



## The Accident Man

*Tom Cain*

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**The Accident Man** Tom Cain

**If Princess Diana had been murdered, what sort of man would have killed her?**

Breathlessly paced and featuring one of the most intriguing heroes in recent fiction, Tom Cain's *The Accident Man* surprises the reader at every turn. For a certain sum of money, Samuel Carver will arrange a death.

A ruptured gas line, an automobile crash, a fall from a window; anything can look like an accident. But when Carver is to carry out a job in a tunnel in Paris, and when the job goes wrong for him, and when he is pursued by the very forces that hired him, Carver must execute his most daring feat yet.

A thriller of the grandest and most exhilarating sort, *The Accident Man* races above and below the streets of Paris, across Europe, and through storms at sea. It is also a startling introduction to a hero engaged in acts of moral violence. With the dissolution of world powers, with everything and anything for sale, how does one justify death?

Samuel Carver--a clouded man of determined action--will come to understand the prices to be paid. Fans of James Bond, the Jason Bourne films, and Lee Child will thrill at Samuel Carver's violent and uncertain world.

## The Accident Man Details

Date : Published January 31st 2008 by Viking Adult (first published January 1st 2007)

ISBN : 9780670018499

Author : Tom Cain

Format : Hardcover 322 pages

Genre : Thriller, Fiction, Mystery, Suspense, Action, Crime

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## From Reader Review The Accident Man for online ebook

### Simon Taylor says

The debut thriller of an accomplished writer. A fiction based on a real death. Already the book is unique before you even open the cover.

Samuel Carver is the an assassin for hire, but only kills bad guys. He's duped into causing the death of Princess Diana and is subsequently hunted by both his bosses as a loose end, and MI6 as a murderer. Joined with a glamorous Russian girl, he zips round the globe trying to stay alive.

Although riddled with cliché, Cain made a serious effort to keep the plot as fresh and dynamic as he could. There were a whole plethora of characters involved in multiple agencies, caught up in complex web of rivalries and hierarchies. On the whole, this added to the book and gave the story much more depth than a two-dimensional cat and mouse chase. Enemies of enemies became friends as well as foes. Having said that, I did at times struggle to remember everybody's associations and there were characters who could have been missed out completely at no loss to the tale.

Cain has quickly become a master with structuring a story. Admittedly, the beginning was shaky. He didn't seem sure of his writing style and it took a while for the book to find its feet and slide into a natural rhythm. Once the flow of the story began, Cain skilfully kept the pace going straight through to the end. He knew when to speed things up and when to slow them down, when to build tension and when to explode with action, when to chart the slow seconds and when to skim long days. The chapters also vary in length and it adds to the deliberate, carefully controlled pace that never runs away from Cain or shudders along the way.

The characters themselves were unremarkable. A little effort was made to make Carver a more rounded individual with a flat tailored to suit him, but on the whole he was just another bland hero. The Russian villains in particular were as clichéd as a shaken, not stirred martini would have been. Even Alix, in the main, was flat and underdeveloped, but her real allegiance was well written. In this respect, Cain actually played up to the cliché, knowing his reader would expect some double-crossing. Playing this in the cleverest way, there genuinely is no guessing where her loyalties are concerned.

Particular criticism has been made of Carver's laborious details, for example the much-maligned identification of the Windows 95 operating system on Carver's laptop. This is quite unfair. Had this been set today in 2011 with Carver loading Windows Vista, I would have agreed. But this is a story set in 1997, published in 2007 and so these minor details are carefully selected reminders to the reader that they are in the previous century. Though Carver has the very latest of everything, the very latest was a very long time ago and Cain considerably provides authenticity when he can. There were carefully selected details about the Diana's death and the immediate aftermath, however as part of the book's selling point I would have liked to have seen a great deal more. We were a bit short changed on the Diana front. The more excessive details in my view are perhaps with the explicitness of the violence – brain matter flies about a lot – and he seems to enjoy the cruder descriptions and sexual dialogue when it occasionally crops up with aplomb.

I was intrigued with how the book would end, requiring a moral conclusion which at the same time did not involve any exposure or capture inconsistent with what could theoretically happened, remembering to this day the Princess's death is considered accidental. Cain pulled it off. The final chapters of the book plunge suddenly and unexpectedly into an incredibly dark tone. The content was so harrowing it made me uncomfortable, which I imagine was precisely the point. The ending itself was very unexpected and rather atypical of the genre. And yet, on reflection, it was completely appropriate and it feels there is almost no other way it could have ended. Haunting but fitting. As Cain continues to develop his craft, his future

catalogue looks extremely promising indeed.

