comprehensive guide dives deep into the world of Furst's novels, highlighting his best works and helping you discover your next literary obsession. We'll explore the key elements that make his books so compelling, offering a critical analysis and ranking to guide your reading journey. Get ready to delve into the thrilling world of Alan Furst.

Ranking the Best Alan Furst Books: A Critical Analysis

Choosing the "best" Alan Furst book is subjective; each offers a unique blend of intrigue and atmosphere. However, based on critical acclaim, reader response, and the author's own development as a writer, here's a suggested ranking and in-depth look at some of his finest works:

1. *Night Soldiers* (1991): Often considered Furst's breakthrough novel, *Night Soldiers* perfectly encapsulates his style. Set in 1940s France, it follows the perilous journey of a cynical journalist entangled in the Resistance. The novel masterfully blends political intrigue, personal risk, and the ever-present threat of betrayal.

Key Elements:

Atmospheric Setting: The grim reality of Nazi-occupied France is vividly portrayed, creating a sense of constant tension.

Compelling Protagonist: The cynical yet ultimately heroic journalist is relatable and compelling, even with his flaws.

Intricate Plot: The carefully woven plot keeps you guessing until the very end, with twists and turns that will leave you breathless.

2. *The Spy* (1993): This novel is frequently cited as a favorite among Furst's readers and critics alike. *The Spy* introduces the charismatic and resourceful Charlie Algren, a protagonist who embodies the cynicism and resilience of the era. Set against the backdrop of pre-war Paris, the story unfolds with a masterful blend of tension and unexpected turns.

Key Elements:

Character Development: Charlie Algren is one of Furst's most memorable and well-developed characters.

Historical Accuracy: The meticulously researched details immerse the reader in the era and enhance

the storytelling.

Moral Ambiguity: The characters operate in a grey area, forcing readers to question their own perceptions of right and wrong.

3. **Dark Star (1999):** This novel takes place in the tense atmosphere of pre-war Spain, showcasing the political unrest and the inevitable impending conflict. The central figure, a seasoned journalist, navigates a world of espionage and deceit. *Dark Star* offers a less cynical tone compared to some other books in his collection and explores themes of loyalty and resilience.

Key Elements:

Exploration of Spanish Politics: Furst provides an insightful portrayal of pre-war Spanish politics and the various factions at play.

Strong Female Character: Although not the central focus, the female character in this novel offers a different perspective and adds depth to the story.

Focus on Moral Choice: The protagonist faces significant moral dilemmas, creating opportunities for introspection and deeper engagement for the reader.

4. **Mission to Berlin (1997):** This novel showcases another aspect of Furst's mastery: the meticulous presentation of setting. Set in pre-war Berlin, it follows a journalist and his involvement in a complex web of spies and agents, highlighting the increasing tensions that would lead to war. The detail invested in the descriptions brings the time and place to life.

Key Elements:

Detailed Setting: Berlin's pre-war atmosphere is vividly recreated, emphasizing the impending doom.

Fast-Paced Plot: This book is one of his faster-paced novels, keeping the reader hooked.

Exploration of Ideologies: The clash of ideologies and the looming threat of war are central themes.

5. **Red Gold (2006):** *Red Gold* showcases Furst's skill in exploring the global impact of political turmoil. Set in various locales, including Romania and Austria, the book traces the paths of several individuals who are caught in the crossfire of international intrigue during the early stages of World War II.

Key Elements:

Global Scope: The story spans multiple countries, providing a broader perspective on the geopolitical landscape.

Multiple Perspectives: The novel explores events from several different characters' viewpoints.

Economic Intrigue: The story weaves the realities of economic exploitation into the larger political narrative.

A Deeper Dive: Analyzing Night Soldiers

Let's delve into a detailed outline of *Night Soldiers*, a prime example of Furst's skill:

I. Introduction: The novel opens in occupied France, introducing the cynical journalist protagonist and the dangerous world he inhabits.

II. Main Chapters:

Establishing the Setting: The early chapters meticulously establish the oppressive atmosphere of Nazi-occupied France and the daily struggles of its citizens.

Introducing the Protagonist: We are introduced to the protagonist and his morally ambiguous role within the resistance.

The Rising Stakes: The plot thickens as the protagonist becomes more deeply involved in increasingly dangerous missions.

Betrayal and Suspense: The novel explores themes of betrayal, trust, and the complexities of working within a resistance movement.

Climax and Resolution: The culminating events involve a high-stakes confrontation and a resolution that leaves the reader with a profound sense of unease and reflection.

III. Conclusion: The novel concludes with the protagonist's reflections on his experiences, leaving the reader pondering the lasting impact of war and political conflict.

Each of these sections would then be expanded upon in a full-length article, providing a more detailed breakdown of the plot, characters, and themes.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Is Alan Furst a historical novelist? While based on historical events, Furst focuses on crafting gripping narratives, not strict historical accuracy.

2. What makes Alan Furst's books unique? His blend of atmospheric settings, morally gray characters, and intricate plots sets him apart.

3. Are Alan Furst's books suitable for all readers? Due to mature themes and violence, they are best suited for adult readers.

4. What is the reading order of Alan Furst's books? While not strictly sequential, reading them chronologically by publication date is a good approach.

5. Are there any recurring characters in Alan Furst's novels? While not explicitly recurring, certain thematic elements and character archetypes appear across his works.

6. How long does it typically take to read an Alan Furst novel? The length varies, but most can be read within a week at a moderate pace.

7. Where can I find more information about Alan Furst? His official website and various literary review sites offer detailed information.
8. Are Alan Furst's books adapted into movies or television shows? Some of his books have been optioned, but full adaptations remain relatively rare.
9. What other authors are similar to Alan Furst? Consider authors like Ken Follett, John le Carré, and Eric Ambler for similar styles.

