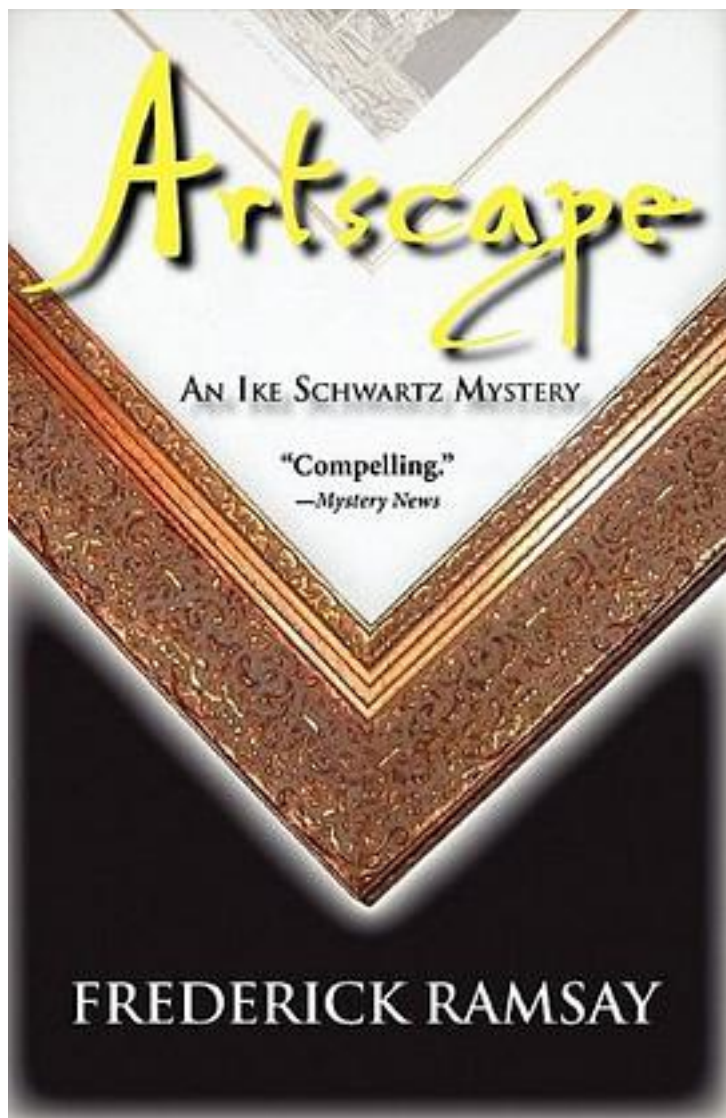


# Artscape



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Ike Schwartz thought he could return to his hometown and ditch the demons that pursue him. More than anything, he wanted to blot out the pain and anger that came when his wife of less than a month was gunned down in a CIA foul-up. So he buried himself as sheriff in rural Picketsville, Virginia, a community indistinguishable from any of the hundreds of small towns that hang like beads on Interstate 81 running from Pennsylvania down to Georgia. Aside from its Civil War history, Picketsville's only real claim to fame is Callend College, a private women's school located just within its corporate limits. The college is notable, in turn, for housing one half of the billion dollar Dillon art collection, carefully secured in an underground bunker originally built in the late 1950s as a super bomb shelter. It's bad news for both Dr. Ruth Harris, the newly hired president of the college, and for a shadowy group whose services have been contracted by Middle Eastern fanatics--The New Jihad--when the collection is scheduled to be removed to New York. The plan is to steal the half billion dollars worth of fine art and statuary, and ransom it back for millions. With the closure of the facility imminent, the operation must be moved forward, which, in turn, creates unanticipated risks and problems. And everyone dismisses Ike Schwartz as a stereotypical rural sheriff. He is, however, a man with uncommon skills, a tough hide, and a notable past--all of which make an arresting first novel.

作者介绍:

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