ForeWord Reviews
Clarion Review

GENERAL

Mirror Image
Richard Flewelling
978-1-4343-6057-1
One Star (out of Five)

Richard Flewelling relates an out-of-this-world story in this novel based on actual events—a story that is entirely fictitious yet moderately real. Poor storytelling and awkward prose makes it hard to decipher what exactly happened to the author on a chilly afternoon in November of 1962 when one man seemingly became another. The mysterious events of the day had a profound effect on Flewelling but he states that they could have been the result of drug use and the truth ultimately remains a mystery.

The novel focuses on the central character of Nicholas "Bogey" Bogart a former marine living in Idaho in the early 1960s. Bogey walks out of a bar one afternoon in search of a place with a little more eye candy. He crosses the street and enters Reynolds another drinking establishment. When Bogey enters the bar everyone inside identifies him as a man named Gary and he begins to live this other man's life. There are plenty of consequences to Bogey's actions the least of which would certainly be the mental trauma suffered by all parties.

While the story is original and has a certain "Twilight Zone" twist it's written in a style that makes it hard to enjoy or even understand. Flewelling struggles to make coherent sentences and loses his audience in translation. Take for example the following passage which is representative of the author's style:

> *I had a couple of beers and no one came in so I decided to walk across the street to Reynold's where there were several cars in the parking lot which was an indication that Reynold's appeared to be a better for entertainment than Erick's today at least for right now….It was a bit early for the 'haps' to be starting anywhere.*

Flewelling's storytelling skills are in desperate need of a tune-up. Also noticeable and irritating is the incessant use of scare quotes for words and terms that are widely used and understood today such as "brush-off" "train wreck" and even "she" and "this guy."

Ultimately due to poor writing and editing the events of that night are equally as confusing as Flewelling's attempt to retell it.

Liam Brennan