

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11)

By Philip Kerr

Download now

Read Online →

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr

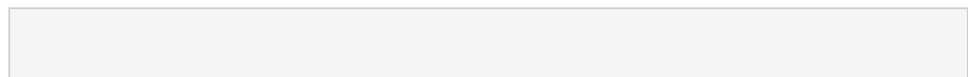
From *New York Times*–bestselling author Philip Kerr, the much anticipated return of Bernie Gunther in a series hailed by *The Daily Beast* as “the best crime novels around today.”

Once I'd been a good detective in Kripo, but that was a while ago, before the criminals wore smart gray uniforms and nearly everyone locked up was innocent.” Being a Berlin cop in 1942 was a little like putting down mousetraps in a cage full of tigers.

The war is over. Bernie Gunther, our sardonic former Berlin homicide detective and unwilling SS officer, is now living on the French Riviera. It is 1956 and Bernie is the go-to guy at the Grand-Hotel du Cap-Ferrat, the man you turn to for touring tips or if you need a fourth for bridge. As it happens, a local writer needs just that, someone to fill the fourth seat in a regular game that is the usual evening diversion at the Villa Mauresque. Not just any writer. Perhaps the richest and most famous living writer in the world: W. Somerset Maugham. And it turns out it is not just a bridge partner that he needs; it's some professional advice. Maugham is being blackmailed—perhaps because of his unorthodox lifestyle. Or perhaps because of something in his past, because once upon a time, Maugham worked for the British secret service, and the people now blackmailing him are spies.

As Gunther fans know, all roads lead back to the viper's nest that was Hitler's Third Reich and to the killing fields that spread like a disease across Europe. Even in 1956, peace has not come to the continent: now the Soviets have the H-bomb and spies from every major power feel free to make all of Europe their personal playground.

From the Hardcover edition.



 [Download The Other Side of Silence \(Bernie Gunther Book 11\) ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Other Side of Silence \(Bernie Gunther Book 1 ...pdf](#)

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11)

By Philip Kerr

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr

From *New York Times*—bestselling author Philip Kerr, the much anticipated return of Bernie Gunther in a series hailed by *The Daily Beast* as “the best crime novels around today.”

Once I'd been a good detective in Kripo, but that was a while ago, before the criminals wore smart gray uniforms and nearly everyone locked up was innocent.” Being a Berlin cop in 1942 was a little like putting down mousetraps in a cage full of tigers.

The war is over. Bernie Gunther, our sardonic former Berlin homicide detective and unwilling SS officer, is now living on the French Riviera. It is 1956 and Bernie is the go-to guy at the Grand-Hotel du Cap-Ferrat, the man you turn to for touring tips or if you need a fourth for bridge. As it happens, a local writer needs just that, someone to fill the fourth seat in a regular game that is the usual evening diversion at the Villa Mauresque. Not just any writer. Perhaps the richest and most famous living writer in the world: W. Somerset Maugham. And it turns out it is not just a bridge partner that he needs; it's some professional advice. Maugham is being blackmailed—perhaps because of his unorthodox lifestyle. Or perhaps because of something in his past, because once upon a time, Maugham worked for the British secret service, and the people now blackmailing him are spies.

As Gunther fans know, all roads lead back to the viper's nest that was Hitler's Third Reich and to the killing fields that spread like a disease across Europe. Even in 1956, peace has not come to the continent: now the Soviets have the H-bomb and spies from every major power feel free to make all of Europe their personal playground.

From the Hardcover edition.

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #31739 in eBooks
- Published on: 2016-03-29
- Released on: 2016-03-29
- Format: Kindle eBook

 [Download The Other Side of Silence \(Bernie Gunther Book 11\) ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Other Side of Silence \(Bernie Gunther Book 1 ...pdf](#)

Editorial Review

Review

Praise for *The Other Side of Silence*

“The intricacies of the plot, partly based on Maugham’s history as a British spy in charge of a team of secret agents, make this one of Kerr’s best technical efforts. But it’s the characterization of Maugham and the sound of his voice...that makes this novel memorable.” --*New York Times Book Review*

“Blackmail, murder, deception, sexual shenanigans of every sort, and an undercurrent of black humor pervade Philip Kerr’s 11th novel featuring the unsinkable German detective Bernie Gunther.” -- *Pittsburg Post Gazette*

