Gripping Espionage Thriller - 1St In Smiley /Karla Trilogy

Smiley and his people are facing a remarkable challenge: a mole - a soviet double agent - who has burrowed his way in and up to the highest level of British Intelligence. His treachery has already blown some of their vital operations and their best networks. The mole is one of their own kind. But which one? His people are full-bodied, believable individuals, the minor characters as vivid as the main cast ...a stunning story

The arrival of a schoolmaster at a remote English boarding school is the unlikely beginning of a master spy-story. If the reader has perused the dust jacket, he is left wondering where the connection is. A bit boring in the beginning, the start of the novel is far from spectacular. Characters unfold almost as an aside. Connections are not evident. When the hero of the novel, George Smiley makes his entrance it is almost as an afterthought. Far unlike Ian Flemming with his techno-laden James Bond licensed to kill, Le Carres George Smiley is a prosaic, pedantic, lugubrious, painstaking, ordinary mortal with an orderly mind. He is a hero like no other. Not for him the flashy glamour of the spy world popularized by Alistair McLean, Ian Flemming, and others of their ilk. Smileys heroism lies in this mediocre methodic brilliance. And in his prodigious memory.

Cast away from the circus, he is called in from retirement to trap a mole high up in the secret service. His fall from grace is more a reflection of the times than his inherent worth. As the bureaucratic battles yield new order in the ranks of service, Smiley, of the old order, is viewed with suspicion and forced into retirement. But much as the irrepressible James Bond could not be done away by his numerous enemies, Smileys brilliance cannot be dispensed with by the Service. At a time when no one in the service can be trusted, when it is painfully obvious that one amongst the trusted four is a mole, Smiley is called in for his analysis. Nowhere is it stated that Smiley is brilliant. Nor does he appear to have any special
skills. It is almost as an apology that he is called in to clean up the mess in the circus. He is given no special powers to search and detain. His character is an epitome of the British understatement.
Yet, as the story unfolds, it is evident that Smiley is far from ordinary. Even more extraordinary than his subtly demonstrated analytical skills, is his reluctant human skills. He reaches out into his past. He cajoles his colleagues to share information. Without overt official sanction, his interrogative style is almost an apology. This queries are excruciatingly painstaking and pedantic. His tone is lugubrious and half-sleepy. His attention to detail is phenomenal. His inferences from interrogation is unexplained.
The character of Smiley is an exquisite painting. Smiley appears to be more of an academic than a spy - more at home in the musty libraries than trysting with elites from the Whitehall. His demeanor suggests a frumpy civil-servant rather than a spy-master. He can be readily pictured as a short, cherubic, owlish, diffident man with a marked disdain for the finer things in life. As he shuffles along the morose London streets, there is nothing to distinguish him from the multitude of middle-aged men beaten by Life. His elegant and beautiful wife, disenchanted by his prosaic existence, and has abandoned him. His chief occupation is in forgetting the time he spent in the Service. Not quite bitter about his ouster, he appears a bit confused. In this, the very ordinariness of the one-time head of the Secret Service is his greatest asset.
Le Carre, in his own way, is probably one of the greatest of story-tellers of our time. He binds his readers in a loose sort of spell. Quite unlike the modern authors who seek to rush their stories along at a great speed, seeking to upstage their own previous chapter with something more breathtaking in the next, Le Carre lets the plot of his novels mature by itself. He lets the reader dwell on the plot. He lets them think and ponder over it. He does not insult the readers intelligence by presuming to give too many details. Some of it, he seems to say, they have to work out themselves. There are no fast-paced change in directions yanking the readers from excitement to excitement. The continuity of the story is seamless. Rather like Alfred Hitchcock, he sometimes seeks to bring the reader to the brink of understanding and leaves him empty-handed. A suspense built in this slow, measured and deliberate manner leaves the reader a bit unfulfilled on one hand, but gives some chaff for thoughtful replay of the plot on the other.
And yet, Le Carre is rich in his portrayals. The details he seeks to give are more to build up clarity than to confuse. Where the details of Tom Clancys novels drag his readers through a myriad of technical issues obscuring the plot, most of which are ultimately useless, Le Carres details are like eye-glasses that bring the novels environment into sharper focus.
Towards the end when Smiley catches up to the mole, we are left wondering how he did it. Trying to make the connections between various incidents and leaps of logic in inferences, we are left with a feeling of trying to catch wisps of smoke. There is presence without substance. It is always so in the shadowy settings of the circus. Shadowy as it, we merely brush against the even more shadowy figure of Karla Smileys arch-enemy at the
Moscow Center - against whom he pits his wits time and again in this and other Le Carre novels. Karlas presence is more felt than seen, less realized than experienced.

Some books are evidently put together hastily. Some are well written. Some are poorly written and asks the plot to make up for the writing talent. A few books are not just well written but well crafted. Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy is one such. In the manner of a well-rendered painting, where subtle attention to details lend elegance without attracting attention to itself, so does Le Carres attention to exquisite details portray a complete picture in the readers mind. The characters are three dimensional, and one can feel them. Like any good book with plethora of details, this novel transports the reader to the physical presence of the plot.

Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy - the title adapted from a nursery rhyme - is a serious read. It is not an easy read, not a fun read, but a read for the discriminating mind seeking serious fiction. The cold war is now past. But the shadowy workings of the tradecraft is still current. This novel captures it in all its realism without sensationalism. It is a simple novel with a complex plot.

For More 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price:
Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy by John Le Carre - 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest Price!