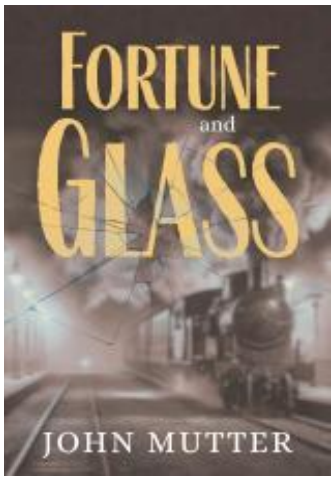
# Fortune and Glass

by John Mutter




## About the Book

**How do you stay human inside a regime built to erase you?**

Berlin, 1932. Germany?s fragile democracy is fracturing, its ideals cracking like thin glass as political violence and paranoia seep into the streets. In the midst of this tension, Rudi, a young Foreign Ministry official, meets Sara, an unpredictable, morally fierce Jewish woman whose connection with him is immediate and combustible.

By 1943, the Germany they knew has vanished, and Rudi works at the center of Nazi power, performing his duties by day and passing intelligence to the Allies by night --- until Sara?s unexpected return threatens to unravel the life he has carefully constructed to survive.

FORTUNE AND GLASS is a philosophical spy novel and literary love story about private choices, secret resistance, and the cost of staying human inside a system determined to erase individuality. Lyrical, atmospheric and morally complex, it explores the gray zones of living under authoritarianism and asks a timeless question: *Who are you when everything falls apart?*

FORTUNE AND GLASS is not a conventional WWII novel but a literary love story braided through a psychological spy narrative --- an intimate exploration of identity, conscience and quiet resistance inside a society sliding into extremism. Positioned at the crossroads of literary fiction, psychological suspense and historical storytelling, the novel explores how ordinary people navigate love, loyalty and moral responsibility inside systems that reward silence and punish dissent --- questions that feel as urgent now as they did then. Lyrical, emotionally rich and philosophically resonant, it turns away from spectacle and heroics to focus on the private cost of survival.

For readers who believe they?ve read every WWII novel, FORTUNE AND GLASS offers something rare: a deeply human story that restores the genre by shifting the lens inward, toward the moral choices that define us when history

fractures beneath our feet. For readers of ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE, THE NIGHTINGALE, THE BOOK THIEF, THE ALICE NETWORK and the espionage of John le Carré, FORTUNE AND GLASS blends intimacy, danger and moral complexity into a WWII story that feels both timeless and urgent.

## Discussion Guide

**1.** Which character did you feel most drawn to, and did that change at any point?

**2.** What meaning does the title FORTUNE AND GLASS take on by the end of the novel?

**3.** Do you think the characters are in control of their lives or reacting to forces around them? Why?

**4.** What does the story suggest about the trade-offs people make to get what they want?

**5.** Throughout the novel, characters are often navigating incomplete or distorted information. How does it shape the choices they make?

**6.** Did any particular scene or image stay with you after finishing? Why that one?

**7.** Several characters make decisions they believe are justified in the moment. In those situations, which choices do you think you would have made?

**8.** The novel touches on how quickly situations can escalate when systems break down or communication fails. Where do you see parallels to real-world situations today?

**9.** In what ways does FORTUNE AND GLASS mirror current events or dynamics in today?s world, whether in business, politics, power structures, trust or information?

**10.** Do you think the kinds of decisions made in the book are more common or more visible in today?s world? Why or why not?

## Author Bio

John Mutter is a journalist who covers the book world and is the editor-in-chief and co-founder of *Shelf Awareness*, the online company with publications for booksellers, librarians and book lovers. He earlier was an editor for more than 20 years at *Publishers Weekly*. He graduated from Sarah Lawrence College and studied for a year in Germany. He has long been interested in history, literature, language and politics. A resident of various points in the Northeast, including New York City, he now lives in the mountains of New Hampshire with his family.

# Fortune and Glass

by John Mutter

**Publication Date:** October 6, 2026
**Genres:** Fiction, Historical Fiction
**Hardcover:** 390 pages
**Publisher:** Left Field Publishing
**ISBN-10:** 1966883072
**ISBN-13:** 9781966883074