



The Spanish Sacrifice: Book 6 of the One Hundred Years of War series

Jay Perin

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The Spanish Sacrifice is a complicated political thriller that twists around flawed individuals; despite its mounting body count, it is punctuated by moments of endearing normalcy.

In Jay Perin's political thriller *The Spanish Sacrifice*, a power struggle between three wealthy families lasts several decades, leaving the fate of a massive oil empire at a tipping point.

Thirty years after initiating a series of political maneuvers, former president Temple struggles to correct the biggest mistake of his life. He lost control of a burgeoning oil company that would grow into a massive network. And after an assassination attempt left Temple near mute, his heir, Lilah, stepped into his place.

As three families—the Kingsleys, the Sheppards, and the Barrons—joined forces to corner the market and prevent a criminal from taking over, Lilah works to tear down the oil network and keep the uneasy political and legal alliances in balance. Her ex-lover, Harry, works behind the scenes to keep eclectic family members in check, but even he can see the cost of achieving Temple's goal: a sacrifice no one will be willing to make.

This penultimate entry in the Hundred Years of War saga spans the final two years of the twentieth century. Familiarity with the previous books is required due the sheer amount of time covered—over thirty years of political, legal, and criminal fighting. Subtle exposition through dialogue provides helpful context, while endearing callbacks to emotional moments reward returning readers (as with Harry's affectionate nickname for Lilah and the circumstances around its creation). An extensive family tree provides a way to track the important members of the families and the intricate relations between them.

Rich characterization remains a standout element. Temple wrestles with inner conflicts, pulled between his flawed morality and pride in his admirable achievements as a politician. Lilah provides the emotional core: she's endured horrific sexual assault, risen to a position of enviable power, and continues to balance loyalty with sacrifice to keep those around her safe through the globe-spanning conflict. Indeed, all who are involved in the geopolitical situation have discrete motivations, and their clashes with each other in pursuit of control of the oil network imbue the world with a sense of dynamism.

The focus is on the looming threat of a political upheaval, forcing all three families to bide their time. But that time is not wasted. Politics set aside, the Kingsleys, Sheppards, and Barrons wield the press and judicial feints in an attempt to knock each other off of their social perches. It is a complicated tale that twists around flawed individuals and a mounting body count and is punctuated by moments of endearing normalcy, as with a school dance for younger members of the families. References to popular music, new technology, and historical figures are used to anchor the events within their timeline.

By the book's end, the stage is set: the oil network must be destroyed, but the 2000 presidential election forces the three families to wait. The lead-up to this showdown is gripping, though there's little indication as to whether the

network will actually fall, despite headstrong Lilah's steadfast work.

The Spanish Sacrifice continues the decades-long political thriller saga in which flawed people strive for redemption—and the means to dismantle a too-powerful oil conglomerate.

JOHN M. MURRAY (April 5, 2024)

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