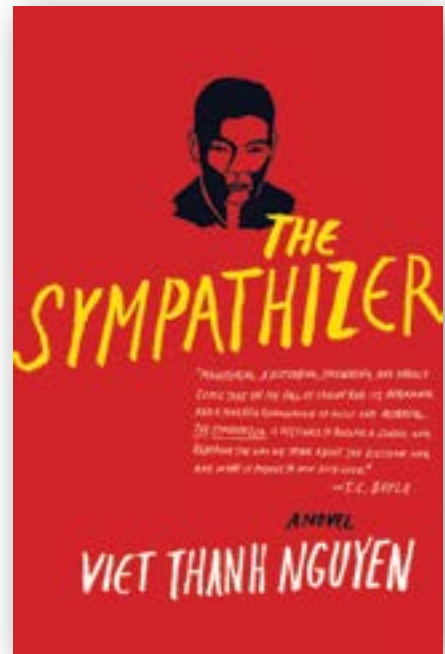


A startling debut novel from a powerful new voice featuring one of the most remarkable narrators of recent fiction: a conflicted subversive and idealist working as a double agent in the aftermath of the Vietnam War

# The Sympathizer

Viet Thanh Nguyen



## MARKETING

Nguyen is an award-winning short story writer—his story “The Other Woman” won the 2007 Gulf Coast Barthelme Prize for Short Prose

Nguyen is codirector of the Diasporic Vietnamese Artists Network and edits a blog on Vietnamese arts and culture

Published to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of the Fall of Saigon

prepublication reading copies

eGalleys available on NetGalley and Edelweiss

8-city tour (Boston \* New York City \* Washington, D.C. \* San Diego \* Los Angeles \* San Francisco \* Portland \* Seattle)

major off-the-book page coverage

major review coverage

library marketing including ALA

featured at Winter Institute

literary blog outreach

publication buzz campaign

IndieBound bookseller outreach campaign

online promotion (vietnguyen.info)

Twitter @viet\_t\_nguyen

“Magisterial. A disturbing, fascinating and darkly comic take on the fall of Saigon and its aftermath and a powerful examination of guilt and betrayal. *The Sympathizer* is destined to become a classic and redefine the way we think about the Vietnam War and what it means to win and to lose.” —T. C. Boyle

A profound, startling, and beautifully crafted debut novel, *The Sympathizer* is the story of a man of two minds, someone whose political beliefs clash with his individual loyalties. In dialogue with but diametrically opposed to the narratives of the Vietnam War that have preceded it, this novel offers an important and unfamiliar new perspective on the war: that of a conflicted communist sympathizer.

It is April 1975, and Saigon is in chaos. At his villa, a general of the South Vietnamese army is drinking whiskey and, with the help of his trusted captain, drawing up a list of those who will be given passage aboard the last flights out of the country. The general and his compatriots start a new life in Los Angeles, unaware that one among their number, the captain, is secretly observing and reporting on the group to a higher-up in the Viet Cong. *The Sympathizer* is the story of this captain: a man brought up by an absent French father and a poor Vietnamese mother, a man who went to university in America, but returned to Vietnam to fight for the Communist cause. Viet Thanh Nguyen’s astonishing novel takes us inside the mind of this double agent, a man whose lofty ideals necessitate his betrayal of the people closest to him. A gripping spy novel, an astute exploration of extreme politics, and a moving love story, *The Sympathizer* explores a life between two worlds and examines the legacy of the Vietnam War in literature, film, and the wars we fight today.



\$26.00  
6 x 9, 384 pp.  
Fiction (FIC019000)  
978-0-8021-2345-9  
eISBN: 978-0-8021-9169-4  
U.S. and Canadian rights: Grove Press

All other rights: Sobel Weber Associates  
(New York, tel.: 212-420-8585)  
Carton quantity: 28  
Export: USO  
Residence: Los Angeles, California

## Excerpt

I am a spy, a sleeper, a spook, a man of two faces. Perhaps not surprisingly, I am also a man of two minds. I am not some misunderstood mutant from a comic book or a horror movie, although some have treated me as such. I am simply able to see any issue from both sides. Sometimes I flatter myself that this is a talent, and although it is admittedly one of a minor nature, it is perhaps also the sole talent I possess. At other times, when I reflect on how I cannot help but observe the world in such a fashion, I wonder if what I have should even be called talent. After all, a talent is something you use, not something that uses you. The talent you cannot not use, the talent that possesses you—that is a hazard, I must confess. But in the month when this confession begins, my way of seeing the world still seemed more of a virtue than a danger, which is how all virtues first appear.

The month in question was April, the cruelest month. It was the month in which a war that had run on for a very long time would lose its limbs, as is the way of wars. It was a month that meant everything to all the people in our small part of the world and nothing to most people in the rest of the world. It was a month that was both an end of a war and the beginning of . . . well, “peace” is not the right word, is it, my dear commandant?

COURTESY VIET THANH NGUYEN



**VIET THANH NGUYEN** was born in Vietnam and raised in America. His stories have appeared in *Best New American Voices*, *TriQuarterly*, *Narrative*, and the *Chicago Tribune* and he is the author of the academic book *Race and Resistance*. He teaches English and American Studies at the University of Southern California and lives in Los Angeles.

## PRAISE FOR *THE SYMPATHIZER*

It is a strong, strange and liberating joy to read this book, feeling with each page that a broken world is being knitted back together, once again whole and complete. As far as I am concerned, Viet Thanh Nguyen’s *The Sympathizer*—both a great American novel and a great Vietnamese novel—will close the shelf on the literature of the Vietnam War.”

—Bob Shacochis, author of *The Woman Who Lost Her Soul*

“Read this novel with care; it is easy to read, wry, ironic, wise, and captivating, but it could change not only your outlook on the Vietnam War, but your outlook on what you believe about politics and ideology in general. It does what the best of literature does, expands your consciousness beyond the limitations of your body and individual circumstances.”

—Karl Marlantes, author of *Matterhorn* and *What It Is Like to Go to War*

“Not only does Viet Thanh Nguyen bring a rare and authentic voice to the body of American literature generated by the Vietnam War, he has created a book that transcends history and politics and nationality and speaks to the enduring theme of literature: the universal quest for self, for identity. *The Sympathizer* is a stellar debut by a writer of depth and skill.”

—Robert Olen Butler, Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Good Scent from a Strange Mountain*

“I think I’d have to go all the way back to Nabokov’s *Humbert Humbert* to find the last narrative voice that so completely conked me over the head and took me prisoner. Nguyen and his unnamed protagonist certainly have made a name for themselves with one of the smartest, darkest, funniest books you’ll read this year.”

—David Abrams, author of *Fobbit*

“Audaciously and vividly imagined. A compelling read.”

—Andrew X. Pham, author of *Catfish and Mandala*