

A Fragment of Fear: A Novel

John Bingham

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FROM THE INTRODUCTION BY JOHN LE CARRÉ

"This novel comprises some of the best work of an extremely gifted and perhaps under-regarded British crime novelist.... What gave John Bingham his magic was something we look for in every writer, too often in vain: an absolute command of the internal landscape of his characters, acutely observed by a humane but wonderfully corrosive eye."

"On a recuperative trip in Italy after a car accident, reporter and novelist James Compton is witness to the discovery of a murder victim, a woman who had been vacationing at the same hotel. Lucy Dawson seemed like a gentle old lady, and so the motive for her death appeared to be unmeditated assault. But when he returns to England and makes a benign inquiry into her background, Compton receives a note warning him to leave the past alone -- a note clearly written on his own typewriter, though his apartment shows no sign of a break-in.

Unable to resist pursuing the unfinished story, Compton's own investigation reveals a sinister side to Lucy Dawson and a cold-blooded conspiracy she may have helped to perpetrate while alive. Suddenly Compton finds a dangerous net closing in around him: threatening phone calls, terrifying invasions of privacy, and no way of proving to the police that anyone is responsible but himself.

In the tradition of Agatha Christie and Patricia Highsmith, John Bingham's writing has earned him a place amongst the great suspense writers of the twentieth century. With taut, compelling prose, *A Fragment of Fear* is a captivating thriller by a master storyteller at the height of his powers.



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