Related Articles:

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4. The Historical Accuracy of Alan Furst's Novels: An exploration of the factual basis of his stories.
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8. How Alan Furst's Novels Capture the Essence of Place: An analysis of his vivid settings.
9. Alan Furst's Influence on Modern Espionage Fiction: An exploration of his impact on the genre.

best alan furst books: *Spies of the Balkans* Alan Furst, 2011-06-14 Greece, 1940. In the port city of Salonika, with its wharves and brothels, dark alleys and Turkish mansions, a tense political drama is being played out. As Adolf Hitler plans to invade the Balkans, spies begin to circle—and Costa Zannis, a senior police official, must deal with them all. He is soon in the game, working to secure an escape route for fugitives from Nazi Berlin that is protected by German lawyers, Balkan detectives, and Hungarian gangsters—and hunted by the Gestapo. Meanwhile, as war threatens, the erotic life of the city grows passionate. For Zannis, that means a British expatriate who owns the local ballet academy, a woman from the dark side of Salonika society, and the wife of a shipping magnate. With extraordinary historical detail and a superb cast of characters, *Spies of the Balkans* is a stunning novel about a man who risks everything to fight back against the world's evil.

best alan furst books: *Midnight in Europe* Alan Furst, 2015-03-17 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER Paris, 1938. As the shadow of war darkens Europe, democratic forces on the Continent struggle against fascism and communism, while in Spain the war has already begun. Alan Furst, whom Vince Flynn has called “the most talented espionage novelist of our generation,” now gives us a taut, suspenseful, romantic, and richly rendered novel of spies and secret operatives in Paris and New York, in Warsaw and Odessa, on the eve of World War II. Cristián Ferrar, a brilliant and handsome Spanish émigré, is a lawyer in the Paris office of a prestigious international law firm. Ferrar is approached by the embassy of the Spanish Republic and asked to help a clandestine agency trying desperately to supply weapons to the Republic's beleaguered army—an effort that puts his life at risk in the battle against fascism. Joining Ferrar in this mission is a group of unlikely men and women: idealists and gangsters, arms traders and aristocrats and spies. From shady Paris nightclubs to white-shoe New York law firms, from brothels in Istanbul to the dockyards of Poland,

Ferrar and his allies battle the secret agents of Hitler and Franco. And what allies they are: there's Max de Lyon, a former arms merchant now hunted by the Gestapo; the Marquesa Maria Cristina, a beautiful aristocrat with a taste for danger; and the Macedonian Stavros, who grew up "fighting Bulgarian bandits. After that, being a gangster was easy." Then there is Eileen Moore, the American woman Ferrar could never forget. In *Midnight in Europe*, Alan Furst paints a spellbinding portrait of a continent marching into a nightmare—and the heroes and heroines who fought back against the darkness. Praise for Alan Furst and *Midnight in Europe* "Furst never stops astounding me."—Tom Hanks "Furst is the best in the business."—Vince Flynn "Elegant, gripping . . . [Furst] remains at the top of his game."—The New York Times "Suspenseful and sophisticated . . . No espionage author, it seems, is better at summoning the shifting moods and emotional atmosphere of Europe before the start of World War II than Alan Furst."—The Wall Street Journal "Endlessly compelling . . . Furst delivers an observant, sexy, and thrilling tale set in the outskirts of World War II. In Furst's hands, Paris once again comes alive with intrigue."—Erik Larson "Too much fun to put down . . . [Furst is] a master of the atmospheric thriller."—The Boston Globe

best alan furst books: *Night Soldiers* Alan Furst, 2008-11-19 Bulgaria, 1934. A young man is murdered by the local fascists. His brother, Khristo Stoianev, is recruited into the NKVD, the Soviet secret intelligence service, and sent to Spain to serve in its civil war. Warned that he is about to become a victim of Stalin's purges, Khristo flees to Paris. *Night Soldiers* masterfully re-creates the European world of 1934-45: the struggle between Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia for Eastern Europe, the last desperate gaiety of the beau monde in 1937 Paris, and guerrilla operations with the French underground in 1944. *Night Soldiers* is a scrupulously researched panoramic novel, a work on a grand scale.

best alan furst books: *The Foreign Correspondent* Alan Furst, 2006-05-30 From Alan Furst, whom The New York Times calls "America's preeminent spy novelist," comes an epic story of romantic love, love of country, and love of freedom—the story of a secret war fought in elegant hotel bars and first-class railway cars, in the mountains of Spain and the backstreets of Berlin. It is an inspiring, thrilling saga of everyday people forced by their hearts' passion to fight in the war against tyranny. By 1938, hundreds of Italian intellectuals, lawyers and journalists, university professors and scientists had escaped Mussolini's fascist government and taken refuge in Paris. There, amid the struggles of émigré life, they founded an Italian resistance, with an underground press that smuggled news and encouragement back to Italy. Fighting fascism with typewriters, they produced 512 clandestine newspapers. *The Foreign Correspondent* is their story. Paris, a winter night in 1938: a murder/suicide at a discreet lovers' hotel. But this is no romantic tragedy—it is the work of the OVRA, Mussolini's fascist secret police, and is meant to eliminate the editor of *Liberazione*, a clandestine émigré newspaper. Carlo Weisz, who has fled from Trieste and secured a job as a foreign correspondent with the Reuters bureau, becomes the new editor. Weisz is, at that moment, in Spain, reporting on the last campaign of the Spanish civil war. But as soon as he returns to Paris, he is pursued by the French Sûreté, by agents of the OVRA, and by officers of the British Secret Intelligence Service. In the desperate politics of Europe on the edge of war, a foreign correspondent is a pawn, worth surveillance, or blackmail, or murder. *The Foreign Correspondent* is the story of Carlo Weisz and a handful of antifascists: the army officer known as "Colonel Ferrara," who fights for a lost cause in Spain; Arturo Salamone, the shrewd leader of a resistance group in Paris; and Christa von Schirren, the woman who becomes the love of Weisz's life, herself involved in a doomed resistance underground in Berlin. *The Foreign Correspondent* is Alan Furst at his absolute best—taut and powerful, enigmatic and romantic, with sharp, seductive writing that takes the reader through darkness and intrigue to a spectacular denouement.

