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The Corpse Reader

By Antonio Garrido



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After his grandfather dies, avid scholar and budding forensic investigator Cí Song begrudgingly gives up his studies to help his family. But when another tragedy strikes, he's forced to run and also deemed a fugitive. Dishonored, he has no choice but to accept work as a lowly gravedigger, a position that allows him to sharpen his corpse-reading skills. Soon, he can deduce whether a person killed himself—or was murdered.

His prowess earns him notoriety, and Cí receives orders to unearth the perpetrator of a horrific series of mutilations and deaths at the Imperial Court. Cí's gruesome investigation quickly grows complicated thanks to old loyalties and the presence of an alluring, enigmatic woman. But he remains driven by his passion for truth—especially once the killings threaten to take down the Emperor himself.

Inspired by Song Cí, considered to be the founding father of *CSI*-style forensic science, this harrowing novel set during the thirteenth-century Tsong Dynasty draws readers into a multilayered, ingenious plot as disturbing as it is fascinating.

In 2012, *The Corpse Reader* received the Zaragoza International Prize for best historical novel published in Spain (Premio Internacional de Novela Histórica Ciudad de Zaragoza).



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The Corpse Reader By Antonio Garrido Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Song Cí, the real-life 13th-century Chinese “founding father” of forensic medicine, has ample opportunity to display his genius in this digressive historical from Spanish author Garrido (La Escriba), his first novel translated into English. Some people in his rural village try to take advantage of the young Cí, with the result that he constantly finds himself in trouble, often betrayed and seemingly doomed to be cast out from any brief haven he finds. At age 16, Cí moves with his family temporarily to the imperial capital of Lin'an, where he gets his medical training in the Fields of the Dead (the cemetery); at the feet of his father's boss, Judge Feng; and at the Ming Academy, where Professor Ming champions him. When Emperor Ningzong recognizes his talents, Cí is charged with solving a series of puzzling murders that enmesh him in palace intrigues. Garrido's impressively detailed descriptions of daily life and Cí's innovative methods offset his hero's overlong, overdone tribulations. Reviewed May 2013.

From Booklist

Inspired by the story of Song Cí, the Song Dynasty Chinese official whose handbook for coroners, *Collected Cases of Injustice Rectified* (1247), may be the first treatise on forensic science, *The Corpse Reader* envisions the young Cí as a gifted action hero who, beset again and again by pitiless foes, survives through his uncanny ability to analyze crime scenes. It is a story defined by its mysteries: Did Cí's older brother really commit the crime to which he confessed? Who is the brutal killer behind the strange and gruesome murders in the Imperial Court? Should Cí trust Feng, the kindly man who once employed his father, or Ming, the powerful scholar with questionable intentions? And what should we make of Blue Iris, the beautiful blind courtesan? The core of the story, of course, is Cí's forensic investigations, which resemble an episode of CSI: Song Dynasty; the rest of the time, Garrido's narrative veers into outright melodrama with its sudden twists, dramatic reversals, and exaggerated emotions. But the overall originality of the premise, and Garrido's dogged commitment to historical and scientific detail, makes it easy to forgive such excesses. Reviewed April 15, 2013.

Review

"An engrossing mystery...this Chinese version of Sherlock Holmes is a captivating figure and the period he lives in is one we know relatively little about. You'll come away with a much better understanding of Chinese history, plus having read a very entertaining suspense story." - *ILoveAMysteryNewsletter.Com*, June 30, 2013

"A refreshing break from the urban-noir fetish that is so common in conventional thrillers and crime books. It's a great novel to add to a summer reading list." – *Ars Technica.Com*, June 29, 2013

"Antonio Garrido's *The Corpse Reader* deserves to be called epic. It also deserves a space on the list of great adventure novels right next to Jerzy Kosinski's *The Painted Bird* and Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*." – *HorrorTalk.Com*, June 28, 2013

"Garrido has created well-developed and three dimensional characters amongst the exotic backdrop of medieval China . . . I enjoyed *THE CORPSE READER* and would recommend it to fans of forensic science dramas." – *Surrounded by Books* blog, May 27, 2013

"A dynamic, thought-provoking historical suspense with a diverse plot and stunning characterization . . . I was engaged in the story from the first page and could not put it down." – *FreshFiction.Com*, May 27, 2013

“This historical thriller is drawing comparisons to *The Hangman's Daughter* for its absorbing details of another time and received the Zaragoza International Prize for best historical novel published in Spain in 2012.” – *Historical Boys*, May 24, 2013

“This novel is exceptional in so many different ways... If you are into forensic sciences, this is a must read... History buffs...also a must-read! For those who enjoy a good forensic science suspense thriller, this will easily fulfill your interests. Highly Recommended!” – *Book Reader's Heaven*, May 22, 2013

“If you'd like to know more about what life in China was really like during the Song Dynasty, if you find forensics interesting...then you should check out *The Corpse Reader*.” – *GeekSmash.Com*, May 21, 2013

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Esther Cunningham:

Hey guys, do you want to find a new book you just read? Maybe the book with the concept *The Corpse Reader* suitable to you? The actual book was written by famous writer in this era. The actual book titled *The Corpse Reader* is the one of several books that everyone read now. That book was inspired a number of people in the world. When you read this publication you will enter the new shape that you ever know before. The author explained their plan in the simple way, thus all of people can easily to know the core of this e-book. This book will give you a lot of information about this world now. In order to see the represented of the world with this book.

Felix Smith:

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Steve Domingo:

A lot of people always spent all their free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with their family members or their friend. Did you know? Many a lot of people spent many people free time just watching TV, or even playing video games all day long. In order to try to find a new activity that's look different you can read a book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book that you just read you can spent all day long to reading a e-book. The book *The Corpse Reader* it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of individuals who recommended this book. These folks were enjoying reading this book. In the event you did not have enough space to develop this book you can buy typically the e-book. You can more quickly to read this book out of your smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book offers high quality.

Wendell Radford:

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