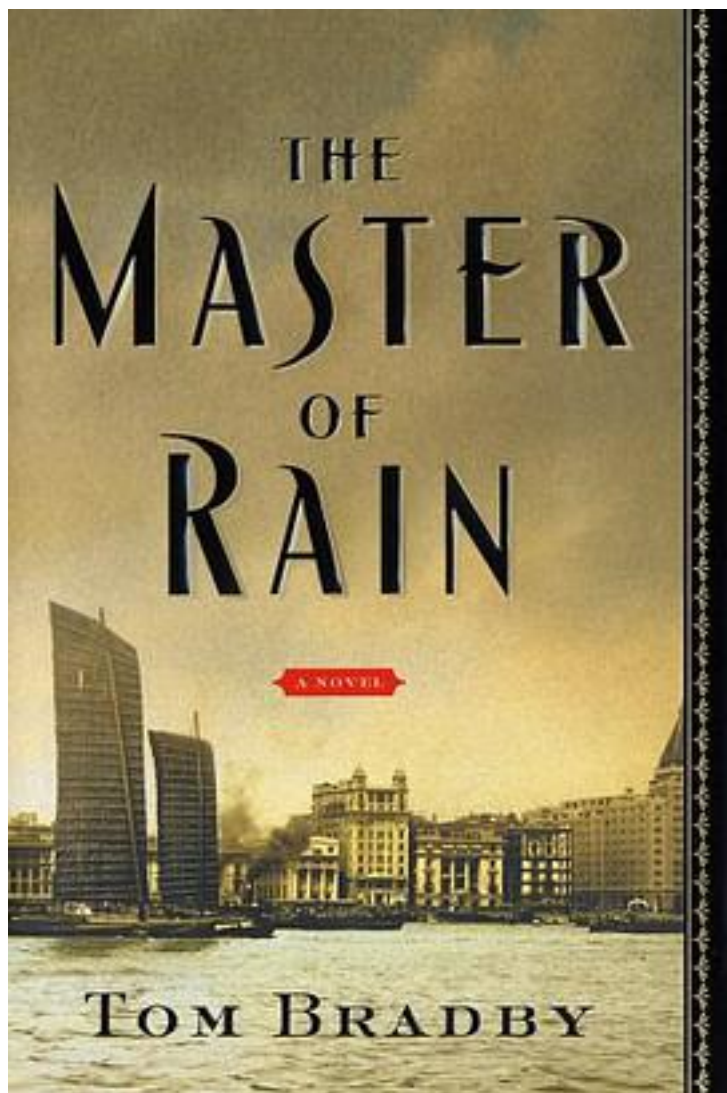


# The Master of Rain



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著者:Tom Bradby

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## Book Description

For Richard Field, a young Englishman new to the international police force, Shanghai represents a brave new world away from the past he is trying to escape. But his naïveté is quickly dashed when he is called to the scene of a brutal crime, in which a young Russian woman, Lena Orlov, has been found sadistically murdered in her bed. Field's idealistic instincts push him to investigate the case, but his attempts are met with apathy - then menace - from his colleagues. He begins to recognize that some cases in Shanghai are intended to remain unsolved, and, in a matter of days, he glimpses the murky depths that lurk beneath a luminous city.

Field's drive to find the murderer leads him to Lena's neighbor, Natasha Medvedev. A stunning beauty who fled her charmed life in tsarist Russia, Natasha escaped the Revolution but landed, like many of her counterparts, in a treacherous life in Shanghai. Natasha travels in an elite circle - one that orbits, Field knows, around the city's most feared drug lord, Lu Huang. As Field's attraction to the beguiling Natasha grows, he is faced with a piercing question: Can he trust someone whose only goal is self-preservation? And is it wise to fall in love with a woman who may herself be the next victim?

Trusting only his Chicago-hardened American partner, Caprisi, Field follows leads that run into the heart of a lawlessly corrupt city, slowly uncovering a web of deception that will leave him reeling.

## Publisher Comments :

Shanghai, 1926. A city glistening with decadence and rife with corruption--a humid, bustling society at the cultural crossroads of British civil servants, American gun runners, Russian princesses, and Chinese gangsters.

For Richard Field, a young Englishman new to the international police force, Shanghai represents a brave new world away from the past he is trying to escape. But his naïveté is quickly dashed when he is called to the scene of a brutal crime, in which a young Russian woman, Lena Orlov, has been found sadistically murdered in her bed. Field's idealistic instincts push him to investigate the case, but his attempts are met with apathy--then menace--from his colleagues. He begins to recognize that some cases in Shanghai are intended to remain unsolved, and, in a matter of days, he glimpses the murky depths that lurk beneath a luminous city.

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In *The Master of Rain*, Tom Bradby weaves a taut, atmospheric crime novel that doles out surprising turns until the last suspenseful page.

