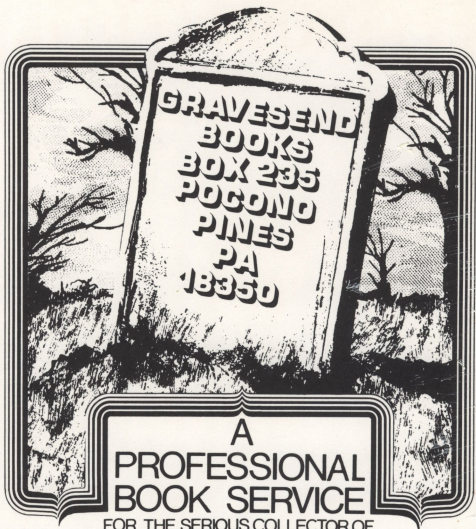


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# THE UNEASY CHAIR

Dear TADian:

*"When Bob [Randisi] told me he was going to do this, I thought it would be something very easy for me to come up and accept. It isn't. Ken is a friend of mine, he's also a writer I admire very much, and the fact that he can't be here makes me feel very bad, indeed. He's always lumped together Hammett, Chandler, and Macdonald. The thing is, though, all writers are unique, at least in my opinion they are. I don't think Chandler is really anything like Hammett, and I don't think Macdonald is really anything like Chandler, and I hope I'm not anything like Macdonald. His is a unique contribution that won't be done again, and I think this award is something I know that he would cherish—and he will cherish it, if he can know that he even has it. I'm sure you all know Ken never won the Edgar for Best Novel in his twenty-some-odd years of writing, and while I feel very good that we can give him this award, I had hoped in a way that the Private Eye Writers of America could give Ken an award for a book. The fact that we never can—he'll never write another book—I'm afraid is our loss."*

Those were the words Dennis Lynds (Michael Collins) used in accepting the first PWA Life Achievement Award on behalf of Ross Macdonald, who is too ill to leave his home, during Bouchercon-by-the-Bay. It was, for me, one of the more moving moments of the convention, and, as any emotionally effective presentation will, it caused some late-night reflection.

America is, today, a country in search of heroes. The evidence is all around us—whether seen in the popularity of such figures as The Executioner or The Destroyer, Rocky (I, II, and III), Superman, or Luke Skywalker, or the two princesses, Di and Grace.

As I write this, late of an October Sunday evening, in a small hotel room in San Francisco, Doug Kotar—a star of the football Giants—lies a prayer away from death, a group of cells growing evilly in his brain. Within the last few weeks we buried—with fanfare or silence—Princess Grace, the murdered President of Lebanon, and a writer, John Gardner, a man critically acclaimed though the recipient of only small popular acceptance. They died within hours of one another. Media coverage went to the Princess.

Several weeks later, Fred Dannay—Ellery Queen—died. One of New York City's local stations came to The Mysterious Bookshop to find out if there were anyone around who knew enough, knew anything,

about Dannay, so that they could put together a thirty-second piece of film to mark his passing.

The writer fulfills one of the most important roles in our culture. He (or she) is the shaman around a prehistoric campfire, sustaining the myths of our tribe. Doing the job correctly results in the myths continuing, in a second generation, and a third and fourth, remembering the stories. This is not to belittle the contributions of Doug Kotar, or Princess Grace, or even the lovely Princess Di—a sweet young woman whose presence on the scene undoubtedly enriches us at least esthetically; however it is meant to complain about the short shrift writers receive. The entire country knows about Doug Kotar; I doubt that even the entire literary community is aware of what Ross Macdonald is facing.

Is it not tragic enough? Must the man suffer inhuman pain and fear? Kotar, whose talents had helped pass a Sunday afternoon, had retired. His talents, once seen, passed from memory. A performance by Grace Kelly, or Ingrid Bergman, or Humphrey Bogart, enliven a moment, but do not sustain. A writer leaves a body of work, accessible to all, within reach at any time to anyone. Somewhere in the middle of a book, Ross Macdonald is taken from us, his talent short-circuited. Most of his books, it would appear, are out of print.

It is, in the final analysis, the artist whose work is the record of the culture. We know the ancients because of a potter's hand, a sculptor's chisel, a writer's marks.

America, as I said, is a country in search of a hero. And if a hero is a savior, then there is no one more suitable for the role than the writer. He saves us all, and offers immortality. He ensures our time and passing will not go unnoticed. While he is with us, then, we should notice him.

Bouchercon is a celebration of the writer. Next year, in New York, we have the opportunity to once again pay respect. It is not only a chance to gather with friends and discuss those issues of interest to us as a fandom; it is the time when we can give back a little to the writers who sustain us. It is, then, my hope that we do turn out, and that the writers, too, will appear, so that we may do right by them.

Best mysterious wishes,

*Michael Seidman*

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# DOVER PUBLICATIONS

## An Interview with

# James M. CAIN

By John Carr

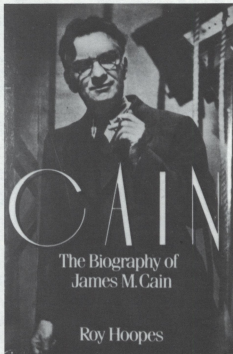
It's a little unsettling to think that I almost didn't meet Jim Cain. It was 1973, and I was running the *Richmond Mercury*, a weekly in Richmond like the *Phoenix* in Boston and *Figaro* in New Orleans, but giving more and better coverage to politics (electoral, that is) and art than either. I was putting in 76 hours a week. I got Sunday morning off.

The paper was losing \$50,000 a year when I got there, and that really never stopped, because the founders of the paper, Harvard boys all, had decided to set it up the year after they graduated and instead of figuring how much they could raise selling ads and tapping trust funds, they figured how much they wanted to *spend* to make it a first-class operation (it was) and then scrambled out to get the money. For those interested in comparative managerial strategy, it was also an interesting example of how collective leadership can fail. Before I got there, the Editorial Meeting was the editor. They'd take votes on what to run, where to run it, and how long to run it. Naturally, this took most of a day. I can relate all this with only a little pain (the paper finally folded, still gushing red ink) because we gave the world a lot of good guys: Frank Rich, now the drama critic for the *New York Times*; Garrett Epps, a promising young novelist; Harry Stein, who for a while edited the only English-language weekly in Paris; Richard Bock, now a clinical psychologist whose book on runaway kids had been published as soon as he left Harvard; Glenn Frankel, a great young reporter who now writes for the *Post*; and Susan Giller, who was also a sterling reporter. Christopher Hill, Master of Balliol, Oxford, reviewed history for us, and George Garrett and Bill Harrison reviewed novels.

We also had an outstanding collection of flakes and flip-outs, including some of the above. My point is, I needed to get away and at the same time was almost afraid to leave town.

I finally did drive up, in response to a friendly reply from Cain to one of my letters—leaving a Weatherman on the run eating peanut butter in my office and the editor of an Episcopal paper giving a banker hell in the corridor. Somewhere else the composition shop was trying to get their money by cracking our safe and the Collective of Peasants and Journalists (Richmond Number One) was voting to do no more petit bourgeois subjectivist intellectual features.

