



## The Mozart Conspiracy

*Scott Mariani*

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A centuries-old mystery. An accidental death. A conspiracy that may end in murder. Former British Special Air Service officer Ben Hope is running for his life. Enlisted by Leigh Llewellyn - the beautiful, world-famous opera star and Ben's first love - to investigate her brother, Oliver's mysterious death, Ben finds himself caught up in a puzzle dating back to the 1700s.

At the time of his death, Oliver was working on a new book about Mozart. Though the official report states that Oliver died in a tragic accident, the facts don't add up. But as Ben and Leigh dig deeper, they find that Oliver's research reveals that Mozart, a notable Freemason, may have been killed by a shadowy and powerful splinter group of the organization. The only proof lies in a missing letter, believed to have been written by Mozart himself. When Leigh and Ben receive a video documenting a ritual sacrifice performed by hooded men, they realize that the sect is still in existence today and will stop at nothing to keep its secrets.

From the dreaming spires of Oxford and Venice's labyrinthine canals to the majestic architecture of Vienna, Ben and Leigh must race across Europe to uncover the truth behind the Mozart conspiracy before they become its next victims. In the tradition of Robert Ludlum and Dan Brown, Scott Mariani's *The Mozart Conspiracy* is an electrifying thriller and the start of an exciting new series.

## The Mozart Conspiracy Details

Date : Published March 22nd 2011 by Touchstone (first published July 14th 2008)

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Author : Scott Mariani

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# From Reader Review The Mozart Conspiracy for online ebook

## James Rye says

I downloaded this as a free ebook from Amazon yesterday and spent most of last night and all of today reading it. I like thrillers, and this was certainly a well-written, interesting page-turner. Because it was free I had low expectations of it, but I couldn't have been more mistaken, and am already looking to get other books by this author (who I had not encountered before).

What I liked about it:

- \* A really good plot based on well-researched possibilities. It was interesting.
- \* The plot was delivered well. It was complex, but fast, and executed in a way that didn't confuse. I genuinely didn't want to put it down and wanted to know what happened next.
- \* The prose was good. It didn't seem trite, banal, or lazy. The author studied Modern Languages at Oxford, and it showed in the quality of the writing - accessible, but with precision and class.
- \* Most of the characters seemed believable - well, the goodies, at least. I cared about them.

Although not having the riddling tease and complexity of The Da Vinci Code, there were objects and people to find and puzzles to solve, spread across countries. And of course, there were the Freemasons! Having just watched the first episode of BBC's Hunted, I could easily see this book being made into an exciting film or TV series.

My reason for not giving it five stars? It was based in historical plausibility, but there were an awful lot of convenient things in it that were necessary for the fast moving plot, but which seemed annoyingly just too implausibly convenient - the brother with the boat, the bent shotgun barrel, Eve and the car crash, for example.

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## Christina says

When I first heard about this book, I was really excited. A novel that postulates on the death of Mozart? How does this book know that I absolutely adore the movie *Amadeus*?! So, of course I was intrigued. However, the further I got into the book, the more I realized that by the end I was probably still going to be able to count the number of references to Mozart on both hands. He was hardly even a part of the story. Merely a catalyst for the trials and errors of ex-military, current muscle-for-hire, rescuer-of-the-innocent Ben Hope. The whole story was based on a letter suggesting that Mozart wasn't just sick, but was poisoned, murdered by the Freemasons. Because, of course he was. I guess because of that, the book had more to do with the Freemasons than Mozart, but then maybe someone should have realized that the title and book jacket are a little misleading. Maybe I'm just too attached to that goofy, music-composing bastard.

**\*\*Spoilers Abound Ahead\*\*** Anyway, when I say the book was about the trials and errors of Ben Hope, I mean it. It was one after another failed attempt at saving the day. I mean, I realize that that's probably more realistic than the hero succeeding at everything he does, but come on. You're supposed to be entertaining me, not making me sigh and roll my eyes because the bad guys keep getting the leg up. Convents were burned, children kidnapped, love interests and best friends murdered, and heroes tricked (by a sex slave, I might add) and abducted. And this was like close to 300 pages of the book. THEN, oh, then, once Ben escapes and can put shit in order again... details are just freakin' glossed over. You're sitting here telling me details of

shooting a shotgun with a bent barrel, effects of being essentially roofied, being in a car with a cop when the enemy's car crashes into yours, ripping it apart... and then you think it's okay to skip over how the fuck Ben gathered his best black ops friends to break up a Freemason ceremony? WHILE he was supposed to be working as hitman for the head of the Freemason?