best alan furst books: *Dark Voyage* Alan Furst, 2004-08-03 "In the first nineteen months of European war, from September 1939 to March of 1941, the island nation of Britain and her allies lost, to U-boat, air, and sea attack, to mines and maritime disaster, one thousand five hundred and ninety-six merchant vessels. It was the job of the Intelligence Division of the Royal Navy to stop it, and so, on the last day of April 1941 . . ." May 1941. At four in the morning, a rust-streaked tramp

freighter steams up the Tagus River to dock at the port of Lisbon. She is the Santa Rosa, she flies the flag of neutral Spain and is in Lisbon to load cork oak, tinned sardines, and drums of cooking oil bound for the Baltic port of Malmö. But she is not the Santa Rosa. She is the Noordendam, a Dutch freighter. Under the command of Captain Eric DeHaan, she sails for the Intelligence Division of the British Royal Navy, and she will load detection equipment for a clandestine operation on the Swedish coast—a secret mission, a dark voyage. A desperate voyage. One more battle in the spy wars that rage through the back alleys of the ports, from elegant hotels to abandoned piers, in lonely desert outposts, and in the souks and cafés of North Africa. A battle for survival, as the merchant ships die at sea and Britain—the last opposition to Nazi Germany—slowly begins to starve. A voyage of flight, a voyage of fugitives—for every soul aboard the Noordendam. The Polish engineer, the Greek stowaway, the Jewish medical officer, the British spy, the Spaniards who fought Franco, the Germans who fought Hitler, the Dutch crew itself. There is no place for them in occupied France; they cannot go home. From Alan Furst—whom The New York Times calls America's preeminent spy novelist—here is an epic tale of war and espionage, of spies and fugitives, of love in secret hotel rooms, of courage in the face of impossible odds. *Dark Voyage* is taut with suspense and pounding with battle scenes; it is authentic, powerful, and brilliant.

best alan furst books: *A Hero of France* Alan Furst, 2016-05-31 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • From the bestselling master espionage writer, hailed by Vince Flynn as “the best in the business,” comes a riveting novel about the French Resistance in Nazi-occupied Paris. NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY THE WASHINGTON POST 1941. The City of Light is dark and silent at night. But in Paris and in the farmhouses, barns, and churches of the French countryside, small groups of ordinary men and women are determined to take down the occupying forces of Adolf Hitler. Mathieu, a leader of the French Resistance, leads one such cell, helping downed British airmen escape back to England. Alan Furst's suspenseful, fast-paced thriller captures this dangerous time as no one ever has before. He brings Paris and occupied France to life, along with courageous citizens who outmaneuver collaborators, informers, blackmailers, and spies, risking everything to fulfill perilous clandestine missions. Aiding Mathieu as part of his covert network are Lisette, a seventeen-year-old student and courier; Max de Lyon, an arms dealer turned nightclub owner; Chantal, a woman of class and confidence; Daniel, a Jewish teacher fueled by revenge; Joëlle, who falls in love with Mathieu; and Annemarie, a willful aristocrat with deep roots in France, and a desire to act. As the German military police heighten surveillance, Mathieu and his team face a new threat, dispatched by the Reich to destroy them all. Shot through with the author's trademark fine writing, breathtaking suspense, and intense scenes of seduction and passion, Alan Furst's *A Hero of France* is at once one of the finest novels written about the French Resistance and the most gripping novel yet by the living master of the spy thriller.

best alan furst books: *Kingdom of Shadows* Alan Furst, 2001-10-09 “Kingdom of Shadows must be called a spy novel, but it transcends genre, as did some Graham Greene and Eric Ambler classics.”—The Washington Post Paris, 1938. As Europe edges toward war, Nicholas Morath, an urbane former cavalry officer, spends his days working at the small advertising agency he owns and his nights in the bohemian circles of his Argentine mistress. But Morath has been recruited by his uncle, Count Janos Polanyi, a diplomat in the Hungarian legation, for operations against Hitler's Germany. It is Morath who does Polanyi's clandestine work, moving between the beach cafés of Juan-les-Pins and the forests of Ruthenia, from Czech fortresses in the Sudetenland to the private gardens of the déclassé royalty in Budapest. The web Polanyi spins for Morath is deep and complex and pits him against German intelligence officers, NKVD renegades, and Croat assassins in a shadow war of treachery and uncertain loyalties, a war that Hungary cannot afford to lose. Alan Furst is frequently compared with Eric Ambler, Graham Greene, and John le Carré, but *Kingdom of Shadows* is distinctive and entirely original. It is Furst at his very best. Praise for *Kingdom of Shadows* “Kingdom of Shadows offers a realm of glamour and peril that are seamlessly intertwined and seem to arise effortlessly from the author's consciousness.”—Janet Maslin, The New York Times “Subtly spun, sensitive to nuances, generous with contemporary detail and information discreetly conveyed.

. . . It's hard to overestimate *Kingdom of Shadows*.”—Eugen Weber, *Los Angeles Times* “A triumph: evocative, heartfelt, knowing and witty.”—Robert J. Hughes, *The Wall Street Journal* “Imagine discovering an unscreened espionage thriller from the late 1930s, a classic black- and- white movie that captures the murky allegiances and moral ambiguity of Europe on the brink of war. . . . Nothing can be like watching *Casablanca* for the first time, but Furst comes closer than anyone has in years.”—Walter Shapiro, *Time*

best alan furst books: *Dark Star* Alan Furst, 2008-12-10 Paris, Moscow, Berlin, and Prague, 1937. In the back alleys of nighttime Europe, war is already under way. André Szara, survivor of the Polish pogroms and the Russian civil wars and a foreign correspondent for *Pravda*, is co-opted by the NKVD, the Soviet secret intelligence service, and becomes a full-time spymaster in Paris. As deputy director of a Paris network, Szara finds his own star rising when he recruits an agent in Berlin who can supply crucial information. *Dark Star* captures not only the intrigue and danger of clandestine life but the day-to-day reality of what Soviet operatives call special work.