“A marvelously intricate tale of betrayals and counterbetrayals—the scam involves Bernie’s past as much as it does Maugham’s—and in sorting it all out Bernie finds that he’s not quite as dried up as he thought he was. But as good as Bernie is, the real star here is Maugham, who emerges as a world-class cynic for all seasons and a great foil for Bernie. One of the best in a sterling series. —*Booklist* (starred review)

Kerr carefully develops his plot, sense of place, and characterization, enabling readers to imagine what it must have been like to have lived in a postwar morass of political and moral ambiguity. This is more than a crime or espionage novel; it’s a marvelous, hard-boiled political read. — *Library Journal* (starred review)

Praise for Philip Kerr and the Bernie Gunther novels:

“Philip Kerr is the only bona fide heir to Raymond Chandler.” —Jonathan Ames, *Salon.com*

“On any continent, in any decade, no one does melancholy better than Bernie Gunther, and melancholy, after all, is the hard-boiled mystery fans’ emotion of choice.” —Bill Ott, *Booklist*

“In terms of narrative, plot, pace and characterization, Kerr’s in a league with John le Carré.”
—Patrick Anderson, *The Washington Post*

“Bernie just tries to behave decently in a world where the serial killers run the governments and history itself may be the biggest crime of all. Bernie walks down streets so mean that nobody can stay alive and remain truly clean.” —John Powers, *Fresh Air* (NPR)

“Kerr quantum leaps the limitations of genre fiction. Most thriller writers insult your intelligence; his thrillers assault your ignorance.” —*Esquire*

“Bernie Gunther is the right kind of hero for his time—and ours.” —Marilyn Stasio, *The New York Times Book Review*

“The Bernie Gunther novels are first-class, as stylish as Chandler and as emotionally resonant as the best of Ross Macdonald.” —George Pelecanos

“A wily if unreliable narrator, Bernie may be forgiven for holding his cards so close to his chest as he tries to do the right thing in so many wrong places. Shades of the moral ambiguity of some of Graham Greene’s and

John le Carré's more memorable characters are here, as is the spirit of Raymond Chandler's knight-errant, Philip Marlowe." —Paula L. Woods, *Los Angeles Times*

About the Author

Philip Kerr is the author of ten previous Gunther novels. *Field Gray* and *Prague Fatale* made the *New York Times* extended list, while *A Man Without Breath* debuted at #13 last year. The Gunther books have garnered nominations for the Edgar and Shamus Awards, and Kerr has won the British Crime Writers' Association Ellis Peters Award for Historical Crime Fiction. As P. B. Kerr, he is the author of the much-loved young-adult fantasy series *Children of the Lamp*. He lives in London and tours annually in America.

From the Hardcover edition.

Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

Chapter 1: French Riviera 1956

Yesterday I tried to kill myself.

It wasn't that I wanted to die as much as the fact that I wanted the pain to stop. Elisabeth, my wife, left me a while ago and I'd been missing her a lot. That was one source of pain, and a pretty major one, I have to admit. Even after a war in which more than four million German soldiers died, German wives are hard to come by. But another serious pain in my life was the war itself of course, and what happened to me back then, and in the Soviet POW camps afterwards. Which perhaps made my decision to commit suicide odd considering how hard it was not to die in Russia; but staying alive was always more of a habit for me than an active choice. For years under the Nazis I stayed alive out of sheer bloody mindedness. So I asked myself, early one Spring morning, why not kill yourself? To a Goethe-loving Prussian like me the pure reason of a question like that was almost unassailable. Besides, it wasn't as if life was so great anymore, although in truth I'm not sure it ever was. Tomorrow and the long, long empty year to come after that isn't something of much interest to me, especially down here on the French Riviera. I was on my own, pushing sixty and working in a hotel job that I could do in my sleep, not that I got much of that these days. Most of the time I was miserable. I was living somewhere I didn't belong and it felt like a cold corner in hell, so it wasn't as if I believed anyone who enjoys a sunny day would miss the dark cloud that was my face.

There was all that for choosing to die, plus the arrival of a guest at the hotel. A guest I recognized and wished I hadn't. But I'll come to him in a moment. Before that I have to explain why I'm still here.