I honestly skimmed over the last few chapters, just to get through them, praying the payoff would be worth it. Finally, I got to the last chapter, and everything seemed okay. The hero had scars, but he won. AND he got the girl (who turned out not to be dead after all). And then suddenly, one of the crazies he had to fight off during the final showdown turns up (not dead after all either), and KILLS the girl. Don't worry. Ben gives chase in a canal in Venice. But the baddie GETS AWAY. The last paragraph of the book was essentially "She was dead. And it hurt Ben. And then he climbed out of the boat." THE END. ARE YOU KIDDING ME?! I should give this book 1 star, but up until about page 260, it was honestly interesting. I just wish I had led to something worthwhile.

I should have known when the book cover touted it as similar to "The Da Vinci Code." But at least that book made me WANT to solve the mystery instead of congratulate Mozart on being dead so he wouldn't have to experience this "literature".

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### **Bodosika Bodosika says**

Not my thing...2star

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### **Kate says**

If Dan Brown and Andy McNab ever wrote a book together I think it would this.

I was highly disappointed with this novel for a number of reasons. Firstly, the title suggested that this would be a mysterious tale but I feel that the author did not go into enough detail or delve deeply enough into the Masonic world. In fact, rather than being a fictional novel focusing on the life and death of Mozart it focuses on the personal story of a family affected by the rumours surrounding Mozart's death.

Secondly, I feel that the focus was mistakingly placed on the Alpha hero aspect of the protagonist as opposed to the mystery that this novel should have held. There was an emphasis placed on the types of guns, equipment, cars etc that was not really needed which reminds me of an Andy McNab novel and moves it away from similarly titled novels, such as, 'The Shakespeare Secret.'

Finally, I feel that the final desperate act of the villain was unnecessary to the narrative and not needed to complete the story.

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### **Douglas says**

What can I say?

I really like Ben Hope!

Keep em coming, Mr. Mariani!

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## **Matt says**

Returning for another full-length novel, Scott Mariani sends Ben Hope into a tailspin of emotions. After learning that his friend and former colleague, Oliver Llewellyn, has drowned in a freak winter accident, Hope attends the funeral. While there, Ben sees Oliver's sister and his own former love interest, Leigh, who is now a well-known opera singer. Tensions rise and Hope disappears before old wounds can be reopened. However, when Leigh contacts Hope for some assistance, they must put their past behind them and focus on the task at hand. Oliver's death was originally ruled as a drunken accident, but then also attributed to his book research on the subject of Mozart and his apparent murder. Mozart was a member of the Freemasons and to celebrate that he penned a famous opera, *The Magic Flute*. The competent historian or active Mason would be able to see some of the strong connections to this secret society. Oliver seemed to be positing that Mozart might have been killed by a splinter group, long since extinct. With only an ancient letter by which to follow leads, something isn't adding up. Oliver's death is equally troubling to Austrian Detective Sergeant Markus Kinski, who tries to reopen the case. His daughter is briefly taken and his superior takes a sudden retirement, hinting that there might be some things best left alone. When a video lands in their laps, Hope and Leigh begin to wonder if the Order of Ra is alive and well, committing ritualistic murders. Oliver seems to have captured one of these before he was caught and potentially killed to keep him quiet. In a race to find out the truth behind the deaths of both Oliver and Mozart, the Order is hot on their heels. Kinski begins to work with Hope and Leigh, helping to protect the opera star and his own daughter while the Order remains active. Unfortunately, the Order of Ra is deep and has ties everywhere, which forces Hope's hand, if he wants a happy ending to this conspiracy. Electrifying and fast-paced, Mariani knows how to pull the reader in with breadcrumbs and lead them around the world on this historical mystery.

