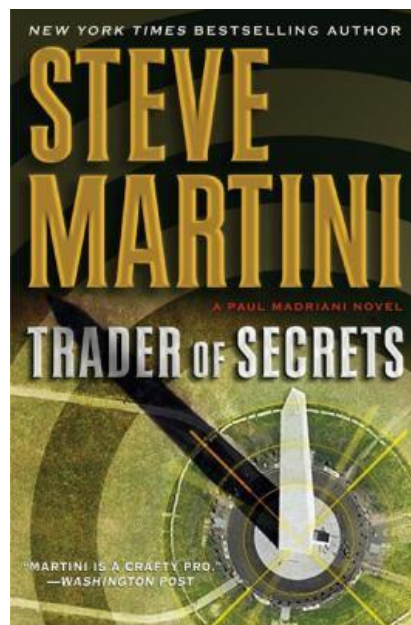
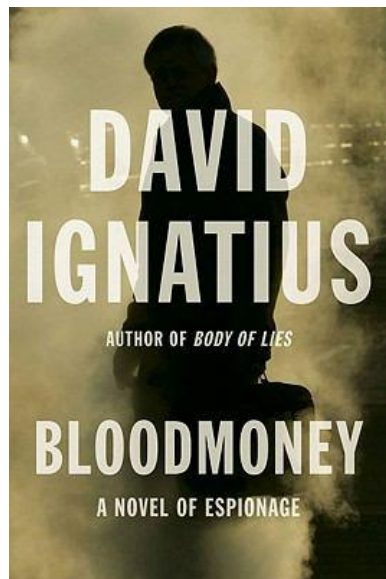


“Trader of Secrets” by Steve Martini. 2011, HarperCollins. \$26.99, 392 pages.

Martini gets high marks for his legal thrillers starring main character Paul Madriani. His writing style is crisp and momentum builds with each page turn. Martini’s latest novel finds Paul’s daughter, Sarah, in seclusion hiding from a stalker named Liquida. Sarah is tired of her armed guard and wants to go running early one morning. However, danger awaits her outside as Liquida has the house under surveillance. Add to this, a secondary plot of espionage with government technology being offered to the highest bidder. Paul has the assistance of his girlfriend Joselyn Cole and his law partner Harry Hinds as the investigative journey leads the trio from California to Washington, D. C. and also to Mexico, Paris, and Bangkok. What seems to be at stake is a real WMD and the safety of the world is at risk. Martini excels at telling a believable story and his reputation is well earned. Steve Martini has also written “Rule of Nine,” “Guardian of Lies, and “Shadow of Power.” A former attorney, Martini now spends his time writing novels.



“Blood Money” by David Ignatius. 2011, W.W. Norton and Company. \$25.95. 367 pages.



David Ignatius has won multiple prizes as a columnist for the Washington Post. His vast knowledge of the CIA and the Middle East is evident in his fiction writing. Members of an intelligence unit trying to obtain peace in foreign locales through monetary outlay are being killed one by one. Sophie Marx, an officer with the CIA, is assigned the devilish job of determining who is responsible for the murders. Sophie’s investigation leads to a hedge fund in England, the Middle East, and the mountains of northwest Pakistan. Sophie discovers that things are not quite as they seem at first glance and disturbing violence and unchecked vengeance end in bloodshed and treachery. Other key characters assisting Sophie include Pakistani Lt. General Mohammed Malik of ISI (Inter-Services Intelligence), an information officer; her boss Jeffrey Gertz; and Cyril Hoffman from CIA Headquarters. The story begins with Malik asking the Homer Barkin, head of CIA operations in Islamabad, if the United States was running intelligence operations outside normal CIA channels. Malik fears that the US has “new capabilities” in the region and despite Homer’s steadfast denial. Malik warns his friend Homer at the end of the meeting, “If you stick your fingers in new places, they may get cut off.” The story is complicated and you might need a playlist. Although clearly a work of fiction, this seems very real when compared to current events. David has also written “Body of Lies” and “The Increment.”

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