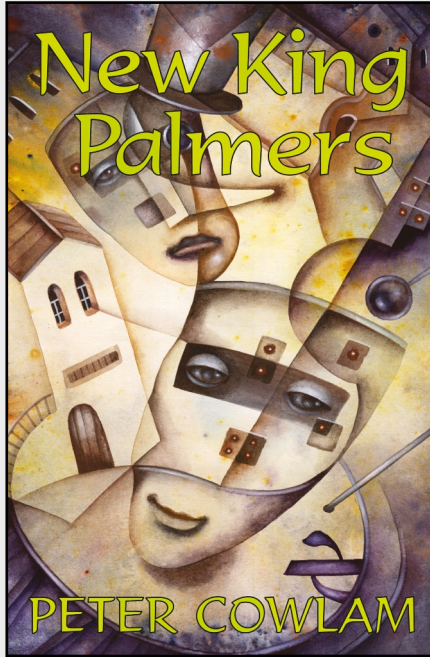


CentreHouse Press

New King Palmers

Advance Information

Winner of the 2018 Quagga Prize for Literary Fiction



Title New King Palmers

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Set in the late 1990s, in the months up to and after the death of Princess Diana, New King Palmers is narrated by its principal character Humfrey Joel, a close friend of Earl Eliot d'Oc. The earl's ancestry is bound up with the Habsburgs and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. D'Oc is a member of the British Privy Council and a close friend of Prince Charles and Princess Diana. In the months preceding Diana's death, he commissions a young theatre professional to develop a play. The play's theme is constitutional issues surrounding Prince Charles, with the heir's interests served by UK withdrawal from the EU, before it becomes a federal superstate. The commissioned play is called New King Palmers, and d'Oc maintains rigorous editorial control over it. When d'Oc's death shortly follows Diana's, Joel is named as d'Oc's literary executor, with the task of bringing the play to the English stage. Supposedly written into the text is an encoded message from the British Privy Council on behalf of the House of Windsor, addressed to the stewards of the EU. When news of this leaks out no one in the British literary and theatrical worlds believes it. In fact most come to see Earl d'Oc as an invented character behind which Joel shields himself, when his own motives are themselves sinister. So sinister, an MI5 spook is put on the case.

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