I will admit that I am quite intrigued by the Ben Hope series, with all its undertones and subplots that fill the pages of the pieces I have discovered to date. Mariani imbues much that the reader can enjoy while not getting too caught up in the minutiae of the historical record. While the series is only two full novels in (and three novellas/short stories), much of the Ben Hope backstory is coming to the surface. In this novel, they reader learns a little more about Hope's SAS time and the woman he abandoned, as well as his mindset on settling down. I do hope that these building blocks turn out to be poignant as the series continues. At present, Hope remains the only constant character, but that might change, forcing the reader to pick up much of the description offered to the other characters in the book. Mariani does a stellar job bringing the reader into the lives of these characters and building a sense of connection, which can only help push the narrative forward. Mariani also pushes to keep the story moving and interesting, choosing some of the lesser known historical happenings and crafting a story around them. This allows him to play with fact and fiction, while also keeping the reader wondering. I get a small chuckle, as Mariani appears keen to 'destroy' the evidence that could turn the world on its head, at some point in the novel, which is a tactic used by another author in the genre who has a similar plot thread. I have noticed that Mariani enjoys what I would called a 'hinged narrative', in that he tells the story that has been progressing nicely, but peppers the narrative with a subplot or alternate storyline that does not seem to play into what is going on. Then, three-quarters of the way through, the primary story resolves itself and the hinge 'bends', turning the story onto this new path, creating a secondary adventure, one might say. This seems to work and does tie in nicely, without leaving the reader feeling cheated or too out to sea with the earlier narrative mentions. The story is strong and the characters help fuel a wonderful narrative. What more could a thriller do for someone seeking an escape?

Kudos, Mr. Mariani for keeping me hooked. I am steamrolling through these pieces, but loving them very much!

Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:  
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

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## **Terence M says**

Audio Book - 11 hours 22 minutes - a solid 4.0 stars out of 5.0

As a lover of classical music, I was lead by the title to assume that the main story would be about a serious conspiracy surrounding Wolfgang A Mozart. Alas, this was not to be but nonetheless Scott Mariani has written a tough and taut thriller which has gripped me from the first 20 minutes or so right through to the exciting and stimulating last 22 minutes. I liked the action-packed nature of the storyline and despite the plot seeming to wander here and there, Mariani demonstrated clearly that he can write this type of prose without the repetition and stalling credibility of other writers in this genre.

I know I shouldn't be doing this, but I have already clicked the go button on my iPod and heard the first few sentences of Ben Hope #3, "The Doomsday Prophecy", which I assume will not dwell too much on "Doomsday" nor be much of a "Prophecy", but I hope I enjoy as much as I did "The Mozart Conspiracy".

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## **Kerry says**

Another great mystery from Scott Mariani. Mozart's death and the mystery surrounding it are at the centre of this thrilling tale. Ben Hope makes for a great male protagonist. He's SAS trained, intelligent, focused to the point of bloody mindedness, effective in getting the job done but reckless and prone to leaving a high body count behind him.

In this story Ben is reunited with his ex-girlfriend and old love Leigh. Their story runs amidst the main narrative. Unfortunately though it was lacking in heart for me most of the time and the climax of their story felt rushed and somewhat unnecessary! Which left me feeling disappointed.

As always though the author tells a great story with plenty of action, shocks and plot twists galore. A must read for any crime thriller fans.

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## **Dixie says**

“This was a pretty good fiction suspense novel, more like an action movie, took a while for me to get into it, the first 12 chapters go back and forth quickly between times and places fairly quickly, but at chapter 12 it starts to get into the story pretty good.

The theory on this may be considered a bit disturbing, has some violent descriptions some involving sacrifice type rituals.

Overall it held my attention, not an easy task, it is suspenseful story, keeps you on edge, and just when you think its over, something else happens, frustratingly suspenseful and intriguing.

The interview with the author at the end gives good insight to the idea of the story, and some there are some interesting and questionable information about Mozart as well.

If you like conspiracy theories and suspense, and don't mind some violence and swearing, then I would recommend it for adult reading.

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### Alexander Draganov says

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### Aleksandar Krajceski says

Honestly, bragging about the similarity between The Mozart Conspiracy and The Da Vinci code is useless. Thrillers like this marked our time of living. During the reading I was thinking that The Mozart Conspiracy is made with the same contexts like the Da Vinci code. Which is true. Robert Landon is Benedict Hope, Li is Victoria Vetra, or Sophie Parker, but that's not the point. We are all missing a huge thing here. The thing is that Dan Brown is working on the discover of the history event. Scott Mariani is working more on the story, than on the facts. In fact, he didn't explained who killed Mozart, he lets that case on our imagination. This is the only book that I have read from Scott Mariani, so I can't say much about his style, but however I expected more from an Oxford professor. Maybe it's because the translation in Macedonian was bad, so I can't say because I haven't read the English version. So correct me if I'm wrong.

About my grade (4),

I really loved the story, maybe because it ended like no one expected. I was devastated from Li's death at the end. But I didn't give it 5 because as I said, I didn't like the style and although I loved the story, it didn't amazed me.

