



# The Story of My Assassins

*Tarun J. Tejpal*

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## **The Story of My Assassins** Tarun J. Tejpal

Based on actual events, *The Story of My Assassins* tells the story of a journalist who learns that the police have captured five hitmen on their way to kill him. Landing like a bombshell on his comfortable life, just as he's started a steamy affair with a brilliant woman, the news prompts him to launch an urgent investigation into the lives of his aspiring murderers - a ragtag group of street thugs and village waifs - and their mastermind. Who wanted him dead, and why?

But the investigation forces him to reexamine his own life, too - to confront his own notion of himself, his job, and his treatment of the women in his life, as well as his own complex feelings about the country that crafted his would-be killers.

Part thriller and part erotic romance, full of dark humor and knife-edged suspense, *The Story of My Assassins* is a piercing literary novel that takes us from the lavish, hedonistic palaces of India's elite to its seediest slums. It is a novel of corruption, passion, power, and ambition; of extreme poverty and obscene wealth.

It is an awesome adventure into the heart of today's India.

## **The Story of My Assassins Details**

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Author : Tarun J. Tejpal

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# From Reader Review The Story of My Assassins for online ebook

## Ana-Maria Negril? says

„Civiliza?ia este blana de miel cu care barbarismul se deghizeaz?.”

„Povestea asasinilor mei” prezint? via?a unui ziarist care tr?ie?te într-o lume plin? de violen??. dar care este protejat prin apartenen?a la o cast? superioar?. Prima sut? de pagini contureaz? portretul unui om care nu prea a cunoscut lipsurile, care are o so?ie frumoas? ?i o familie iubitoare, pe care nu o apreciaz?, petrecându-?i timpul departe, la redac?ia unui ziar obscur sau în bra?ele amantei, Sara, o feminist? militant?, de ale c?rei idei nu este interesat ?i cu care are o rela?ie bazat? numai pe atrac?ie. Este o via?? searb?d?, irosit?, personajul fiind mereu în c?utare de ceva pentru a-?i ocupa plictiseala zilelor, netulburat? nici m?car de tentativa de asasinat, adus? la cuno?tin?? de c?tre poli?ia local?. Este probabil partea cea mai pu?in interesant? a volumului, totu?i necesar? pentru a realiza contrastul cu vie?ile celor cinci presupu?i asasini ai s?i, în care se vede cu adev?rat for?a narativ? a autorului. Reu?it este ?i modul în care se face sim?it contrastul între civiliza?ia citadin?, a castelor superioare, ?i cea rural?, a s?racilor, pentru care nu exist? speran?? ?i nici dreptate într-o Indie, presupus modern?.

O carte recomandat?, f?r? doar ?i poate.

Mai mult pe blog

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## Moushine Zahr says

This is the second novel I've read from the Indian author Tarun J. Tejpal. The first title read was "the valley of masks" rated 3 stars. I like this novel much better the previous title. This is a very well written criminal thriller with multiple layers of suspense. The story evolves around a reporter who discovers live on television that the police foiled an attempted assassination against his person by arresting 5 assassins.

The author deliberately didn't develop the central character of the reporter because he's not the real target and to focus the attention of the real victims: the 5 arrested assassins. We learn nothing about the past of the reporter, but only about his current life after the foiled attempt assassination. We're served with an investigative reporter with one major success story with no powers, self-centered, and lost about what he really wants in his personal and professional lives.

The author did a great job in developping entirely all 5 characters of the assassins from almost their births to the time they were arrested by the police. The author dedicated a full chapter for each of the assassins, used creativity while staying realistic to described to us the entire life of these assassins. While they all came from different part of India, different religion, different background, and lived different lives, they shared many similitudes such as being born poor, having access to no education, suffering since birth from fear of, physical violence and verbal violence. They were all 5 criminals who had no choice in life because they were themselves born victims of the system leading them straight to a life of crime. The author used these characters, assassins and victims, to show the true lives of the poor, the real lives of the unseen in Bollywood movies, and the lives of the people who can't speak out for themselves on their own.