Jim Cain lived the last two decades of his life in a suburb of Baltimore, three or four blocks off the oily, dirty, fantastically noisy six-lane that continues from D.C. to Baltimore to points north, in a small, commonplace, white frame house with a nice yard and a couple of shade trees. It was the kind of neighborhood that Mildred Pierce might have lived in when she was just starting out. Cain would not object to my describing his neighborhood as commonplace. Jim Cain was the poet of the American commonplace, and to him it was beautiful. Moreover, this neighborhood was quiet, and the



people next door, a large happy, pleasant family, admired Cain and did their best to look after him after his wife Florence Macbeth Whitwell died in 1966. This was Cain's last marriage and no doubt his happiest; she had been a coloratura soprano who sang with some of the best opera companies, and Cain, as his readers know, was an aficionado of music, and of all our novelists was the one who knew the most about it for publications. Even his titles reflect his love of music: *Career in C Major* (1943), *Serenade* (1937).

The day I pulled up in his driveway, I knew only the basic facts. That his name was James Mallahan Cain. That he was born in Annapolis, Maryland July 1, 1892, that his father had been president of St. John's College there, and that Cain had been graduated from Washington College, Chesterton, Maryland in 1910 (B.A.) and 1917 (M.A.) That he was in the American Expeditionary Forces, Headquarters Troop of the 79th Division, and had edited *Lorraine Cross*, their newspaper. That he had been married four times; the penultimate wedding was with Aileen Pringle, one of the glories of the MGM lot in the 'twenties and 'thirties (see *Names* at the end of this interview).

I wasn't prepared to see a tall, gangly, smiling man in a neat blue suit with a shock of white hair, wearing rimless glasses and one of those inimitable Maryland smiles. He was an easy man to like. He was a tough guy, all right. No mistaking that. Not only had he fought the Germans—along with J.P. Marquand, John Crowe Ransom, and Raymond Chandler—he, like them, had never written a word about it. He let the ambulance drivers and the pilots who never left North America do that. And as if that weren't enough, he had served under three of the most famous editors in the history of journalism: H. L. Mencken of the *Baltimore Sun* (1919–23) and Walter Lippman of the *New York World* (1924–31). He also worked for Harold Ross of *The New Yorker* as his managing editor. Those were reporters' editors; and, like most of them, they ate reporters for breakfast.

We talked a lot about Mencken. More than got on the tape and more on the tape than got into the edited version of the interview. Mencken held forth in his home on Hollins Street, as the gaffdy of the Moral Majority of his day (whom we have to thank for Prohibition and its natural sequel, organized crime), as the "conscience of the intellectuals" in his role as editor of *The American Mercury* (we in Richmond had named our paper in honor of that magazine), as the publisher behind *The Black Mask*, which published Chandler, Hammett et al. and *The Smart Set*, which employed Willard Huntington Wright (S. S. Van Dine) as its editor before he had a mental breakdown, and as "The Sage of Baltimore." Let's

face it, boys and girls, blustering, anti-Semitic, Germanophile, autocratic, high-handed Mr. Mencken was about all we had on the other side of the aisle from the Cold Water Presbyterians and Hard Shell Baptists there for a decade.

He was undoubtedly a father figure to Cain—and a rival, too, in a way, for he had romanced in his Puritan, repressed way, Aileen Pringle, in the 'twenties, long before Cain married her in 1944. Lippman was probably more help to him, because Lippman introduced him and the manuscript of *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1934) to Alfred Knopf and then got Cain a good contract. Cain's last piece of nonfiction in fact was a memoir of Lippman for *Potomac Magazine* in 1975, when Lippman died. About Ross and *The New Yorker*, Cain said little.

Like a lot of us, he wasn't sure he'd been called, and for a long while he was damn sure he hadn't been chosen: he tired of reporting, as most responsible adults do, and went to Hollywood to write screenplays in 1932 and didn't give it up until 1948. His success was less than total, but he did meet "Jack" Lawrence, whose influence on Cain and other screenwriters was enormous. Lawrence had isolated the "love-rack" as the element in a romance—does it shock you to consider that all of "Tough Guy" Cain's novels are romances?—that made people empathize with the boy and girl (see *Names* for a further explanation; what it really means is that something should prevent the course of love or lust from running smooth, and, of course, ending the story too soon).

After Cain realized in the course of events that he was a writer badly suited for the screen (although it's fascinating to think that if Broadway hadn't collapsed during the Depression he could have been a most interesting playwright), he began to focus on Lawrence's advice and anecdotes and decided to write a novel in which murder was the love-rack: *Double Indemnity*. As Cain wrote in the introduction to *Three of a Kind*:

In the end, they would get away with it, and then what? They would find, I said [to Lawrence], that the earth is not big enough for two persons who share such a secret, and eventually turn on each other. . . . [Lawrence] has always quarreled with me for the first scene between the lovers in that novel, insisting that it is commonplace. A commonplace scene was just what I wanted. They were that kind of people, and I still proposed to be true to my ideal of truth, something theatrical people are inclined to be a little perfunctory about. But after this scene, as the dreadful venture became more and more inevitable, I strove for a rising coefficient of intensity, and even hoped that somewhere along the line I would graze passion.

He published *Double Indemnity*, *Career in C Major*, and *The Embezzler* in a book called *Three of a Kind* in 1943, after the unsuccessful *Love's Lovely Coun-*



*terfeit* (1942). It was the end of his glory days. The films were made (they continue to be made; while this article was being done, a new version of *Postman* was released and *The Butterfly* was made and released).

Some writers—and he talked about this too—would have quit and rested on their laurels, however faded and brittle the laurels might have become. Fitzgerald said there were no second acts in American lives. Sometimes I think he was right. Certainly we all know writers who did one brilliant book and then just quit for ten, thirty, forty years.

Cain thought that if writing was your vocation, you should practice it. Avon published *Sinful Woman* in 1947, the same year Knopf published *The Butterfly* (the reviewers groaned), and in 1950 two more paperback originals appeared, in the first few years of the paperback original phenomenon. It's almost forgotten now, but that craze started in the armed forces during World War II, and most of the early paperback originals were published for young men in their late twenties and early thirties. They were, predictably, soft-core porn, most of them. *Jealous Woman* and *Root of Evil* added nothing to Cain's reputation, and by now he had given up screenwriting. It's a funny thing about realism: the attractions of a practitioner seem to be invisible to the next generation, so the books skip over and aren't read or treasured until the second generation after their publication. Certainly *Cain Times Three* (1969) began the re-founding of his reputation, but even in the last books, there are good things. Many good things. (See the Bibliography following the interview.)

But we didn't talk about the bubble, fame, in 1973. We were too busy eating his big shrimp, served with a sauce *de la maison* (cooking was another one of his passions) and drinking my beer. He was working—on *The Institute*—and we talk about it below, but he was more interested in finding out how the newspaper wars were fought in the 'seventies. The time I brought a friend, he drove us (an edifying experience) to a favorite restaurant not far away, and we had as much fun as if we'd all just stumbled into *Ciro's* after seeing one of Jack Lawrence's witty, skeptical plays about love. He was courteous and nicer about being frank than anyone I've ever known. I think it's something only peerless reporters develop, and if his style on the *Sun* and *Post* was anything like its afterglow in the 'seventies, he must've been a hell of a reporter.

