



Inside Out

Barry Eisler

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Marooned in a Manila jail after a bar fight fatality, black ops soldier Ben Treven gets a visit from his former commander, Colonel Scott Horton, who explains the price of Ben's release: Find and eliminate Daniel Larison, a rogue operator from Ben's unit who has stolen ninety-two torture tapes from the CIA and is using them to blackmail the U.S. government.

But other players are after the tapes, too, and to find Larison, Ben will have to survive CIA hit teams, Blackwater mercenaries, and the long reach of the White House. He'll also have to find a way to handle Paula Lanier, a smart, sexy FBI agent who has her own reasons for wanting the tapes and is determined to get them before Ben does. With the stakes this high, everyone has an angle—everyone but Ben, who will have to find the right alliance if he wants to stay alive.

Inside Out Details

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From Reader Review Inside Out for online ebook

Jocelyn No says

Loved the book, didn't think much of the protagonist, though. I enjoyed the read, but probably won't read it again.

Stuff I liked: the shadowy government manipulations were great - so accurate and so depressing. There was this picture of Obama when he walked out of the FBI building, after he was elected and before he became President, and in the caption it said that he'd been briefed on Presidential-legal confidential information. His facial expression in that photo was amazing - he looked like he'd aged 10 years in the one day he spent in that building. Just shell-shocked. My mind kept going back to that photograph as I read this book.

I loved the love interest. I loved that she was black, first of all (considering that 12% of the US population is black, it seems like black women are horribly under-represented as romantic interests in genre fiction), but mostly I loved that she managed to turn every misconception about her to her own advantage. I hope we see more of her as this series progresses.

Overall, I don't think these books are as good as the John Rain books, mostly because I don't think the main character is as thoughtful or relatable. But he seemed to evolve a lot over the course of this book, and I've got high hopes for future installments.

Jim says

An interesting premise & I really liked the end. Political, but not party politics. Ben is definitely in a quandary with a lot of action & no one is clean. This is taken straight from the headlines, too. There's enough truth there that it makes you wonder if it is fiction or not.

I like Ben as a hero better than Rain. He's more believable - easier to relate to, especially in this situation. Great motivations for all the players & excellent characterization. Even the bad guys have understandable & believable motives.

Jill Dunlop says

Inside Out is the second book in Barry Eisler's Ben Treven series. Ben Treven is a black ops soldier who recent had everything he believes in turned upside down in the previous novel Fault Line. This time Ben has been asked to track down a rogue operator who is threatening the US government with revealing tapes of American soldiers torturing prisoners all in the name of war. Ben, with the help of FBI agent Paula Lanier, must stop Larison before these tapes are revealed to the American people.

While Inside Out had many of the things I enjoyed about Fault Line, the first Ben Treven novel, it also didn't quite live up to my expectations. I think Inside Out was much more focused on the external conflict Ben was facing in hunting down Larison and was much less focused on Ben's relationships with those around him. Inside Out also seemed transitional in the fact that Ben is being groomed to take on more a leadership role

and active participant in his division than just being a mindless drone that just takes orders and executes them.

There is no doubt that Barry Eisler writes a compelling, well researched and believable story. He is extremely knowledgeable in the nuances of the United States government and how it would manage a crisis it didn't want the American public getting wind of. It actually makes a person wonder at just what kinds of things are being kept hidden from us. Barry also can write compelling characters and gives the reader insight into how a soldier, especially a fierce, loyal and aggressive soldier views the world. I found it very interesting how Paula would psychoanalyze Ben and hit the nail right on the head. I do wish that there would have been more romance between these two, although the one sex scene in the book was smoking hot! Also, I felt like certain issues were wrapped up rather quickly at the end. But, I am definitely going to be reading the next Ben Treven novel.

Gail Cooke says

He's never failed me yet - Barry Eisler's books have been consistently exciting, gripping, can't-put-down thrillers, especially the John Rain titles. However, with INSIDE OUT he exceeds his own high standards with a revealing look at the netherworld of official torture, killings, and ghosting of detainees. While it is a brilliant fictional account, don't think for a minute that it's fiction...simply think.

After a deadly barroom brawl black ops soldier Ben Treven (remembered from FAULT LINE) is tossed into a nightmarish Manilla prison where he fears he'll never be given a hearing but left to rot in the cell he shares with a dozen other prisoners. Enter Colonel Scott Horton (Hort), Ben's commander. Why is Hort there? In his words, "When I heard they had visiting hours in hell, I just couldn't stay away."