best alan furst books: *The World at Night* Alan Furst, 2007-12-18 “First-rate research collaborates with first-rate imagination. . . . Superb.”—*The Boston Globe* Paris, 1940. The civilized, upper-class life of film producer Jean Casson is derailed by the German occupation of Paris, but Casson learns that with enough money, compromise, and connections, one need not deny oneself the pleasures of Parisian life. Somewhere inside Casson, though, is a stubborn romantic streak. When he's offered the chance to take part in an operation of the British secret service, this idealism gives him the courage to say yes. A simple mission, but it goes wrong, and Casson realizes he must gamble everything—his career, the woman he loves, life itself. Here is a brilliant re-creation of France—its spirit in the moment of defeat, its valor in the moment of rebirth. Praise for *The World at Night* “[*The World at Night*] earns a comparison with the serious entertainments of Graham Greene and John le Carré. . . . Gripping, beautifully detailed . . . an absorbing glimpse into the moral maze of espionage.”—Richard Eder, *Los Angeles Times* “[*The World at Night*] is the world of Eric Ambler, the pioneering British author of classic World War II espionage fiction. . . . The novel is full of keen dialogue and witty commentary Thrilling.”—Herbert Mitgang, *Chicago Tribune* “With the authority of solid research and a true fascination for his material, Mr. Furst makes idealism, heroism, and sacrifice believable and real.”—David Walton, *The Dallas Morning News*

best alan furst books: *Under Occupation* Alan Furst, 2020-06-02 From “America's preeminent spy novelist” (*The New York Times*) comes a fast-paced, mesmerizing thriller of the French resistance fighters working secretly and bravely to defeat Hitler. Occupied Paris, 1942. Just before he dies, a man being chased by the Gestapo hands off a strange-looking document to the unsuspecting novelist Paul Ricard. It looks like a blueprint of a part for a military weapon, one that might have important information for the Allied forces. Ricard realizes he must try to get the diagram into the hands of members of the resistance network. As Ricard finds himself drawn deeper and deeper into anti-Nazi efforts and increasingly dangerous espionage assignments, he travels to Germany and along the escape routes of underground resistance safe houses to spy on Nazi maneuvers. When he meets the mysterious and beautiful Leila, a professional spy, they begin to work together to get crucial information out of France and into the hands of the Allied forces in London.

best alan furst books: *Red Gold* Alan Furst, 2007-12-18 “Nothing can be like watching *Casablanca* for the first time, but Furst comes closer than anyone has in years.”—*Time* Autumn 1941: In a shabby hotel off the place Clichy, the course of the war is about to change. German tanks are rolling toward Moscow. Stalin has issued a decree: All partisan operatives are to strike behind enemy lines—from Kiev to Brittany. Set in the back streets of Paris and deep in occupied France, *Red Gold* moves with quiet menace as predators from the dark edge of war—arms dealers, lawyers, spies, and assassins—emerge from the shadows of the Parisian underworld. In their midst is Jean Casson, once a well-to-do film producer, now a target of the Gestapo living on a few francs a day. As the occupation tightens, Casson is drawn into an ill-fated mission: running guns to combat units of the French Communist Party. Reprisals are brutal. At last the real resistance has begun. *Red Gold*

masterfully re-creates the shadow world of French resistance in the darkest days of World War II.

best alan furst books: *Blood of Victory* Alan Furst, 2002-08-27 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • “[Furst] glides gracefully into an urbane pre-World War II Europe and describes that milieu with superb precision.” —Janet Maslin, *The New York Times* In the autumn of 1940, Russian émigré journalist I. A. Serebin is recruited in Istanbul by an agent of the British secret services for a clandestine operation to stop German importation of Romanian oil—a last desperate attempt to block Hitler’s conquest of Europe. Serebin’s race against time begins in Bucharest and leads him to Paris, the Black Sea, Beirut, and, finally, Belgrade; his task is to attack the oil barges that fuel German tanks and airplanes. *Blood of Victory* is a novel with the heart-pounding suspense, extraordinary historical accuracy, and narrative immediacy we have come to expect from Alan Furst. Praise for *Blood of Victory* “Densely atmospheric and genuinely romantic, the novel is most reminiscent of the Hollywood films of the forties, when moral choices were rendered not in black-and-white but in smoky shades of gray.” —*The New Yorker* “Furst’s achievement is a moral one, producing a powerful testament to fiction’s ability to re-create the experience of others, and why it is so deeply important to do so.” —Neil Gordon, *The New York Times Book Review* “Richly atmospheric and satisfying.” —Deirdre Donahue, *USA Today*

best alan furst books: *Mission to Paris* Alan Furst, 2012-06-12 “A master spy novelist.” —*The Wall Street Journal* “Page after page is dazzling.” —James Patterson NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER Late summer, 1938. Hollywood film star Fredric Stahl is on his way to Paris to make a movie. The Nazis know he’s coming—a secret bureau within the Reich has been waging political warfare against France, and for their purposes, Fredric Stahl is a perfect agent of influence. What they don’t know is that Stahl, horrified by the Nazi war on Jews and intellectuals, has become part of an informal spy service run out of the American embassy. *Mission to Paris* is filled with heart-stopping tension, beautifully drawn scenes of romance, and extraordinarily alive characters: foreign assassins; a glamorous Russian actress-turned-spy; and the women in Stahl’s life. At the center of the novel is the city of Paris—its bistros, hotels grand and anonymous, and the Parisians, living every night as though it were their last. Alan Furst brings to life both a dark time in history and the passion of the human hearts that fought to survive it. BONUS: This edition includes an excerpt from Alan Furst’s *Midnight in Europe*. Praise for *Mission to Paris* “The most talented espionage novelist of our generation.” —Vince Flynn “Vividly re-creates the excitement and growing gloom of the City of Light in 1938-39 . . . It doesn’t get more action-packed and grippingly atmospheric than this.” —*The Boston Globe* “One of [Furst’s] best . . . This is the romantic Paris to make a tourist weep. . . . In Furst’s densely populated books, hundreds of minor characters—clerks, chauffeurs, soldiers, whores—all whirl around his heroes in perfect focus for a page or two, then dot by dot, face by face, they vanish, leaving a heartbreaking sense of the vast Homeric epic that was World War II and the smallness of almost every life that was caught up in it.” —*The New York Times Book Review* “A book no reader will put down until the final page . . . Critics compare [Alan] Furst to Graham Greene and John le Carré [as] a master of historical espionage.” —*Library Journal* (starred review) “Alan Furst’s writing reminds me of a swim in perfect water on a perfect day, fluid and exquisite. One wants the feeling to go on forever, the book to never end. . . . Furst is one of the finest spy novelists working today.” —*Publishers Weekly*

