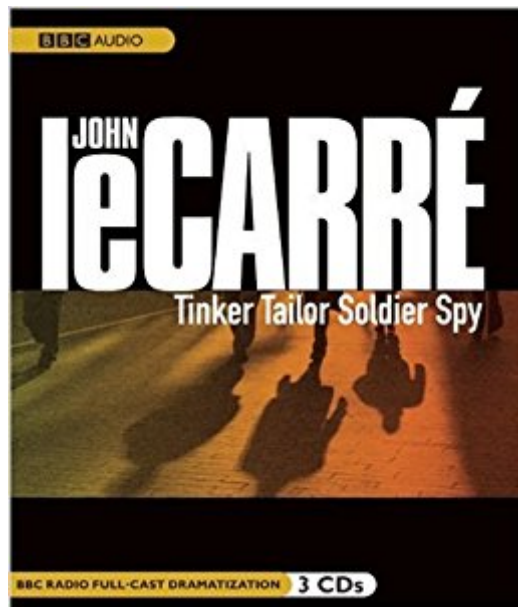




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# Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy (BBC Radio Full-Cast Dramatization)



## Synopsis

George Smiley is one of the most brilliantly realized characters in British fiction. Bespectacled, tubby, eternally middle-aged and deceptively ordinary, he has a mind like a steel trap and is said to possess the cunning of Satan and the conscience of a virgin. This BBC Radio full cast dramatization of *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, stars Simon Russell Beale as George Smiley. -- Smiley, wrestling with retirement and disillusionment, is summoned to a secret meeting with a member of the cabinet office. Evidence has emerged that the Circus has been infiltrated at the highest level by a Russian agent -- and it's more than likely that the perpetrator is Karla, his old adversary. When Smiley is offered the job of catching the mole, it becomes a long and bitter battle of deception and treachery. Find the mole, George. Clean the stables. Do whatever is necessary. Reluctantly Smiley agrees, and so embarks on a dark journey into his past -- a past filled with love, duplicity, and betrayal.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

John le Carré<sup>®</sup> was a member of the British Foreign Service from 1959 to 1964. He started writing novels in 1961, and since then has published twenty-one titles.

George Smiley is holed up in the cheap Isley Hotel in Paddington working through the night on secret files that have to be returned every morning. He's looking for a mole in the Circus "buried very deep and very near the top". Control knew there was a traitor but died before he could be unmasked. Is it Tinker, Tailor, Richman, Beggerman? Will George nab the mole. Most of all I enjoy the pacing of this tale. It unfolds very slowly, as a true investigation would. You can't be without this

text book Le Carre. Don Wardell

It's a good dramatization, but the listener needs to be advised that it is just that - a BBC dramatization of the story - not a full or abridged reading of the book.

This BBC broadcast was such an intelligent telling of the Tinker, Tailor story. It assumed you had read the book or perhaps even seen the recent (Gary Oldman) movie. I had. Thus, a complete success with me--and I have relistened to it already. Thanks.

the production of this is marvelous. It is well made and brings the story to life. The story is clear and it is a joy to follow.

like most bbc adv/mystery etc when I can get them like this

in a lot of ways better than the actual movie.

Everything I expected and needed. added to the enjoyment of the games. easy to read and understand. GREAT PICTURES TO ADD TO THE UNDERSTANDING

First I have to say a couple things: I love the story of TINKER, TAILOR, SOLDIER, SPY. I've read the book, seen the Alec Guinness version and enjoyed the Bernard Hepton version that BBC Radio did in the late 1980s. Each has been special in it's own way while still telling the same story. The book is the high water mark of spy fiction. I believe it's Le Carre's best book, and George Smiley is his best character. When I heard that the BBC were going to dramatize all the Smiley stories I was very happy. When I heard Simon Russel-Beale as Smiley I knew they'd made an inspired choice; he really is wonderful as the "anti-Bond." I'd listened to CALL FOR THE DEAD and THE HONORABLE SCHOOLBOY before buying TINKER, both of which were very well done. Then I listened to TINKER and found myself less impressed. I found myself missing scenes that I thought were important. I found the structure confusing, though (if memory serves) it follows the books structure more closely than other adaptations. By the end I found myself missing Bernard Hepton. Now this is strange because Mr. Russel-Beale is fantastic as Smiley. His performance is wonderful. I think what I was missing was the ensemble from the older show. The characters in the older program were more idiosyncratic, especially Charles Kay as Toby Esterhase. Bill Haydon is hardly in

the story until the final episode, and Lady Ann Smiley is only here as Smiley's imagination. In fact, all of the potential moles, Tinker, Tailor, Soldier and Poor Man, make no appearance before episode 3. They are all mentioned by Peter Guillam, who again, narrates the story, but are hardly there. I may be wrong about Tinker, but I don't think so. Most of Smiley's detective work is missing from this drama too. No Jerry Westerby at all, which is sad because Hugh Bonneville plays him wonderfully in THE HONORABLE SCHOOLBOY. As a writer of radio drama with over 100 hours of produced work I have to say, I think that Guillam's narration is lazy writing. Much of it isn't necessary and slows the story down. TINKER is a thoughtful enough tale, it doesn't need to be slowed down further- and it certainly shouldn't be dumbed down. In the end I'm of two minds about this adaptation. I think it's good, but it falls short of previous adaptations because of uninspired writing and confusing timelines. If my wife listened to it (she hasn't seen, heard or read TINKER) I fear she would find it confusing and lacking dynamic. The cast is strong, but never really break out. It's easy to explain this as "the characters are all gentlemen" and never raise their voices. That may be, but it also creates no sense of urgency. Oh, there's a mole in the British Secret Service? Well now, what shall we do about that? I give this adaptation 3 and 1/2 stars. I give the Hepton dramatization 4 and 1/2 stars. Good luck finding it.

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