Hort offers him release....at a cost. Ninety-two torture tapes have been stolen from the CIA by a rogue member of Ben's unit, Daniel Larison, who is blackmailing the U.S. government for a million in uncut diamonds. These tapes are incendiary showing torture approved by the office of the U.S. Vice President. Ben is to find and get rid of Larison. At some level Ben seems to realize that he is being manipulated and threatened, but could not resist Hort's approval nor deny his desperate need to get out of prison. Little did he know or even dare imagine the twists and turns, machinations and betrayals that he would face.

Of course, Larison and the missing tapes are of great interest not only to the CIA, but also the FBI, and other political figures. The FBI is represented by Paula Lanier, a beauteous agent, which gives Eisler the opportunity to pen one hot sex scene. Nonetheless pleasure aside,, Ben finds himself unable to distinguish between friend and enemy, always guarding his back, and realizing that there is even more to the tapes than their explosive content.

At heart INSIDE OUT reveals the education of Ben in the ways of political conspiracies, and the lengths to which others will go to gain or retain power. After his three years in the CIA it is a story only Eisler could have and should have written. Forged with tension, terror, and truth it should be required reading. Exhaustively researched the book includes a Bibliography and an impressive list of Sources. INSIDE OUT is listed as fiction - read it and then ask why.

- Gail Cooke

Karen says

Inside Out Excerpt from Inside out by Barry Eisler. "This is the propulsive thriller that only former CIA operative turned bestselling novelist Barry Eisler could write. Marooned in a Manila jail after a bar fight fatality, black ops soldier Ben Treven gets a visit from his former commander, Colonel Scott Horton, who explains the price of Ben's release: Find and eliminate Daniel Larison, a rogue operator from Ben's unit who has stolen ninety-two torture tapes from the CIA and is using them to blackmail the U.S. government. But other players are after the tapes, too, and to find Larison, Ben will have to survive CIA hit teams, Blackwater mercenaries, and the long reach of the White House. He'll also have to find a way to handle Paula Lanier, a smart, sexy FBI agent who has her own reasons for wanting the tapes and is determined to get them before Ben does. With the stakes this high, everyone has an angle—everyone but Ben, who will have to find the right alliance if he wants to stay alive. From the Hardcover edition." My Take: First I'd like to thank Goodreads for winning this book in their First Read giveaway. When I started reading Inside Out by Barry Eisler I read it like any other fiction book, as fiction. This book is filled with many twists and turns of survival in the pursuit of finding CIA interrogation tapes of torture on the captured individuals allegedly responsible for the 9/11 hijacking and destruction of the twin towers in New York and the Pentagon building and the Pittsburgh hijacking and crash. As I came closer to the end of the book it became very clear to me that the events discussed in the book were actually true. The characters were very well articulated throughout the book and I felt as though I was right there in the midst of the action as I was reading. It really hit home when I read the author's notes regarding the tapes and how finding them may overtake his story and his explanation stressing the fact that the tapes would never be found. The author's source list of the events are overwhelming and gave me the feeling that things aren't always what they seem in our nation's government. I would like to read Barry Eisler's book "Fault Line" to have a better understanding of Ben's life before this book.

Dale says

Do you remember the 'missing' CIA torture tapes? No? Well, have a look at the appendix to 'Inside Out' and you will find a documentary chronology of the news reports about that incident. In this, the second in the new Ben Traven series of novels, Barry Eisler uses the missing torture tapes as a first step in an examination of media spin, the oligarchy, and torture.

By now, many of us have become skeptical about anything the US government has to say about its behavior, and with good reason. The 'smoking gun / mushroom cloud' that turned into a tragic farce - G. W. Bush looking here, looking there, looking everywhere while hundreds of thousands of Iraqis died. 'We must work in the dark' turning into 'we do not torture', turning into 'it is not torture if we do it', turning into 'we had to torture and we are proud of it'. The NSA surveillance of US citizens on US soil - the initial denials, the eventual partial admissions, and the use of 'state secrets' to prevent any redress. All these and more tell us, as if we didn't know before, that when the US government speaks to its people we can expect only lies and propaganda.