I went into the garage underneath my small apartment in Villefranche, closed the door, and waited in the car with the engine turning over. Carbon monoxide poisoning isn't so bad. You just close your eyes and go to sleep. If the car hadn't stalled or perhaps just run out of gas I wouldn't be here now. I thought I might try it again another time, if things didn't improve and if I bought a more reliable motor car. On the other hand, I could have returned to Berlin, like my poor wife, which might have achieved the same result. Even today it's just as easy to get yourself killed there as it ever was and if I were to go back to the former German capital, I don't think it would be very long before someone was kind enough to organize my sudden death. One side or the other has got it in for me, and with good reason. When I was living in Berlin and being a cop or an ex-cop, I managed to offend almost everyone, with the possible exception of the British. Even so, I miss the city a lot. I miss the beer, of course, and the sausage. I miss being a cop when being Berlin police still meant something good. But mostly I miss the people who were as sour as I am. Even Germans don't like Berliners and it's a feeling that's usually reciprocated. Berliners don't like anyone very much - especially the women, which, somehow, only makes them more attractive to a dumb head like me. There's nothing more attractive

to a man than a beautiful woman who really doesn't care if he lives or dies. I miss the women most of all. There were so many women. I think about the good women I've known - quite a few of the bad ones, too - who I'll never see again and sometimes I start crying and from there it's only a short trip to the garage and asphyxiation, especially if I've been drinking. Which, at home, is most of the time.

When I'm not feeling sorry for myself I play bridge, or read books about playing bridge, which might strike a lot of people as a pretty good reason on its own to kill yourself. But it's a game I find stimulating. Bridge helps to keep my mind sharp and occupied with something other than thoughts of home - and all those women, of course. In retrospect it seems that a great many of them must have been blondes and not just because they were German, or close to being German. Rather too late in life I've learned that there's a type of woman I'm attracted to, which is the wrong type, and it often happens that this includes a certain shade of hair color that just spells trouble for a man like me. Risky mate search and sexual cannibalism are a lot more common than you might think, although more usual among spiders. Apparently the females assess the nutritional value of a male rather than a male's value as a mate. Which more or less sums up the history of my entire personal life. I've been eaten alive so many times I feel like I've got eight legs, although by now it's probably just three or four. It's not much of an insight, I know, and like I say, it hardly matters now, but even if it happens late in life a degree of self-awareness has to be better than none at all. That's what my wife used to tell me, anyway.

Self-awareness certainly worked for her: she woke up one morning and realized just how bored and disappointed she was with me and our new life in France and went back home the very next day. I can't say that I blame her. She never managed to learn French, appreciate the food, or even enjoy the sun very much and that's the only thing down here of which there's a free and plentiful supply. At least in Berlin you always know why you're miserable. That's what Berlin *luft* is all about; an attempt to try to whistle your way out of the gloom. Here, on the Riviera, you would think there's everything to whistle about and no reason at all to be down in the mouth, but somehow I managed it and she couldn't take that anymore.

I suppose I was miserable largely because I'm bored as hell. I miss my old detective's life. I'd give anything to walk through the doors of the police praesidium on Alexanderplatz - by all accounts it's been demolished by the so-called East Germans, which is to say the communists - and to go upstairs to my desk in the Murder Commission. These days I'm a concierge at the Grand Hotel in St. Jean Cap Ferrat. That's a little bit like being a policeman if your idea of being a policeman is directing traffic and I should know. It's exactly thirty-five years since I was first in uniform, on traffic duty at Potsdamer Platz. But I know the hotel business of old; for a while after the Nazis got into power I was the house detective at Berlin's famous Adlon Hotel. Being a concierge is very different to that. Mostly it's about making restaurant reservations, booking taxis and boats, coordinating porter service, shooing away prostitutes - which isn't as easy as it sounds; these days only American women can afford to look like prostitutes - and giving directions to witless tourists who can't read a map and don't speak French. Only very occasionally is there an unruly guest or a theft and I dream of having to assist the local *Suréte* to solve a series of daring jewel robberies of the kind I saw in Alfred Hitchcock's *To Catch a Thief*. Of course, that's all it is; a dream. I wouldn't ever volunteer to help the local police, not because they're French - although that would be a good reason not to help them - but because I'm living under a false passport, and not just any false passport, but one that was given to me by none other than Erich Mielke, who is currently the deputy head of the Stasi, the East German Security Police. That's the kind of favor that sometimes comes with a high price tag and, one day, I expect him to come calling to get me to pay it. Which will probably be the day when I have to go on my travels again. Compared to me, the Flying Dutchman was the Rock of Gibraltar. I suspect my wife knew this, since she also knew Mielke and better than me.