He asked my friend how girls in her generation found places to make love if they were in love and he did it so gently and in such a polite old-school way that all three of us forgot to be embarrassed.

Forget what a Tough Guy is supposed to be. Jim Cain was a gentleman and a scholar and he wrote as well as anyone ever has in the plain, simple rhythms of the English of the common man, an American

English that becomes poetry in the hands of a master such as Cain. Moreover, he had a direct hot line to the consciousness of his generation, and he had seen the inner shrine of democracy. There haven't been many like him.

#### **JC: Tell me how you started out, with Lippman.**

**CAIN:** Well, it suddenly occurred to him that this guy who'd been trying to chase up articles [Cain had just moved to the city] might be good at writing editorials. What I didn't know was that Maxwell Anderson had just sold a story [a play, *What Price Glory*, in collaboration with Laurence Stallings] and had just resigned as human interest editor—a phrase I came to despise. It was a job without a specialty. You wrote things about Christmas and New Year's, things like that. Lippman needed somebody to replace Anderson and wondered if I could do it. Well, it turned out I scored a hit right from the beginning. I caught him with the first editorial I turned in. I'd never written an editorial—for Christ's sake, I'd never read an editorial. . . . It was the opportunity—in the city room, we used to say that editorials were written by trained seals. (*Laughs*) Another qualification for writing editorials, we said, was that you had to be for motherhood and against the man-eating shark.

But I had to turn something in, and they gave me this Underwood, a nice typewriter, and I sat there and I said, "Motherhood, okay. But what's wrong with man-eating sharks? They never attack unless attacked, they're very quiet, there are no loud outcries. And the man-eating shark is viviparous. It brings forth its young alive. It has been doing this for one million years, before the human race was ever heard of. Speaking of motherhood—in a real sense, the man-eating shark is motherhood."

And this made Lippman laugh, and I turned in a couple more just like it, and they were just what Lippman had been hoping for. I was being paid \$10 a piece for these things. That would be \$120 a week. He guaranteed to take two a day from me, if he could use any at all. And \$120, that was twice what you could get over on the *Baltimore Sun*.

#### **JC: Big money.**

**CAIN:** Oh, yeah! And then I had a triumph: and this colored my writing later. I wrote an editorial captioned "THIS EVIL MUST CEASE." I said the Pie Trust was ruining blueberry pies. I said they were mixing corn starch with the juice so that it would coagulate and permit the pies to be stacked, instead of giving this thin, free-running juice that tastes good, that they were doing this to the pies to stiffen them up. I said, "This is not in the interest of good

eating," and so on. Well, that goddam editorial... you never heard such a commotion in your life. Every editorial writer east or west of the Mississippi River picked this thing up and said, "Agreed, this is absolutely right." *The Literary Digest* reprinted the editorial in full and with comments from all over the country. The Rotary Club of New York debated this, and a man named [George] Shattuck, who was president of Schraff's, Inc., sent us two of *their* pies to prove that *they* weren't guilty. Suddenly I was put under contract. Lippman was afraid that some other paper would snap this guy up. And I, who had never read an editorial, was suddenly master of the form after having written six.

I had various triumphs. One was an editorial on frog legs. I wrote an editorial saying that the local frog legs were okay, but that they were too small, that in Charleston, West Virginia, they were so big that two frog legs were dinner, that the ends stuck out on either end of the plate when they arrived. About a week after this, a very good-looking woman that I knew and had designs on, and perhaps she was not wholly unresponsive, she—I was taking her to dinner one Saturday night—she said, "You caused me one of the worst five minutes I ever had in my life."

"How did I do this?" I said.

She said, "Well, I was sitting there at the machine this morning—" she was a reporter—"meditating on my misspent life. I was hung over and I was trying to decide whether to give up this stuff altogether or go to the speakeasy, and then I looked over at your machine, and there it was—a frog. But it was bigger than any frog I'd ever seen. It was as big as a chicken. And I said to myself, 'Oh, it's later than you think, lady.' And I told myself that I could at least go over there and punch it and make sure it wasn't there. And then I poked it and it *was* there, this horrible thing, all cold and slippery, and then this copy boy came and took it away."

It turned out it had come in a box addressed to Frog-Leg Editor. A fellow from down where you come from [J.C. was then editing the *Richmond Mercury*], the Old Dominion he called it, said that Old Dominion frog legs were bigger than any *West Virginia* frog legs anybody had ever, ever heard of, and he sent us six frogs in a box—with shoes on them. They got there, and the copy boy received the box and went to the editor and he said, Mr. Masters, there's something alive in this box, I can hear it in there scratching around. So Masters ordered a screw-driver to be brought, and he opened up the box, and the frogs hopped all over the city room. The men from the aquarium finally came and got them, and I went down a couple of weeks later and there were my frogs, looking very happy. They were *gigantic* things.

**JC:** Now that the furor's died down and Mencken's gone from the scene, what are your thoughts on him?

**CAIN:** I think now, and I thought at the time, that he was a very great writer. He was an *incomparably* magnetic and exciting guy personally. He was many things, but there were aspects of him that left most of his friends feeling as I do: that after you say all that, there are various other things that have to be said too.

For instance, there were so many people who thought they were intimate friends of Mencken, who had no idea that they weren't. I would run into people in Hollywood—you want to remember that Mencken went out there one time... Mencken cut a wide swath out there, and there were various guys he'd painted the town red with—not that he ever painted anything red: Mencken was not a heavy drinker... Anyway, they imagined themselves Mencken's pals, and when they'd hear I was going East—because it would be in the paper, you



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know—they'd say to be sure and tell Henry Mencken hello for them, and oh boy did we have a night that time. I said, I sure will, so when I'd see Mencken—the time to deliver that sort of message was when I rode with him on the train from Baltimore to New York [while Cain was managing editor of *The New Yorker*] to put the magazine to bed—I'd deliver the message, and a blank look would cross his face. No recognition of any kind whatsoever. And I'd say, "Do you mind if I send your greetings to them?" and he'd say, "Oh, no, no, no." I had that happen a dozen times. People thought that on the basis of one evening or two or three evenings, they were his friends, but people who knew him well didn't have any such illusions.

Mencken had three intimate friends. One was Phillip Goodman, a man he introduced me to, who became a very close friend of mine; then he quarreled with me. It's his daughter Ruth, the playwright I spoke of earlier, who's so close to me now. The other two friends Mencken had were Paul Patterson, the publisher of the Baltimore *Sun*, and his brother, August Mencken. The rest of Mencken's friends were people who were affectionately-regarded stooges, like members of the Saturday Night Club.

#### JC: Stooges?

CAIN: They sat around and listened to him talk, and they played. He would do things... like when he decided that Hamilton Owens, editor of the *Evening Sun*, after being a member of the club as an oboist for six or seven or eight years, didn't play the oboe well enough to be a member anymore. I'd say that at the end of five years you were in permanent possession of a membership in the club, wouldn't you? Well, Mencken didn't think so, and kicked Hamilton out of the club. So what does Hamilton do? He takes a frightful revenge.

