



A Reconstructed Corpse

Simon Brett

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Acclaimed mystery writer Simon Brett takes readers behind the scenes of a true-crime television show, where actor Charles Paris has found work at last. As Charles reconstructs a missing man's actions for the TV cameras, he discovers that true-crime TV can be deadly.

A Reconstructed Corpse Details

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From Reader Review A Reconstructed Corpse for online ebook

Clare says

Review to follow.

Cat. says

This is about a true-crime TV show a la "Cops," that gets dramatically (ugh, sorry) out of hand. Charles Paris is hired to play a man who is missing, presumed dead. Over the course of a month of these shows, viewers are drawn in by the discovery of a body--actually a torso--then the legs, then the arms, each exactly in time to be broadcast on the next week's show. I knew the wife of the victim was too good to be true, but the identity of the killer was still a surprise. Quite funny, pathetic and sick, but not particularly gory.

Ian Brydon says

Down at heel actor Charles Paris has experienced many indignities throughout his lengthy but conspicuously unsuccessful career, but as [A Reconstructed Corpse] opens he finds himself plumbing new depths. He is back on television, playing the role of Martin Earnshaw, a property developer from Brighton. He is not, however, participating in a drama series, nor even one of the ghastly situation comedies in which he has occasionally landed a supporting part. Martin Earnshaw has disappeared in rather suspicious circumstances, believed to have fallen foul of local loan sharks after his business became over-extended following some imprudent deals. Charles Paris is, therefore, playing the role of Earnshaw as part of a reconstruction for a real-life crime investigation programme (clearly modelled on BBC's "Crimewatch"). This represents a new low for Charles as he was clearly selected for the part more for his apparent resemblance to the man who has disappeared than in recognition of any acting expertise. There is, however, a positive side to things, as for various reasons the disappearance of Martin Earnshaw (or, more accurately, the plight of his immensely attractive wife) has captured the public's imagination, and Charles's appearance on the programme develops into a continuing role as the investigation into the disappearance gathers pace.

As with all of the books in this entertaining series, Simon Brett manages to retain the integrity and plausibility of his plot while offering a very entertaining portrayal of the jealousies and egos that are manifested in the production of any television series. Charles Paris seems an immensely sympathetic character - not especially gifted as an actor, and certainly flawed as a man. He remains sensitive to the conflicting personalities amongst whom he has to operate, and the reader feels for him throughout the vicissitudes he has to face.

Very entertaining, both for the plot and Charles's continuing struggle to wring any drop of dignity out of an awkward situation, and also for its sardonic insight into the shameless world of television, in which any vestige of good taste is immediately satisfied if there is the merest chance of a boost to a programme's viewing figures.

Lbaker says

Charles Paris is certainly not very heroic or have much gumption or incentive. Things seem to just happen around and to him.

There were quite a few holes in the plot, and much too much alcohol dazed times which don't seem to matter much.

There really were not many characters that I liked, in fact, none. It's difficult to like a book when you don't like any characters, and can't relate to any of them. The people in this novel were like reading a psych student study of a disfunctional group - weird but hard to care about.

Sandy Carmichael says

Light, comedy mystery set in England. Enjoyable

Margaret says

I liked this book. I thought it started out rather dry and a little formal however I grew to like this somewhat stiff British writing style. The character of Charles Paris did not really evoke my sympathy even though he is a mostly out of work third string actor struggling with separating from his wife and consoling himself with constant bottles of Bell's yet he earned my respect at least in the end. This series seems to be quite a different tone from his Mrs. Parteger series. Looking forward to reading more of this author.

Diane says

Love Bill Nighy. Unfortunately our Library only owns 2 of his Charles Paris Mysteries on CD. This one was even funnier than Cast in Order... The lady portraying his "semi-detached" wife has expert timing. The scene where he is trying to tell her what happened last night as she is reading off DVD XXX titles is hilarious! My favorite line comes in a scene where his agent is storming out of the flat and as the door slams Charles says, "Don't I get a kiss?" Laughing out loud driving down Columbia Parkway. I'm listening to disc 2 for a third time before I return it.

Dwayne Wojtowicz says

This is the first book of Simon Brett that I have read, and let me tell you, I will be seeking out his books from this day forward.

"A Reconstructed Corpse" main character, Charles Paris, is an actor who plays a man who is presumed dead. It is all a part of trying to get an audience for a British television show, Public Enemies. However, Charles gets the notion that the dead man that he's portraying isn't really dead, and takes the investigation into his own hands.

The twist and turns, the cliff hanger at the end of every chapter has the markings of a excellent novel. My hat is off to you, Mr. Brett.

Shanna_redwind says

I listened to a full cast audio version of this book. I enjoyed listening to it, but doubt that I will actively seek out any others in this series. This is the first that I've read, and I did not enjoy the character very much, though he was quite well developed and interesting, just not the type of character that I enjoy.

I'm not much of a mystery fan, and read this for a challenge, but the book was enjoyable enough to me, and though I thought I'd figured things out half way through, I was wrong.

Aidan Matthews says

Enjoyable book, a very easy read story is straight forward, well told, and revolves around a missing person now pronounced murdered. Characters interact with each other vying for the limelight fame and renown and perhaps fortune. Non more so then Charles Paris down at heel actor who longs for recognition and respect, perhaps solving this case might go a long way to attain this, but then again it might not .Oh well read it and see.

Brian's Bookshelves says

Another job for Charles Paris and another mystery to solve

This series is really good, the writing is crisp and funny. The settings are well drawn and realistic

The plot for this one. a missing man presumed dead then bits of body turn up. About halfway through there is a massive clue which seemed so obvious that the ending lacked any surprise or tension.

also the ending was a bit rushed. Charles confronts the killer, then walks out. The killer kills themselves and Charles gets on with his life again. All within 5 pages. The End

3 stars (4 if had a proper ending)

Verity W says

Charles's acting career continues to go nowhere - this time he's playing a missing man in a reconstruction for show that is crimewatch's sensationalist cousin. Fun, but Charles is at his most unlikeable at times - he's definitely more alcoholic here than he has been previously.

I've listened to the radio play version of this too - and it's one of the ones that has changed most (beyond the moving forwards in time that they've all done) of the Nighy adaptations - so of interest from that point of view too.

Marie says

I ended up liking the book more at the end than I thought I would at the beginning. Some interesting twists. But my favourite Charles Paris books are still the ones where he's neck-deep in theatre. More of those please, Brett!

Tan Clover says

Great fun - no plot spoilers here - but had me guessing , and laughing out loud , all the way through Gear holiday/bored with work/on the bus/missed the bus..just get in and.. read!

Cece says

Silliness and mayhem and the wonderfully desolute Charles Paris, perpetually "resting" actor. A brain bonbon? You bet.