Quite where I'd go I have no idea although I hear North Africa is accommodating where Germans on a wanted list are concerned. There's a Fabre line boat that sails from Marseilles to Morocco every other day.

That's just the sort of thing that a concierge is supposed to know although it's much more likely that there are rather more of the hotel's well-heeled guests who've fled from Algeria than there are those who want to go there. Since the massacre of Pieds-Noirs civilians at Philippeville last year, the war against the FLN in Algiers isn't going so well for the French and by all accounts the colony is ruled even more harshly than it ever was when the Nazis left it to the tender mercies of the Vichy government.

I'm not sure if the effortlessly handsome, dark-haired man I saw checking into one of the hotel's best suites the day before I tried to asphyxiate myself was on any kind of wanted list but he was certainly German and a criminal. Not that he looked like anything less affluent than a banker or a Hollywood film producer and he spoke such excellent French that it was probably only me who would have known he was German. He was using the name Harold Heinz Hebel and gave an address in Bonn, but his real name was Hennig, Harold Hennig and during the last few months of the war he'd been a captain in the SD. Now in his early forties he wore a fine, gray lightweight suit that had been tailored for him and black, handmade shoes that were as shiny as a new centime. You tend to notice things like that when you're working at a place like the Grand Hotel. These days I can spot a Savile Row suit from the other side of the lobby. His manners were as smooth as the silk Hermés tie around his neck, which suited him better than the noose it richly deserved. He tipped all of the porters handsomely from a wad of new notes that was as thick as a slice of bread, and after that the boys treated him and his Louis Vuitton luggage with more care than a case of Meissen porcelain. Coincidentally, the last time I'd seen him he'd also had some expensive luggage with him, filled with valuables he and his boss, the East Prussian *Gauleiter* Erich Koch, had probably looted from the city. That had been in January 1945, sometime during the terrible Battle of Königsberg. He'd been boarding the German passenger ship, *Wilhelm Gustloff* which was subsequently torpedoed by a Russian submarine with the loss of more than nine thousand civilian lives. He was one of the few rats that managed to escape from that particular sinking ship, which was a great pity since he'd helped to bring about its destruction.

If Harold Hennig recognized me he didn't show it. In our black morning coats, the hotel's desk staff all tend to look the same, of course. There's that and the fact that I'm a little heavier now than I was back then, with less hair probably, not to mention a light tan that my wife used to say suited me. For a man who just tried to kill himself I'm in remarkably good shape, even though I say so myself. Alice, one of the maids I've taken a shine to since Elisabeth left, says I could easily pass for a man ten years younger. Which is just as well as I have a soul that feels like it's at least five hundred years old. It's looked into the abyss so many times it feels like Dante's walking stick.

Harold Hennig looked straight at me, and although I didn't hold his gaze for more than a second or two, there was no need - being an ex-cop, I never forget a face, especially when it belongs to a mass-murderer. Nine thousand people - men and women and a great many children is a lot of reasons to remember a face like Harold Heinz Hennig's.

But I have to admit that seeing him again looking so prosperous and in such rude health left me feeling very depressed. It's one thing to know that there are people like Eichmann and Mengele who got away with the most appalling crimes. It's another thing when several of the victims of a crime were your friends. There was a time when I might have tried to exact some kind of rough justice, but those days are long gone. These days, revenge is something of which my partner and I talk lightly at the end or perhaps the beginning of a game of bridge at La Voile d'Or, which is the only other good hotel in Cap Ferrat. I don't even own a gun. If I did I certainly wouldn't be here now. I'm a much better shot than I am a driver.

