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City of Gold, Len Deighton, Arrow, 1993, 0099233916, 9780099233916, . .

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My Enemy, the Queen , Victoria Holt, Apr 19, 1993, , 444 pages. "SHE'S THE QUEEN OF THE GENRE; WITH HER AT THE HELM, YOU KNOW YOU'RE IN FOR A GREAT RIDE." --The Ocala Star-Banner It was Lettice who married the Earl of Leicester, whom

The Rift in the Lute , Noel Langley, 1953, American fiction, 188 pages. .

They sought out Rommel a diary of the Libyan campaign, from November 16th to December 31st, 1941 ..., Sean Fielding, 1942, History, 72 pages. .

Popski's private army , Vladimir Peniakoff, 1950, History, 369 pages. .

Cairo, 1942 - A city ruled by Egyptian royalty, occupied by the British military, seething with spies and deserters. Here in a hotbed of corruption, espionage, and profiteering, the war will reach a turning point and the future of the free world will be decided. Captain Bert Cutler, late of the Glasgow police, has been brought to Egypt with one purpose: to find Rommel's sp...more Cairo,

1942 - A city ruled by Egyptian royalty, occupied by the British military, seething with spies and deserters. Here in a hotbed of corruption, espionage, and profiteering, the war will reach a turning point and the future of the free world will be decided. Captain Bert Cutler, late of the Glasgow police, has been brought to Egypt with one purpose: to find Rommel's spy and plug the remarkable leak of exact intelligence that is making the Axis advance toward Cairo unstoppable. In a heady atmosphere of social gaiety, explosive politics, black marketeering, and sudden violence, Alice Stanhope, the beautiful young aristocrat with a well-connected mother in Alexandria; Prince Plotr, the aging Tsarist; Peggy West, the handsome British nurse awaiting her husband's return from a distant secret mission; exquisite Zeinab el-Shazil and her handsome brother, Sayed; Solomon al Masri, the wily arms dealer; Wally Wallingford, the reckless adventurer with his Independent Desert Teams; and a host of others will be ensnared in the tangled web of intrigue. From the formal headquarters of British Intelligence through the ancient streets of Cairo to bohemian soirees at the Hotel Magnifico...from a flamboyant houseboat on the Nile to remote desert villages and the shell-shattered wastes of the Sahara, Bert Cutler must pursue his clever and elusive prey. Even as the odds against the Allies escalate and the only victory possible must be snatched from the jaws of defeat, he dreams of a life with the lovely Alice, keenly aware that he himself is not what he seems. He is a man caught in a strange twist of fate...a man playing a brilliant charade. He is a man who has attended an inquiry into his own death and may yet live to face a charge of murder. Seizing a crucial moment of history and bringing it vividly to life in all its drama, irony, and ambiguity, Len Deighton has created a brilliant and compelling thriller that will grab you on the first page and hold you spellbound to the very end.(less)

I love the atmosphere of this novel. Deighton does a wonderful job of creating Cairo during World War II. The characters are interesting, and his context of both the war and the political climate are well done. Unfortunately, the book proceeds at the pace of one of Deighton's Bernard Sampson novels. While the Sampson novels are staged to evolve and reveal at a pace suited to the later years of the cold war, this story needs more tension or at least a sense of urgency. In the end, I found myself...more I love the atmosphere of this novel. Deighton does a wonderful job of creating Cairo during World War II. The characters are interesting, and his context of both the war and the political climate are well done. Unfortunately, the book proceeds at the pace of one of Deighton's Bernard Sampson novels. While the Sampson novels are staged to evolve and reveal at a pace suited to the later years of the cold war, this story needs more tension or at least a sense of urgency. In the end, I found myself wanting something more.(less)

Len Deighton is almost as famous for his meticulously researched World War II stories (and non-fiction) as he is for his Cold War spy thrillers. City of Gold is his farewell to this sub-genre, and I think it is the best of his late novels. Like several others of his Second World War stories, it is inspired by actual events; set in Cairo during the North African campaign, it tells of the hunt for a spy who was revealing all the details of the All...more Originally published on my blog here in March 2005.

