



# The Changeling Murders

*C.S. Quinn*

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Abduction. Murder. A conspiracy that could bring down the King.

London, 1667: In the wake of the Great Fire, a new city has emerged from the flames. The King has reopened the capital's theatres, and the royal court is hell-bent on debauched entertainment. But amid the raucous festivities, an actress shows up dead, dressed in the clothes of a missing girl.

It's a time of great change for thief taker Charlie Tuesday too: his old flame, Maria, is on the cusp of marrying someone else. But when she is abducted on the way to her wedding, Charlie realises her disappearance is linked to the murder.

Meanwhile, as Lent draws to a close, London is exploding into shocking riot. With brothels and theatres being attacked, Charlie and his sidekick Lily must find clues before an angry mob does. And as the mystery deepens and violence fills the streets, can Charlie solve a riddle that threatens not just Maria, but London itself?

## The Changeling Murders Details

Date : Published May 24th 2018 by Thomas & Mercer

ISBN :

Author : C.S. Quinn

Format : Kindle Edition 366 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Mystery, Fiction

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# From Reader Review The Changeling Murders for online ebook

## J says

### Another fantastic chapter in the life of Charlie Tuesday

This the fourth instalment of the Thief Taker is just as well written and absorbing as its predecessors. Historical fiction at its best, it had me reaching for google on a number of occasions to look up a reference or fact and I was not let down once. CS Quinn creates a believable and fascinating restoration London and you won't be disappointed to spend time there.

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## Maureen says

London 1667, and Charlie Tuesday, (thief taker) is right on the case when former lover Maria is abducted on the way to her wedding. However, to secure her release he will have to discover the whereabouts of the 'Lord and Lady'. This will be no easy task, as no word of them has been heard since their disappearance during the reign of Cromwell. Some believe they were burned along with Royalist supporters, but others say that their special magical powers enabled them to escape.

London lies in ruins after the great fire of 1666, a fire that swept through the central part of this medieval city, leaving businesses and homes completely destroyed and the air filled with death and destruction. Charles II doesn't have the funds to rebuild, and the social and economic problems that his people suffer go unnoticed by him. However, he appears to throw money readily at the theatres which are a hotbed of debauchery. His long time lover and former prostitute Lady Castlemaine, is determined to have her share of the King's money too.

Amidst all this comes the apprentice riots where whorehouses are attacked along with the prostitutes who ply their trade there. This is a dangerous time for the King, where an accumulation of events could lead to his downfall.

Charlie's partner Lily joins him in his search for Maria and the Lord and Lady - a search that will immerse them in the world of changelings and fairy folk, together with some truly nasty individuals with murder in mind.

It's clear that C. S. Quinn has carried out extensive research into this turbulent period in history, and she has written a tale full of atmosphere, that ensures the reader is fully entertained throughout.

\*Thank you to Netgalley and Amazon Publishing UK for my ARC, I have given an honest unbiased review in exchange\*

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## Yvonne Davies says

One thing I have started reading is historical thrillers. So when I was offered a chance of review this book, I jumped at it.

Whilst I had not read any others in the Thief Takers series, I quickly got into the story. Charlie Tuesday is on the hunt for “The Lord and Lady”, to save his lost love. The downtrodden are in uproar over the new king and bodies are turning up.

Charlie Tuesday was a loveable rogue and would put himself in danger to save others. Being brought up an orphan he had a soft spot for the down trodden and would use his talent of finding things to help others worse off than him.

Set in London in the Stuart period, this book was well researched and as you follow Charlie on his quest, the descriptive style of the author brings the sights and smells to life and showed just how much of a hard life the poor had.

This story was non stop and kept me turning the pages as I wanted to know what would happen to Charlie. It was like you were following him on the treasure, following the clues to get closer to the goal . Whilst some of the escapes seemed a bit unreal, there was always an explanation on how he made his escape. As there were others looking for the lord and lady, the story does not just revolve around Charlie. Each character had their own story to tell and one of my favourite characters Lily Boswell, a gypsy pirate who took no messing and stood up for what she believed.

The story had a fantasy feel to it, as the belief of fairies was still strong amongst the population. The fairy story running throughout, had me doubting Tom Black’s sanity and what mother’s did to the changeling babies was quite harrowing.

This can be read as a stand alone read, as the story was well explained and I will go back and read the others in the series. A page turner

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## **Josephine Porter says**

I didn't enjoy this one quite as much as the others. I liked the background story with the prostitutes and the rioting but I was quite disappointed upon discovering what the lord and lady actually were and with the person who ended up getting them.

