



A False Mirror

Charles Todd

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Rutledge is called on to prove the innocence of a man he dislikes and distrusts. But the deadly triangle also stirs up memories of the woman he himself loved and lost when he went to France to fight.

Hampton Regis, a small harbor town on the southern coast of England, is a most unlikely place for violence. Yet, one early spring morning in 1920, a man is found on the strand so severely beaten that he slips in and out of consciousness. The prime suspect? His wife's jilted lover, who served with Rutledge in the recently ended Great War—but who left the Front under a cloud. Badly wounded, yes, but did someone also cover up cowardice?

Rutledge is called on to prove the innocence of a man he dislikes and distrusts. But the deadly triangle also stirs up memories of the woman Rutledge himself loved and lost when he went to France to fight. His doubts about the accused and himself only deepen when the victim of the beating mysteriously disappears, with no body to be found.

As the brilliant yet tormented detective discovers that he's not the only person seeing a reflection of tumultuous emotions in this case, he must confront the demons that threaten to overwhelm him and search out the truth. For in Hampton Regis hides a vicious killer who intends to let nothing—and no one—stand in the way.

A False Mirror Details

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From Reader Review A False Mirror for online ebook

Brian Maicke says

A bit of a bad spell for me and period mysteries. I normally enjoy Charles Todd's Inspector Rutledge series but this one left me pretty flat. The mystery itself was not unsatisfying, but two of the main characters affected by the plot were so completely unsympathetic to me that I just wanted to get through the story so I would not have to read about them anymore.

Lisa says

When I began this entry in the Ian Rutledge series, I thought (after getting into the situation) that the plot would be impossible to make interesting--but I was wrong! This is an enjoyable series, especially for people who like books set in England between the two world wars.

Mary Munroe says

Good Mystery

I really liked this Ian Rutledge mystery. I could not put it down. The characters were interesting and there were enough red herrings to fill a boat.

Craig says

3 1/2 stars. Hamish seems to be retreating a bit. Not that I miss him all that much, as he occasionally get a bit tiring - maybe it's just a coincidence that this title isn't quite up to snuff as some of the rest.

Megan says

A rainy afternoon seemed the perfect time to read the newest entry in the moody Charles Todd mysteries about shell-shocked Scotland Yard detective Ian Rutledge. As a big fan of the time period, I have always liked series like this and the Maisie Dobbs books by Jacqueline Winspear, because they take you so vividly to a time and a place absolutely dominated by a shared experience, World War I. Rutledge is an interesting character, deeply scarred by his war experiences, but trying to move on with his career in Scotland Yard. His coping mechanism is an unusual one, in that he hears (in his head) the voice of one of the men who died under his command in the trenches. This distinctive inner voice is both an intense distraction, but also a second conscience. And strangely enough it makes him a better policeman. The plots of the series are not nearly as interesting as watching poor Rutledge battling his demons. Author Todd writes classic examples of what used to be called the "fair play" mystery, where all of the information that a reader might need to solve the mystery is provided, if hidden amongst red herrings. He cheats a bit here, and the story drags a little in

the middle, but it contains a good climax and reveal, which manages to surprise due to the large number of possible suspects. If it had been a little tighter plotted, I would have happily given it more than a guarded 4 stars. As it is I still look forward to the next in this interesting series.

Carol says

I enjoyed this book of Ian Rutledge as detective a bit more than others because the ultimate who of the who done it wasn't easy to guess and in actuality very unobvious. The pacing was slow but still enjoyable. I do find these books worth the read and will continue with the series.

Larraine says

This novel takes place starting in February, 1920. Ian Rutledge has been back in Scotland Yard after the Great War for less than a year. The war haunts him as it has so many of the men who survived. Rutledge is working an important case in London when he is told that a case in a small town along the southern English coast requires his attention. A man is holding a woman hostage and insists that Rutledge personally investigate. He served under Rutledge in the war. Rutledge despises him because his uncle, a bishop with connections, had him pulled out of combat. Despite his personal dislike, he agrees to investigate. The former officer is holding the wife of a retired foreign service officer. They were in love before the war, but he told her not to wait. She met Matthew, a retired foreign service worker, and fell in love. When the war was over, her former love followed her to her new town. When her husband is badly beaten, her former lover is suspected. He takes her hostage but with her help which complicates matters. This book seemed to be a bit of a stretch compared to some of the others. Even in Great Britain of 1920, I doubt that civility would allow someone to be held hostage for that long. It really is a intriguing story though with a interesting ending.

Deb says

This was one of the best Inspector Rutledge books yet. An influential diplomat has been attacked and left for dead and the main suspect is the diplomat's ex-fiance Stephen Mallory. Mallory served at the front with Rutledge, and despite their shared negative history, Mallory asks Rutledge to prove he's not the perpetrator. Once again, Rutledge battles his supervisor and his past, represented by Hamish. I especially liked this installment because I was misled as to the true perpetrator. I also liked how Rutledge was forced to deal with his past.

Jeri says

This was the ninth in the Inspector Rutledge series of books. The stories take place after WWI and often many of the characters have suffered due to the war. Ian Rutledge, the protagonist, suffers from "shell shock" or the term for PTSD from way back. The people who didn't serve generally regard these ex-soldiers as cowards and crazy people. It's hard to see that society has progressed much from 1920. This mystery takes place in a small town where a man has been beaten almost to death. The Constable has accused a local citizen of attempting to murder the victim because the victim's wife was the local's fiancé before the war.