So one of the themes of 'Inside Out' is the masterful way in which the US government manages the media. Missing torture tapes? 92 of them? Tell the media on a Friday evening that the CIA has 'discovered' that there are 2 tapes missing from the archives. Say nothing more until the mild ensuing controversy has died

down and the media has managed to focus attention away from torture and onto the latest about Lindsey Lohan. Then announce that 'further investigation' has 'revealed' that it was actually 92 tapes missing, not just 2. Oops, our bad. By the time the second announcement is made, any questions about the significance of missing tapes have already been asked and ignored, and the risk of actual accountability is slight.

Another thread running through the novel is the oligarchy: the 'power elite' who sit at the top of the political and economic food chain. The loose confederation of corporate executives, wealthy stockholders, and high government officials who operate largely above the law with little or no accountability for their actions. Those for whom we are instructed to 'look forward, not backward' when they are found to have committed egregious crimes.

Mainly, though, this is a thriller. Near super-hero good guy engaged in a fight to the death with a worthy opponent, both of them pawns in a larger game. And it works well as a thriller, with enough plot twists to prevent it being predictable, and enough interesting characters to keep the reader engaged. It is also a much better written novel than its predecessor, 'Fault Lines'. The political themes are present but don't interfere with the plot - in fact, the politics actually advances the plot, especially the Dick Cheney-like character.

Pamela says

An operative is rescued from a Manila jail (after an angry rampage) and sent to locate a former operative who holds 92 tapes of torturing done at secret prisons for terrorists, etc. The conflict of CIA, FBI and special ops makes it a complex plot.

This was an ARC and the first I'd read from Barry Eisler, but I'll be looking for his books in the future. His inside knowledge of operatives is apparent, and his pragmatic view of political interworkings rings too true for comfort.

Michael says

Ben Traven is in jail in Manila when his boss, Scott Horton, manages his release. Hort needs Ben to perform a vital mission.

Rogue agent, Daniel Larison feels betrayed by the government and has stolen ninety-two torture tapes from the CIA. He's blackmailing the government and will release the tapes to the media unless he gets his payoff.

The CIA, FBI and other government agencies are after Larison and Hort wants Ben to locate him.

Ben gets a lead from Larison's former wife, Marcy, that Larison might be in Costa Rica. The FBI were staking out Marcy's house and two agents want Ben to accompany them for questioning but wind up in a hospital. However a petite young black FBI agent, Paula Lanier, gets the drop on Ben and convinces him that they should work together.

Like many thrillers today, there is competition between government agencies and when independent contractors are brought in, to apprehend Larison, they seem to have no intelligence for field work. Larison is

able to spot them, overcome a tranquilizing dart and eliminate twelve men without much effort. This disregard for life and unemotional approach to killing fellow Americans left me cold. The fact that Ben was ordered to observe this action and did little to prevent it also seemed inconsistent with what an honorable agent would do.

The story also had its mandatory romance scene. The rough sex action added nothing to the plot and was unnecessary.

I found that the characters were stereotypical, from the agency leaders to the men in the field. The story also meandered and didn't hold my attention as well as it should have. Finally, the conclusion was unsatisfactory. I could see that there was a good deal of research about these tapes but after reading the author's excellent John Rain novels, this story disappointed.

Note: I did think it was fun that Ben's superior is named Scott Horton and Scott Horton is the name of one of the people who wrote a blurb on the novel's back cover. This Scott Horton is a contributing editor of "Harpers."

Giovanni Gelati says

Ben Treven is front and center again as Rain takes a break. Inside Out is one of the most provocative and enjoyable novels I have read in quite some time. I have been fortunate to have read all of Barry Eisler's novels, and I am not going out on a limb in saying that this is probably his best work to date. Once you open it up and start to read it, putting it down is very difficult. I basically became a Casper to my family on the beach as I didn't want to put this down. Passing up a chance to inflict more damage in bocce or ladder ball is not something I usually do.

Barry Eisler has put together a novel that is as close to hitting a ten as I think anyone has come in quite a while. Inside Out will entertain you, and at the same time make you question some very fundamental elements of our everyday life. The plot and subplots are woven together in such a way that the ending is even more mind blowing, the questions larger than anticipated. The levels to which this novel ascends are amazing, timely, controversial, provocative, and altogether too entertaining. This is the total package.