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## **Elisa says**

This is a wonderful and entertaining series. In the 4th volume, Charlie Tuesday is as sharp as ever, even when the case gets personal. Maria, who may or may not be his true love, has been abducted and, to release her, Charlie needs to find a mysterious Lord and Lady who could bring the King down. Of course, he is not the only one looking, and not everybody agrees over what should be done if these figures are found. Some want the king overthrown. Charlie just wants Maria back so he teams up with Lily to find her (come on, Charlie, Lily is the real deal... stop pining over Maria and just get with her ASAP!). The research that goes into the historical part of the novels is palpable, and the descriptions of the background so complete that you feel like you are walking in XVII Century London. But it’s the non-stop action that reminds me of old-fashioned adventure serials. Every chapter ends in a cliffhanger, so it’s easy to fall into the “one more chapter before I go to bed” circle until the plot has reached its conclusion. There are unexpected twists, and some more details of Charlie’s mysterious past. I wouldn’t like to live in these novels, but I like to visit Charlie as often as possible.

I chose to read this book and all opinions in this review are my own and completely unbiased. Thank you, NetGalley/Thomas & Mercer!

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## **Thebooktrail says**

Visit the locations in the novel

Soot, debauchery and talk of changelings .... a journey back in time to 1667 London grab you? It should as it's fine fine fine!

Have a wet wipe to hand when you read this book as you'll need to wipe yourself clean from all the stench and soot of London to come from its pages. I haven't felt so immersed and in need of a wash after reading a novel in a long time and I mean that as a lovely complement! London is the den of debauchery and even those not in the opium dens or the whorehouses have to trudge the gritty, dirty streets to try and make a living, if not even just to survive.

Now that's not all. This novel is the fourth in a series but I haven't read the others and I didn't feel I was missing out until the end of the book when I wondered why I hadn't read the rest of this heart-pumping series. The theatre world was just fascinating and jaw-dropping both in detail and fantasy. There were threads of a magical and supernatural presence, which, for me, took the novel to an even better place. These illegal theatres just gave me a thrill reading about them and stepping inside, experiencing a world that the author has crafted with care and a mean glint in her eye.

If you love historical fiction, you'll get goosebumps. If you don't, you'll get goosebumps and a new genre to get stuck into. The changeling murders is fascinating, wonderfully evoked and I haven't even touched upon the changelings themselves...the fairy folk....now that really is something you have to discover for yourself, or is it that they will discover you?

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## **Annette Jordan says**

Another solid entry in the Thief Taker series of historical crime fiction, *The Changeling Murders* takes us back to London in 1667, and our by now familiar protagonist Charlie Tuesday is drawn into the hunt for the mysterious Lord and Lady when his old flame Maria is abducted on the way to her wedding. Without knowing who or what the Lord and Lady are, he faces an uphill battle, even with the help of his sidekick Lily, recently returned from a life on the high seas. The clock is ticking, and Lent draws to a close and riots rock the city, time is running out. Little does Tuesday realise that more than just the fate of Maria is at stake, the City and even the King lie in the balance.

As with my previous foray into this series, I raced through this book, every revelation making me want to know more. While the fast pace rarely lets up, the author never sacrifices character or historical detail, and I found myself completely immersed in the world she had recreated. Once again she cleverly weaves background from the previous books into the narrative, so that a reader picking up this book without having read the rest of the series would not have any difficulty keeping up, in fact their only difficulty, like mine, might be putting the book down.

I read an advance copy courtesy of NetGalley and the publisher, all opinions are my own

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## **Amanda says**

This book was definitely not what I expected. It starts with a woman on her way to be married and someone picks her up and tells her her ex wants to see her before she gets married. She is then taken and now people are trying to find her. Not only are they looking for her but the Lord and Lady. This was extremely slow. There wasn't even moments of wowww at least for me. That's why I'm giving this a one star. It just wasn't for me. Thank you to NetGalley for allowing me to review this book.

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## **Kelly-Jo Sweeney says**

I love a good historical murder mystery/crime novel and this was definitely a good historical murder mystery novel. I hadn't read any of the previous books, but it really didn't matter. This worked fine as a stand-alone novel. Although, having enjoyed it so much, I'd be really keen to go back and read the earlier books.

The sense of time and place was very well written. This book touches on ideas of witchcraft, fairies and superstition. Unlike lots of books, there wasn't a clumsy attempt by the characters to whisper off camera that of course, they don't believe in it. What people believed or not was left shadowed, but their attitudes seemed to fit their time.

I enjoyed the mystery, the characters were well developed and interesting to read and the whole book was a great read. This was a great book to get lost in and visit another time. I couldn't put it down once I'd started and really enjoyed it. Highly recommended.

I received a complimentary copy of this book through NetGalley. Opinions expressed in this review are completely my own.

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## **Cindy Woods says**

### **Three point five stars**

As much as I've enjoyed this series and the creative writing of C.S. Quinn, this fourth book of the series was a bit hard to sink my teeth into.