Furthermore, besides all the above and implicit denunciation of violence and corruption in the modern society, there is a great criminal suspense thriller for readers trying to discover who wanted to kill the

reporter, who was/were the real victims in the story, and who's behind it all and most importantly why.

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### **Tariq Mahmood says**

One of the best novels I have read. Tarun Tejpal has created a masterpiece. It starts off slowly, with a weakish plot but the strength of characters is so vivid that I almost thought everything was happening for real. I loved Sarah, the progenitor's mistress and their sexual encounters which were certainly kinky, arousing me every time. The individual stories of all the assassins were captivating and illuminating. The author has a great gift of celebrating the diversity of India in great detail.

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### **Kylie Sparks says**

This book was difficult for me to rate. It's well-written, but I did not like it. Like Dickens, Tejpal brings to life a wealth of interesting characters and exposes the dark side of Indian culture, politics, and institutions. But the contempt of the author for all of his characters, and his deep cynicism also come through. One reviewer calls his writing "humane." I don't see this at all. It is not just that the main character is really unlikeable--sexist, amoral, materialistic, uncaring. It is the dispassionate detached way in which the author describes all of the characters. You certainly do gain an understanding of why and how the assassins became who they are. But it is difficult to emotionally identify with any of the characters. There's a lot of sex and violence in the book, and he uses sexual language to describe violence. I found it fairly repulsive. Nonetheless, this author is calling attention to things that need to change. I'm rating this book fairly highly because I think this is a thought provoking book worth discussing and debating.

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### **Prashant Dwivedi says**

Possibly the best book that I've read from Tarun Tejpal. The authors observation and understanding of human nature is amazing. The way he builds each character is out of the world. Possibly my favourite Indian author!

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### **Saju Pillai says**

Powerful, unapologetic, grim making of 5 criminals (or victims depending on your point of view). Tejpal does a good job of bringing the harsh realities of rural north India to the reader.

The first person chapters concerning the protagonist suffer from the sad fate of most Indian authors - "trying too hard to express oneself". If you would just grunt through these insignificant, boring & sometimes positively painful pages, you will be rewarded with yet another shock & awe chapter about a boy becoming a criminal.

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## Ashwini Nocaste says

tarun j. tejpai might be placed in my list of authors to look forward to but this book from him has endangered his comfortable ensconcement and perhaps dangled his position in that list a bit but not quite sufficiently to perfectly displace his position. in the books that i have been picking off late i discover a definite stream of thought that easily accepts determinism as the primary driver of the world. but none are too openly admitting of it as it would then make them even indirectly seem as nazi apologetics. tarun's editor in the book was to be assassinated by five hard criminals. now a criminal justice system would hardly look at the make up of a criminals mind unless he is clinically proven insane before kick starting proceedings. however tarun veers towards providing for a background to the criminals lives with grim and harsh storylines, descriptive and brutal violence (where he does an extremely good job of picturing the same), abject cruelty, a sense of powerlessness (which hardens into brutal brandishability of power), and upper echelons of society that are as unforgiving as can possibly be. this concoction brewing in the cauldron of society is what prepares the criminals ultimately and through these brews, tarun sort of fluidly explains the formation of criminals. however once all that was said and done, tarun timidly discards the criminals one by one from the storyline in a convenient fashion which was kind of a literary cheating for me. tarun could have taken a bolder stance here and perhaps kicked off a renewed debate, but his story shied away from there. the guru of the editor also though all throughout being very stoic is astutely used by tarun to support the ultimate criminality of the criminals. even though all throughout there are faint voices that would have absolved the criminals of their supposed crimes perhaps in another value systems. an example being inspector huthyama, who states that even those who do wrong are eventually playing their role in the drama of the universe. but then the inspector is hardly shown off as a character of strength and own decisiveness and hence this strain of thought is comfortably benumbed.