Olga, his wife, played the violin very well—she was a graduate of Peabody—and she and Hamilton started a club of their own: the Sunday Night Club. Well, the eats out there at the Owens' and the physical layout were so much better than the back room of Hildebrand's Piano Store that there was just no comparison, so Hamilton's club got a tremendous membership, including most of the members of Mencken's club, including the conductor, Streubel, of the Peabody staff, who would conduct performances out there. Mencken pulled that trick on several people. Raymond Carl he kicked out of the club.

#### JC: Was he hypercritical, or frustrated, or what was his major personality problem?

CAIN: Nobody ever figured this out. And everybody sort of made allowance. But when you make allowance for somebody because he's some kind of nut, it's

a somewhat costly appraisal, it's a somewhat costly forgiveness. There was another man who was kicked out: Heinrich Buchholz, I knew him very well. He didn't play any instrument, but he was the treasurer and librarian of the club. He kept the scores. He got up one night at Schellhase's Cafe, where they went for supper after playing, to go to the little boy's room and at the door made some commonplace exclamation—he'd had a few beers—and Mencken said, "That man's a disgrace to the human race!" and made them vote Buchholz out of the club.

#### JC: On the spot?

CAIN: Yeah. And Buchholz had been treasurer and librarian of the club for 25 years. The fact that all of them would do this, and that no one had the nerve to get up and say, "Hey wait a minute, Henry, be your age," but no one ever did. Then various people began calling Henry up about this Buchholz affair, and so he went down to see Buchholz.

About a month later, Buchholz found out I was driving up to Gettysburg for about my fifteenth tour of that battlefield—you can't just go up there and spend one time—and he wanted to ride with me. He said we could come back by York, that he had half an hour's business in York, where he published a teacher's magazine for Maryland distribution. I said yeah, we can have dinner in York. Driving up, he said [about the incident], "Jim, it upset the hell out of me. He came down there and not one goddam word did he say of apology for losing his temper or anything that night. No explanation or anything. What the hell kind of goddam fool is this anyway? Who the hell gave him the right to dictate what this club is?" This turning on friends, this hurting them... There are all kinds of stories about Mencken and why he did what he did, but nobody ever knew. Apparently, he regarded friendship as entertainment. When a man began boring him, meaning when he thought he knew Henry so well he assumed he didn't have to crack jokes all the time, Mencken got bored with him. At least that's as well as I can bring it out.

His marriage [in 1930] to Sara Haardt had a very curious psychological effect on him. Up to then, Mencken was a very informal kind of guy, but, my God, he asked me down there one night about nine o'clock—they lived on the top deck of this incredibly tall building at the corner of the park and Cathedral Street [in Baltimore], and when I walked, sitting around up there in dinner coats were Harry Black and two or three other guys, and women in formal dresses, and Mencken was dressed in a dinner coat. I wasn't. And that was the kind of life he led with her. It was a phony kind of life because living on the top deck of an old-fashioned apartment house, a converted place, didn't call for any such dinner coats. It was all Sara Haardt's notions of being High-Toned.



But then all his old friends, that is, the stooges I've spoken of . . . Sara Haardt had a trait that was very costly: she could see through people, and she saw through all of *them*. He didn't break with these friends, he just didn't see them any more, and after she died, it was pretty hard for the old bunch to reunite with him. But those who knew him well didn't try to do more about their friendship than the Saturday Night Club would call for.

Over at the restaurant, you and I were talking about how the German connection was a canker in his life. It was dreadful in the war years [1914-18] and then was twice compounded when Hitler came in, because compared to Hitler, Kaiser Bill was a gentleman. Mencken was unable to speak with any restraint or judgment on such things. After the [first] war, the *Sun* sent him over to Germany as a correspondent, and he went *calling* on Kaiser Bill at Doorn, to write him up. And you'd've thought he was writing about a real statesman. But the Kaiser, you know, was a cheap, playacting fool of a man, and having Mencken taking him so seriously was a little pain in the neck. I was talking to Ruth Goodman, and she was talking about this, and she said, "My God, saying that Hitler wasn't so bad and that he had a helluva problem to deal with in his own way, my

God what horseshit!" The recollection of it came back to her, and she really blew her top over the phone about it. Phil Goodman, her father, one of Mencken's old friends, couldn't take it any more. Phil was Jewish. He was one of those Jews that likes jokes about kikes, and they were as funny as anything until Hitler came along, and then suddenly the jokes about Jews weren't funny to Phil at all.

Mencken was very anti-Semitic. He was very contemptuous of Jews, unquestionably. But he was also contemptuous of frogs, wops—everybody except heinies. And he was very racially conscious, and this was fairly tiresome too, you know. He said (*Cain uses a very gruff, clipped voice*), "There's German music and then there's other music." There, that was Mencken. Sometimes a man comes out of your mouth just right when you talk. That was the way he talked. German Music and Other Music, for Christ's sake! That is a . . . that is a . . . a *small* view. So silly. There's Italian music, the biggest strain, and Russian music, and Finnish music's important as hell. Okay, I don't mind German music, there's a lot of wonderful German music, and if I had to pick my favorite composer, I'd pick Beethoven, but there is other music . . . Mencken had this pro-Germanism about him in him that dominated everything about him, and when it recoiled on him, as it did in the days of Kaiser Bill, he became so contentious trying to prove that all this stuff going on in Europe didn't mean anything, that there was a reason for it—I mean in the first days of the war, before we entered the war. Then, later, after Hitler came to power, Mencken could be very tiresome.

**JC:** So you don't agree with Alistair Cooke that it was the Depression that finished off Mencken?

**CAIN:** Only incidentally. At the same time as the Depression comes, this business about Germany comes on, and I think the souring of the romantic German aspect of his nature had as much to do with his disintegration—which was real—as anything. The stuff he was writing for the *Evening Sun* in the 'thirties was so embarrassingly bad . . . you ought to get some of his old columns and read them. [Carl] Bode reprints a couple of them in his book that just came out, of readings in Mencken and the columns were just so silly that . . .

**JC:** What did Mencken think about your novels?

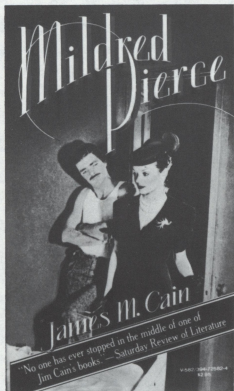
**CAIN:** I don't know what he thought about my novels. He was very pleasant about them when he reviewed them, but he more or less had to be. What he secretly felt about them, I don't know. I don't think he liked *Serenade* at all. He liked the stuff I used to write for him. I wrote a lot of dialogue for him in a book that came out called *Our Government*.

**JC:** Did you still think about *Mildred Pierce*?



**CAIN:** *Mildred Pierce* is a book that if I had to do over again, I'd do very differently, with a different ending. I've got a joke about *Mildred Pierce*. Once there in Hollywood one night, I had the Larkins to dinner. John Larkin was a writer [and director]. I knew him fairly well. He said to me suddenly: "I read your goddamn book. Right down to the end, I liked it fine. But Jim, heroic women are not defeated by snips like Vita."

I said, "Wait a minute. Heroic women, what are you talking about? The whole premise of the book was that Mildred was a commonplace, average house-



wife who had to go into business. She had pretty legs, but beyond that—what was inside the woman—I think I fairly well depicted her."