The thief taker Charlie Tuesday 's story continues after London 's Great Fire as the woman he loves, Mary, is about to be married to another and is kidnapped on her way to the altar. It is up to Charlie to find a lord and a lady in order to save her.

Unfortunately, I found the plot extremely convoluted with an abundance of secondary and minor characters who distracted from the storyline. I took an inordinate amount of my time looking back to recall who was whom and what their purpose might be. The historical accuracy of the 17th century era post-Cromwell was interestingly employed, but with so much going on and so many characters added to enforce the plot of fairies and magic and riots and motivations ascribed to each it became almost a chore to keep it all straight.

All comes together and gels into an interesting finish, but the story took too many roads to get there. This wasn't a smooth read and I, several times, found myself going back to re-read in attempt to ascertain who a

character was and how they might fit into the plot as well as grasp the fairy myths and their application.

Given the very creative mind of the author, having now finished the entire book, I see how it all results into a big finish but the plot up to the grand finale is messy.

I would recommend this book to readers of historical fiction as an important link to an otherwise good series and look forward to the next book of the 'Thief Taker' series. Books one through three are very good. I believe it was worth trudging through this fourth book of the series, although not as good. The end justified the messy means!

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## **Lisa says**

### **Another fantastic addition to the series.**

I have been utterly enchanted with this series since book 1. Each novel is beautifully written and well researched, everything about it transports you back in time and you get lost in the characters, places and plot.

Congratulations on a great novel a must read for all xx

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## **Joyce says**

4 stars

Charlie Tuesday, thief-taker, is following a carriage. Meanwhile, his former beloved Maria is being kidnapped on the day of her wedding. When Charlie runs into Percy Berry, Maria's fiancé, in a theatre, he asks how Maria is doing. Percy replies that Maria never showed up for their wedding.

Lady Castlemaine, consort of King Charles, is dead set against the theater and whores. She supports the Lenten observation of London's apprentices vandalizing the theaters in an orgy of violence. The King, however, feels differently. With his actress friends and his penchant for debauchery, he opposes Lady Castlemaine's attitudes.

Lily, Charlie's partner joins in the hunt for the lost artifacts and Maria. Searching for the artifacts, they run into severe trouble. The apprentices are drunk – and they've found Charlie and Lily in an old theater. What follows is an exciting chase through the old theaters of London and the eventual capture of the bad guys – and the restoration of the artifacts.

There is a hint of the supernatural in this book. It is well-played out and scripted. The book is well written and plotted. It is exciting and reads linearly. That is to say, one event follows another logically. I liked Charlie and Lily. They make a good team. I didn't care for the Percy character so much. I cannot fathom why Maria would prefer him over Charlie. Perhaps because he is a "respectable" lawyer where Charlie is just a poor man trying to eke out a living. Perhaps there is more in the cards for Charlie and Lily – stay tuned.

I want to thank NetGalley and Thomas & Mercer for forwarding to me a copy of this book to read, enjoy and review.

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## **E says**

This story is set just after the Great Fire of London. It is a hard enough life just to forge a living in these hard times. Charlie Tuesday makes his living as a Thief Taker, sort of like a private eye. His old love interest Maria has been abducted and her now fiancé wants Charlie to find her. Charlie enlists his former wife, an actress favored by the current King, for help. One clue leads to another and Charlie finds he is looking for a fairy Lord and Lady and in order to find them he must find an old dress hidden in a brothel. The time is now Lent when apprentices are given liberty to destroy brothels; a yearly tradition. But something is amiss; the destruction goes way beyond usual endeavors and is too organized. Charlie thinks someone else is looking for The Lord and Lady and the cover is the apprentice riots. Tom Black thinks he is a changeling. He cleverly devises a plan to find the Lord and Lady to help him go home. He kidnapped Maria and threatens to kill her if Charlie can't find the Lord and Lady in time. Lady Castlemaine, the King's mistress, is also seeking the Lord and Lady for the power she thinks she can obtain over the King. "The Changeling Murders (The Thief Taker)" Book 4 is an entertaining tale, filled with wonderful characters and dialogue. The descriptions of old London, the brothels and theaters, and the rich and poor are remarkable and paint a perfect background for the reader. Nothing is as it seems. Lots of surprises. Will Charlie save Maria? Will Tom finally go home? Find out – read the book. I really enjoyed this book and look forward to reading books 1-3.

I won this e-book and Goodreads.com.

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## **Martha says**

The event rich 17th century in the United Kingdoms, England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales was as important, if not more so, to the story of how Great Britain became the country it is, as the years of Henry Tudor and his marital problems. The trials of this single century included regicide, daring and often comical escapes, government by an austere Protestant tyrant, and finally restoration of the legitimate monarch. The Changeling Murders is set in last third of this period. After the return of Charles the 2nd from France, many, many things changed. Not only was it possible to celebrate Christmas but the theatres and bawdy houses were once again open to those seeking these kinds of entertainments. This included the King himself.