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## Liviu Szoke says

Dacă n-ar fi existat tocmai personajul principal, jurnalistul de la a cărei tentativă de asasinat pleacă povestea, și povestea sa, i-a? fi dat cinci stele fără? stau prea mult pe gânduri. Pentru că Tarun J. Tejpai a?terne cale de aproape ?ase sute pagini cinci povești de via?? (ale potențialilor asasini) care pur și simplu î?i fac p?rul m?ciuc? în cap. Violență, omoruri, homosexualitate, s?r?cie crunt?, caste asuprite și asupritoare, câini ucigași, st?pâni ucigași, ucigași pl?tiți, foamete, gelozie, ură, prostie, incompeten?ă, tot tacâmul. Mai multe, pe FanSF: <http://wp.me/pz4D9-2wv>.

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## Aadya says

An interesting read. Strata of Indian Society ladden with sarcasm and somewhat the naked truth in the language of people written about.

The character that grips you The Most is the tantalizing Sara with her philosophies, and purpose and the zeal for changing this country and her dedication for the same. Unrelenting. Unmoved.

My favorite characters are definitely Kaaliya and Chini. And my heart goes out for the poor Kabir.

And because Tejpal cannot do without sex, there is definitely a lot of pinning the wall and rising passion kind of sex. The rapes could have been a little less though.

All in all, a very interesting read, if you know how to read through assholes giving descriptions in their entire ass-holic kind of way and laden with sarcasm.

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### **Shatheesh says**

In short - Useless book... if you have not yet started. But once you start, you gotta finish it.

In detail - The book is a useless one. Believe me, you'll say the same once you complete that. But you won't be able to keep it down till you finish it.

Each assassin is a gem. The path that led them to their current life would want you to save them and cry for them, literally. Raping of sisters, mothers, wives, etc., would become just words to you after some chapters.

Sara.. What a character! You need to read the book to understand the full power she harnesses. But I don't understand why that power is used only to turn her ON! Literally, she is useless in the book, except to inform the lead guy about the assassins' backdrop in single lines. But her characterization would want a Sara in your life.

So many cut-throat straight words including my favorites "Chuthiya Nandan Pandey's" and "Mr. Peashooter" goes all along the book, keeps us wondering about the reality. But it mingles well with the characters.

I was expecting the end to be much more of an answer to all assassin issues. But, I don't know why the end was such a blunt one. It made me brand the lead guy with both of my favorite words.

There is nothing that you can take from the book. Just that you'll wait for the end.. soon!

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### **Vaibhav Bahadur says**

Really great book. Situated highly in the Indian context, revealing it to the core (the divide in language, caste, class barriers) but widely understandable. Revolves around the concept of fear (either live in fear or rule with fear). The description is straightforward and needs very less self-interpretation.

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### **Prashant says**

Six months after completing this book the appreciation for this writer and the work he has done has brought me back to write this review. The reasons to write this may be many but the strongest one is the fact that this author is extremely under rated.

I mean, in the world where in the name of Indian writers, we admire [Author:Arvind Adiga] and [Author:Arundhati Roy] but still a guy like [Author: Tarun Tejpal] who took the whole country with storm after his revolutionary magazine Tehelka remains under rated. It's nothing less but a shame.

The first work that I read of him The Valley of Masks was by pure accident and I never expected much from him. But after reading that book whenever someone asks me to suggest an Indian author that they can read, i can't help myself but to say "read Tejpal".

This book is unlike Adiga's The White Tiger(which won him the Booker) and Danny Boyle's Slumdog Millionaire where the writer wants to exploit the desire of the non-Indians to see the misery and irony of a country.

Here, Tejpal gives a balance account of how the life of a poor and unfortunate Indian materializes when he lets fate take the handle of things.

The narrator in the book was planed to be attacked by 5 assassins who were handed the task to kill him. The actual attack never took place and all 5 were apprehended by the police.

Narrator is overwhelmed by the fact that he has been targeted to be assassinated with such grand a group of criminals. The hilarity and irony of the life of the narrator is captured well by the author.