He said, "Yeah, yeah. She went out and licked the world for the two little kiddies and that makes her heroic. That woman is *not* defeated by a snip like Vita."

And I said, "Who said Vita was a snip? Half of Vita was a bitch. The other half was a very high-spirited singer."

"She was a snip," he said.

Well, it shook me, because somewhere gnawing at me I had a feeling I'd been a little *too* good at the end of that thing, that story, with Mildred, and that I had been seduced by Vita's thinking so fast—where she could *pretend* that her mother had ruined her voice and get out of that contract. It was *too* good. You ask if I look back on it with pride. I suppose I do. Down to that point. But Larkin was stating something that I instinctively in my gut knew.

**JC:** Did you intend—to me, it was laid in so strongly, that there was an incestuous relationship between Vita and Mildred.

**CAIN:** Oh, I think it's in there that Mildred's so absorbed in Vita that it became the equivalent almost of a sexual relation.

**JC:** Mildred slept with Vita after Ray, the younger child, died...

**CAIN:** Yes, and yet Vita wouldn't spit on her, and this was torturing Mildred. And strangely enough, the scene in that book that is most remembered by those who've read it was a scene where the singing teacher tries to explain to Mildred why she must have nothing to do with Vita, and this evidently made a big impression on people. I think the reason it did was that there was a lot of exact observation in it about singers. Anyway, that scored. And there was other good stuff in *Mildred Pierce*.

**JC:** I hope to shout. That long monologue the Italian delivers about Vita, though... it's like a riff in a jazz piece by an immensely talented saxophone player—

**CAIN (laughing):** Mildred says, "Are you trying to insinuate that my daughter is a snake?" He says, "No, I'm not. That is flattery. The little snake does what mamma says and is nice to me. Not this one." (Laughs) Then he gives a picture of what the life of a coloratura soprano is like. The details have slipped my mind, but it was a very funny scene and I take some pride in it.

**JC:** It's like your hugging to your bosom the man-eating shark.

**CAIN:** I like doing twists like that.

**JC:** There are two scenes that stay with me out of *Mildred Pierce*. One is when Mildred goes over to Monty's house. Monty wants to take her to bed. It's raining outside, it's the most awful rainstorm ever in Southern California. He tells her in so many words that she's nuts, that they're going to have a few drinks and of course he has something else in mind too. You lay in very well how she almost says the hell with it and does what he wants, then she decides *hell* no, she's not going to, and drives off into the storm, and



the car stalls and then she walks all the way to Glendale. That walk through the rain is one of the most vividly expressionistic scenes I've ever read.

**CAIN:** There was a real storm like that on New Year's Eve 1933. My stepdaughter and one of her friends, I guess they were fifteen-year-olds then—I'd promised to take them to Glendale to see *King Kong*, I guess, and then the rain started and I told them they weren't going anywhere, I told Virginia she wasn't even going home. And my stepdaughter said, "You promised." You know. And I said she was going to get her backside tanned if she didn't get to bed. It was a simply frightful storm. Thirteen inches came down in twenty-four hours. We drove out the next day, and, where in the East here we'd have snowdrifts, they had mud drifts. You never saw such a thing in your life. Over the river between Pasadena and Anaheim, upstream from the road, was a bridge that had been just pulled apart like cake icing, the arches tumbled around by that river in a way that you just wouldn't believe. That was the mess that Mildred drove home in. Yes, and Monty kept following her, that's right, and trying to get her to go back with him.

**JC:** The other scene I remember involves Monty too. Mildred and Monty are married. Mildred comes in late one evening for some reason, and Vita's not in her room. Mildred goes and knocks on Monty's door, and he says he doesn't know where she is, and tells her she ought to go to bed, it's a free country, don't worry about the kid. Then she moves past him and Vita stands up in the bed stark naked: she's been sleeping with Monty.

**CAIN:** Down to that point, I'm with it. After that, all that legal stuff and especially the way the book turned out, I'm not, but don't ask me what I'd do with it now, because the two lovers in that book, don't forget, are Mildred and Vita. And what you do about them, I don't know. Larkin said that women like Mildred are not defeated by snips like Vita. But they were the two lovers. The book did not have a satisfactory ending, but don't ask me to think of one.

**JC:** After all these terrible things have happened—Ray is dead, Monty's a heel, Vita's an idiot, Mildred's nearly killed Vita—and then Mildred and Burt get together again and it's like the closing of a circle, some sort of status quo has been restored, you keep on with what you had in the first place, except now it's worse.

**CAINE:** That's what I had hoped for, but I don't think... It sold all right. It was a bestseller. Not a big bestseller, but it did all right in the reprint edition.

**JC:** One of the things I was impressed with, and I noticed it immediately, is that when Burt leaves

Mildred and she faces bankruptcy, she goes in and lies down with her fists clenched. Then when Vita is told she'll never be a great singer of the classics, not an opera singer, she lies down with her fists clenched. It's a tip-off in both cases to the decay that's going to set in, a decay brought on by rage. There are other body signals, if you want to call it that, in your other books. In *The Postman Always Rings Twice*, when Cora says "Rip me" in that famous, or infamous scene, we see her nipples erect. And then later, when what they're well into has really kind of sickened them, and they don't care about each other any more, you say, at the end of Chapter 12, "Then she closed her eyes and lay back on the pillow. Her hair was falling over her shoulders in snaky curls. Her eye was all black, and her breasts weren't drawn up and pointing at me, but soft, and spread out in two big pink splotches. She looked like the great grandmother of every whore in the world."

**CAIN:** You reacted, so okay. I got what I was trying to get. But a girl commenting on all of that, named Joyce Carol Oates, writing in this thing [David] Madden got out, a collection of articles he edited, just wouldn't have all that stuff in *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. The first night he's there, Chambers goes out and loses his dinner and Cora says something like, "Sometimes a change of water'll do it." She just utters these social bromides and Chambers says something like, "I wanted that woman so bad I couldn't keep anything on my stomach." Well, Joyce Carol Oates just wouldn't have that. She peeled the shirt off that scene. She'd just never seen anything like it. Well, you can't please everybody, but it seems to me she was a little capricious. I have a hard time reading her. I remember her stuff in the *Saturday Evening Post* which I liked a lot better than her later stuff, like this book *Them*. I'll be goddamned if I can believe that book.

Something about a girl waking up with a corpse beside her and the corpse being dumped in the alley and the police having no idea what happened. Awww... Awww... (*Cain makes sounds like a mule in distress*.) That's what happens when a good writer uses a true story, if it is, as the basis for a novel: you just can't believe it. And there was another woman by the name of Douglas Shearer, an Englishwoman who used true stories as the basis for novels, and they seemed so wooden. Nobody seemed alive. It's the difference between the painting of a nude and the picture of a nude. The painting leaves you... I scarcely glance at the pictures of those nudes in *Playboy*. I don't know why. They don't do anything to me at all. They're good photographs, but a painting of a girl with no clothes on seems to have a meaning that a photograph of a girl with no clothes on doesn't have.

**JC:** Speaking of fame—were we? At any rate, I've been gazing for a couple of visits now at that Edgar, the one awarded you by the Mystery Writers of America in 1970, when they designated you a Grand Master.

