The Thirty-Nine Steps by John Buchan

A Spymaster Who Writes Spy Novels

Perhaps more than any other book The Thirty-Nine Steps has set the pattern for the story of the chase for a wanted man. And, of the many writers who have attempted this kind of thing since Buchan, only a very few, like Graham Greene, have managed to sustain the tension in the same way. The main character is Buchan’s familiar hero, Richard Hannay who gets caught up quite suddenly on a dull London afternoon in a situation of extreme danger. Before he knows what is happening he is the obvious suspect for a murder committed in his own flat, and has to go on the run to his native Scotland.

My Personal Review:
It was not until recently that actor Douglas Fairbanks, Jr. and others learned and revealed the information that John Buchan, author of The Thirty-nine Steps as well as the highly successful Greenmantle series, had been the head of the secretive British domestic intelligence agency which parallels the FBI in the United States, MI-5. With that knowledge it is increasingly easier to see how the Scotland-born Buchan was able to write such penetrating spy stories, which contain such a strong tone of believability.

The Thirty-nine Steps traces the activities of Richard Hannay into the world of master spies. This gripping first person account details how an innocent was drawn into the grimy world of espionage after an American called Scudder who lived in his Portland Place apartment building contacted him one day, telling him he was about to be assassinated by a group of master spies. When the act is accomplished Hannay becomes a sought after potential victim as the spy group fears what he might know about their enterprise. He is also pursued by police as a murder suspect in Scudders death.

Hannay, a former international mining engineer, tells adventure stories about his foreign experiences and uses common sense resourcefulness to prevent the police from arresting him as the suspected killer of Scudder.
and the spy masters who want him dead for what he might have learned from his former neighbor Scudder. Buchan, a former mountain climber and a distinct man of action, presents Hannay as a man much like himself, using mental and physical resourcefulness to stay out of harms path. Scotsman Buchan presents excellent descriptions of chase sequences in the Scottish moors as Hannay hides in and steps through heather and brush, eluding those who chase him. Eventually Hannay is able to solve the case by using logic in the way of Arthur Conan Doyles presentation of Sherlock Holmes. Buchan was influenced by Doyle. This influence is particularly notable at the storys fascinating conclusion.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
The Thirty-Nine Steps by John Buchan - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!