



A Fatal Likeness: A Novel (Charles Maddox Book 3)

Lynn Shepherd

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NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY *KIRKUS REVIEWS*

With *The Solitary House*, award-winning author Lynn Shepherd introduced readers to Charles Maddox, a brilliant private detective plying his trade on the gaslit streets of Dickensian London. Now, in this mesmerizing new novel of historical suspense, a mystery strikes disturbingly close to home—and draws Maddox into a world of literary legends, tormented souls, and a legacy of terrible secrets.

When his great-uncle, the master detective who schooled him in the science of “thief taking,” is mysteriously stricken, Charles Maddox fears that the old man’s breakdown may be directly related to the latest case he’s been asked to undertake. Summoned to the home of a stuffy nobleman and his imperious wife, Charles finds his investigative services have been engaged by no less than the son of celebrated poet Percy Bysshe Shelley and his famed widow, Mary, author of the gothic classic *Frankenstein*. Approached by a stranger offering to sell a cache of rare papers allegedly belonging to the legendary late poet, the Shelley family seeks Maddox’s aid in discovering whether the precious documents are authentic or merely the work of an opportunistic charlatan.

But the true identity of his quarry is only the first of many surprises lying in wait for the detective. Hardly a conniving criminal, Claire Clairmont is in fact the stepsister of Mary Shelley, and their tortured history of jealousy, obsession, and dark deceit looms large over the affair Maddox must untangle. So, too, does the shadow of the brilliant, eccentric Percy Shelley, who found no rest from the private demons that pursued him. With each new detail unearthed, the investigation grows ever more disturbing. And when shocking evidence of foul play comes to light, Maddox’s chilling hunt for the truth leads him into the blackest reaches of the soul.

Steeped in finely wrought Victorian atmosphere, and rife with eye-opening historical revelations, *A Fatal Likeness* carries the reader ever deeper into a darkly magnetic tale of love and madness as utterly harrowing and heartbreaking as it is undeniably human.

This eBook edition includes the complete text of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, a classic novel that’s referenced in *A Fatal Likeness*!

Praise for Lynn Shepherd and *A Fatal Likeness*

“As a piece of literary detective work, it’s stimulating and hugely fun—even brilliant.”—*The Spectator*

“A potent mixture of passion, intrigue, perversion, and betrayal, exploring the lives of Shelley, Byron, and their Romantic intimates through a Gothic lens.”—Lyndsay Faye, author of *The Gods of Gotham*

“A wonderfully ingenious novel: perceptive, gripping, and fascinating.”—Miranda Seymour, author of *Mary Shelley*

“Shepherd sets a new standard of brilliance in historical fiction with *A Fatal Likeness*. Her summoning of dead souls—Mary Shelley, Lord Byron, and their most intimate circle—is so psychologically penetrating, it

feels like truth. Exquisitely rendered in Shepherd's pitch-perfect prose, this tale will haunt the reader long after its close."—**Stephanie Barron, author of *Jane and the Canterbury Tale***

"A literary thriller that weaves back and forth in time and gives some plausible answers to certain genuine biographical mysteries . . . [The novel's] conclusion has haunted me ever since I finished the book. But if you want to know what it is, you'll have to read it yourself."—***The Independent***

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