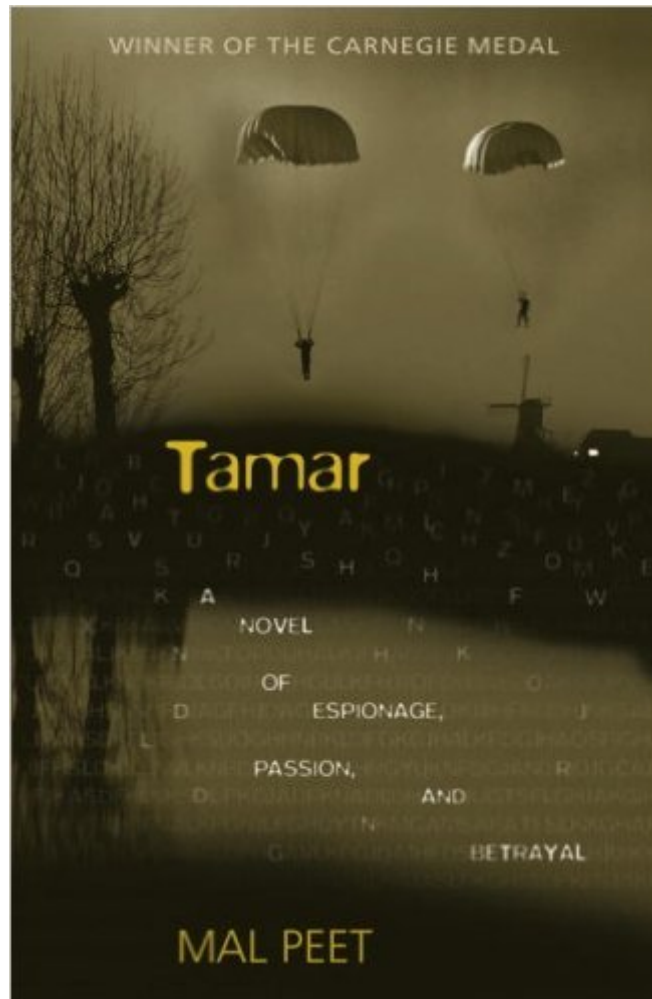


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Tamar: A Novel Of Espionage, Passion, And Betrayal



Synopsis

Now available - the Carnegie Medal winner comes to the U.S. When her grandfather dies, Tamar inherits a box containing a series of clues and coded messages. Out of the past, another Tamar emerges, a man involved in the terrifying world of resistance fighters in Nazi-occupied Holland half a century before. His story is one of passionate love, jealousy, and tragedy set against the daily fear and casual horror of the Second World War -- and unraveling it is about to transform Tamar's life forever. From acclaimed British sensation Mal Peet comes a masterful story of adventure, love, secrets, and betrayal in time of war, both past and present.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Tamar and Dart are spies who parachute into Nazi-occupied Netherlands during the "Hunger Winter" of 1944. Tamar's mission is to convince Dutch resistance groups to unify under the authority of the British government. Dart is his wireless operator, at a time when a WO's life expectancy in the field is just a few months. Tamar is undercover as a farm laborer sent home from Nazi work camps due to broken health. Dart is disguised as a doctor in residence at a sanatorium. They communicate only with the help of local resistance members, any of whom could be Nazi spies. Very little information is given about the characters beyond their duties as spies. Both are Dutch, but it is never revealed how they came to be recruited by the British or what their lives were like before they were spies. It is almost as though their choice to become spies has erased all other sense of identity. They have no past and no future beyond their present mission, even as personal feelings begin to color their relationships to one another and the organization they serve. Approximately 50

years later, a teen girl, also named Tamar, inherits a mysterious box from her grandfather. She and her cousin Yoyo take a trip into the British countryside seeking the origins of the Tamar river and the answer to a family secret that has remained hidden for generations. The two stories dovetail in a compelling novel about the legacy of a world at war, binding people across borders and generations. World War II happened so long ago that it is beginning to pass from memory into history. The world of TAMAR's spies is so different from our own that it might as well be an imaginary world.

I was sucked in by the first line: "In the end, it was her grandfather, William Hyde, who gave the unborn child her name. He was serious about names; he'd had several himself." One day, out of the blue, William Hyde asks his son to name his daughter Tamar. He explains that when he was a Dutch resistance fighter working for the British during WWII, their code names were taken from rivers in England. His son assumes it was his father's code name and agrees to name her Tamar. After this brief introduction, the story jumps back in time to follow two young Dutch secret agents, code names Dart and Tamar. The two friends parachute into the occupied Netherlands in the dead of night. Tamar is charged with organizing the fragmented resistance efforts. Dart is his wireless operator. When they arrive, Tamar finds he is based out of the farm where a young woman named Marijke lives. It turns out the two met and fell in love a year ago but never thought they'd see each other again after Tamar was sent back to England. As they rekindle their romance amid the terror and starvation gripping the country, Dart is not so lucky. Based out of an insane asylum, he poses as a doctor, making trip after treacherous trip into town to relay encrypted messages and receive directions from headquarters in England. The events that overtake these two friends combine to create a web of deception and anger that reaches out to cover three generations. This story is bleak. The focus is on the horrors of war and what they do to the men and women involved, the indelible mark left on their lives long after the guns are silenced and the violence is over. In the WWII chapters, the writing is coolly objective.

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