

Only to Sleep: A Philip Marlow Novel by Lawrence Osborne, Raymond Chandler

5 Stars

There is always work for an aging sleuth.

In 1989, Philip Marlow is 77 years old, living a semi-retired life, when he is asked to investigate the disappearance of Donald Zinn, supposedly drowned off the coast of Mexico.

The story goes from California to Mexico as Philip investigates a far more complex case than a non-suspicious death.

Zinn's much younger wife is hiding something, and Philip becomes a little obsessed with her, but his pursuance pays off when he discovers Zinn is alive and living off the spoils of his fraudulent capers.

A psychological tale with many twists and turns and a hint of the younger Marlow, coming to terms with modern life and aging bones.

Not ever having read the original Marlow books, I will not comment on whether Lawrence does Mr Chandler's hero justice, but as a stand alone book I thoroughly enjoyed it, just enough film noir to give Marlow the old gumshoe character. The story flows beautifully, the action is strategically placed to keep you on the edge of your seat.

The characters are full bodied and believable, and poor Mr Marlow is also a sad ghost of his former self, warring against modern criminals and cruel, vicious gangs.

A thoroughly good book and well worth a read on a cold winter's afternoon.

Ellezig

Breakaway Reviewers received a copy of this book to review.