The city of London was growing at an outrageous rate. The devastations of the plague and the Great Fire of 1666 caused barely a hiccup in this population rampage. The desperate poor were everywhere and, as no regular law enforcement existed, petty thievery and even murder were everyday occurrences. Within the mire of London's stews and alleys, its stinking markets, its theatres, pubs and brothels, our protagonist Charlie Tuesday found his livelihood. He was a thief-taker, a private individual hired to capture criminals. While our Charlie may have been reasonably successful at his profession, his personal life was a mess. Divorced from Lynette, a successful comedic actress, hated by the Romany pirate, Lily Boswell and rejected by Maria, who had left him to marry a lawyer, he nonetheless retained the belief that he must help everybody.

When Maria goes missing on the way to her wedding, the prospective bridegroom, Percy Berry, and Charlie



form an awkward and unlikely partnership to find the missing woman. An ominous note warns that if they do not find 'The Lord and Lady' before the end of Lent, she will die. The note was signed Tom Black.

Now the chase is on. Charlie must figure out who are the Lord and Lady referenced, who is Tom Black and what does he have to do with all of the this. Even as the answers insist on changing into more questions as soon as they are found, another deadly challenge begins surging through the streets and bawdy houses, the Lenten rampage of the Apprentices. This holdover from the Puritan rule of Cromwell's time, usually an occasion of a few knocked heads and battered doors, has in this year, become a riotous mob of angry workers and starving poor determined to demonstrate their anger with the King by attacking the things he seems to care most about. To describe more of the dense tangle of events, risks giving away the turns and turns about that make this book so engaging. This is historical crime writing of a very high order.

OK, I love historical novels, mea culpa. It is the genre that first made me want to become a writer. The Changeling Murders is exactly my kind of book, a fast paced, well researched, well written romp of a book which I enjoyed enormously. The characters are sharply drawn, and for the most part likeable and engaging. The women especially have strong personalities and opinions which they express with clarity and agency. I am happy to recommend this and give it 4\*\*\*\*.

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## **Paromjit says**

This is the 4th in this historical series featuring London Thieftaker Charlie Tuesday set during the 17th century restoration period of 1667. It is the first book I have read and it worked just fine as a standalone. Quinn's richly detailed descriptions conjures an atmospheric picture of a anarchic London where the simmering seeds of unrest have broken out into pockets of outright rebellion against the king. The Great Fire has laid waste to much of the city and Charles II has no money to rebuild, poverty and squalor is rampant, and paranoia reigns with spies everywhere. People are disgusted and disenchanted at what they see as money spent on his mistress, Lady Castlemaine, formerly a prostitute, manipulating to secure her precarious position, ruthless in her determination to eliminate all threats. Charles is indeed The Merry Monarch with his debauchery laid bare, his support of the theatres which are a hotbed of prostitution, alienating the Puritans and those who supported Cromwell. Quinn writes a tale of the supernatural, malevolent fairies, changelings, abduction and murder that threatens the King.

Maria is on her way to her wedding ceremony when she is abducted and imprisoned. She is a former lover of Charlie Tuesday, famed thieftaker and a dead body dressed in Maria's clothes is discovered in a theatre. If Maria is to be saved, Charlie must find the Lord and Lady who escaped burning and Cromwell, before Lent. A desperate Charlie tries to work out who the Lord and Lady are, where they are now, before others who want to get to them before him. Charlie finds himself in a world of soothsayers, fairies and changelings, a mysterious dress that is linked to a whorehouse, and a clue to the location of the Lord and Lady. London has been divided between 3 bawdy houses, Mrs Jenks who serves the well off, Mother Mitchell whom Charlie grew up with and the black ex-slave Damaris Paige, serving sailors and the poor. Praise-God Barebones is leading a growing army of apprentices intent on bringing down the whorehouses and theatres but he has a secret agenda behind the attacks he is leading but will he dare to challenge the king by encroaching on people and institutions that have the King's support? Charlie is joined by Lily Boswell, who fights beside him as he tries to locate the Lord and Lady before Maria is killed.

Quinn writes compelling and gripping historical fiction of a London in a turbulent time, subject to elements

of superstition and a monarchy that is hellbent on overturning the austere Puritanism that had held sway in the country in the recent past. Charles is failing his subjects, flaunting his liaisons with prostitutes, supporting theatres and lacking the funds to defend himself or rebuild London. It is little wonder that his reign faces threats from numerous directions. Charlie has an understanding of London streets and those who live there that holds him in good stead as he battles to find Maria. His adventures make for a rip roaring yarn of myths and legends, a king living in fear, spies and murder. This is an entertaining novel that holds a reader's interest with ease. Many thanks to Amazon Publishing UK for an ARC.

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