Ben Treven really has his hands full throughout the novel, and Eisler has created another franchise character for himself that is as strong, if not stronger than Rain. Treven carries enough emotional baggage to make him fun and unstable, but grounded enough to help him see things through. Inside Out for me, is thus far, the best work of fiction I have read this year, period. There are some serious novels, by some of the industries heaviest hitters coming soon, but I don't see anyone coming close to the total package Barry Eisler has slammed down here in Inside Out. Who is your favorite Barry Eisler main character, Rain or Trever? What are you reading today? Check us out and become our friend on Facebook. Go to Goodreads and become our friend there and suggest books for us to read and post on. You can also follow us on Twitter, Book Blogs, and also look for our posts on Amazon. Did you know you can shop directly on Amazon by clicking the Gelati's Store Tab on our blog? Thanks for stopping by today; we will see you tomorrow. Have a great day.

Skip says

Ben Treven is tossed into a hellhole jail for a barfight in which he killed an Aussie sailor. Rescued by his commander, Hort, he is asked to help neutralize a former colleague, who is blackmailing the U.S. government over terrorist interrogation tapes. After trashing her two colleagues, Ben decides to join forces with a black female FBI agent to trap the target. Decent, but not on a par with the John Rain series.

Alain Burrese says

I just finished an Advanced Reader's Edition of Barry Eisler's newest thriller "Inside Out," and I thoroughly enjoyed it. It was fast paced, engaging, and had a profound insight on certain political controversies going on in the world around us. So not only was it an addictive action yarn, but also a work of fiction that made you think a little about what really happens behind certain closed doors. How much was fiction, and how much of the plot line was real? More on this in a moment, but this is a book I highly recommend if you enjoy action, military tactics, government agencies that when mixed together look like alphabet soup, and a good story line to keep you reading right up to an ending that caught me by surprise, but made me eager to learn what Eisler has in store for future novels.

If you read Eisler's last book, "Fault Line," you'll be familiar with the main character Ben Treven, and you know he's a black ops soldier. Now, with "Inside Out," we get to learn more about Treven and see him in a different kind of mission. Not to worry, if you have not read "Fault Line," this book stands alone, and very little was mentioned regarding the happenings of the previous novel. (However, I enjoyed that book too, so you might want to pick it up and read it first.) While Ben's brother was a major player in "Fault Line," this story is all about Ben.

If you are a fan of Eisler's first six books about the half-Japanese Assassin John Rain, you'll particularly enjoy the reference to Rain in this book. I know it made me smile as I read it. I thought it was pretty cool how Eisler worked the character from those novels to be mentioned here. For fans, you'll like it.

So yes, it is a fun story. The book has fast paced action, tactics, and a plot that twists enough to keep you guessing. Sure, there were some things I figured out, or saw coming, but not everything, so it kept my interest. I also like how Eisler writes about places. He does a great job of explaining and describing places. Here's the kicker. I mentioned above that the book makes you think about things that are going on, and wonder just how much is real life. Well, the book contains a long list of sources that show that the story may not be as much fiction as you think, and some of this does go on in real life. I did not look at all these sources, there are over eighty, but it might be some interesting reading for those inclined to research these kinds of things.

I was waiting to see where Eisler was going to take Ben Treven after "Fault Line," and I was not disappointed. If you've liked Eisler's earlier works, I'm sure you'll enjoy this one too. However, this book did something else, which was brilliant, it made me really want to see where Eisler will go next. Check it out and enjoy a good summer thriller.

Jeffrey says

During the Bush presidency, the CIA taped various interrogations and it was reported in the news that the tapes of the interrogations were destroyed.

Eisler's latest novel, literally ripped right from this headline is that that the tapes were not destroyed, but were in fact ripped off by a rogue agent who is blackmailing the USA that he will release the tapes unless paid \$100 million in diamonds.

Ben Treven is recruited by Horton, his boss at the JSOS to track down who took the tapes. Treven is joined by a FBI agent Lanier as they try to track the agent's whereabouts. Helped by a tip from the agent's wife, Treven and Lanier track the agent to Costa Rica.