The local, Malloy, had served under Rutledge's command in the Somme in France. Malloy had been a Lieutenant under Captain Rutledge. The town constable found Malloy at the home of his ex-fiancé trying to explain to her that he had not beaten her husband. Malloy took her hostage and sent the constable away to locate Rutledge so he could find the real culprit. From there Rutledge goes about his investigation, not quickly enough for anyone. With very little information to go on and an already bad relationship between Malloy and Rutledge it takes Rutledge a while. Rutledge goes on annoying everyone, talking to everyone, research all involved. Meanwhile two more murders occur. Lots of red herrings. The actual bad guy does not enter into the story much until the end. Usually I can pick the murderer but this one I didn't. Another good story. Another enjoyable book.

Patsyann says

A mystery with no forensics, no CSI team and no cell phones or Ipads. And the mystery is solved - in a week!! Ian Rutledge solves the mystery by watching faces as he gives people information. He can tell exactly what they did or didn't do by how they react to the information. He does this all, while suffering from World War I's version of PTSD - shell shock !!

Love these books!! And the bad guy in this book - came out of nowhere and was a complete surprise. Loved it!! I also love how the author(s) makes me feel like I am really in 1920 England, I smell it, hear it and feel it. BEST USE OF: an English village by the sea, people who volunteer information and relatives that have information that you need to solve a crime!

ALPHA MALE: -none here

SPUNKY HEROINE: none here

RUNNING THROUGH ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE: 10+

NO SEX: 10+

HEA - 0

PROLOGUE/EPILOGUE: -none- but the ending was one of the best endings in the Ian Rutledge series!!

Rating

9 - a keeper

Heat Level

0 -the only heat in this book - Spring!!

HOLLYWOOD CALLING: Tom Hardy as Rutledge and still James McAvoy as Hamish

Saleh MoonWalker says

Onvan : A False Mirror (Inspector Ian Rutledge, #9) - Nevisande : Charles Todd - ISBN : 60786736 - ISBN13 : 9780060786731 - Dar 371 Safhe - Saal e Chap : 2007

Nicole says

What do I think? I think you have to be a Charles Todd fan to enjoy any aspect of this book. The premise is pretty hard to believe. Also, this book is starting to read like his/her previous books. Creating tension between the local detective and Ian Rutledge is thoroughly played out. Unless you're into reading the series in order (like I am), I would skip this one entirely.

Diane says

There is so much to love about Charles Todd's books. The extensive research provides such a palatable sense of time and place in post-war England. And they build such beautiful sentences. I especially liked this passage.

"Except for what he'd read or been told since, he knew nothing about the peace that had been fought over and turned into punishment for Germany, each participating nation stretching out greedy hands for what they wanted out of the shambles of dead men's suffering. He'd been locked in his own private hell while Wilson and Lloyd George and Clemenceau created the new world in their own images. The Kaiser was gone, shut in his tiny estate in Holland, and the Tsar, deposed and dragged around Russia like a trophy until he was no longer of any value to anyone, was dead."

A later scene showed the authors' attention to detail that illustrates a character's personality.

"There was a fresh pot of tea waiting for them, and a plate of biscuits that Putnam had found somewhere, set out on a pretty floral plate.

. . . Bennett refused the offer of a chair and leaned against the wall with his teacup balanced in one hand. Rutledge found himself thinking that Mrs. Granville wouldn't have cared for people making free with her fine china, and would have worried about the cup in Bennett's fist."

Like all the Ian Rutledge mysteries, there are plenty of suspects and red herrings and Agatha Christie-esque plots and only once have I ever figured out the identity of the villain before it is revealed. But there is so much more to the book than just the plot and I thoroughly enjoyed this one.

Dee says

ian rutledge,mysteries,detective stories,england,WWI

Lawyer says

Perhaps it is just me. Or perhaps the mother and son duo Charles Todd are beginning to run out of steam with their Ian Rutledge series. Don't get me wrong. "A False Mirror" was a fair read. I was entertained. However, the darkness of the previous volumes in this series has been fueled by Rutledge's experiences in the trenches of World War One. Those issues are present in this latest outing. But those issues are much less present in "A False Mirror." Rutledge is still accompanied by his constant companion Hamish, whose voice is an ever present reminder of the horrors of World War One. But Hamish's contributions in the latest volume seem a mere plot device, a way of learning what is going through Rutledge's mind in the investigative process.

The Great War's connection to "A False Mirror" is a man with whom Rutledge served in France. He has returned from the war to find the woman he loved has married another man, one much more well off, and a man of high social position. When his former love's husband is found severely beaten and left to drown in

the incoming tide, Rutledge's former comrade in arms is the prime suspect. Through a plot line that stretches credulity, the beaten man's wife urges her former love to appear as though he's holding her hostage, even giving him her husband's revolver which he obligingly brandishes to the local constable who comes to inform the lady that her husband is hovering at death's door in the local doctor's surgery.

Our poor suspect will not cooperate to any degree and demand that Ian Rutledge be summoned. Rutledge is the only man he will talk to.

When Rutledge arrives on the scene, the bodies begin to pile up. The maid in the "hostage" household is smothered with a pillow. The Doctor's wife is bludgeoned to death. And most mysteriously, the battered man who had apparently been comatose has disappeared from the Doctor's surgery.

The Todds roll out a substantial number of suspects. The plotting is less precise than the previous taut tales by this mother and son. There are too many loose ends here and the ultimate revelation of the killer is less than satisfying.

"A False Mirror" is a decent English Village mystery. However, that is all it is. Perhaps the Todds recognized the difficulty of crossing the bar they raised for themselves repeatedly. They wrote a stand alone mystery entitled "The Murder Stone" before returning to Rutledge's investigations.

This is Rutledge's ninth investigation. The tally stands at thirteen. With some misgiving I'm on to "The Pale Horse" and hope that I find the Ian Rutledge and Hamish I came to know so well in the earlier Rutledge novels.
