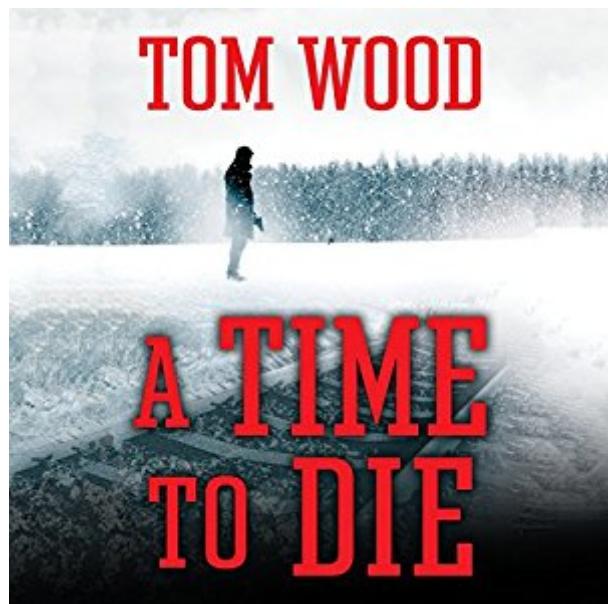


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A Time To Die: Victor The Assassin, Book 6



Synopsis

It's not how long you'll live.... Now that professional assassin Victor is indentured to British Intelligence, he is tasked with eliminating the worst of the worst. One such man is Milan Rados, a former Serbian paramilitary commander wanted for war crimes and now head of an organized criminal network in Belgrade. He has escaped justice once already, so it's Victor's job to take the justice to him. It's how soon they'll die. Victor might be the best in the business, but with powerful friends and an entire crew to protect him, Rados is a hard man to corner and even harder to kill. To get close to his target, Victor will need more than his deadly skills. An unlikely ally can provide him with the edge he seeks, but there's a price on Victor's head - and a killer who won't quit knows just how to find him....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I've been following the Victor the Assassin series from the first book and while I've enjoyed it immensely, I'm still at a bit of a loss as to explain its attraction. The stories themselves, while nothing original, are well-crafted and filled with suspense and action. I won't get into the specifics of this one since other reviews have already covered that ground, but it follows the formula of previous entries: Victor is hired to kill someone and must confront brainless thugs, charming psychopaths, shady government representatives, femme fatales, deadly rivals, and heavily armed former military operatives. He must plan for every contingency, prepare for all possible outcomes, and be able to improvise at a moment's notice. The plot moves along briskly, the dialogue sounds true-to-life, and

the bad guys are suitably reprehensible. You won't find fault in these areas. No, the difficulty lies in trying to clarify the strange allure of its protagonist. Victor is only ever depicted while on the job: spending hours doing surveillance, countersurveillance, studying his target, acquiring tools and weapons, plotting escape routes, sizing up opponents' strengths and weaknesses, ad infinitum. Unlike Lawrence Block's hitman Keller, who devotes his free time to collecting stamps, Victor is always in "assassin mode," so to speak. We don't know if he has any hobbies, if he enjoys fine art or classical music or nouveau cuisine, or pretty much anything of substance that would add more dimension to his character. He is analogous to the Terminator, a killing machine that is continuously scanning the world around him with ruthless efficiency. He talks in a flat, even tone most of the time and the only emotions he seems to express are minuscule degrees of surprise and irritation. If it weren't for his very human dislike of cursing and littering, he might as well be a robot. And yet Victor is a fascinating creation. We watch as he goes about his assignments and marvel over how thorough and professional he is. He manipulates everything he possibly can to his advantage and even on those rare occasions when circumstances go sideways, he is able to meet the challenge through an enviable mix of physical prowess and cognitive dexterity. Like the Hollywood version of Jason Bourne, Victor can assess a situation in the seeming blink of an eye and fashion an appropriate response. A lethal killer who never stops thinking - could there be a more potent combination? Despite my respect for his abilities, however, I cannot say that I've ever found Victor 'likable' in the traditional sense of the word. Make no mistake: he is a sociopath, with little to no empathy for anyone. Granted, the people in his world are typically scheming low-lifes but even innocents are often met with callous indifference. As he tells one young woman, a victim of human-trafficking with whom he has struck a deal and who is considering breaking their agreement by delivering him to the men who are keeping her captive, "It's really not smart to threaten me...do not make yourself the kind of problem I don't need. I'm the worst enemy you could have." Whereas Dexter Morgan could be affable and wry and even appealing in spite of the horrible things he does, Victor is largely taciturn and off-putting; any humor he indulges in is sarcastic and deadpan, more suited for the gallows. As a result, there is almost nothing about him that I can feel a kinship with. I'm as emotionally detached from Victor as he is from the people he meets, and the only other character with whom I've felt a similar disconnect is Hannibal Lecter. Victor is like a crocodile gliding below the water's surface, a cold-blooded reptile disguising himself as a harmless piece of driftwood until he gets close enough to strike. But he is mesmerizing every step of the way, which is why the stories work so well. This series is highly recommended for suspense/thriller fans but don't expect to get the warm and fuzzies while reading. More likely, it will feel like someone just walked across your