Meanwhile in the USA, Ulrich, the prior assistant to the Vice President, who is now a lobbyist, has learned of the missing tapes. Ulrich, who knew the tapes were never destroyed because he created the whole cover story of their destruction when they went missing, is in contact with Clements, a senior agent of the CIA, who is also looking for the tapes. Ulrich, who does not trust the CIA, also has his own sources looking for the tapes because he does not want to go down for the misdeeds on the tapes because he was involved with the Caspers, apparently innocent persons who were tortured and killed by the government.

The book is a very good thriller and although the ending is a little of a cop-out, it does speak to the idea that in these type of real situations there is no real ending. The good guys, and in this novel, there are no real good guys, do not win. They system wins.

Justin says

This is the 2nd novel following Ben Treven, a black ops soldier/spy who works for the clandestine dept, and gets caught up in a cover up. One that follows the real life story in the wake of 9-11 when the U.S. was accused of destroying interrogation tapes involving torture and murder.

I enjoyed everything about this book, other than it being part of a series and felt.. like a part, instead of whole. But fast paced, intelligent, poignant and violent, this thriller delivers the goods, just the finale needs work.

mari says

I was introduced to Barry Eisler's books when I received a copy of Fault Line through Library Thing's Early Reviewers Program. My husband and his family have known about Eisler for awhile since he lives in the same town as them and have also read all the his John Rain books. Anyway, I enjoyed Fault Line and was thrilled to get a copy of Inside Out for review.

Inside Out begins not too long after the end of the events in Fault Line. Ben Treven is a bit down and out and has found himself in a Manilla jail. The man who tried to have him killed in the last book is back but this time to ask for his help.

Another agent, thought to be dead, has tapes that document the US governments use of torture during the War on Terror and is holding them for ransom. It is Ben's job to try and get the tapes before they can be released to the public as other agencies try to get their hands on the tapes as well.

The plot is complex, the action is non stop and it is relevant to what is going on in the world today. Scary, but true. What is needed to keep the American public safe? Do we need to know the truth about what the government is doing or should we just be happy in the fact that we are "safe"? All questions that come up in the book and fuel an interesting ending.

I enjoyed the book, just not as much as Fault Line. I think what I enjoyed most about that one was the sibling interactions and that was definitely missing from this book with Alex barely getting mentioned. I am hoping that he will make another appearance in later stories. He is my favorite of the two brothers.

Inside Out did get me thinking, though, and definitely kept me entertained. It has also got me excited to see what happens in the next book if two of Eisler's characters come together. Treven and Rain. That will make for quite an exciting read.

Russell Brooks says

Conspiracy-theory buffs are in for a treat. Inside Out features the return of Ben Treven—an American Black-Ops soldier. In this sequel to Fault Line, Treven isn't on the run, but doing the hunting instead. A rogue Black-Ops soldier, Daniel Larison, has stolen ninety-two CIA interrogation tapes and has blackmailed the US Government. Treven—who was imprisoned after a bar fight he was in resulted in the death of one of his attackers—is released from jail with the aid of his former commander, Colonel Scott Horton. Treven's release comes at a price: He must track down and eliminate Larison. Along the way, he is joined by Paula Lanier—a sexy FBI agent with an attitude—who is not only an annoyance to Treven, but later becomes an ally. What complicates matters further for Treven is that other hit squads have been dispatched to hunt for Larison, leaving Treven to suspect that he may be a pawn in a bigger picture.

Inside Out contains some well-paced action, martial arts, and a believable conspiracy that will leave the reader wondering if all of it is really fiction. FBI agent Lanier brings about an excellent balance to complement Treven's character. This is illustrated by her naivety in handling certain situations that risk exposing them. At times, I had a chuckle picturing how pissed off Treven must have been every time she made a gaff. What I also enjoyed was that Eisler allowed readers to enter into the minds of both Treven and his target, Larison, illustrating his first-hand knowledge of surveillance and reconnaissance techniques. The fight scenes were very believable, and the hand-on-hand combat scenes were meticulously well done.

In addition, readers will learn why it's not a good idea to read important documents—electronic or hard copy—or have a private conversation while you're traveling in first class. Conspiracy fiction fans will love the subject matter of the CIA's interrogation tapes that was top news several months ago. I wouldn't be surprised if discussions about this have been given a boost, due to Eisler's interpretation of what could've really happened to the CIA interrogation tapes.

Oh yeah, if you've ever wondered whatever became of Japanese-American assassin, John Rain, from Eisler's previous novels, you're in for a treat.

3 1/2 Stars.