**CAIN:** Yes, it is an honor. It was very pleasant to have those mystery writers single me out. But the award I really treasure is that little silver kangaroo. That was given to me by Pocket Books when *The Postman Always Rings Twice* sold a million copies for them. That is an achievement that was earned, it didn't have to be anybody's opinion or some committee picking me; if you sold a million copies, you sold a million copies.

**JC:** You were telling me you'd read only twenty pages of Hammett, and I think you said you hadn't read any Raymond Chandler.

**CAIN:** I have not read over five pages of Raymond Chandler. I knew him and very pleasantly. He was a very likeable, pleasant guy. I never saw him drunk.

**JC:** Did you know Hammett?

**CAIN:** I can't say that I did or didn't. I was at Edward G. Robinson's one night, at a party that Gladys invited me to, and there coming up and wringing my hand was this wild-looking gazebo [sic] with gray, nearly white, hair, with a funny look in his eye. And he said, my God, he admired me extravagantly, and I said oh, yes, mutual, likewise I'm sure, and I came to find out it was Dashiell Hammett. That was the extent to which I knew Dashiell Hammett. I am often somewhat embarrassed talking to other novelists because I haven't read their work. Partly because I'm afraid to.

I don't read a novel just to be reading it. When I read a novel, I'm rewriting it in my own mind, I'm tearing it down, I'm building it up... it exhausts me. And another thing: I might like this writer too well. And it has happened, you know, that people began writing like someone else, like Kipling trying to write like Bret Harte, and Ring Lardner trying to write like Frank Sullivan. This is not at all an uncommon thing, so I just don't read any fiction. I read a lot. I read a lot of history, but fiction I'm ignorant of.

**JC:** I think that you and Hammett and Chandler are probably the ones who are going to be read as much as Hemingway and Faulkner and Fitzgerald when Time Rolls On and our grandchildren are all making estimates of our reputations. And I think Madden's right about one thing, although I'm sure he offended you in some ways: he really puts you in the forefront of American novelists and gives you credit for a lot

of Italian neo-realistic works. Camus himself said you were, and I'm quoting, "the greatest American writer."

**CAIN:** I constantly hear allusions to Camus's acknowledging some relationship to me, whatever it was, but I never read *The Stranger* and I never really read what he had to say about our relationship. I have been read very widely in France, and maybe that's one reason, if he *did* do any modeling after me, that he did. I did well in France and Scandinavia, fairly well in Germany, and in Italy, but not as well as in France and Scandinavia.

**JC:** How did you like Chandler's screenplay for *Double Indemnity*?

**CAIN:** I liked it fine. There were things in his screenplay I would've put in the story myself if I'd thought of them, but I didn't. He also had a mode of telling that story, which may have been Billy Wilder's idea, that I didn't think of. The end of *Double Indemnity* as I wrote it wasn't too good. His ending was very much better. Oh, much better. And then some of the dialogue in *Double Indemnity* was very skillful. A thing happened in connection with that which made a tremendous impression on me, not said by Chandler and not said by Wilder, but by Joe Siström [the producer].

Well, from the beginning before we get to that: Wilder had bought this book partly to use some of my wonderful dialogue—you know—but then when Chandler did not put my dialogue into the screenplay, Wilder got upset. Chandler tried to tell him that my dialogue wouldn't play, that it was for the eye and not the ear, but he was muleheaded about it. So Wilder got three contract players to play some of my lines, and to Wilder's utter astonishment the dialogue didn't play at all. Ray got me over there to explain why they weren't using more of my dialogue. I don't know why he thought I cared. The extent to which a writer doesn't give a hoot what they do to his story in a picture is practically unlimited.

**JC:** Really?

**CAIN:** No. After all, it's their thing, and you've got nothing to do with it. They bought your novel, and they paid you for it, so let them take it from there. And people say, "Well, don't you care what they did to your story?" But they didn't do anything to my story. It's still the same as I wrote it and for sale—thirty-five cents—and you can go and buy it if you want to read it. Well, anyway, he had this idea—they're somewhat egotistical, you know, these picture people—and they summoned me over there. They both were saying how the dialogue didn't play at all, and Ray said, "Jim, I tried to tell him it's for the eye: all those ragged right-hand margins." With this little

smile he had. And I said, "Well, I can write stuff that plays," and Chandler said yes, he imagined I could.

But what came out of that conference was something Joe Siström said. He was the producer on the picture, and only in his twenties. Now, when Billy Wilder was on a picture, he was going to run it, but the studio liked having their own producer around just the same, and so as the studio's producer of record, we had Siström. He sat listening to all this without taking much interest, and then he began to talk: he was much bothered that this insurance agent was much too quick and too pat with this perfect murder, and I said, "Well, it's implied here that he's been planning this perfect murder for twenty years." This didn't satisfy him, and then after very somberly and unhappily and irritatedly stating all this, as if I'd sort of cheated somehow, he said, "All characters in B movies are too smart." He didn't think this was a B picture, but he didn't want that air of pat smugness of a B picture to hang over this picture.

What Joe Siström said that day came up as I was writing this story that I've done, but that the typist hasn't picked up yet [*The Institute*, published in 1976, three years after this interview; it was the last fiction Cain wrote]. This man is trying to get twenty million dollars out of a millionaire named Garrett in Wilmington for an institute of biography that he wants to found. The wife of the man that has the

money is incomprehensibly opposed to it. He gives Mrs. Garrett a ride down to Washington as a favor. He's rather resentful of her because he feels like she's blocking him off from something the man, her husband, would be willing to put up the money for. Twenty million bucks to Garrett is nothing. At the same time that he's annoyed with Mrs. Garrett, she keeps having this physical effect on him. He keeps rationing this desire to let her have it and cut her down to size, and that's the frame of mind they're in when they stop at the professor's house on the way to Washington. He lives in College Park, Maryland.

Now, after admitting she's against this thing and telling the professor in part why, she tells him to stop sulking. She says she wants to hear more about his red dinner jacket [she's been giving the professor a thorough cross-examination on his manners and wardrobe]. She says I'll ask you up to Wilmington, you can be my extra man at dinner parties and there'll be all kinds of millionaires there and I'll try to sell you to them. Certainly Richard—her husband—will fall for it eventually, she says. So how about that?

The professor—Palmer—lives in a condo owned by his mother, whose idea of decor is pictures of him. He has to more or less apologize for it, and she goes around looking at these pictures with some interest and amusement, and suddenly she sees one and sits down, it's had such an effect on her.

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He doesn't understand. It's just a picture of him throwing a forward pass. But then he feels something crawling up his spine, and he knows he can have her, and he goes over and puts his arms around her and one hand under her knees, and she begins to wiggle and say no. He carries her in his bedroom and puts her down and takes off the cover and rolls her in there and takes off his own clothes, and she jumps up to get dressed again, and he holds her with one hand and undresses her with the other, and finally he rolls her in and climbs in with her. And it happens.

But it turns out there was a reason for the suddenness of it. The picture had a tremendous reminiscent effect on her. That's explained later. [It was a picture of Palmer as she had seen him in that same stadium years before; in the novel, the sight of his bare neck then and in the photo on the wall arouses her.] She's ashamed of herself afterwards and begins explaining this relationship with her husband, and she says, "We aren't mated." Since she's had her miscarriage, they haven't been using the same room and so on.

