



Treason

James Jackson

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'Remember, Remember, the Fifth of November...'

For fans of Conn Iggulden and Bernard Cornwell, this pulse-racing and dramatic new thriller from Sunday Times bestselling author James Jackson sheds new light on one of the most dramatic events in British history.

Behind the famous rhyme lies a murderous conspiracy that goes far beyond Guy Fawkes and his ill-fated Gunpowder Plot . . .

In a desperate race against time, spy Christian Hardy must uncover a web of deceit that runs from the cock-fighting pits of Shoe Lane, to the tunnels beneath a bear-baiting arena in Southwark, and from the bad lands of Clerkenwell to a brutal firefight in The Globe theatre.

But of the forces ranged against Hardy, all pale beside the renegade Spanish agent codenamed Realm.

Treason Details

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Author : James Jackson

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From Reader Review Treason for online ebook

Tom Corbould says

It's not hard to see why Frederick Forsyth is addicted to James Jackson's books (a Forsyth endorsement appears on most, quite possibly all, of them, including this latest one, *Treason*). As in a Forsyth thriller, the orchestration of plot knots your stomach tighter with every page, luring you into the blind, fetid alleys of Jacobean London – thence, for instance, into the low light of a parlour where “the pinched and haggard faces seemed already to belong to the afterlife”... and, of course, down into the cellar beneath Parliament which “was too much like a tomb for comfort”. Given that we know the outcome of the 5th November (just as in *Day of The Jackal* we know that de Gaulle evades assassination), it's the sub-plots – the individual confrontations, one of which, almost unbearably, pits Christian Hardy against his estranged son, Adam – that matter most. It's here that Jackson demonstrates that he is without equal in the genre, not only because of the adroitness with which he shifts focus – from plotter to agents of the Crown and back again – but because of his delineation of character. The plotters are creatures of flesh and blood, led by Robert Catesby, a man of principle, of decency as well as valour; the Crown forces are compellingly human, too, not least James I himself, his decisions variously governed by cunning, fear and lust (“he scratched at his crotch with absent-minded pleasure”). Above all else, though, there is Jackson's greatest creation: Realm – traitor and psychotic, a man capable of “almost feeling pity”, for whom barbarity is “simply a means, a habit needing to be fed, a store of screaming faces he glimpsed occasionally from afar”. A contemporary figure, in other words, within the higher command of the IRA or Islamic State. This is why, as Forsyth says, there is no-one today writing fictionalised history like Jackson, who obliges us, as in all the best history, to confront the immutability of man's inadequacies – his twin capacity for demonic cruelty and true nobility. A masterpiece.

Peter Jones says

I tried to like this book. I really, really did. I ploughed on through it long after I should have jettisoned it (and jettison it I did before the end), but really I could not follow it.

John Bramley says

Brilliantly written, interweaving actual historical characters and a clear mandate to push the boundaries between fact and fiction. Once I started reading I could not put the book down and even though I knew how it all ends, I kind of hoped it wouldn't. About to start the second book in the series.

Kate says

The dark and sinister tale of the Gunpowder Plot and its unravelling.

Phil Shaw says

I quite enjoyed this book although to be honest I don't think it's as good as Pilgrim. I felt that there were parts of the narrative where Jackson was "filling" the book for the sake of it, effectively padding it out.

That said, the story, although well known, has been given some fun twists and turns, but I would have liked to know how Beatrice is rescued.

It's not a book I'll read again but it won't put me off reading another James Jackson story.

Marzouq says

Good book great read

Marcus Wilson says

This was a brilliantly researched and well written historic novel. I applaud the writer in bringing to life the period so brilliantly. At times it was like reading a factual history book, with added fiction. I really wish more books were written like this, I enjoyed it immensely.

Vixie says

James Jackson's 'Treason' is an incredible story that gives depth to a legend, Guy Fawkes and his plot to blow up parliament. All know the tale but few can imagine the sheer scale of deception and treachery.

Christian Hardy is the agent (or intelligencer) who is one of many tasked with discovering the plot against His Majesty, King James. Almost instantly Hardy was a notable character, a man experienced in war and thus world-weary and perhaps more 'mature' than many of the men in this story. Hardy is a man who knows the consequence and risk and so plays the game with his hand close to his chest. At times there was glimpse of a man who could love and care for those around him but more often than not he faced the world with a mask of duty, accepting of his fate and his chosen path. However the more he investigates the more he is dragged into the plot to rescue England. His love interest, his son and his friends must all play their part and he must step carefully to protect them all.