best alan furst books: *Miernik Dossier* Charles McCarry, 2007-10-30 A circle of spies travels by Cadillac from Switzerland to the Sudan in this critically acclaimed novel: “arguably the finest modern American spy story” (*The New York Times*). Paul Christopher is cool, urbane, clear-sighted—a perfect American agent in deep cover in the twilight world of international intrigue. But now even he does not know which side is good or bad in a maze of double- and triplecross. When a small group of international agents embarks on a road trip from Switzerland to the Sudan, Christopher is among them. Along for the ride are a comical Polish exile, a beautiful Hungarian seductress, and a North African prince with an appetite for women and a lust for power. Christopher only knows that he has to find whose finger is on the trigger of a terrorist threat that could turn the Cold War uncomfortably hot—and God help everyone if he makes a mistake. Related as a collection

of dossier notes on the mission, *The Miernik Dossier* reveals a complicated web in which each character spins his or her own deception.

best alan furst books: *The Polish Officer* Alan Furst, 2001-11-06 September 1939. As Warsaw falls to Hitler's Wehrmacht, Captain Alexander de Milja is recruited by the intelligence service of the Polish underground. His mission: to transport the national gold reserve to safety, hidden on a refugee train to Bucharest. Then, in the back alleys and black-market bistros of Paris, in the tenements of Warsaw, with partizan guerrillas in the frozen forests of the Ukraine, and at Calais Harbor during an attack by British bombers, de Milja fights in the war of the shadows in a world without rules, a world of danger, treachery, and betrayal.

best alan furst books: *A Corpse in the Koryo* James Church, 2006-10-17 Against the backdrop of a totalitarian North Korea, one man unwillingly uncovers the truth behind series of murders, and wagers his life in the process. Sit on a quiet hillside at dawn among the wildflowers; take a picture of a car coming up a deserted highway from the south. Simple orders for Inspector O, until he realizes they have led him far, far off his department's turf and into a maelstrom of betrayal and death. North Korea's leaders are desperate to hunt down and eliminate anyone who knows too much about a series of decades-old kidnappings and murders---and Inspector O discovers too late he has been sent into the chaos. This is a world where nothing works as it should, where the crimes of the past haunt the present, and where even the shadows are real. A corpse in Pyongyang's main hotel---the Koryo---pulls Inspector O into a confrontation of bad choices between the devils he knows and those he doesn't want to meet. A blue button on the floor of a hotel closet, an ice blue Finnish lake, and desperate efforts by the North Korean leadership set Inspector O on a journey to the edge of a reality he almost can't survive. Like Philip Kerr's Berlin Noir trilogy and the Inspector Arkady Renko novels, *A Corpse in the Koryo* introduces another unfamiliar world, a perplexing universe seemingly so alien that the rules are an enigma to the reader and even, sometimes, to Inspector O. Author James Church weaves a story with beautifully spare prose and layered descriptions of a country and a people he knows by heart after decades as an intelligence officer. This is a chilling portrayal that, in the end, leaves us wondering if what at first seemed unknowable may simply be too familiar for comfort.

best alan furst books: *The Spies Of Warsaw* Alan Furst, 2011-08-25 An Autumn evening in 1937. A German engineer arrives at the Warsaw railway station. Tonight, he will be with his Polish mistress; tomorrow, at a workers' bar in the city's factory district, he will meet with the military attaché from the French embassy. Information will be exchanged for money. So begins *THE SPIES OF WARSAW*, with war coming to Europe, and French and German operatives locked in a life-and-death struggle on the espionage battlefield. At the French embassy, the new military attaché, Colonel Jean-Francois Mercier, a decorated hero of the 1914 war, is drawn in to a world of abduction, betrayal and intrigue in the diplomatic salons and back alleys of Warsaw. At the same time, the handsome aristocrat finds himself in a passionate love affair with a Parisian woman of Polish heritage, a lawyer for the League of Nations. Colonel Mercier must work in the shadows, amidst an extraordinary cast of venal and dangerous characters - Colonel Anton Vyborg of Polish military intelligence, last seen in Furst's *THE POLISH OFFICER*; the mysterious and sophisticated Doctor Lapp, senior German Abwehr officer in Warsaw; Malka and Viktor Rozen, at work for the Russian secret service; and Mercier's brutal and vindictive opponent, Major August Voss of SS counterintelligence. And there are many more, some known to Mercier as spies, some never to be revealed.

best alan furst books: *Leaving Berlin* Joseph Kanon, 2015-03-03 New York Times Notable Book * Named one of NPR and Wall Street Journal's Best Books of the Year * The acclaimed author of *The Good German* "defly captures the ambience" (*The New York Times Book Review*) of postwar East Berlin in his "thought-provoking, pulse-pounding" (*Wall Street Journal*) New York Times bestseller—a sweeping spy thriller about a city caught between political idealism and the harsh realities of Soviet occupation. Berlin, 1948. Almost four years after the war's end, the city is still in ruins, a physical wasteland and a political symbol about to rupture. In the West, a defiant, blockaded

city is barely surviving on airlifted supplies; in the East, the heady early days of political reconstruction are being undermined by the murky compromises of the Cold War. Espionage, like the black market, is a fact of life. Even culture has become a battleground, with German intellectuals being lured back from exile to add credibility to the competing sectors. Alex Meier, a young Jewish writer, fled the Nazis for America before the war. But the politics of his youth have now put him in the crosshairs of the McCarthy witch-hunts. Faced with deportation and the loss of his family, he makes a desperate bargain with the fledgling CIA: he will earn his way back to America by acting as their agent in his native Berlin. But almost from the start things go fatally wrong. A kidnapping misfires, an East German agent is killed, and Alex finds himself a wanted man. Worse, he discovers his real assignment—to spy on the woman he left behind, the only woman he has ever loved. Changing sides in Berlin is as easy as crossing a sector border. But where do we draw the lines of our moral boundaries? At betrayal? Survival? Murder? Joseph Kanon's compelling thriller is a love story that brilliantly brings a shadowy period of history vividly to life.