Chapter 2

Between Nice and Monaco, Cap Ferrat is a pine-planted spur that projects into the sea like the dried-up and near useless sexual organs of some old French *roué*- an entirely appropriate comparison given the

Riviera's reputation as a place where great age and precocious beauty go hand in wrinkly hand, usually to the beach, to the shops, to the bank, and then to bed although not always in such decorous order. The Riviera often reminds me of how Berlin was immediately after the war except that female companionship will cost you a lot more than a bar of chocolate or a few cigarettes. Down here it's money that talks even when it has nothing much to say except *voulez vous* or *s'il vous plait*. Most women would prefer to spend time with Monsieur Gateau to Mister Right, although unsurprisingly these often turn out to be one and the same. Certainly, if I had a bit more cash I, too, might find myself a pretty little companion with whom to make a fool of myself and generally spoil. I'm enough of a feeble minded idiot now to be quite sure that I don't have what nearly all women on the Cote d'Azur are looking for, unless it's directions to Beaulieu sur Mer, or the name of the best restaurant in Cannes (it's Da Bouttau), or perhaps a couple of spare tickets to the Municipal Opera House in Nice. We see a lot of Monsieur Gateau and the firm, greenish apple of his rheumy eye at the Grand Hotel, but he has his *confrères* at the nearby La Voile d'Or, a smaller, elegant hotel situated on a high peninsula overlooking the blue lagoon that is the picturesque fishing port of Saint Jean Cap Ferrat. This three storey French villa - formerly the Park Hotel - was established in 1925 by an English golf champion named Captain Powell, which probably explains the old wooden putters on the walls; either that or they have a very challenging hole in the hotel's very elegant drawing room. That's usually where I sit down and drink gimlets and play bridge with my only three friends, twice a week, without fail.

To be perfectly honest they're not what most people would call friends. This is France after all and real friends are thin on the ground especially when you're German. Besides, you don't play bridge to make friends or to keep them either and sometimes it helps if you actively dislike your opponents. My bridge partner, Antimo Spinola, an Italian, is the manager at the municipal casino in Nice. Fortunately he's a much better player than me, which is unfortunate for him. Our usual opponents are an English married couple, Mr and Mrs Rose, who have a small villa in the hills above Eze. I wouldn't say I dislike either of them but they're a typically English husband and wife, I think, in that they never seem to demonstrate much emotion, least of all for each other. I've seen Siamese fighting fish that were more affectionate. Mr Rose was a top heart specialist in London's Harley Street and made a small fortune treating some Greek millionaire before he retired to the south of France. Spinola says he likes playing with Rose because if he had a heart attack then Jack would know what to do, but I'm not so sure about that. Rose drinks more than I do and I'm not sure he even has a heart, which would seem to be a pre-requisite for the job. His wife, Julia, was his nurse-receptionist and is by far the better player, with a real feel for the table and a memory like an elephant, which is the animal she most closely resembles although not because of her size. She'd be a very good-looking woman if her oversized ears were not stuck on at right angles to her head. Crucially, she never discusses the hands she's just played as if she's reluctant to give Spinola and me any clues as to how to play against them.

It's a good example to take when it comes to discussing the war, as well. As far as anyone knows, Walter Wolf - that's the name I'm living under in France - was a Captain with the Intendant-General's office, in Berlin, with responsibility for army catering. It's what you might expect of someone who's worked in good hotels for much of his life. Jack Rose is quite convinced he remembers me from a stay at the Adlon Hotel. I sometimes wonder what they might think if they knew their opponent had once worn an SS uniform and been the near confidant of men like Heydrich and Goebbels.

I don't think Spinola would be very surprised to discover I had a secret past. He speaks Ivan almost as well as me, and I'm more or less certain he was an officer with the Italian 8th Army in Russia and must have been one of the lucky ones who got out in 1943 following the rout at the Battle of Nikolajewka. He doesn't talk about the war, of course. That's the great thing about bridge. Nobody talks about anything very much. It's the perfect game for people who have something to hide. I tried to teach it to Elisabeth but she didn't have the patience for the drills I wanted to show her that would have made her a better player. Another reason she didn't take to the game was that she doesn't speak English - which is the language we play bridge in because that's the only language the Roses can speak.

A day or two after the arrival of Hennig at the Grand Hotel I went down to La Voile d'Or to play bridge with Spinola and the Roses. As usual they were late and I found Spinola sitting at the bar, staring blankly at the wallpaper. He was in a sombre mood, chain-smoking Gauloises in his short, ebony holder, and drinking Americanos. With his dark curly hair, easy smile, and muscular good looks he always reminded me a little of the film actor, Cornel Wilde.

"What are you doing?" I asked, speaking Russian to him. Speaking Russian to each other was how we kept in practice as there were few Russians who ever came to the hotel or to the Casino.