The plotters themselves may be seen as pious or fanatics. But one plotter is nothing more than a murderer, the others disillusioned by the belief their faith is better than the other. It seemed to me that it was more than just Protestant and Catholics fighting for England but Rome and Spain itself through Catholicism. The Protestants were not just tools of 'God' but of invading powers seeking to undermine England's authority and make England ripe for the picking.

The story itself was a realistic tale that had strength in many factors, but most vitally its religious and political referencing. Not once was the tale unbelievable or farfetched. The intrigue and discord between characters went much further than between Catholics and Protestants, setting son against father and at one point husband against wife. This divide between characters lent to by discord in beliefs made the tale all the more intriguing as it became quite obscure, who was friend and who was foe. A priest of Catholicism may be

an abomination to the eyes of a Protestant nation, but this priest showed more kindness than his disciples and 'children' and in doing so clouded the waters even further, marring the idea of the good and the bad. In this tale there is no good or bad, just as in real life there are those who are led by a genuine good cause that lead to acts of evil and those who had more darker intentions still performed their duties for friends, allies, King and country. It was easy to hate the plotters, so blinded by their faith that they committed cruel acts, but one had to admire their loyalty to one another.

Despite the overall good review and the four stars I give this book I admit that I won't be reading this book again. The political intrigue held me long enough to finish this book but the religious references, whilst appropriate in the time setting of this book, turned me away. This is a book for those who can enjoy a tale mired in religion, truth and political intrigue.

Jo says

Historical fiction set around the Gunpowder Plot. Adventure style narrative as one of Cecil's spies attempts to track the plotters. Enjoyable and very suitable for this time of year.

Ruth says

c2016 (5) FWFTB: 1616, Southwark, firefight, Realm, tunnels. The underlying violence of the Elizabethan times, something you do not think of whilst swanning around Hampton Court, for example, is captured well by the author. The dastardly Mr Cecil is also portrayed somewhat differently than in other books written about the same period. But you do have to think that you have to be of a certain 'character' to survive in those times. Shakespeare pops up also but more of a cameo than anything else. The plot, of course, runs parallel to the plot that we all think we know. Recommended to the normal crew. *"He had never favoured trawling the shoals of the innocent to uncover the true enemy."*

Tom says

I have found a new genre that I like; historical thriller. This is a great book about the Gunpowder plot of 1605 and the frankly gruesome aftermath. We follow a spy and Catesby as they try to thwart one another to it's eventual and tragic end. And there's a definite surprise at the end. It made me want, despite it being a historical, a sequel as the characters are so well developed and I will definitely be reading more of James Jackson's work and other historical thrillers.

Annette says

Source: Free copy from Zaffre , Bonnier Publishing.

Rating: 3 stars for good

Summary:

During the early part of the reign of James I of England, a plot was made against James and his family.

Guido Fawkes, an English Catholic, planned a Gunpowder plot. He and several men planned to blow-up the king, his family, and the Protestant rulers. English government spy, Christian Hardy, works to uncover the plot and people involved. A man named Realm, a Spanish agent, is another strong threat.

My Thoughts:

The year is 1604, London.

The name Guido Fawkes is literally pressed from the lips of a prisoner. Fawkes being the name of the plotter against the king. This name is a pseudo name for the plotter.

The spy, Christian Hardy, must find the man behind the Fawkes name, and his accomplices before they achieve their plot.

I love history. I enjoyed reading about this period in English history.

I have never read a book specifically on James I, but aim to in the new year.

The storyline is a plus.

The character Christian Hardy is a plus.

However, I felt the story missed an opportunity to draw me in with suspense. For another reader, they may enjoy this book. For me, it just did not hold my attention as I'd liked.

Christian Hardy is a strong character. He is a character who uses whatever means he can contrive to extract information. I wonder if the book had centered on him, and if his character had been fleshed-out more, and extended with his "interesting" principles, how the book would fair?

Sir Robert Cecil was chief minister during the early part of the reign of James I. His character is seen more often; whereas, James I seems to be in the background.

I was shown the technique of spying and torture during this period. This element reminded me of a Vincent Price film, macabre.