best alan furst books: *They Don't Dance Much* James Ross, 1975 Called by Raymond Chandler "a sleazy, corrupt but completely believable story of a North Carolina town," this tough, realistic novel exemplifies Depression literature in the United States. Falling somewhere between the hard-as-nails writing of James M. Cain and the early stories of Ernest Hemingway, James Ross's novel was for sheer brutality and frankness of language considerably ahead of his reading public's taste for realism untinged with sentiment or profundity. In his brilliant Afterword to this new edition, George V. Higgins, author of the recent best-seller *Cogan's Trade*, pays tribute to Ross for his courage in telling his story truthfully, in all its ugliness. The setting of *They Don't Dance Much* is a roadhouse on the outskirts of a North Carolina town on the border with South Carolina, complete with dance floor, restaurant, gambling room, and cabins rented by the hour. In the events described, Smut Milligan, the proprietor, seeks money to keep operating and commits a brutal murder.

best alan furst books: *Lie in the Dark* Dan Fesperman, 2003-07-01 Vlado Petric is a homicide investigator in war-torn Sarajevo. When he encounters an unidentified body near "sniper alley," he realizes that it is the body of Esmir Vitas, chief of the Interior Ministry's special police, and that Vitas has been killed not by any sniper's aim but by a bullet fired at almost pointblank range. Searching for the killer in this "city of murderers," Petric finds himself drawn into a conspiracy, the scope of which goes beyond anything he could possibly have imagined. *Lie in the Dark* brilliantly renders the fragmented society and underworld of Sarajevo at war—the freelancing gangsters, guilty bystanders, the drop-in foreign correspondents, and the bureaucrats frightened for their jobs and very lives. It weaves through this torn cityscape the alienation and terror of one man's desperate and deadly pursuit of bad people in an even worse place.

best alan furst books: *A World Lost* Wendell Berry, 2010-08 Brilliantly detailed characters and subtle social observations distinguish Berry's unassuming but powerful fifth novel. The T.S. Eliot Award-winning poet, essayist and novelist writes with the authority of a man steeped in the culture of a time an...

best alan furst books: *The Bride of the Wilderness* Charles McCarry, 2011-11-22 Something completely different from the bestselling thriller writer: "a full-blooded, unashamed romance . . . Mr. McCarry sweeps you along" (The New York Times). Fanny's father, Henry Harding, has known Oliver Barebones since the two men were children. Together they survived the Great Plague and the Great Fire, and now they are rich, middle-aged, and unmarried. Everyone's shocked when Oliver, a lifelong bachelor, falls headfirst for a superstitious young girl named Rose. In two days he's decided to marry her. For the Hardings and the Barebones, it will be years before they find such happiness again. Ruin comes to them all in the shape of Alfred Montagu, a cold-hearted moneylender who ensnares them in crushing debt and schemes to marry Fanny. After her father dies, Fanny attempts to take refuge in France. It's not far enough to escape her troubles, so with Oliver and Rose, she departs for a far-off place called Connecticut, dodging Montagu by diving into the teeth of dangers no London girl could ever imagine.

best alan furst books: *The Sweet Forever* George Pelecanos, 2011-08-15 One of the 1990s'

rising stars of crime fiction delivers a bold, brilliant tale of mystery, revenge, and survival in the 1980s, when cocaine and money ruled the city streets and even the good guys wanted a piece of the action.

best alan furst books: *Your Day in the Barrel* Alan Furst, 1976 Roger Levy, the protagonist of Alan Furst's fast-moving and funny suspense novel, is an enterprising young man in business for himself. In fact, his is a kind of modern American success story, although it just happens that his business is dealing dope around the various colleges and universities in Pennsylvania. So when he is stopped, his van searched and his merchandise discovered by the Pennsylvania police, he has no choice but to appear to cooperate when offered his freedom in exchange for complicity in an apparent CIA murder scheme. Back home in New York the chase is on, and it is only with the help of his lawyer, his street sense and a lot of his own hard-earned cash that Levy is finally able to identify and evade the enemy, uncover the unlikely source of the plot and come away with enough capital to fulfill his own version of the American dream—to retire and live above his own Chinese restaurant, its kitchen available to him twenty-four hours a day. Set in the last days of the sixties, *Your Day in the Barrel* is at once a fond spoof of the suspense genre and a fiercely contemporary thriller told in the truly original voice of a young writer making his highly auspicious debut.--Book jacket flap.

best alan furst books: *Autumn Leaves, 1922* Tessa Lunney, 2021-08-03 After a year away from Paris, Kiki Button is delighted to be back in City of Lights. But danger threatens her return as she is pulled into another spy mission—one that brings her ever closer to the rising fascist threat in Europe. October 1922. Kiki Button has had a rough year at home in Australia after her mother's sudden death. As the leaves turn gold on the Parisian boulevards, Kiki returns to Europe, more desperately in need of Paris and all its liveliness than ever. As soon as she arrives back in Montparnasse, Kiki takes up her life again, drinking with artists at the Café Rotonde, gossiping with her friends, and finding lovers among the enormous expatriate community. Even her summertime lover from the year before, handsome Russian exile Prince Theo Romanov, is waiting for her. But it's not all champagne and moonlit trysts. Theo is worried that his brother-in-law is being led astray by political fanatics. Kiki's boy from home, Tom, is still hiding under a false name. Her friends are in trouble—Maisie has been blackmailed and looks for revenge, Bertie is still lovesick and lonely, and Harry has important information about her mother. And to top it off, she is found by Dr. Fox, her former spymaster, who insists that she work for him once more. Amidst the gaiety of 1920s Paris, Kiki stalks the haunted, the hunted, and people still heartsore from the war. She parties with princes and Communist comrades, she wears ballgowns with Chanel and the Marchesa Casati, she talks politics with Hemingway and poetry with Sylvia Beach, and sips tea with Gertrude Stein. She confronts the men who would bring Europe into another war. And as she uses her gossip columnist connections for her mission, she also meets people who knew her mother, and can help to answer her burning question: why did her mother leave England all those years ago?