This twist adds an extra touch of humanity to the story, which otherwise could easily have been dry for a thriller. As you might expect, Cairo is expertly realised (it is as convincing as the setting in Olivia Manning's Levant trilogy, set in the same place at the same time and written by one who was there), and the background details show the research to have been thorough. Cairo, the city of gold, is a corrupt place in the period, and now it is a frightened one, and so the novel is filled with examples of the sordid side of human nature; Deighton keeps this entertaining rather than depressing.

City of Gold is the best of Deighton's nineties novels, the only one to really score near his classics of earlier decades. Thirty years on from The Ipcress File, Deighton was probably not really thinking about gaining new fans and there is little that is new here; but it is far more successful than Mamista, the only one of his late novels which could be described as innovative.

Just to give a brief introduction: The setting is Cairo, also known as the "City of Gold", during the Second World War and Rommel is making great headway against the British and is approaching Cairo. Apparently Rommel has a spy in the British army, because he knows their movements in

advance and is acutely aware of their strengths a...more I found this to be a hugely enjoyable read. Some of Len Deighton's novels have been made into films and I think this novel will fare very well in the form of a movie.

Deighton shows a very precise understanding of the historical period and the nature of the army. The circumstances have an authentic feel and the story is based on real happenings amalgamated with fictional characters. For those who enjoy Second World War historical fiction and even those who like a pleasant detective/police/spy story, this is a good reading option.(less)

I like books that put me in a different time and place. This book is about life and intrigue in the city of Cairo in the early 1940's. Nazi Field Marshall Rommel is advancing across the desert, the British are resisting, and black-marketeers are running guns for Zionists and making quick money any dangerous way they can. An interesting cast of characters. Not a spell-binder, but moves along nicely with a decent plot and subplots.

I was surprised I hadn't read any Len Deighton books in the past " I certainly know the name " and I'm glad to have read this one... I always enjoy books set in foreign locations that I have traveled to including Cairo (the City of Gold) where this story takes place. The war time spy theme is well paced with good characters and it includes an interesting twist. Although not as spell binding as some Ken Follett spy novels, I will make a point of reading more from this author.

It had an interesting plot and the story-line was good but it seemed to simmer on a low flame. The intrigue and suspense I had expected never really developed and I think more could have been done with the characters. This is my first reading of a Len Deighton novel and although it didn't quite come up to mustard, I wouldn't hesitate to read another in the hope that it would.

This review has been hidden because it contains spoilers. To view it, click here. A rather disappointing espionage tale set in 1942 Egypt. It begins wonderfully and through the entire book, I anticipated a climax with the name of the spy revealed...but...Deighton disappoints, making the spy an unknown character in the American embassy. Unless I missed the whole point...

Deighton was born in Marylebone, London, in 1929. His father was a chauffeur and mechanic, and his mother was a part-time cook. After leaving school, Deighton worked as a railway clerk before performing his National Service, which he spent as a photographer for the Royal Air Force's Special Investigation Branch. After discharge from the RAF, he studied at St Martin's School of Art in London in 1949...more Deighton was born in Marylebone, London, in 1929. His father was a chauffeur and mechanic, and his mother was a part-time cook. After leaving school, Deighton worked as a railway clerk before performing his National Service, which he spent as a photographer for the Royal Air Force's Special Investigation Branch. After discharge from the RAF, he studied at St Martin's School of Art in London in 1949, and in 1952 won a scholarship to the Royal College of Art, graduating in 1955.

Deighton worked as an airline steward with BOAC. Before he began his writing career he worked as an illustrator in New York and, in 1960, as an art director in a London advertising agency. He is credited with creating the first British cover for Jack Kerouac's *On the Road*. He has since used his drawing skills to illustrate a number of his own military history books.

