Clarion Review

Career

Cold Sunshine: The World Has a Flipside. Learn the Secrets from a Former Agent.
Dustin Style
CreateSpace
978-1-4776-9236-3
Four Stars (out of Five)

Espionage has been part of the human experience at least since the Trojan War. It wasn't until 1953, however, that the debut of Ian Fleming's iconic Secret Agent 007 suddenly turned many a young man's daydreams to the glitz, glamour, and gadgetry associated with being a world-class spy.

Cold Sunshine author, Dustin Style, came by his own such expertise in the undercover universe of disguises, daring pursuits, and beautiful women through a succession of risky jobs, including law enforcement, national security, and guarding high-profile clients. While adventure dominates the life of a spy, this book will appeal to both men and women interested in personal empowerment and redirecting their existing talents.

Unabashedly entertaining, Style's book is as dry as a James Bond martini, captivating the reader with a silhouette cover that cleverly conjures actor Daniel Craig. The well-structured chapters present a dispassionate look at the various skill sets one needs should he or she decide to embark on a career as an agent. A sense of humor is much in evidence as well. As the author wisely notes, after you have decided how to break a door in, you might "try the door handle first to see whether the door is actually locked."

The wealth of information presented here—some practical and much of dubious legality—holds appeal that any person wanting to live in the shadows will find useful even if not in the employ of a government. Were this a book of some other genre, one would call the writing style breezy, but such a label is more in line with a harmless summer romance. Style's book is neither harmless nor romantic.

Style's word usage belies his extensive experience and training. If he had had an emotional or visceral reaction to many of the dangerous scenarios he depicts, he'd likely not be alive to tell the tale. It is this aspect—the combination of mental discipline and physical

training—that is the most compelling aspect of the author's conversational narrative. The chapters do not contain idle speculation on his part. Indeed, this is not a work of fiction written by some literary voyeur who sows a tale of violence and death, of fine cars and clothes. Style does not save the world from catastrophe and top it all off with a vacation in St. Moritz with a supermodel. Readers are left at the last page with the understanding that Style has been there and done that, with all the moral equivocations such a lifestyle entails.

Some of Style's glib quips, especially about befriending women, expose a degree of chauvinism that his fictional counterparts would seemingly be more likely to display. The interpersonal discussions are actually the most awkward. In order to be someone with multiple identities, who is capable of acting to fit a specific role in a specific situation, a certain distance from reality is required. Conversely, Style's consistent theme of assessing risks, blending in, and exercising the utmost caution and discretion requires a deep level of self-awareness, making this book an instructional manual for only a very few. For purely entertainment value, however, it is an easy, if somewhat incredulous, read for both sexes.

Christina Hamlett