Now here's where the "smartness" comes in. After they've had this afternoon, and more after that, she says, "You wouldn't take advantage of me to get the money would you?" And it hadn't once occurred to

him! All he was after was that nice, twitchy bottom in bed. Just good, straight, honest lechery. But then he realizes he's got her twenty times as much over the barrel, and he *keeps* her there and *makes* her tell her husband she's changed her mind. All that came out of Joe Siström's remark about characters in B pictures.

There's a girl in New York, a celebrated playwright named Rosa Capps, whom I asked to read the first version of this story, and she pleaded with me to have him plan to seduce this woman. But I simply could not have him too smart. It would take all the humanness out of this thing. It would also, as Vincent Lawrence used to say, split the concentration. Because if he just wants her because he wants her, that's one thing. If he wants her for ulterior motives, I don't know whether he really wants her or what. And it seems to me that part of the premise of this story, that right smack in the middle of it, was physical desire. And those are some of the problems you have when you block a story out.

**J.C. I think Fred MacMurray was perfectly cast as the insurance agent in *Double Indemnity*.**

**CAIN:** I see him now in the Greyhound ads, and he doesn't look one day older than he did when he walked up the aisle with me in that theater in Glendale where they sneaked *Double Indemnity* and he confessed to me the sweat he went through trying to decide whether to play that part or not.

**JC: Really?**

**CAIN:** It terrified him.

**JC: He never again played parts as good as that or as tough as that.**

**CAIN:** He'd been in entirely another category until that part. He'd been a pleasant leading man.

**JC: There's a great piece of writing given to him: at one point MacMurray is sitting on the couch in Stanwyck's house and she gives him a drink which he samples and finds less than death-dealing, and he says, "Why don't we put something in this drink to make it get up and walk around?"**

**CAIN:** That was a funny line, and it was Chandler's. I guess he did have a problem with his drinking. You know, Chandler's wife—I met her, and she must have been fifteen years older than he was. They were known as "Hollywood's Happiest Couple." [She was eighteen years older.]

And people spoke of his writing novels as a queer thing to have happen, that a man who'd been in the oil business until he was in his forties should start writing novels, but actually, if you *can* write novels, you don't actually begin to do it until the end of your thirties. Fitzgerald was very unusual in doing it when





he was young. Look at Sinclair Lewis. You say, well, he wrote novels before the end of his thirties. Yes, he did. He wrote cheap, *Saturday Evening Post* serials. Not that the *Saturday Evening Post* was particularly cheap, but these were fairly clap-trap things, just topical stuff like *Turn to the Right* and *Free Air* and stories of that kind. Then, at the end of his thirties, he takes a walk around the block and decides to do the novel he later called *Main Street*. [Walter] Winchell came out with the statement that Lewis's original title for it was *The Village Virus*. Somewhere in *Main Street*, you'll find that phrase mentioned several times.

Then suddenly Lewis was of different intellectual stature. But, as I have said, the thing that statured him up is at the same time going to be the thing that statures him out. Once the country no longer believes that a real estate man is such a dope, and a clown, as Lewis made Babbitt, suddenly Babbitt has no point, and you don't want to read about Babbitt anymore. I'll give you a small personal illustration of the kind of reaction you have. At first, I was quite delighted with this TV show called *All in the Family*. Carroll O'Connor gives a beautiful performance, and so do Jean Stapleton and Sally Struthers and Rob Reiner. They all give beautiful performances, but somehow I suddenly got sick of the character played by O'Connor because it's a portrait much like Lewis's portrait of Babbitt. Then I realized that Archie Bunker had an ancestor, and his name was Ralph Kramden, the character played by Jackie Gleason in *The Honeymooners*. There was one important difference: at the end of the *Honeymooners* episodes, there was usually some little sentimental moment where you glimpsed why Audrey Meadows had fallen for Ralph in the first place. But they never give you that with Archie Bunker: he's just a crumb. And that's supposed to be realistic and artistic and uncompromising. It also leaves you with the wrong taste in your mouth, the way Lewis's stories did. You don't feel Lewis ever had any respect for Babbitt at all. Are real estate men all such awful crumbs, really? And the second that thought crosses your mind, you're no longer sold. I don't know how Lewis rates now. Maybe they're selling him by the ton and I don't know it. And I don't think Theodore Dreiser is sold much anymore.

**JC:** Lewis is not highly regarded, but Dreiser's having a sort of revival.

**CAIN:** I didn't read Dreiser with much pleasure. He was a man who had only one hit, and that was *An American Tragedy*. Some of his books were fairly godawful, like *The Financier* and *The Titan*. *Sister Carrie* was not too convincing a book; I don't know why it was regarded with such moral indignation. What was the story? Wasn't it suppressed?

**JC:** Doubleday bought it while Mr. Doubleday was in Europe. He returned, Mrs. Doubleday read it and was horrified, and Doubleday decided that although they were contractually obligated to print it, there was nothing in the fine print that said they had to distribute it, so they just sold it in Manhattan. It made Dreiser \$70 before he found an English publisher. Norton brought out a critical edition in 1970 that gives the whole awful history. It was Dreiser's first book, that was what nearly killed him. In 1981, the University of Pennsylvania announced that their press would be publishing the original version of *Carrie*, including material Dreiser suppressed before Doubleday saw it. And so the book seems to be complete after a turbulent eighty-year publishing history.

**CAIN:** That was a pretty rotten thing to do. You know, that's what Mencken tried to get Alfred Knopf to do with Willa Cather's *A Lost Lady* and *One of Ours*. He said Knopf should let it die to teach her a lesson, so she wouldn't be sloppy and sentimental, so she could get on to really good stuff like *My Antonia*.

**JC:** Mencken was behind this?

**CAIN:** That's what he told us one night. But, he told us, "Knopf wouldn't listen to this *good, sound* advice." And I don't know of any surer way to lose a writer than to let suspicion get around that a publisher would do something like that. That's probably the reason, the one night I saw Mencken and Cather together at a dinner party, she had nothing to say to Mencken at all. She was very pleasant to him when she came and when she left, but she had nothing to say in between and I was there and I heard every word that was said, and not one word was said. And she sat by him that night at the Knopfs. She was not exactly scintillatin' company, though. She was just a pleasant woman that apparently took no interest in anything.

