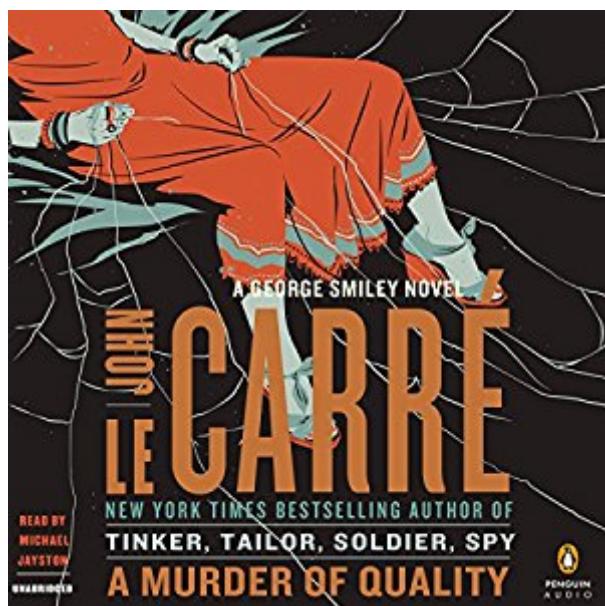


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A Murder Of Quality: A George Smiley Novel



Synopsis

John le Carré's second novel, *A Murder of Quality*, offers an exquisite, satirical look at an elite private school as it chronicles the early development of George Smiley. Miss Ailsa Brimley is in a quandary. She's received a peculiar letter from Mrs. Stella Rode, saying that she fears her husband - an assistant master at Carne School - is trying to kill her. Reluctant to go to the police, Miss Brimley calls upon her old wartime colleague, George Smiley. Unfortunately, it's too late. Mrs. Rode has just been murdered. As Smiley takes up the investigation, he realizes that in life - as in espionage - nothing is quite what it appears.

Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

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Version: Unabridged

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Whispersync for Voice: Ready

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#72 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Mysteries & Thrillers > British Detectives #466
in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > British Detectives

Customer Reviews

Readable, but George should return to his normal job as spy. He seemed out of place as a private detective solving a murder, even one of quality.

Rich English, talks about countryside lifestyle, social distinction; with a punch of murder and systematic investigation. The book could only be written by a seasoned investigator.

It is a detective novel unlike other novels of Smiley series. It is excellent , though may not be as exciting as a spy novel

This is the second George Smiley novel (after *Call of the Dead*) and one can see that LeCarre is still

trying to figure out the character. John le Carre worked for a short while as teacher at Eton, one of the great English public (that is private as opposed to royal) schools. It is clear that he found many of the traditions and notions to be wanting and that the quality of the education far from the stated ideals. Smiley is asked to look into an odd death at an English public schools, "one of the great schools", Carne - possibly a play on words for "meat"? It isn't a spy thriller. It has some of the same plotting elements. Smiley is asked to help out to clear up a problem by an old friend. He has to move among his social class (public school academics). For contemporary readers some of the details may seem puzzling - it is postwar England in the 1950's - as shown by a reference to Hungarian refugees (~1956). Cars are not ubiquitous. The economy is tight and many men and women live lives of quiet desperation. One has to speculate if some of the characters are drawn from personal experience - did le Carre ever know a woman so venal as to be deserving (as he intimates) the horrible manner of her death? An interesting book - completists will want to read this to see how George Smiley evolves. He is a bit more plodding and doesn't seem to exhibit the "cunning of satan" but does seem already to have the "conscience of a virgin". For those searching for the international espionage gritty thrillers - better to start with Call of the Dead and then skip ahead to the great The Spy Who Came in From the Cold and the very good The Looking Glass War to see Smiley come into clear focus. That will clear the palate for the Karla Trilogy (Tinker, Tailor, Soldier Spy, The Honourable Schoolboy, and Smiley's People).

I enjoyed the non-spy murder mystery for a change. Lots of intrigue and mystery solving. An excellent read! Smiley solving crimes without the intelligence story background.

Not the best Smiley novel, but a satisfying and useful prelude for anyone who has been caught up in the later works.

Well-written with well drawn characters. We'll describes the foibles and foolishness of British class distinctions amidst a good crime mystery.

OK, not great. Stilted old British.

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