

The Colonel's Mistake by Dan Mayland

Discussion Questions

1. How authentic a character do you think Mark Sava is? What do you think drives him?
2. Daria initially comes across as a traditional heroine—she's pretty, intelligent, and appears committed to the CIA. How did revelations about her past change your perception of her?
3. What did you think about Daria's reasons for joining the CIA? What did you think about her reasons for aiding the MEK?
4. Do you believe Mark is trustworthy? What about Daria?
5. The book travels to Azerbaijan, Iran, Iraq, Dubai, and France. Which was your favorite setting? Why?
6. How did your opinion of the title change, if at all, over the course of the book? What would you say was the colonel's mistake?
7. Did you notice any parallels between what happens in the book and current events? If so, what were they?
8. Mark states, "Most people would believe almost any lie you told them provided that you followed two rules. The first was that the lie had to be within the realm of plausibility. The second was that the lie had to be framed in such a way that it didn't appear to be in the self-interest of the person who was telling it." Do you agree with this statement? Why, or why not? Which character is the most adept at lying?
9. What do you think are some of the characteristics of a good spy? Do you think Mark, Daria, and Decker possess these characteristics? Do you think you would make a good spy?
10. The author has written, "I don't see spy thrillers as just stories about a spies, I see them as a stories that focus on elemental issues all people deal with—when do you tell the truth, when do you lie, when do you decide the ends justify the means, when do you decide they don't, how much of your true self do you show to the people around you, how much do you hide... Spies grapple with these same issues, only they take it to an extreme." Do you agree with this? Why or why not?
11. How would you describe the relationship between Mark and Daria? Are they right for each other?
12. This is the first book in a series. Which characters do you hope to see in future books?