The book gives us the story of all 5 culprits one by one and thus unfolds the plot of the great human tragedy. The author goes to great details to make us aware of the situation and psyche of all the 5 men.

Each story is tragic and refreshing at the same time.

After completing this one I was severely left wanting more of the author. I hope he comes out with another book soon.

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## Christian says

This is one of those books where I went into it expecting one thing, got something totally different, and was pleasantly surprised in that what I got was probably better than what I wanted anyhow.

From the title and a blurb, I knew that this was the story of a reporter for an Indian newspaper (which the author also is) who survives an assassination attempt and goes on to investigate those who tried to kill him. It was said to be based on a true story, and I went in expecting some kind of gritty, gripping high stakes political thriller, like a more literary and internationally aware version of a Tom Clancy novel or Lee Child novel or something.

Instead, this book is a sprawling, vulgar, delightfully horrific and sharply comedic stroll through every caste, institution, nook and cranny of modern Indian culture. One comparison that leaps to mind, for its portrayal of senseless, eternal bureaucracy for its own sake, is *Catch-22*. Another is Kafka at his most subtly, acidly

funny. I would also compare the book, in its renderings of recognizable but weird and outsized characters, to something like *A Confederacy of Dunces*, or maybe the movies of John Waters if he were Indian... what a thought.

I learned a whole bunch about India. I learned what paan is, and a charpoy, and a chutiya (uh never call anyone from India that by the way). I learned about growing up among impoverished tribal farms where disputes were settled by murder, rape and arson. I learned about Indian courtrooms, the dealings therein vividly depicted as a grotesque hand-me-down cargo cult of British colonial rituals.

This is dangerous, I know, learning Indian culture from a work that might be the Indian equivalent of something like *Trainspotting*. There is bias and fantasy, to be sure. There is also a lot of hard truth, and a compassionate reporter's eye cast over a lot of human suffering. The whole section focusing on the train stations, and the children who lived under them, may be the most haunting section of the book.

Each of the assassins has his vivid own story of injustice and abuse, and the reporter of the framing story turns out to be a complete cad, bigot and dimwit from nearly page one. The inevitable reading guide notes mention that the author deliberately chose an unlikeable narrator to open up the material he wanted to share about modern India. Well, it worked, I was along for the whole filthy, tragic, hilarious ride.

It's a big novel, hard to get into due to the many foreign words, but just packed with one fascinating scene and riotous setpiece after another, floating deftly between truly sad realism and truly funny observations. Worth the work.

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### **Juliebd says**

I could not get through this. I made it through part 1 and a bit into part 2, but this morning I pulled the plug. I just could not get the big picture and the details were grossing me out. Between the foul language and the graphic descriptions of beatings and torture I couldn't take it. I would listen to the details of some beating or carving but I had no idea who was speaking, how it fit into the story or why it was important. Maybe it was bad narrating, I don't know. I just couldn't take the torture descriptions anymore.

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### **Ridhima Suri says**

What struck me most about this book was the vivid and often gut wrenching portrayal of characters belonging to different strata of the Indian society. From gang members in UP to the outlaws in Bihar, the farmhouse owning foul mouthed elitists of Delhi to a caricaturized chai sipping woman activist, they all came alive inside my head. At the beginning of the book, the protagonist – a journalist in a loveless marriage, a downward spiral of a journalistic ambition with a single minded aspiration to satisfy his carnal desires seemed quite hollow and empty. Even after an assassination attempt on him, he walked through life with absolutely no passion. However; by the end of the book it was clear that the author does this intentionally. The reader takes a journey with the protagonist and by the end of this journey; the protagonist is weaned away from a state of listless uncaring attitude towards that of consciousness and maybe even a bit of compassion towards the people around him. And so is the reader. The story of the lives of the suspected assassins is gruesome and it would be fair to say that this isn't a read for the faint hearted. Having read quite a few books on India, I can say with confidence that this is one of the most realistic and original piece of



Indian literature with no pretensions both in terms of language and expression.

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