

The Lies I've Told

Reviews

MR W.

5.0 out of 5 stars A real page-turner!

Reviewed in the United Kingdom on September 5, 2021

The basic truth of 'The Lies I've Told' by Charles Serio is it's a real page-turner which I found hard to put down. I was immediately drawn into the world of our hero Ralph Waldo and his superbly crafted set of stories, so seamlessly linked and charmingly told. I don't think I've ever come across such an eclectic collection of anecdotes in one volume. The "All human life is there" motto could justifiably be resurrected, as we are taken from Ralph's beginnings in America in the 1950's through to moving to the UK of the 1980's with so many unbelievable adventures, tears, laughter and suspense along the way. Whether fact or fiction, there is a wealth of well observed humanity and wisdom here and I really hope there is more to follow.

Russ H

4.0 out of 5 stars Entertainment as writing is designed to do...

Reviewed in the United States on December 6, 2016 - Verified Purchase

Humorous and serious, stories of life written as a series of 1 act plays that are well presented and reflective. The best part is that the stories are all true, I purchased the book on the internet.

Amazon Customer

5.0 out of 5 stars Couldn't put it down!

Reviewed in the United States on July 28, 2016 - Verified Purchase

Truly enjoyed reading about Ralphy and his adventures. So sad when I read the last page. Hope their will be a sequel!

RJ S

5.0 out of 5 stars Seductive read: clever, warm, funny, and softly moving

Reviewed in the United States on December 2, 2016 - Verified Purchase

This is a seductive read: clever, warm, funny, and softly moving. The author has strung together a series of stories in the first person (very loosely derived from the autobiographical: the author is an American-born, London playwright). The stories are arranged chronologically, so they begin with the innocence of youth and the hijinks of teens on the streets of Baltimore circa 1960 and later. The stories follow the narrator through university, first love, and marriage—ultimately on to London, where he becomes a player in the city's vibrant theater culture. There are ups, downs, and twists. The narrator's marriage and business venture dissolve amid a spouse's painful struggles with alcohol. The narrator reenters the dating scene later in life, and his stage career takes a peculiar turn into professional education, which leads to adventures farther afield in the post 9/11 century.

What happens subtly but effectively in this book is the maturation of the narrator, Ralphy, as both storyteller and main character. The earliest stories are rendered in shorter paragraphs, aptly with a child's innocence. Drama and humor derive from ghosts, dares, and fumbling romance. As the narrator grows older, so does his voice. Ralphy captures the earnest innocence of first love, the discovery of a larger world, and the excitement of Bohemian life in big-city London. I thought myself still detached from Ralphy's experience, but when the first cracks in Ralphy's marriage emerged, tears at the corners of my eyes said I was already spellbound. We share with Ralphy the peculiarly adult pain of his separation and the redefinition of his place in the world. Ralphy's later relationships play to the awkwardness of starting over in romance. We see that the shy and adventuresome youth we started out with is still there: older and wiser, to be sure, but still our storyteller, still armed with gentle humor and still eager to have us along for the ride.

Rare among books of its kind today, this author accomplishes his story without the rawness of foul language and sex. It's not missed and not necessary to accomplish the author's purpose. The book has decidedly adult themes in its treatment of marriage and addiction, but the author handles them with care and grace, making the book appropriate for readers as young as teens. The text is a straightforward read and worth the investment.

Andrew Caldwell

5.0 out of 5 stars Do people lie to improve their persona?

Reviewed in the United States on January 28, 2016 - Verified Purchase

Tale of a man who recounts events in his life which may or may not be completely true. The events range from his American youth to adult life in England. His work is affected by marital problems as well as difficulties of making it as a writer. He tries acting, role playing for NHS doctors, & developing training programs for various corporations. His work takes him to Europe & the Middle East.

V. Mckenna

5.0 out of 5 stars Spinner of stories...

Reviewed in the United Kingdom on January 9, 2016 - Verified Purchase

Loved this novel! The author spins his tales and draws you in --a real page turner. Makes you laugh and cry --humorous stories and ones that are very poignant. A good read!

Amazon Customer

5.0 out of 5 stars Enormously entertaining, insightful...

Reviewed in the United Kingdom on January 25, 2016 - Verified Purchase

Charles has written an enormously entertaining, insightful, and engaging series of stories in his book, 'The Lies I've Told'. I recommend it to everyone who enjoys an engaging good read by a talented storyteller.