



Illegal Action (Vintage Crime/Black Lizard)

By Stella Rimington

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The fiercely intelligent, ambitious MI5 officer Liz Carlyle returns in a spy novel of arresting psychological complexity and unflagging suspense.

In the most recent installment in the Liz Carlyle series, Liz has been transferred to counter-espionage—the hub of MI5 operations during the Cold War. Her mission: protect Nikita Brunovsky, an increasingly vocal opponent of Vladimir Putin, who has been targeted for assassination and is seeking refuge in the UK. The Foreign Office is adamant about forestalling a crime that could become a full-blown international incident. So Liz goes undercover, attaching herself to Brunovsky's retinue: racing against the clock to determine who betrayed him and suddenly facing a wholly unexpected second task—unmasking a Russian operative working undercover alongside her.

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Illegal Action (Vintage Crime/Black Lizard) By Stella Rimington Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. MI5 officer Liz Carlyle tries to make the best of it after she's unwillingly transferred from counterterrorism to counterespionage in Rimington's excellent third novel (after *Secret Asset*). Assigned to a case involving a rich Moscow oligarch living in London, Liz quickly realizes that there's considerable evidence the oligarch's been targeted for death by someone in Russia—perhaps with the assistance of the Russian government, perhaps not. Matters become more complicated when it becomes evident Liz herself may wind up a target. Rimington's command of espionage and counterespionage history and techniques (derived from long personal experience at the same British agency as Carlyle's) enables her to bring enormous believability to her well-paced narrative. Her dialogue moves as swiftly as the action, and her characters are as believable as the world in which they—and we—live. Fans of intelligent spy thrillers are in for a treat. *Author tour.* (July)

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From [Booklist](#)

This is the third entry in the British spy series by Rimington, herself a former director general of MI5, featuring the smart and daring intelligence-operative Liz Carlyle. Along with her sidekick, Peggy Kingsolving, Carlyle has been transferred to the Counter-Espionage division, which, in the terrorist-obsessed modern world, is no longer the plum assignment it was during the height of East-West rivalries. She is surprised to find that there are more spies lurking around the current London scene than there were during the cold war—no longer in pursuit of military intelligence but the rich stakes of the global business community. After discovering a plot to assassinate a Russian billionaire, Nikita Brunovsky, who has been strident in his public criticism of Vladimir Putin, Carlyle goes undercover as a member of the financier's entourage only to find herself in danger from a Russian spy who is also masquerading as an innocuous associate of Brunovsky. Elements of the old-fashioned spy novel—sudden twists and characters with hidden agendas—combine with James Patterson's secret to success (short chapters) to create an ideal beach read for the upcoming vacation season. --Michael Gannon

Review

“Rimington’s plot, as one should expect from a former head of MI5, bristles with subterfuge and splices in allusions to Litvinenko’s poisoning to give **Illegal Action** a contemporary feel. . . . Carlyle, in her third outing, has depth and tenacity.”—*The Financial Times* “A former director general of MI5 in the ‘90s, Rimington fills her brainy page-turner with authentic details.”—*Entertainment Weekly* “Rimington fashions an exciting final confrontation to her story.”—*The Washington Post* “The psychological curiosity and attention to detail that has made Rimington a top spy also distinguishes her as an author.”—*People* “An ideal beach read for the upcoming vacation season. . . . Elements of the old-fashioned spy novel—sudden twists and characters with hidden agendas—combine with James Patterson’s secret to success.”—*Booklist*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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Maria Simmons:

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