



Courage Begins: A Ray Courage Mystery Novella

R. Scott Mackey

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Garrett and Tiffanie Bate had it all—youth, money, and a perfect marriage. Until Tiffanie is killed in a suspicious accident. Neither the police nor the insurance investigators can prove she was murdered and the case turns cold.

Two years later the insurance company asks an intern—former college professor turned private eye Ray Courage—to reopen the investigation. He uncovers little new evidence to support suspicions that Garrett killed his wife for the insurance money. Garrett has the perfect alibi—hundreds of witnesses that place him more than two hours from the scene of Tiffanie’s death. Ray knows he’s missing something. But what? As his search for the truth unfolds, Ray’s life is put in jeopardy and he realizes his adversary is someone who’ll kill before he’ll be caught.

In this prequel to *Courage Matters*, Ray Courage begins his private investigation career, displaying the skills, abilities and sense of humor that have made him a fan favorite around the world.

Courage Begins: A Ray Courage Mystery Novella Details

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Author : R. Scott Mackey

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From Reader Review Courage Begins: A Ray Courage Mystery Novella for online ebook

Betty says

Ray Courage is working as a college professor and teaching is becoming a chore rather than something he looks forward to. Then an issue with a manipulative female student arose and his employer and colleagues were less than supportive. Even though Ray was cleared, the whole thing just left him with a bad taste in his mouth and made the decision to retire from teaching much easier. Now, what's next? Ray wanted something entirely different so private eye it was. In order to be licensed, he needed some case experience. Ray is assigned a cold case, an insurance case where the company paid out but everyone thought there was murder but no proof! Ray begins asking questions and double checking facts in the file. He knows he's on the right track when there's an attempt on his life. A very well-written, fast-paced mystery that keeps you turning the pages!

Kathy says

Excellent short story. Read it in a couple of hours. Very easy entertaining read. Mystery and suspense to it...

BooksChatter says

3.5 I liked it a lot

Courage Begins is the prequel to the Ray Courage series, by author R Scott Mackey. Although this is part of a series, there are no cliff-hangers and it can be read stand-alone.

Courage begins fully delivers on what is promised in its synopsis. Narrated from the first person point of view of Ray Courage, the story is extremely well written, with clear, simple structure, flawless spelling and grammar, and a rhythm to its flow, as we find out about Ray, the people and places in his life and of course the case that he is investigating.

Ray is a very likeable character, with real integrity. He is also funny and he likes his ales. I found his voice very authentic and believable.

The plot is also very good, however there was a big hint half way through, therefore, although still very satisfying, the twist did not come as a surprise to me.

Definitely a good fast-paced read which leaves you wanting more.

[ARC received from the author]

BooksChatter

Christine says

I had a day of nothing to read while awaiting a group read to start and was lucky enough to find this 76-page novella as a free read on Amazon. I was in the mood for a short whodunit and this story fit the bill perfectly.

Ray Courage was a college professor who became bored with his job. He felt his skills suited him for a job as an investigator so he took a deep breath, quit his scholarly career and went for it. As we meet Ray, he is 52 years old and is starting an investigator internship with an insurance company. He is given a cold case of a woman killed 20 years previously. It is suspected that her husband killed her for the insurance money, but evidence could never be found to prove it. Can Ray actually crack a case that stumped multiple detectives?

There are several things I liked about *Courage Begins*. Scott Mackey, the author, has come up with a good little plot. Though his writing is efficient, he does take the time to create atmosphere in most of his scenes and to give us a glimpse into Ray's personal life. I found Ray to be endearing and a "regular guy". The book is laced with subtle humor, which I found amusing. The pace is excellent.

Though *Courage Begins* is the first installment of the Ray Courage Mystery series, it is definitely a stand-alone with no loose ends left hanging. I must say I look forward to seeing more of this older rookie investigator and have already downloaded the next book, *Courage Matters*, a full-length novel. There is a third book available and another in the pipeline. Anyone looking for a fast yet entertaining mystery will find it in *Courage Begins*. Definitely recommended.

Sandy Goga says

This was a pretty easy and fast read. I thought it was a pretty good book. There wasn't a build up to the end. All of a sudden I was reading the ending to the book. That actually wasn't a bad thing. The way the book flowed, it was an easy and logical transition. I would recommend this book for reading.

Brittany King says

This was a great short read. Its about a man who is starting a new chapter in his life. Ray has become an intern and his first case is a two year old insurance case. He spends the next four days figuring out how Tiffanie was really murdered. The story was fast paced, and very entertaining. It was like watching an episode of Law and Order. The writing style is really just spot on.

I did receive a free copy of this book for an honest review.

Stacei says

Excellent mystery

I really liked this book. Ray Courage has started a new career, and has been given an assignment to review an old insurance case. Every thought the husband killed his wife, but no one could prove it. He had an airtight alibi. Could Ray prove him guilty or was he innocent. Only reading the book will tell you for sure. I am looking forward to the next book in the series. I highly recommend you pick up a copy today.