best alan furst books: *Shame the Devil* George P. Pelecanos, 2001-03-06 The boys are back in town Frank Farrow is a natural-born killer. Roman Otis is a fine-looking crooner who does his killing on the side. On a hot D.C. afternoon Frank and Roman hit a pizza shop called May's. When the hit was over, four people were executed. A cop was shot. A boy was dead. And when the sirens stopped wailing and the killers vanished into the heat, dozens of lives were shattered forever. Now it's three years later, and Dimitri Karras, who lost a son, is starting to live again. But Dimitri's old acquaintance, a P.I. named Nick Stefanos, has just unburied the past--by discovering the killers' identity. Suddenly the second act of a crime story is about to be told. Because the May's pizza parlor killers are coming back into town: where they'll be greeted with open arms, broken hearts, and at least one loaded gun.

best alan furst books: *The Book of Spies* Anthony Burgess, John Steinbeck, John le Carré, Rebecca West, 2004-06-08 Here is an extraordinary collection of the world's best literary espionage, selected by Alan Furst, a contemporary master of the genre. *The Book of Spies* brings us the aristocratic intrigues of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, in which French émigrés duel with Robespierre's secret service; the savage political realities of the 1930s in Eric Ambler's classic *A Coffin for*

Dimitrios; the ordinary (well, almost) citizens of John le Carré's *The Russia House*, who are drawn into Cold War spy games; and the 1950s Vietnam of Graham Greene's *The Quiet American*, with its portrait of American idealism and duplicity. Drawing on acknowledged classics and rediscovered treasures, *A Book of Spies* delivers literate entertainment and excitement on every page.

best alan furst books: *Shadow Trade* Alan Furst, 1984

best alan furst books: *The Snows of Yesteryear* Gregor Von Rezzori, 2012-08-15 Gregor von Rezzori was born in Czernowitz, a onetime provincial capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire that was later to be absorbed successively into Romania, the USSR, and the Ukraine—a town that was everywhere and nowhere, with a population of astonishing diversity. Growing up after World War I and the collapse of the empire, Rezzori lived in a twilight world suspended between the formalities of the old nineteenth-century order which had shaped his aristocratic parents and the innovations, uncertainties, and raw terror of the new century. The haunted atmosphere of this dying world is beautifully rendered in the pages of *The Snows of Yesteryear*. The book is a series of portraits—amused, fond, sometimes appalling—of Rezzori's family: his hysterical and histrionic mother, disappointed by marriage, destructively obsessed with her children's health and breeding; his father, a flinty reactionary, whose only real love was hunting; his haughty older sister, fated to die before thirty; his earthy nursemaid, who introduced Rezzori to the power of storytelling and the inevitability of death; and a beloved governess, Bunchy. Telling their stories, Rezzori tells his own, holding his early life to the light like a crystal until it shines for us with a prismatic brilliance.

best alan furst books: *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* John le Carre, 2002 George Smiley is assigned to uncover the identity of the double agent operating in the highest levels of British Intelligence.

best alan furst books: *Hard Revolution* George Pelecanos, 2004-03-01 In this epic showdown from one of the best crime novelists alive (Dennis Lehane), police officer Derek Strange hunts his brother's killer through a city erupting with rage.

best alan furst books: *Night Soldiers* Alan Furst, 2011-08-25 'Complex, intelligent, hugely intriguing - Alan Furst is in a class of his own' William Boyd 'Furst's ability to recreate the terrors of espionage is matchless' Robert Harris 'Furst never stops astounding me' Tom Hanks Chosen as one of the 50 Best Modern Crime Novels by Marcel Berlins, crime reviewer, *The Times* Bulgaria, 1934. Khristo Stoiانev sees his brother kicked to death by a gang of fascist thugs. Taking a risk on the promise of Communism, he flees to Moscow and is trained as an agent of the NKVD, the Soviet secret intelligence service. His first mission is to go to Catalonia, where he is soon caught up in the bloody horrors of the Spanish Civil War. Warned that he is about to become a victim of Stalin's purges, Khristo must again take flight, this time to Paris, where he is a small player on the wrong end of a social scene that is simultaneously decadent and doomed. One of the twentieth century's greatest spy novels, *Night Soldiers* is a thrilling portrait of one man's extraordinary adventures and of Europe teetering on the brink of the Second World War. 'Alan Furst's mastery of the espionage novel puts him beyond any would-be rival' *Literary Review* 'A spy novel, a war story, an adventure, a survivor's tale - *Night Soldiers* is all this and more' *Seattle Times*

best alan furst books: *Drama City* George Pelecanos, 2005-03-01 Lorenzo Brown loves his work. In his job as an officer for the Humane Society, he cruises the city streets, looking for dogs that are being mistreated - underfed, unclean, trained to kill. He takes pride in making their lives better. And that pride helps Lorenzo resist the pull of easier money doing the kind of work that got him a recent prison bid. Rachel Lopez loves her work, too. By day she is a parole officer, helping people - Lorenzo Brown among them - along a path to responsibility and advancement. At night she heads for the city's hotel bars, where she can always find a man who will let her act out her damage. She loses herself in sex and drink and more. But Rachel's nights are taking a toll on her days. Lorenzo knows the signs. The trouble is, he truly needs her right now. There's an eruption coming in the streets he left behind, the kind of territorial war that takes down everyone even near it. Lorenzo needs every shred of support he can get to keep from being sucked back into that battleground. He reaches out to Rachel - but she may be too far gone to help either of them. Writing with the grace

and force that have earned him praise as the poet laureate of the crime world, George Pelecanos has created a novel about two scarred and fallible people who must navigate one of life's most brutal passages. It is an unforgettable, moving, even shocking story that will leave no reader unchanged.

