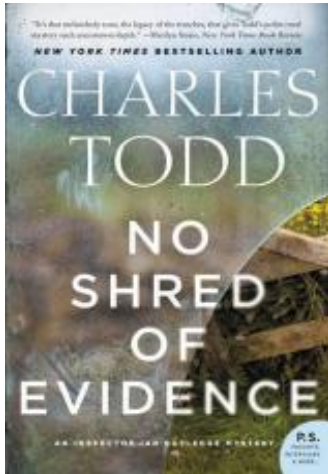


No Shred of Evidence: An Inspector Ian Rutledge Mystery

by Charles Todd



About the Book

On the north coast of Cornwall, an apparent act of mercy is repaid by an arrest for murder. Four young women have been accused of the crime. A shocked father calls in a favor at the Home Office. Scotland Yard is asked to review the case.

However, Inspector Ian Rutledge is not the first Inspector to reach the village. Following in the shoes of a dead man, he is told the case is all but closed. Even as it takes an unexpected personal turn, Rutledge will require all his skill to deal with the incensed families of the accused, the grieving parents of the victim, and local police eager to see these four women sent to the infamous Bodmin Gaol. Then why hasn't the killing stopped?

With no shred of evidence to clear the accused, Rutledge must plunge deep into the darkest secrets of a wild, beautiful and dangerous place if he is to find a killer who may --- or may not --- hold the key to their fate.

Discussion Guide

1. Discuss the opening chapter with the four young women in the rowboat. Is it clear that they are trying to rescue the man they come upon on the river?
2. Why is Inspector Ian Rutledge reluctant to take on the case in Cornwall?
3. What role does Hamish MacLeod play in this series? Why does Inspector Rutledge need him around?
4. How does Rutledge being young, a single, childless man, affect the investigation? Is this a positive or a negative?

5. Class and status play a significant role in this case. How would the story change if these were no longer issues?
6. Small-town secrets play a large role in the plot. Examine each one and their ramifications.
7. The novel focuses mainly on the four young women accused of a terrible crime. How would the story be different if it was told from the victim's point of view?
8. Talk about the nature of justice in this story and how difficult it was to achieve in the face of enormous pressure from those involved with this case.
9. Like the classic film *Rashomon*, in which a murder is viewed from the point of view of several eyewitnesses, the alleged murder in *NO SHRED OF EVIDENCE* also contains many vantage points from those present. Examine each one and the potential results.
10. How did your perspective change when additional victims began mounting up? Did you begin to suspect different characters were guilty?

Author Bio

Charles Todd is the *New York Times* bestselling author of the Inspector Ian Rutledge mysteries, the Bess Crawford mysteries, and two stand-alone novels. A mother-and-son writing team, Caroline passed away in August 2021. Charles lives in Florida.

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