"Enjoying the view."

I turned and pointed at the terrace and beyond it, the view of the port.

"The view's that way."

"I've seen it before. Besides, I prefer this one. It doesn't remind me of anything I'd rather not remember."

"That kind of day, huh?"

"They're all that kind of day down here. Don't you find?"

"Sure. Life's shit. But don't tell anyone here in Cap Ferrat. The disappointment would kill them."

He shook his head. "I know all about disappointment, believe me. I've been seeing this woman. And now I'm not. Which is a pity. But I had to end it. She was married and it was getting difficult. Anyway, she took it quite badly. Threatened to shoot herself."

"That's a very French thing to do. Shoot yourself. It's the only kind of French marksmanship you can rely on in a fix."

"You're so very German, Walter."

He bought me a drink and then looked at me squarely.

"Sometimes, I look in your eyes across the bridge table sometimes and I see a lot more than a hand of cards."

"You're telling me I'm a bad player."

"I'm telling you that I see a man who was never in army catering."

"I can see you've never tasted my cooking, Antimo."

"Walter, how long have we known each other?"

"I don't know. A couple of years."

"But we're friends, right?"

"I hope so."

"So then. Spinola is not my real name. I had a different name during the war. Frankly I wouldn't have stayed alive for very long with a name like Spinola. I was never that kind of Italian. It's a Jewish-Italian

name.”

“It doesn’t matter to me what you are, Antimo. I was never that kind of German.”

“I like you, Walter. You don’t say more than you have to. And I sense that you can keep a confidence.”

“Don’t tell me anything you don’t have to,” I said. “At my time of life I can ill afford to lose a friend.”

“Understood.”

“If it comes to that I can ill afford to lose people who don’t like me either. Then I really would feel alone.”

On the bar top next to my gimlet was a Partagas cigar box which Spinola now laid his hand on.

“I need a favor,” he said.

“Name it.”

“There’s something in there I’d like you to look after for me. Just for a while.”

“All right.”

I glanced around for the barman and seeing that he was safely outside on the terrace I lifted the box and peeked inside. But even before I’d flipped the lid open, I knew what was in there. It wasn’t cigars. There’s something about the twenty-three ounce weight of a Walther Police Pistol that I would recognize in my sleep. I picked it up. This one was fully loaded and, to my nose at least, it had been recently fired.

“Not that it’s any of my business,” I said, closing the cigar box, “but this one smells like it’s been busy. I’ve shot people myself and that was nobody’s business either. It’s just something that happens sometimes when guns are involved.”

“It’s her gun,” he explained.

“She must be quite a girl.”

“She is. I took it off her. Just to make sure she didn’t do anything stupid. And I don’t want it around the house in case she comes back. At least until she returns my door key.”

“Sure, I’ll look after it. A good bridge partner is hard to come by. Besides, I’ve missed having a gun about the place. A house feels kind of empty without a firearm in it. I’ll put it in the car, okay?”

“Thanks, Walter.”

I stepped outside, locked the gun in my glove box and went back into the hotel just as the Roses drew up in their cream Bentley convertible. I waited a moment, and then instinctively opened the heavy car door for Mrs Rose to step out. He always drove them to the La Voile d’Or, but she always drove them back having allowed herself just the two gin and tonics next to his six or seven whiskies.

“Mrs Rose,” I said, pleasantly and gallantly picked up the green chiffon scarf she dropped on the ground as she got out of the car. It matched the green dress she was wearing. Green wasn’t her color but I wasn’t going to let that interfere with my game. “How nice to see you again.”

She answered, smiling, but I was hardly paying much attention to her; my mind was still on Spinola's girlfriend's gun while my eyes were now drawn to two men having an argument at the opposite end of the hotel terrace. One of them was a florid faced Englishman who was often hanging around La Voile d'Or. The other was Harold Hennig. Automatically I opened the front door for Mrs Rose before allowing myself a second look at Hennig and the Englishman, which revealed it was, perhaps, less of an argument and more a case of a smiling Hennig telling the Englishman what to do, and the Englishman not liking it very much. He had my sympathy. I never much liked taking orders from Harold Hennig myself. But I put it quickly out of my mind and followed Jack and Julia Rose inside and for the first time in a while Spinola and I beat them, which trumped everything until I went back to the Grand to cover for our night porter who'd phoned in sick with a summer cold, whatever that is. I had a winter cold in a Soviet POW camp for about two years and that was bad enough. A summer cold sounds just awful.