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### **Cheryl says**

Samuel Carver gets paid to make accidents happen. He can be classified as a hit man. His jobs usually involve him eliminating bad people like terrorists and human traffickers. Sam's boss, Max gives Sam his latest orders to take out Ramzi Hakim Narwaz a terrorist. This mission just may be his last as it will have him running for his life. Sam accomplishes his mission. He makes Ramzi's car crash into a cement wall at the Alma Tunnel. The date is August 31, 1997. What Sam doesn't know is that the crash has actually took out America's princess, Princess Diana. While Sam is trying to survive he meets Alexandra "Alix" Petrova. Alix is hired to take eradicate Sam. Sam and Alix come up with a plan to join forces instead in order to learn what is going on. Buckle up your set belts and get ready for the ride of your life!

From the first moment I read this book summary I have been wanting to read The Accident Man. Just the concept of the plot caught my attention. Well I can tell you I was not disappointed. For me this book hooked me right away. I found myself reaching for The Accident Man every chance I got. It might because The Accident Man really made me think of The Bourne movies with Matt Damon or maybe it was all the action as well as adventure on every page. Well whatever the case I am glad this book was not a let down. The Accident Man is Tom Cain's first novel and I am sure we will be hearing more from him. Also this book is being made into a movie, which you can see why when you read The Accident Man.

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### **Sue says**

First rate. At first, I was riveted. This guy writes like Tom Wood--and I can't get enough of those . . .

I had to take it down a notch because the book was ruined as soon as the protagonist, Carver, hooked up with a woman--then it seemed all about her. Also, the author over-used the word *Carver* and I consider that very poor writing.

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### **Sue says**

I have no idea why I keep doing this; I don't like thrillers. I never have. Here, we have a pretty predictable, formulaic story where everything that happens could be seen from a mile away. Except in this book, the story has the backdrop of Princess Diana's death and yet another conspiracy theory of how and why she died. I hate this kind of use of real world events; it feels cheap and exploitive. Wally Lamb does this same kind of thing, and I didn't like it then, and I certainly don't like it now. This was competently written and fast paced, but unimaginative and to be honest, bordering on the edge of taste. Waste of my time.

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### **Book Addict Shaun says**

The Accident Man has been on my TBR for the longest time and I am so glad that I have finally read it. Samuel Carver is another great character to add to my list of favourite assassins and I can't wait to read

about him again. This book is a thriller in every sense of the word and I have not been able to get enough of it whilst reading it today.

The Accident Man takes one of the world's most memorable events, the death of Princess Diana and looks at the hypothetical question of what if? What if she had actually been assassinated? Who could have authorised it? And why? Those are the questions posed here as Samuel Carver finds himself tasked with killing a supposed terrorist in a Paris underpass only to then find out that he has killed somebody entirely different. I have to say this is the first book of this type I have read that's took something as famous as this and turned it into a story but, having finished it, I felt it was scarily plausible and it was definitely a thought-provoking and intriguing read. Not only that but what's the future going to look like for Samuel Carver? I am already itching to read the next book and find out.

Tom Cain is a brilliant writer and the pace of this book doesn't let up for a second, taking place across just a few days and so events unfold in what feels almost like real time. There's a sense of authenticity when reading about things like guns and having seen some of Tom's tweets on Twitter this is a subject he knows well. Samuel Carver is a well-imagined character, reminiscent at times of Victor the assassin however Carver is less of a closed book and more willing to get involved with members of the public, however after the events of this book I'm not sure whether that will be the case anymore.

Now, what would a thriller be without it's macho lead male having a beautiful female companion who he just so happens to fall into bed with? Well, there wouldn't be a thriller without that would there and here we have a Russian named Alix Petrova who accompanies Carver on his search for answers. You know sometimes I wish we could have a thriller with a gay male character as it's lead or one who is asexual. There's something cliched and predictable about these male/female partnerships and whilst I absolutely adored Alix as a character, it was annoying at times to see Carver being led by his dick rather than his brain. Then again had he not done that then we wouldn't have had much of a story near the end of the book. So I suppose my problem isn't with the author but more the way this genre just has to have this partnership in almost every book. But, every genre has its cliches, for example ever met a macho gay character in a Women's Fiction novel? Nope, me neither.

I was expecting The Accident Man to take me a day or so to read but once I got into it I just couldn't put my Kindle down and had it read in just a few hours. There's a huge cast of characters here and the story plays out in various countries around the world but I had no trouble following what I was reading. Carver faces danger from multiple organisations around the world and I had no idea of what the final outcome would be to his story to find answers into why he was tasked with this assassination. There's plenty of twists along the way to catch you off guard and it all leads to an exhilarating finale. The closing chapters of the story were extremely tense and the ending was a truly satisfying one that will leave every reader desperate for more from this fantastic author and character and I certainly cannot wait to get started on the next book in the series. If Victor is my favourite assassin then Samuel Carver isn't far behind. Highly recommended for those who are yet to discover this series.