Tatiana Lammers says

This book is the beginning of a series, but, as far as I understand, it could be read as a standalone. The novella was a quick but rather enjoyable read. The main character is interesting and his sidekick is intriguing (they are such different people!). The mystery was tough to solve but that's what kept the main character going, and it also kept me interested in the plot. I'll read more of Ray Courage books for sure!

Col says

Synopsis/blurb.....

Garrett and Tiffanie Bate had it all—youth, money, and a perfect marriage. Until Tiffanie is killed in a suspicious accident. Neither the police nor the insurance investigators can prove she was murdered and the case turns cold. Two years later the insurance company asks an intern—former college professor turned private eye Ray Courage—to reopen the investigation. He uncovers little new evidence to support suspicions that Garrett killed his wife for the insurance money. Garrett has the perfect alibi—hundreds of witnesses that place him more than two hours from the scene of Tiffanie's death. Ray knows he's missing something. But what? As his search for the truth unfolds, Ray's life is put in jeopardy and he realizes his adversary is someone who'll kill before he'll be caught. In this prequel to *Courage Matters*, Ray Courage begins his private investigation career, displaying the skills, abilities and sense of humor that have made him a fan favorite around the world.

My take.....

Courage Begins is an 85 page novella from new-to-me author R. Scott Mackey. The author's debut novel *Courage Matters* sits after this in his Ray Courage series.

I enjoyed this introduction to a new investigator. We had some sense of his character and background revealed to us during our case and there was enough there to encourage me to want to read more about him. The Sacramento setting also appealed to me.

We had a decent plot here and I was interested to see how our former college professor unravelled it when more experienced investigators had failed before him. Garrett Bate was cocky, confident and pretty sure he was home free after the suspicious death of his wife a couple of years previously. He was also over a million dollars richer. Courage starts off sedately enough, poking around, innocently asking questions. A mention of something maybe halfway through or a bit beyond, set an alarm bell ringing in my head and whilst I was correct, the author added a twist which I hadn't seen coming.

Overall, entertaining without being the best book ever, but I was satisfied and as a result intend to get to

Courage Matters sometime soon.

Courage Resurrected follows-on after that.

4 from 5

R. Scott Mackey has his author website here.

<http://www.rscottmackey.com/>

Review copy received from the author.

<http://col2910.blogspot.co.uk/2015/04...>

Terry says

It was a fun read. I felt the ending was a little rushed. I also did not care for the branding of items. It dates the work and removes imagination. Thanks for sharing your story.

Charles Ray says

After working for 22 years as a professor at Sacramento State University, Ray Courage retired and set out to become a private investigator. In order to get his license he needs 4,000 hours of paid intern work, and has signed on at California Farmers Insurance. His boss gives him a cold case involving the death of a wealthy real estate agent, Tiffanie Bate, who died of carbon monoxide poisoning along with her lover. Although the company suspected foul play, in light of her husband having taken out a \$1.5 million policy on her life shortly before she died, he has an iron clad alibi, and the police are calling the death accidental.

In *Courage Begins*, a novella introducing Ray Courage, written by R. Scott Mackey, the reader follows Ray as, with the help of his former student and ex-gangbanger, Rubia, he digs up ghosts that someone wants to be left buried. Ray knows that he's on to something when the town drunk swears that he saw the husband near the crime scene the night of the death—despite video evidence placing him at a very public event many miles away. When someone tries to get him to drop the case, using the same method that killed Tiffanie, Ray knows he's on to something. The question, though, is whether or not he can prove it before he becomes the next victim.

Pithy dialogue and on-the-mark narrative descriptions, along with a good mixture of humor and horror, mark *Courage Begins* as a must-read book for mystery fans. I received a free copy of this introductory novella in exchange for my review.

Kathy Heare Watts says

THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK

This is a very well written story that kept me captivated as Ray Courage tries to solve a two-year-old murder

and insurance claim. The main character, Ray Courage, retired from teaching college to become a private investigator. The style reminds me of a modern day Dragnet. The twists and turns of this unsolved crime kept me turning the pages as the story remains in a constant suspense. The plot was ingenious and executed where you learn bits and pieces of this two-year-old mystery until it is solved. This book is part of a series but reads as a standalone.

C.E. DeJoria says

Entertaining mystery novella

I wanted more, but have to admit the pacing of the story was perfect. I liked the author's writing style and mms ain character. Although the way Ray Courage investigates is probably not too realistic, it was logical and moved the story along briskly.

Quanita says

Introducing Ray Courage

A short introducing Dr. Ray Courage., former college professor turned insurance investigator. He's given a cold case of possible murder that had a million dollar payout. Can he break the prime suspects' alibi? A good read as he follows the clues.

Kathy says

Courage begins

Excellent short story. Read it in a couple of hours. Very easy entertaining read. Mystery and suspense to it.... Read it...