best alan furst books: *Vienna Spies* Alex Gerlis, 2020-03-02 A new and terrifying enemy rears its head at last... With the end of the Second World War in sight, the Allies begin to divide up the spoils and it proves to be a dangerous game. The British have become aware that, contrary to prior agreements, the Soviet Union is intent on controlling Austria once the war ends. Major Edgar is tasked with the job of establishing an espionage unit in Vienna to monitor the situation. He sends in two agents – Rolf Eder and Katharina Hoch – to track down Austria's most respected politician and bring him over to the British cause. But the feared Soviet spy Viktor Krasotkin is already in the war-torn city, embarking on exactly the same mission. A taut, tense masterclass in espionage fiction, perfect for fans of John le Carré, Len Deighton and Jack Higgins.

best alan furst books: *The Berlin Spies* Alex Gerlis, 2020-03-02 The Second World War is coming to a close. But their fight is just beginning... Berlin, 1945: A group of Nazis frantically plot the next steps for their country. SS recruits gather east of the city for an audacious yet ill-fated mission to bring about a Fourth Reich. Three decades later, a young British diplomat in East Berlin is compromised after falling into a honey-trap. He contacts Major Edgar, a veteran British spymaster, who is drawn into an unlikely alliance with his old adversary, Viktor Krasotkin. Soon they are plunged into a world of Nazi war criminals and double agents. With nobody to trust, they must rely on each other. But as Cold War tensions rise, the cracks begin to show. The thrilling final novel in the Spies series, with an astonishing twist, perfect for fans of Jack Higgins, Frederick Forsyth and John le Carré.

best alan furst books: *The Lantern Bearers* Rosemary Sutcliff, 1994 Instead of leaving with the last of the Roman legions, Aquila, a young officer, decides that his loyalties lie with Britain, and he eventually joins the forces of the Roman-British leader Ambrosius to fight against the Saxon hordes.

best alan furst books: *The Increment: A Novel* David Ignatius, 2010-05-03 The New York Times bestseller: "A remarkably timely and pulse-quickening tale of deception, divided loyalty, and moral haziness."—Raleigh News & Observer Harry Pappas, chief of the CIA's Persia House, receives an encrypted message from a scientist in Tehran. But soon the source of secrets from the Iranian bomb program dries up: the scientist panics; he's being followed, but he doesn't know who's on to him, and neither does Harry. To get his agent out, Harry turns to a secret British spy team known as "The Increment," whose operatives carry the modern version of the double-O "license to kill." But the real story is infinitely more complicated than Harry understands, and to get to the bottom of it he must betray his own country.

best alan furst books: *An American Spy* Olen Steinhauer, 2012-03-13 In Olen Steinhauer's bestseller *The Tourist*, reluctant CIA agent Milo Weaver uncovered a conspiracy linking the Chinese government to the highest reaches of the American intelligence community, including his own Department of Tourism---the most clandestine department in the Company. The shocking blowback arrived in the Hammett Award-winning *The Nearest Exit* when the Department of Tourism was almost completely wiped out as the result of an even more insidious plot. Following on the heels of these two spectacular novels comes *An American Spy*, Olen Steinhauer's most stunning thriller yet. With only a handful of tourists—CIA-trained assassins—left, Weaver would like to move on and use this as an opportunity to regain a normal life, a life focused on his family. His former boss in the CIA, Alan Drummond, can't let it go. When Alan uses one of Milo's compromised aliases to travel to London and then disappears, calling all kinds of attention to his actions, Milo can't help but go in search of him. Worse still, it's beginning to look as if Tourism's enemies are gearing up for a final, fatal blow. With *An American Spy*, Olen Steinhauer, by far the best espionage writer in a generation, delivers a searing international thriller that will settle once and for all who is pulling the strings and who is being played. *An American Spy* is one of The New York Times Notable Books of 2012.

best alan furst books: *The Double Game* Dan Fesperman, 2012-10-15 A few years before the fall of the Berlin Wall, spook-turned-novelist Edwin Lemaster reveals to young journalist Bill Cage

that he'd once considered spying for the enemy. For Cage, a fan who grew up as a Foreign Service brat in the very cities where Lemaster set his plots, the story creates a brief but embarrassing sensation. More than two decades later, Cage, by then a lonely, disillusioned PR man, receives an anonymous note hinting that he should have dug deeper. Spiked with cryptic references to some of his and his father's favorite old spy novels, the note is the first of many literary bread crumbs that soon lead him back to Vienna, Prague, and Budapest in search of the truth, even as the events of Lemaster's past eerily--and dangerously--begin intersecting with those of his own. Why is beautiful Litzi Strauss back in his life after 30 years? How much of his father's job involved the CIA? Did Bill, as a child, become a pawn? As the suspense steadily increases, a long stalemate of secrecy may finally be broken.

best alan furst books: Defectors Joseph Kanon, 2017-06-06 The bestselling author of *Leaving Berlin* and *Istanbul Passage* "continues to demonstrate that he is up there with the very best...of spy thriller writers" (The Times, UK) with this "fascinating" (The Washington Post) novel about two brothers bound by blood but divided by loyalty. In 1949, Frank Weeks, agent of the newly formed CIA, was exposed as a Communist spy and fled the country to vanish behind the Iron Curtain. Now, twelve years later, he has written his memoirs, a KGB- approved project almost certain to be an international bestseller, and has asked his brother Simon, a publisher, to come to Moscow to edit the manuscript. It's a reunion Simon both dreads and longs for. The book is sure to be filled with mischief and misinformation; Frank's motives suspect, the CIA hostile. But the chance to see Frank, his adored older brother, proves irresistible. And at first Frank is still Frank—the same charm, the same jokes, the same bond of affection that transcends ideology. Then Simon begins to glimpse another Frank, capable of treachery and actively working for "the service." He finds himself dragged into the middle of Frank's new scheme, caught between the KGB and the CIA in a fatal cat and mouse game that only one of the brothers is likely to survive. "A finely paced Cold War thriller with [Kanon's] usual flair for atmospheric detail, intriguing characters, and suspenseful action" (Library Journal), *Defectors* takes us to the heart of a world of secrets, where even the people we know best can't be trusted and murder is just collateral damage.

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