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## Robert says

A new character is introduced in this book, Samuel Carver, or The Accident Man. A former British special forces soldier that decides to do some off the books type of jobs. Specifically arranging very unfortunate accidents, with deadly results, for some very nasty folks. Given a job and double crossed by his handlers Carver is looking to figure out who screwed him over. And unfortunately for them Carver is very good at his job. I found this book to be a fantastic thriller that cracks along at a very fast pace with a very interesting wet

job as the basis for the story. Most readers will recognize the accident Carver arranges as it actually occurred. The thing I really liked about this book is that the central character, Carver, is a real human being and not painted as some super hero with extra special powers. Definitely not to be missed by fans of the genre.

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### **Jp says**

Tom Cain brings his experience as an investigative reporter into the world of fictional thrillers and creates Sam Carver, a morally conflicted ex-soldier and current black ops specialist.

Tom Cain writes a solid thriller that keeps you on the edge of your seat in a fast-paced adventure. It keeps with some of the standards of the genre with bigger than life heroes and villains, but at times grounded deeply in the real world.

I recommend it highly and I'm looking forward to his next book.

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### **Ian Mapp says**

I've read reviews of this and seen it in the shops and tried to stay away from it. It just seemed a little bit too exploitative - basing such a story on real events, to which there are already too many conspiracy theories. It almost seems irresponsible to add more.

As a thriller, it is utterly absorbing and breathless. Very shorty chapters, double and triple crosses and many set piece action scenes.

Told in classic thriller/cinematic style. A header showing our ace assassin Samuel Carver taking out an eastern european despot. Yes he is a hired killer but he is taking out the scum.

Then it moves on to his next assignment and this is handled beautifully. He completes his task in the tunnel through the aid of a high powered light but then has a couple of russians on his back who have been sent to finish him off. Great sense of location as he makes his escape through the streets and nightlife of Paris - in complete ignorance of who he has killed.

The story then moves into Bourne Identity hocus pocus - cross european locations as he befriends one of the russians (a beautiful woman of course) and the pair of them go on the run together.

Breathless from start to finish - obviously would make a good book. Would just say that its morally a bit dubious.

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### **Jim says**

Tom Cain takes a look behind a piece of recent history, the accident that killed Princess Diana and asks, What if?.... Cain's protagonist, Sam Carver is a former member of the British Special Boat Service. He is now a paid killer, but still a man with a conscience, who is able to justify what he does by his belief that he is eliminating evil men who have no conscience at all. Eliminating criminals who think they are above the law.

His life takes a dramatic turn when he accepts and carries out a job in Paris. He discovers that he has been double crossed by the people who hired him. There are Russian hit men trying to kill him and the victim was not a terrorist as he was told, but Princess Diana.

This book is one big adrenalin rush from beginning to end. Cain's tale unfolds like one big free fall and the reader keeps turning pages to see if the ripcord will ever be pulled or even if there is a parachute at all!

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### **Ed says**

Samuel Carver is a former British SBS Marine specializing in staging accidental deaths for a clandestine government entity. Working on the assumption he was assassinating a dangerous middle Eastern terrorist in Paris, Carver's actual target is Princess Diana, the world's most popular woman. Shortly after engineering the fatal tunnel crash, Carver quickly becomes a dangerous loose end. He forms a shaky alliance with a beautiful Russian woman with questionable motives and together, they work to survive and hunt down the leaders of the plot.

I thought about awarding this book 4 stars but given the exceptional characters, original plot premise, unforgettable bad guys and page turning, action oriented pacing make it a 5 stars read. I highly recommended it.

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### **Neil says**

The author has taken an internationally known event, in this case the death of the Princess of Wales, and has skillfully woven a tale around the commonly accepted 'facts'. As a debut thriller, from a previously unknown author, I have to say that I was totally engrossed in the book. The pace never really lets up, and kept me turning page after page.

The main character is Samuel Carver, an ex Royal Marine, and one time member of the Special Boat Service. The SBS being less well known than the SAS. He makes accidents happen to various unsavoury people. The characters are far from perfect, which makes them seem all the more believable and human. Who can be trusted in the clandestine world, as double crosses and misinformation seem to be commonplace. The author takes the reader on such a journey, following Carver's footsteps. All very well written and thought out, and I am looking forward to getting to grips with the next book in the series.

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### **Ben Starling says**

Very detailed and precise. Tightly written. Gripping. Enjoyed every page. Some day I'll read it again, so I'm keeping it on my bookshelf.