grave.

Another Victor assassin story, another tale of what can go right and what can go wrong when you do anything. What makes the book work is that there is no good guys but everyone is shades of grey even the victims. People die when they get in the way of Victor intentionally or not. Got to say well done and thoroughly enjoyed story and fact that Victor is a character that can adapt but still tries to be who he is good or bad. Most stories fall because the author tries go in directions that don't work or make sense. Really good book worth the money, will buy next one on this ones merit.

This, the 6th in the Victor the Assassin series, may have been the best. I will do a brief plot synopsis, not giving anything important away. Victor is hired by British Intelligence to kill an evil oligarch in Belgrade, Serbia, but first he has to find him, as he hasn't been seen in six years. Victor first has to track the man, Sandos, succeeding where intelligence agencies have failed. Then Victor has to get close enough to kill him without being killed himself. Tom Wood is simply one of the best. I put him in the same category as Lee Child, both in his ability to spin a tale, and also his ability to create a character we find fascinating. Another key to the success of this series is another talent Wood has in common with Lee Child, the extraordinary ability to allow us inside the moments of conflict. A great author can take you into a five minute period of conflict, and carefully construct a complete chapter around the interaction, as each impactful second unfolds. This occurred several times during the book, and the ability to be inside Victor's mind, understand his reactions, his reasoning, his assessments, his strategies, it makes the book a wonderful and memorable experience. I felt as if I had been in London, and in Belgrade, the scenes were described so fully. Add to that Wood's expert understanding of weapons and tactics, and you understand why this series is such a favorite of mine. If you enjoy thrillers that immerse you, that you will have difficulty putting down, and you enjoy suspense, intrigue, weapons, and tactics, you will love this series. I cannot recommend it enough.

For my money this is the Best 'Victor the Assassin' novel. We see more of Victor's character and there is more well-written detail about locations and action sequences. This outing has the greatest fleshing out of Victor's business and of how his competitors work as they try to collect a bounty one of his handlers has set on his head. Scenes and settings are endlessly inventive. People die just like always but very little seems repetitious. Tom Wood is doing his best writing to date here and his fans will only rejoice.

Victor is back and better than ever. Ruthless doesn't begin to describe him. He's tricky, always one step ahead of the enemies and always ready to engage in philosophical speculation with his equally amoral opponents. I continue to root for his survival. I hope the author doesn't run out of plots or try to kill him off out of boredom.

Tom Wood is, without a doubt, one of my favorite authors. I love books about assassins/bad asses that aren't based solely in or around the military (predictable and a bit boring). His writing is exquisite, descriptive, exciting and he knows what a thesaurus is (nothing more annoying than an author using the same words over and OVER again, ah!). What makes his books even better is listening to the audiobooks. The narrator Rob Shapiro is AMAZING! Love everything about this series and I hope it never ends.

I've read all of the Victor the Assassin books from Wood. You definitely get your fill of action and suspenseful flow. I especially like the intellectual and philosophical references. My advice, read all of the Victor books.

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