Following the success of his first novels, Deighton became *The Observer's* cookery writer and produced illustrated cookbooks. In September 1967 he wrote an article in the *Sunday Times Magazine* about Operation Snowdrop - an SAS attack on Benghazi during World War II. The following year David Stirling would be awarded substantial damages in libel from the article.

He also wrote travel guides and became travel editor of *Playboy*, before becoming a film producer. After producing a film adaptation of his 1968 novel *Only When I Larf*, Deighton and photographer Brian Duffy bought the film rights to Joan Littlewood and Theatre Workshop's stage musical *Oh, What a Lovely War!* He had his name removed from the credits of the film, however, which was a move that he later described as "stupid and infantile." That was his last involvement with the cinema.

Deighton left England in 1969. He briefly resided in Blackrock, County Louth in Ireland. He has not returned to England apart from some personal visits and very few media appearances, his last one since 1985 being a 2006 interview which formed part of a "Len Deighton Night" on BBC Four. He and his wife Ysabele divide their time between homes in Portugal and Guernsey.

If the author of *The Ipcress File* is not at the very top of his form here, he nevertheless produces an absorbing and well-crafted WW II thriller. In January 1942, infamous Gen. Erwin Rommel is making a seemingly unstoppable march on Cairo, the "city of gold." Former Glasgow police detective Bert Cutler, now an Army captain, has been charged to uncover the spy who is feeding the Desert Fox information enabling him to thwart all British strategies. En route to his new post, Cutler escorts fellow Scotsman Jimmy Ross, accused of murder, to the military prison in Cairo. When Cutler dies of a heart attack in their private train compartment, Ross assumes his identity. Readers might expect that Ross's efforts to carry off the impersonation and capture Rommel's agent will be the focus of this 24th offering from an acknowledged master of espionage fiction, yet Ross is only one member of an intriguing ensemble cast, which includes a society girl turned undercover agent, a British deserter heading up a band of renegades, an exiled Russian prince and King Farouk himself. Story lines concern not just the war but also black-market activities and the efforts of Jewish operatives to arm themselves for the anticipated battle for a homeland. Directing his varied characters and juggling his many subplots, Deighton demonstrates enviable legerdemain. Literary Guild main selection.

Abandoning present-day intrigues (*MAMista*, *Spy Sinker*, etc.), Deighton journeys back to WW II (SS-GB and XPD)--and a terrific return it is: a rich drama of heroes and villains awaiting German General Erwin Rommel's attack on Cairo--the "city of gold." The plots here are many, but central among them is the attempt by Special Investigation Branch Major Bert Cutler to unmask the spy who's been leaking British secrets to Rommel. The kicker is that Cutler isn't Cutler; he's really Jimmy Ross, a British corporal who was on his way to Cairo to be court-martialed for killing an officer when his escort, Cutler, keeled over from a heart attack. Quick-thinking Ross switched IDs with Cutler and now finds himself in Cairo with an office, full staff, and *carte blanche* to turn the city upside down in pursuit of the spy--that is, if he doesn't betray himself first to any of the marvelously realized characters who crowd the pages here, from his leathery assistant to a manipulative Jewish nationalist, a White Russian prince, two young and beautiful Englishwomen, an upper-class British deserter turned grand thief, a too-caricatured American reporter (all tough pose and cocky action), and King Farouk himself--fat, decadent, imperious. It's the deserter who--by committing a murder that Ross must investigate--turns out to be Ross's main foil; and it's he who pulls the narrative--the first half of which springs forward mostly on perfectly pitched dialogue--into the desert and shattering action as Rommel attacks an armored caravan carrying Ross and several others, precipitating a crisis that movingly strips these men, good and evil, down to their bare selves. At one point, Ross is likened to Bogart--appropriate in a novel so reminiscent in spirit to *Casablanca*. And if this is the same old story, a song of love and glory, at least it's told here with consummate skill. Play it again, Len. -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

CITY OF GOLD is a different kind of Len Deighton book. There is no cold war Berlin here. No Bernard Sampson risking his life to make one more dangerous border crossing. No Fiona, the non-traitor traitor, nor any of the rest of Deighton's usual cast of spies, counter spies, and stay-at-homes. Deighton, to his credit, has tried something different here.

