



The Sinkiang Executive

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Whirling silently through space, satellite cameras pick up a suspicious new Soviet missile complex which at all costs must be properly identified. The mission is carefully planned and carefully rehearsed. The latest and the fastest MiG, which a defecting Soviet pilot has conveniently landed in the West, is to fly at a treetop level until well into Soviet airspace and on course for the target. And the return journey? Well, that's up to Quiller.

Quiller fans will also enjoy THE KOBRA MANIFESTO, THE NINTH DIRECTIVE and THE QUILLER MEMORANDRUM.

The Sinkiang Executive Details

Date : Published November 1993 by HarperPrism (first published 1978)

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Author : Adam Hall

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From Reader Review The Sinkiang Executive for online ebook

cool breeze says

Quiller faces dismissal for killing an old enemy without authorization and is given a chance for redemption if he accepts a nearly suicidal mission. The first half of the book focuses on the use of a captured Soviet fighter jet. The flying sequences are good but the training sections are a bit slow and the whole scenario that Quiller can fly the plane so well in his first actual flight is more than a bit improbable. In the second half, Quiller is on the Soviet Chinese border with an objective that isn't clear to him until the very end. There are some memorable scenes, one involving a bus, but the plot seems to just lurch around at times.

For some reason it seems that whenever Quiller gets seriously involved with fighter jets, the quality of the book isn't up to the usual high standards (see also The Stryker Portfolio). Hall does a technothriller well enough, though not as well as Tom Clancy, but it seems to distract him from what is best about the Quiller series.

stormhawk says

Quiller really can do anything, even feel on occasion, which is rather unexpected given the usual cold, calculating professional that he usually presents to the world at large. I bet spy thriller writers really miss the cold war ...

Garry Wall says

I love the Quiller novels.

Mark Isaak says

This book rates highly for details of Cold War-era spycraft; lovers of action will probably appreciate the quantity of action scenes; and a couple of the characters, including the protagonist Quiller, are psychologically interesting. However, the suspense is so overdone that it becomes boringly predictable that things will pull through at the last possible second. Also, Hall switches to run-on sentences for action scenes, which no doubt is supposed to make the prose feel more breathless, but I find just slows down my reading pace and defeats the purpose. And the episodes of the plot feel only loosely connected, with no real overall theme.

Brian Casey says

I read The Sinkiang Executive by Adam Hall on my vacation in Kauai.

There are no bad Quillers, but this one has always been my favorite. Quiller works for The Bureau, a cold-war covert-ops unit that only the highest members of the British Government even knows to exist. He kills a Russian tailing him in a London underground train, and is forced into a one-way mission in order to keep the job he craves.

I've read this book maybe ten or twelve times over the years, and it always holds up marvelously. It requires no suspension of disbelief to feel that this is how things really happened back in The Cold War spy games.

<http://goption.com/2011/06/sinkiang-e...>

Peter says

Elleston Trevor (nom de plume: Adam Hall) was a British author whose character (Quiller) is an agent (called an “executive”) for a spy agency (“The Bureau”) that so secret that “it doesn’t exist.” Quiller is an anti-Bond: he is loathe to go on missions and usually has to be duped into them; he is afraid of dogs and averse to firearms; he is dead calm in a crisis but surprisingly fragile.

“The Sinkiang Executive” is a 1978 work—eighth in the Quiller series—in which Quiller has just returned to London from a covert action in Turkey that went awry. He is immediately called on the carpet for the cold-blooded murder of a Russian agent who had murdered Katia, a woman with whom Quiller was involved. Quiller is fired because the act might draw attention to the Bureau, then he is exiled from London and sent to Barcelona. There he is re-employed as a “volunteer” on a one-man suicide mission in Russia, with little chance of surviving and no chance of reinstatement. How could he resist?

His mission is to fly a captured Mig-28D fighter (Foxbat) into Russia and take photographs related to a failed mission by another executive. Quiller is (of course, aren't they all?) a trained jet pilot but he has never flown a Russian jet, much less a Foxbat (there is only this one in western hands). In fact, he won't fly this one until he takes off on the mission—it is too valuable to risk on training flights. So we follow him through his flight training on a simulator for a similar Russian F-series jet, getting great details on the idiosyncrasies of Russian jet fighters in general and the Foxbat in particular. (Will I ever go to a cocktail party requiring this information?)

Finally, the dawn of the mission arrives and Quiller takes off in his new toy. That is when the story takes off as well. The story is told in a first person stream-of-consciousness style that accentuates the feeling of the reader's involvement, the pace is very fast, and—with the exception of a few over-the-top scenes—the reader buys into the story. After a slow start, the story streaks—just like a Foxbat.

Stephen P says

4 stars for sheer enjoyment of another of Hall's brilliant spy thrillers. Written in first person we are not only present, involved, in all events but always present within the mind of Quiller; including his doubts, fears, contradictions, the voice in the back of his mind calling out for survival.

Addictive. You've been warned.

Amarylisa says

Anna says

Thrilling plot with many intricate twists and turns as I have come to expect in Quiller books. Some lovely

More violence and sexual content than in many, and I am not sure the sexual content was always necessary, and in one instance it was totally illogical.

I'm ramping up my rating--for anything written by Adam Hall--to a consistent 4 stars. The guy is just wild.

Up to now I've allowed myself to be lulled into complacency by the first volume in the Quiller series. That particular book asserted a few key aspects about Quiller which dupes one into assuming Quiller is always going to be quiet, cerebral, and somewhat passive. He doesn't carry a gun. He is sly and wily and avoids fights if possible.

But these were apparently character-elements strictly tied to just that first, unusual Hall novel. It was moody and atmospheric, set in Berlin, and nothing much happened, plot-wise. Hall established there too, that Quiller has a particularly obsessive hatred for neo-Nazis... and so when you glance over the rest of the Hall library you wonder why Hall is sending him all over Asia and Russia.

But 'Sinkiang Executive' is a powerful example of action-espionage writing which demonstrates that all of Hall's other Quiller books are urgently deserving a read. This one is phenomenal!

Hall is a confident author; fully in control of his craftsmanship. He has that great 1970s knack (shared by Forsyth, Follett, etc) which was so common back then and so rare now: the pages race by as fast as you can read. He never fumbles a single sentence. You wonder how the hell he does it: the technical details are so rich and convincing and powerful. This novel involves Quiller (*who knew he was a pilot? I thought he was a former US military intel?*) flying a decoy Mig28 into Soviet airspace (*similar to Craig Thomas' "Firefox"*) and deliberately being shot down to carry out a ground mission. It's just astounding: Hall has all the factoids about air defense systems and air traffic radio frequencies down pat.

What's more--even with all this absurdly rigorous sequence to describe and get correct, Hall's writing itself never lets up pace. He barrels from chapter to chapter with nothing left out, and no letup in tension. Do you realize how tough that is to do? This is top-quality action-thriller writing technique on display; the caliber is as good as any pure action scene in LeCarre or Deighton. If you plucked out an action scene from LeCarre

and set it off by itself to stand on its own, it would look like an Adam Hall book.

Adam Hall oughta be a lot better known than he is. If all the rest of the Quiller reads are as good, this is incredible.

Colin Graham says

I thought I recognised the name... Quiller. It was dated, but not too difficult to read.