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### **Dave Brown says**

Fictional stories that spin off of historical events are always fascinating. I don't mean fictional accounts of the lives of historical people...although those are fascinating as well. I mean novels that take a historical

event and ask, "what if?" That is what Tom Cain does with *The Accident Man*, and he chooses a particularly sensitive subject historically: the death of Princess Diana. Specifically, Cain uses the fictional premise (although he specifically denies attempting to set forth or support any sort of conspiracy theory in his preface) that Princess Diana's death was not accidental, but rather an assassination. His protagonist, Samuel Carver (who will debut here and will recur in future novels), is the assassin. He specializes in making his hits look like accidents, and only assassinates people whom he deems to truly deserve their fate, without knowing from whom his orders come. With this job, however, Carver has been double-crossed, and unknowingly murders one of the world's most loved public figures, in order to further the political and financial goals of his employers. The rest of the book is about his discovery of this, his employers' attempts to in turn kill him when he displays a conscience, and his quest for revenge.

I've always loved the espionage and suspense genre, and have gravitated toward books like *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* or the Bourne trilogy. I grew up devouring the entirety of the James Bond library, from Ian Fleming's original works forward. What strikes me the most about this book is the consistency between Cain's world and Fleming's world for Bond. For example, when Carver takes a shower, he first takes a steaming hot shower, followed by an ice cold shower. This was a trademark of James Bond when Ian Fleming wrote him; Bond always took his showers this way. I was also struck by the female character's (an unwitting spy who is drawn into a job she hates by people she hates) line after they sleep together, something to the effect of "it's never been like that before." I thought to myself, if that wasn't a James Bond-like line, I don't know what is.

The reason that I find this fascinating is because this is the first of Cain's books featuring Carver's character. He is creating a character much like Bond, and doing it well. However, he is creating a darker version of Bond, one that doesn't function with patriotic allegiance, but rather with allegiance to the highest bidder, justifying his relativistic ethics with a survival instinct. This can be taken as an interesting commentary on how our world is now as opposed to the Cold War era of Fleming. In essence, Cain is asking a second question in this novel: what would James Bond look like in a modern world of blurred lines between nations where patriotism is no longer an acceptable motive and anyone or anything can be purchased, including life and death?

Cain develops his protagonist fully as he follows a very Bond-like plot, mastering what Fleming did so well with his master spy: balancing his human vulnerability with his deadly professional expertise. Carver's backstory is interspersed well throughout the book, never bogging the reader down and always contributing to what Carver is doing at that moment. Cain uses interesting language choices for his narration, drawing emotional analogies to the sorts of physical items that would appear in a spy's life, for example. Cain also develops his other characters, although his villain is not nearly as original or even as memorable as a Bond villain. He makes up for this, however, in the brutality of his villain.

And therein lies part of the problem. The story absorbs the reader breathlessly until around page 300. From that point until the end of the book, Cain moves the plot in a direction that is decidedly like *Casino Royale*, with some notable differences: the twist with the female character doubles back on itself, the torture scene is even more savage (as unbelievable as that sounds), and the protagonist is not pictured as recovering well. In fact, we wonder how he will return in future books at all after the abuse he survives and the condition in which it leaves him. The interrogation and torture scene goes on for multiple chapters, and left me disturbed well into the next day. I found this to be un-necessary (especially as other characters undergo interrogation during the course of the book, with significantly less graphic descriptions) and so long that it completely robbed the story of its momentum in the closing chapters. The plot line for these adventures, after all, is relatively predictable: we know the protagonist will be captured and interrogated. That's just part of the genre. This is one area, however, in which Cain shouldn't have attempted to out-do Fleming, especially as Cain had done so well at making his violence succinct and effective up until this point.

Cain's dark, post-modern version of Bond is worth reading, if only to experience this contemporary take on

the master-spy character in literature. If you like the genre, and can handle the graphic violence in the closing chapters, this would be a good book for you. Tom Cain has given us a character to consider, and Samuel Carver may well be a spy that will be mentioned in all future discussions of the genre. Time will tell. Will I read another Samuel Carver novel? Only time will tell that, as well.

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## **Dlmrose says**

3.5

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## **Mark says**

This is a well written thriller about a former British special forces soldier that specializes in accidental deaths for serious bad people. He gets a job to kill a suspected terrorist in Paris, it has to look like an accident. And when he finishes his job he finds out that he is marked for death. His Client has decided to leave no loose ends. And as he escapes a formidable Russian killer and goes on the run in Europe he finds he has been misled and has killed somebody else, a job he would never have taken had he known. Now he is on the run with a female agent also involved in the assassination. And everybody will want to arrest or kill him.

A well written and easy to read novel that uses the conspiracy around the death of Princess Diana in Paris, and does so very well.

My only criticism would be that the ending leaves something to be desired and the torture is somewhat gross and leaves only one ending possible which then is chosen.

A nice debut with a daring premise that the writer manages to deliver pretty decent. A good beach read.

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