Far from the cold war in both time and place, we find ourselves in 1942 Cairo in the presence of one Bert Cutler who isn't Bert Cutler at all. He is really Jimmy Ross who doesn't want to be Bert Cutler but can't afford to be Jimmy Ross. We first meet Ross on a train on the way to Cairo in the Custody of Cutler. Ross is being taken to Cairo to be tried for murder when Cutler suffers a fatal heart attack. The quick thinking Ross manages to switch identities with the deceased and shortly finds himself in Cairo charged with finding the identity of a spy who is leaking information on British troop movements to Rommel, the Chief of the German Tank Corps. Ross doesn't want to stay Cutler. He doesn't want to hunt for a spy. All he wants to do is to escape before his true identity is discovered.

An escape opportunity never presents itself.

This is not a spy story. It is, however, a pretty good adventure set in Cairo and the surrounding desert. As Cutler, Ross's life is further complicated by the murder of a British soldier that he is expected to investigate. In investigating this murder, he runs across a group of "special assignment" British Soldiers who aren't really soldiers at all, but armed marauders who steal British Munitions and sell them to the highest bidder. To further complicate matters, the second in command of this group isn't even British. Read more ›

The setting is early 1942 in Cairo. Rommel is advancing on the city. Egypt is neutral, but the government is a British puppet and the the Army is the law. The plot centers around the search for a spy that is giving Rommel detailed information regarding British positions and movements. Several interesting characters are introduced, and the author does a wonderful job of describing both the setting and the what life was like there for the natives, the Army, British civilians, and other foreign nationals.

The historical background is rich and well presented. The characters are interesting. The plot has some novel twists. It could have been a really good book. But about halfway through, time became compressed, what was a well paced flow became rushed, and it felt like I had somehow skipped a chapter here and there. I was left wanting to have better known the key characters.

I wish the book had as much luster as the gold it talks about in the title. Bland, dull and obvious, all that in the first chapter. Based on the outline of the story I thought this would be an interesting book, and I have read some of his World War Two based books before which were ok. Unfortunately, the best writing was on the dust jacket. I got the feeling he just put this together to give him more time to get another of his famous spy novels completed. I would skip this one.

I found this to be a slow moving story that had a good premise with a weak outcome. A corporal being escorted to Cairo to be tried for the murder of his commanding officer changes place with the military policeman guarding him when the latter dies of a heart attack. Upon arrival, the policeman was to have led a search for a spy in Egypt supplying Rommel with military secrets. Great premise, but the book was uninteresting and contrived from that point on. I finished it, but wouldn't have minded if I hadn't. I see it's out of print and relatively unobtainable (I got mine on a bargain book table) which is where it belongs.

Born in London, Len Deighton served in the RAF before graduating from the Royal College of Art (which recently elected him a Senior Fellow). While in New York City working as a magazine illustrator he began writing his first novel, *The Ipcress File*, which was published in 1962. He is now the author of more than thirty books of fiction and non-fiction. At present living in Europe, he has, over the years, lived with his family in ten different countries from Austria to Portugal.

The story centres on a half dozen or so primary characters - with the main character being a convicted soldier who passes himself off as a policeman assigned as the lead investigator in the search for a German Spy in Cairo in mid-World War II. This mechanism allows the plot to move through all levels of society and a wide variety of locations without stretching the storyline.

City of Gold is set in WW2 Cairo, based around the British search for a German spy feeding vital information to Rommel, who is threatening to overrun Cairo. As the title suggests, the real focus is WW2 Cairo, where the British war efforts, Egyptian history and politics, and regional spies and adventurers all came together. The cast includes British army officers and civilians, Egyptian nationalists, an American journalist, a Russian prince, criminals and spies. This all makes for a good read, with plenty of double crossing and a good climax. And all based on real events.

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