Amazon.com

Tom Bradby's third novel (though his first to be published in the U.S.) is a feverish work of historical noir, a labyrinthine thriller set in a vicious world where everyone--as in Bogart's *Casablanca*--has a reason for hiding. The year is 1926; the city is Shanghai, a swamp of organized crime, corruption, turf wars between British intelligence and street-level law enforcement, Communist sympathizers, and East European refugees from Bolshevik atrocities. Into this sweltering, cutthroat port city steps Richard Field, an idealistic policeman from Yorkshire looking to distance himself from a painful past. Ill-suited to Shanghai's heat and shocking violence, Field nevertheless throws himself into investigating the grisly murder of a Russian prostitute, the latest in a line of dead women who lived in the orbit of a powerful Chinese mobster. Slowed by official roadblocks, Field learns that the only man in his department he can trust is a tough Chicago detective, Caprisi, a touchstone of sanity even as Field loses his rookie head over another doomed Russian call girl.

Bradby, a seasoned correspondent for Britain's ITN television network, has obviously spent considerable time researching 1920s Shanghai. His feel for the city's Byzantine society and exotic textures is matched by his accessible vision of Shanghai as a junction of international fallout and internal intrigue. Less compelling, if not outright distracting, is Bradby's more contemporary emphasis on ghastly serial killings with a sex-crime edge. But in the end, the book's remarkable prose and density of experience are uniquely rewarding.

--Tom Keogh

Amazon.co.uk

Every once in a while a book comes along that combines larger-than-life epic adventure; idiomatic, pungent historical detail and genuine storytelling panache. Tom Bradby's *The Master of Rain* is such a book, carrying the reader headlong into a breathless tale of double-dealing and murder in 1920s Shanghai. What's more, Bradby never allows his sprawling canvas to overwhelm his beleaguered characters who always remain in keen focus.

Richard Field, Bradby's resourceful protagonist, has been seconded to the police force in the turbulent city of Shanghai. He finds a jostling mélange of British Imperial civil servants, American gunrunners and vicious Chinese gangsters. The grisly case he is landed with involves the mutilated body of a young White Russian woman and Field discovers that her neighbour, Natasha Medvedev, is somehow crucial to the investigation. But Natasha's only agenda is self-preservation and Field finds himself unwisely falling in love with her. Can he crack the mystery before the next victim falls--particularly as the signs are that it is to be Natasha?

This is splendidly evocative writing from the author of the first-rate *Shadow Dancer*. Masterly in its depiction of a beautiful, dirty and corrupt city and a population in thrall to the imperatives of the market: human life, like everything else in Shanghai, has its price. Field is the perfect conduit for the reader through the glittering decay of the city and his relationships (both with the beguiling Natasha and the panoply of quirky, dangerous characters he encounters) are adroitly handled by Bradby. The book is nearly 500 pages long but the reader will find that it has the pace and compulsiveness

of a short story.

--Barry Forshaw

From Publishers Weekly

British TV newsman Bradby used his time in Hong Kong to do some research on 1920s-era Shanghai, the result of which is this hefty first novel of corruption, debauchery and decaying colonialism. Richard Field, a young policeman from Yorkshire, lands a job in the Special Branch of Shanghai's police department circa 1926. Honest but naeave, the Englishman falls into a snake pit of corruption and rivalry, revealed when a Russian prostitute is savagely murdered by a maniac. The trail leads to local gangster "Pockmark" Lu Huang, a powerful opium smuggler; when evidence begins disappearing and mysterious cash deposits are made to his bank account, Field knows the department is dirty, but can't get support from anyone except his sidekick Caprisi (a pugnacious American transplant who cut his teeth fighting Capone in Chicago). What's more, Field falls hard for the dead Russian's neighbor, Natasha Medvedev, who is one of "Lu's girls" and therefore, as Field discovers, highly likely to meet a fate similar to her neighbor's, which Field learns is only one in a string of such homicides. But when Field's investigation threatens Lu's opium ring, Lu lashes out at the foreign police force and the body count rises precipitously. The novel works better as a multilayered mystery than as a period piece, as the background historical issues are obscured by the more modern focus on frenzied sex and death. Likewise, the obvious film noir look the author goes for is undermined by the late 20th-century serial-killer shtick he injects into the plot. Despite the periodic glimpse of Western elitism and building Chinese sympathy for communism, there is remarkably little use of local color (language, food, local customs) to satisfy readers of historical thrillers, though the mystery plot doesn't disappoint. Major ad/promo; author tour.

From Library Journal

A foreign correspondent for British TV's ITN, Bradby takes on Shanghai in 1926, where an English cop discovers that he is not supposed to solve the murder of a young Russian woman.

From AudioFile

The conventional elements of the gritty whodunit--the fledgling cop, the politically volatile station house, the criminal mastermind, the sexy dame in distress, drugs, smuggling, corruption--are spiced up by an exotic locale and taut writing. In 1920s Shanghai, an idealistic British novice on the force and his partner, a street-smart Chicago expatriate, investigate the murder of a Russian prostitute, the "property" of a Chinese underworld kingpin. West End veteran Steven Pacey serviceably impersonates the run-of-the-mill characters of various nationalities, despite his shaky handling of accents. Even more successfully, he plays the rhythms of the slick narrative structure and journalistic prose, which so effectively keep the listener riveted to the action. Y.R.

About Author

TOM BRADBY is a foreign correspondent for the British television network ITN. He has spent the last eight years covering British and American politics, as well as conflicts in China, Ireland, Kosovo, and Indonesia. While living in Hong Kong and writing this novel, Bradby researched historical records and archives of 1920s Shanghai. He now lives in London with his wife and three children.

Book Dimension:

length: (cm)24.1 width:(cm)16.1

作者介绍:

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