

The Wasted Vigil

12th September 2008
The Daily Mail

Nadeem Aslam's follow-up to his acclaimed *Maps For Lost Lovers* is about people searching for someone they've lost, played out against two decades of war in Afghanistan.

In 2007 Lara, a Russian woman, journeys to Afghanistan and the house of an English doctor, Marcus Caldwell, looking for her soldier brother Benedikt, who vanished during the Russian occupation.

Benedikt knew Marcus's daughter Zameen, who also went missing - and then, like her mother, was found to have been murdered by the Taliban.

Soon afterwards, David Town arrives, an American CIA agent who once loved Zameen and now periodically visits Marcus.

Into this mix is thrown Casa, a radicalised young man wounded on a terrorist mission against the Americans but purporting to be the victim of a robbery.

Significantly, perhaps, Marcus lives in the shadow of the Tora Bora mountains, where, of course, the big hunt goes on for Osama bin Laden.

None of the searches has a happy resolution, but what the reader finds, in Aslam's exquisitely written, gripping narrative, is that although war destroys lives and shatters families, and people are capable of the greatest brutality, love and humanity still survive.

This story was found at: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/home/books/article-1055245/The-Wasted-Vigil.html#>