

A Wolf on the Fold

Donal Greaves

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“Sentimentality is a sin in this business,” Israeli Mossad agent Aaron Plaistot tells himself as he worries over the possibility of a colleague’s death in Donal Greaves’s exciting thriller, *A Wolf on the Fold*. Plaistot has reason to worry. His colleague is trapped in an ancient DC-3 ferrying a psychotic killer on his way to assassinate the entire Israeli Knesset in Jerusalem.

How the young man escapes and lives to help Plaistot and others bring the deranged bomber to justice at times makes for a page-turning adventure involving British, French, and Israeli police and secret-service forces. Their unsentimental hunt for the elusive villain, “Candor,” a former captain in the Royal Marines Commando Force and now “a hard man and a fixer” bent on revenge for the accidental killing of his wife by Israeli forces, is a tour de force of spellbinding intrigue. The action includes several hand-to-hand combat killings, masterfully devious planning, and a chilling surprise ending involving a daughter and her estranged father.

There is much to recommend in this novel, one of the three that Greaves wrote after retiring at age seventy-three as a general mechanical engineer and draftsman. The characters are all well profiled, consistently credible, and easily remembered—whether villains, victims, or heroes. Even a nasty Pomeranian makes his mark alongside his whiskey-loving master, another chain-smoking “big man,” and the unscrupulous avenger. The plot is complex and clever with appropriately placed flashbacks that enhance the pace of the main story line.

The unique plan to bomb the Knesset is worthy of a James Bond novel, and Greaves is to be commended for his ingenuity and his ability to keep readers guessing right to the last moment about its potentially devastating success. As well, he seamlessly inserts brief references to past and present frictions between the Israelis and Palestinians. Some readers may find the British slang bothersome, but for the most part, the context carries the meaning. The cover art of a wolf—a wolf on the fold—awaiting an opportunity to attack a defenseless lamb is an apt introduction to the theme and content of the novel.

Where the book falters, however, is in its typos, errors in punctuation, and incomplete and run-on sentences. The first paragraph in the section entitled “Synopsis,” for example, ends with “The couple’s daughter Patricia being resident in a private boarding school.” A case could also be made to eliminate the synopsis entirely since it reveals too much of the plot in advance, especially for readers searching for a tale with some mystery to it. Even the back-cover blurb could be rewritten to be more of a tease to buy the book rather than a spoiler for the plot.

In addition, neither of Greaves’s other two books, *Goes Around Comes Around* and *Only the Guilty*, are identified anywhere in the front or end pages or on either cover, even though all three were released at approximately the same time. Readers who like *A Wolf on the Fold*—and there should be quite a few—would likely be interested in these other titles as well.

WAYNE CUNNINGHAM (March 29, 2013)

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