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### John says

Let's face it, this novel is absolute garbage.

But it's also a tremendous page-turner that I had difficulty setting aside whenever other duties called -- like work and sleep. While normally I just jeer when book blurbs compare the contents to *The Da Vinci Code*, in this instance I came to the conclusion the comparison was actually justified -- not in terms of the writing, because Mariani is a far better prose technician than Dan Brown, but in terms of the wacky implausibility of the plot. It seemed to me, though, that the *real* comparison would be to a Dwayne Johnson action movie: lots of biffing, no boffing, very little by way of introspection, yet somehow completely engaging. There's even a bit where our hero leaps to grab the skids of an ascending helicopter, doing his best to climb aboard as the pilot does his best to shake him off.

Ben Hope, ex-SAS, is a sort of Galahad-for-hire, rescuing children and other vulnerable individuals from bad guys, wherever in the world that might take him. He's persuaded by his first love, Leigh -- now, fifteen years later, a famous opera diva -- to investigate the supposedly accidental death of her brother Oliver, who was also Ben's best friend in the army.

Ben soon finds it wasn't suicide but murder -- a murder carried out at the behest of a shadowy cabal, descendants of the secret society that murdered Mozart because he was using his opera *The Magic Flute* to advocate for Freemasonry. In his final letter, lost for centuries but rediscovered by Leigh's father, Mozart told a friend about his fears. Oliver was killed because he'd learned too much about the cabal's nefarious activities; now Leigh's life is in danger too because the cabal, for reasons that completely escape me, is determined to destroy the Mozart Letter.

As will be readily evident, the Mozart Letter is nothing but a McGuffin -- if the cabal simply ignored its existence no one would be any the wiser about their modern crimes. But what the hell: Ben, who has little compunction about killing bad guys and their spear carriers, biffs and bashes his way past all opposition to bring the true, enormously powerful culprits -- the Secret Masters, if you like -- to a long overdue justice.

There's so much action here -- and such an extraordinarily high body-count -- that the narrative seems to keep tumbling over itself as Mariani tries to cram everything in. At the same time some mighty important plot points go completely unexplained: Exactly how *was* Ben able to assemble an elite combat team at a moment's notice while being under observation by the crooks? How *did* the psycho villain escape, while unconscious, the explosion that blew his surroundings to shreds? There are lots more unanswered questions along the same lines.

As you'll have gathered, this is not a novel for the literary purist. But, just in the same way that a Dwayne Johnson action movie isn't *Casablanca* yet fulfills a perfectly valid function, *The Mozart Conspiracy* earns its keep, so to speak. And it also has -- although this is only a very minor aspect -- a political savvy absent from most of its peers.

I was startled to discover, on finishing the novel, that it's actually #2 in a (now substantial) series; I'd assumed it was a debut. I might even, at some point, go back and investigate its predecessor.

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## **Monika says**

I really loved this book. I fell in love with it. The story, the plot, the characters. Especially with Ben Hope. He's just perfect in my opinion. He's strong, intelligent, determined, sensible, sensitive and handsome. The way he goes through the whole situation is really amazing. I don't believe there's such a man in real life. I really expected that there would be more about Mozart and his death, but it's okay. The end was heartbreaking, I couldn't stop my tears. I'll get some more books from Scott Mariani about Benjamin Hope. Amazing.

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## **Douglas says**

What can I say?



I really like Ben Hope. I've said it again and again... he's a standard now in my reading list.

Keep em coming, Mr Mariani.

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## **Cheryl says**

It has been two months since, famous opera performer, Leigh Llewellyn's brother, Oliver passed away. Oliver was in Austria conducting research on Mozart. He had come up with the theory that Mozart was murdered by the Freemasons. Leigh decides to pick up where her brother left off. She is joined by her former flame and former British Special Air Service Officer, Ben Hope. What Leigh and Ben discover will have them running for their lives.

The Mozart Conspiracy is both music to by ears and a breath of fresh air! This book is the second Ben Hope novel but the first one I have read. It can be read as a stand alone novel. The first book is The Alchemist Secret. I have read many mystery/thriller novels and while there were some flaws, for the most part this book was right on par. The beginning started out at a rapid pace but than the story line started to slow down and than it would pick up again when it would flash to the past. I thought the ending was alright. Though, I liked that author, Scott Mariani played on the idea of a famous icon like Mozart being murdered. I do plan to check out the first book.

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