I don't mind the late shift. It's cool and the sound of cicadas is as soothing as the night honeysuckle that adorns the walls behind the emaciated statues near the front door. Also there are fewer guests in evidence with questions and problems to solve and I spent the first hour on duty reading *Nice Matin* to help improve my French. At about one o'clock I had to go and help a very rich American, Mister Biltmore, up to his fourth floor suite. He'd been drinking brandy all night and had managed to empty a bottle and the bar with his obnoxious remarks, which were mostly to do with the war and how the French hadn't quite pulled their weight, and that Vichy had been a Nazi government in all but name. I wouldn't have argued with any of that, unless I'd been a Frenchman. As Napoleon might have said, but didn't, 'French history is the version of past events that French people have decided to agree upon'. I found Biltmore slumped in a chair and barely conscious, which is the way I prefer hotel drunks, but he started to get a little loud and unruly as I went to rouse him politely. Then he took a swing at me, and then another, so that I was obliged to tap him on the chin with my fist, just enough to daze him and save us both from further injury. That left me with a different problem because he was as big as a sequoia and just as hard to fold across my shoulder and it took almost all of my strength to get him into the elevator, and then the rest of it to haul him out of the cage and onto his bed. I didn't undress him. As a concierge, the last thing you want is for a drunken American to regain consciousness when you've got his pants half way down his legs. Amis don't take kindly to being undressed, especially by another man. In a situation like that it's not just teeth that can be lost but a job as well. On the Riviera, a concierge - even a good one, with all his teeth - can be replaced in no time at all but no hotel wants to lose a guest like Mister Biltmore, especially when he's paying more than fifteen hundred francs a night, which is about four hundred dollars, to stay in a suite he's booked for three whole weeks. No one can afford to lose thirty thousand francs plus bar bills and tips.

By the time I went back downstairs I was as warm as a Chinaman's pressing cloth. So I went back into the bar and had the barman make me an ice cold gimlet with the good stuff - the 57% Plymouth Navy Strength gin they give the sailors in nuclear submarines - just to help the four weaker ones I'd already drunk at La Voile d'Or to take the strain. I hurried it down with my evening meal, which was a couple of olives and a handful of pretzels.

I'd just finished eating dinner when another guest presented herself at the front desk. And it was quite a present: lightly scented, sober, tightly wrapped in black which left you a pretty good idea of what was under the paper, and with a nice little diamond bow on the front. I don't know much about fashion but hers was a sort of ballerina bodice-shaped dress, with one shoulder uncovered and, now that I looked at it again, not a bow on the waist at all but a little diamond flower. In her matching black gloves and shoes, she looked every bit as fine as Christian Dior's bank balance. Mrs French was one of our local regulars, a rich and extremely attractive-looking English lady in her forties whose father was a famous artist who'd once lived and worked on the Riviera. She's a writer by all accounts and rents a local house in Villefranche, but she spends much of her free time at the Grand Hotel. She swims a lot in our pool, reads a book in the bar, uses the telephone a great deal, and then has a late dinner in the restaurant. Often she's alone, but sometimes she's with friends. A

few weeks ago, Mrs French seemed to be making a play for the French Minister of National Defense, Monsieur Bourgès-Manoury, who was staying here, but that came to nothing. It seemed that the minister had other things on his mind - like the Islamic threat posed by the Algerian FLN, not to mention Egypt's cut-price Hitler, Gamal Abdal Nasser, and perhaps the anonymous woman who was in the room next to his. He's not a bad-looking fellow, I suppose; dark haired, dark-eyed, perhaps a little oily, a bit small and frankly a couple of leagues below where Mrs French plays. I thought a nice brunette like her could do better. Then again, Maurice Bourgès-Manoury is tipped to be the next Prime Minister of France.

"Good evening, Mrs French," I said. "I hope you enjoyed your dinner."

"Yes, it wasn't bad."

"That doesn't sound nearly as good as it should be."

She sighed. "It could have been better."

"Was it the food? Or perhaps the service?"

"To be honest, neither one of them was at fault. And yet there was something lacking. With only my book for company, I fear it was nothing that can be easily remedied by anyone here in the Grand Hotel."

"Then might I ask what it is your reading, Mrs French?" My manners have improved a lot since I started working in hotels again. Sometimes I sound almost civil.

She opened her crocodile leather dispatch bag and showed me her book: *The Quiet American*, by Graham Greene. My cop's eyes took quick note of the bottle of *Mystikum*, a sheaf of French francs, a gold compact, and a little purple screw top tin that might have contained a powder puff but more probably contained her diaphragm.

"Not one I've read," I said.

"No. But I think you've probably forgotten more about how to render an American acceptably quiet than Graham Greene has ever learned." She smiled. "Poor Mr Biltmore. Let's hope he puts his sore head down to alcohol tomorrow and not your fist."

"Oh, you saw that. Pity. I had thought the bar was empty."

"I was seated behind a pillar. But you handled it very well. Like an expert. I'd say you've done that kind of thing before. Professionally."

I shrugged. "The hotel business always presents a number of interesting challenges."

"If you say so."

"Perhaps I can recommend something else for you to read," I offered, hurrying to change the subject.

"Why not? You are a concierge after all. Although in my own experience playing Robert Benchley is perhaps above and beyond the call of your normal duties."

I mentioned a book by Albert Camus that had impressed me.

"No, I don't like him," she said. "He's too French for my tastes. Too political, as well. But now that I

think about it, maybe you could recommend a book about bridge. I'd like to learn the game and I know you play it often, Mister Wolf."

"I'd be happy to lend you some of my own books, Mrs French. Anything by Terence Reese or S.J.Simon would do, I think."

"Better still, you could teach me the game yourself. I'd be happy to pay you for some private lessons."

"I'm afraid my duties here wouldn't really permit that, Mrs French. On second thoughts I think you're probably best to start with Iain Macleod's *Bridge is an Easy Game*."

If she was disappointed she didn't show it. "That sounds just right. Will you bring it tomorrow?"

"Of course. I regret I won't be here to give it you myself, Mrs French, but I'll certainly leave it with one of my colleagues."

"You're not working tomorrow? Pity. I enjoy our little chats."

I smiled diplomatically and bowed. "Always glad to be of service, Mrs French."

In bridge that's what we call No Bid.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ellen Wirth:

Book is definitely written, printed, or highlighted for everything. You can understand everything you want by a publication. Book has a different type. To be sure that book is important matter to bring us around the world. Next to that you can your reading expertise was fluently. A guide *The Other Side of Silence* (Bernie Gunther Book 11) will make you to possibly be smarter. You can feel considerably more confidence if you can know about everything. But some of you think which open or reading the book make you bored. It is not necessarily make you fun. Why they can be thought like that? Have you searching for best book or acceptable book with you?

Teresa Raap:

The ability that you get from *The Other Side of Silence* (Bernie Gunther Book 11) will be the more deep you excavating the information that hide into the words the more you get considering reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to understand but *The Other Side of Silence* (Bernie Gunther Book 11) giving you excitement feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in particular way that can be understood by anyone who read this because the author of this book is well-known enough. That book also makes your current vocabulary increase well. Therefore it is easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We propose you for having that *The Other Side of Silence* (Bernie Gunther Book 11) instantly.

Bruce Alexander:

Information is provisions for those to get better life, information currently can get by anyone with everywhere. The information can be a understanding or any news even an issue. What people must be consider if those information which is inside the former life are difficult to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is acceptable to believe or which one typically the resource are convinced. If you receive the unstable resource then you obtain it as your main information you will see huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen inside you if you take The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) as your daily resource information.

Lily Terry:

E-book is one of source of knowledge. We can add our information from it. Not only for students and also native or citizen have to have book to know the upgrade information of year to help year. As we know those publications have many advantages. Beside we add our knowledge, also can bring us to around the world. By the book The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) we can take more advantage. Don't you to definitely be creative people? To get creative person must love to read a book. Only choose the best book that appropriate with your aim. Don't become doubt to change your life at this book The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11). You can more appealing than now.

Download and Read Online The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr #LXACJBOF981

Read The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr for online ebook

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr books to read online.

Online The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr ebook PDF download

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr Doc

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr Mobipocket

The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr EPub

LXACJBOF981: The Other Side of Silence (Bernie Gunther Book 11) By Philip Kerr