**JC:** Vincent Lawrence was a great influence in your life, wasn't he?

**CAIN:** Oh, yes, oh, yes. With that man [Lawrence] it was a passion to get things *right*. He was the first one who clarified to me what a story really is. And I haven't gone a great deal further. I've found out I can't do certain kinds of stories. I can't do a regular novel. The confrontation of a man and his destiny, the kind of thing you see in *Madame Bovary*, her mothlike flutterings at this life that attracted her, I'd be utterly unable to do that. My mind is a dramatist's mind that instead of writing plays writes novels. That's the reason I've done stories with so many different kinds of backgrounds without any particular feeling that I'm departing from what I ought to



be doing, as contrasted to, say, Faulkner who all his life seldom departed from that Mississippi background of his. I did a story called *Career in C Major*, and the background was in New York. The background for *Mildred Pierce* was Glendale. The background for *Serenade* was Mexico, in large part. The background for *The Moth* was Hobo Alley, and the background for *The Butterfly* was West Virginia. But that's where the dramatist in me comes in: to me the background is never important. To the dramatist, to Shakespeare for example, Elsinore Castle was just a set. He didn't take any interest in what he put down on paper about how it looked, or how the doors work. That's up to the stage director. Well, if I get my background authentic, that's as much interest as I take in it. The rest of it is the story of people. Of course, these people have to have roots and verisimilitude. If I'm writing about a singer, I want to give a faithful portrait of a singer, or if I'm writing—as I have been writing this last book—about a college professor, I try to give a faithful portrait of him, but I'm not really trying to do a whole picture of a certain world, just the people in it. Now, Lewis did a composite of many different people to make one character, the composite country doctor in *Main Street*, the composite businessman in *Dodsworth*.

**JC:** Do you think that, in the case of someone like Lewis, when he tries to create characters who represent types, people read the book as sociology, and reject it, because they'd rather be reading about real people, however eccentric, than representative persons? Gatsby's prior career is a little unbelievable, but he's a *man*, he's not an illustration of the type of man who made a profit from Prohibition.

**CAIN:** Gatsby, to the extent he was anything at all, was Gatsby. He wasn't a composite picture of a group of bootleggers. But don't get the idea that people rejected Lewis or didn't read him. My God, they read him by the thousands. The times, of course, had a lot to do with it, as they had a lot to do with Mencken's readership. Mencken was accepted, and his jibing and sneering was read, and more or less taken as the Bible, because the country was so dreadfully ashamed of the horrible mess that Prohibition had landed it in. The better people of this country didn't believe in Prohibition. It was wished upon the country by the kind of people that Sinclair Lewis wrote about, and for that reason *his* novels, which derided those people, appeal to those who derided and detested the Prohibitionists and were ashamed of Prohibition, and by corollary ashamed of their country. All that contributed to Lewis's success, and you have no idea how great that success was. I would go with him here and there in New York and the reaction in a bookstore—and he was very

fond of sidling into a bookstore and seeing the girl behind the counter almost drop dead to see that Sinclair Lewis was in her store—he had a tremendous success. . . . But then, you see, he made many enemies. We haven't mentioned *Elmer Gantry*. That book was greatly resented by the Protestant clergy and by pious people, and, to tell you the truth, I think that the resentment had some justification because, although Gantry was a fairly credible portrait, he was not really—he purported to be typical of Protestant evangelists, but he wasn't really, and everybody knew



that most Protestant preachers weren't anything like as immoral or as cheap or as phony as Gantry turned out to be.

Later, when Lewis was in Ann Arbor to write a book about a college president, when people at the University of Michigan discovered he was going to write a novel about them, not one of them intended to give that novel any help. He was put into Coventry. And you can understand how they felt, especially after *Elmer Gantry*. Now *Arrowsmith* was a somewhat different thing. I think *Arrowsmith* was a kind

of wraith he laid on the grave of his father. There was an exception to the Lewis characters in *Arrowsmith*. The girl, Leora, if you remember, the one who always had a button off, this utterly enchanting girl, wasn't a synthetic portrait, wasn't a composite portrait, she was just Leora, one of the characters that Lewis occasionally drew straight, and she was probably the best portrait in the book. It was quite a wrenching scene when she died and Arrowsmith came home. . . I remember Phillip Goodman talking about Lewis's subtlety. There had to be some reminder that would wallop the reader as well as wallop Arrowsmith, and he found this little memo about her son, "Don't forget Marty's chocolates." This gave you a terrible gulp when you read it. She dominated the book, and to tell you the truth I think Segal, when he was writing *Love Story*, peeked at *Arrowsmith*, because the behavior of that girl somewhat parallels the behavior of Leora when she first met Arrowsmith. He was getting off some smart-alecky clowning at her, and she just calmly took him in her stride, took him down several pegs without even trying to do it, and, little by little, they fall in love and get married.

**JC:** Did you like *Love Story*?

**CAIN:** I can't say I liked it, but don't smack it out. It was a manufactured story, but towards the end it had this thing that I have to believe is so terribly hard for a novelist: that socko punch moment at the end. And when this girl dies, and he walks out of the hospital with his father. . . Oh! It hits you. You may be saying to yourself at the same time it hits you that it's synthetic, it's phony, it's *too* good. . . Well, okay, so it's phony, it's too good, but it's got you with a lump in the throat, and that's what sold all those hundreds of thousands of copies. Not only that, the story—he didn't write well, with any distinction, and his concept of character was so naïve that you were embarrassed by it, but just the same you knew that the refusal of the boy's family to accept this daughter of a—fruit peddler or something, hurt. But then when she got sick and he put his pride in his pocket and went to his father to get the loan so that she could have that operation that might save her, well, all this. . . you can say to yourself, it's too good, but within his imaginative limits, he turned in a job.

**JC:** Wasn't there a kind of informal censorship over all of y'all who were writing in the 'thirties and 'forties? I've read what a scandal it was when Nick told Nora Charles he got a "kind of" erection when he was wrestling with a woman in *The Thin Man*. There was no really vulgar language in novels then, no sex scenes.

**CAIN:** I use very little extreme language. I throw in a few *goddams* now and then, but any stronger

language—there's one place in *Mildred Pierce* where I grazed a four-letter word. A lady I knew in Los Angeles—I saw a great deal of her and she let me talk to her while I was writing that book. We'd ride around in the car. She pleaded with me not to put that word in, but I did. I told myself that if Mildred was going to be hit between the eyes with this expression of Marty's, why she has to be hit between the eyes, so I put it in. I'm not sure I was right. She may have been right. But besides that, you'll search all of my books and not find a four-letter word. *Damn* and *goddam* run along a somewhat different track. Impious and gross, but I don't think anybody much cares about them.

**JC:** Was that a censorship you exercised on yourselves, or had publishers intimated that you couldn't use those words?

**CAIN:** I don't like those kinds of words, and I don't think readers like 'em. Another thing you have to realize is that if you and I and three or four other men are at lunch—men police up their language when they're just with each other a lot better than they get credit for. As a matter of fact, there's not much four-letter stuff between men. Do you think?

**JC:** I'm afraid in my generation there is.

**CAIN:** I don't hear it. I hear a lot of *damns* and *goddams*. Then I'll say I'm from Annapolis, where we boasted we could cuss in meter. But there is a difference between its impact on your ear—it's said and that's the end of it, and the wind takes it away—and the impact when it's in print—there it is, it's going to be there ten years from now for whoever reads this book. There is a difference, and we have to admit it. I'll tell you something that happened. I did a play once, and Mary Pickford was in it. More for kicks than anything else, but I wrote this dialogue and I put some *goddams* in it, and in the middle of the second act of our gala performance, six or eight women got up and stomped out. Let me tell you, that made an impression on me. I don't want it to happen again, and I think I decided I was not like Hemingway and didn't want to spend the rest of my life snarling and talking obscenities and deriding people. I said to myself, Cain, you had it coming.

**JC:** There is violence in your books. Does that do as much harm as obscenity?

**CAIN:** What harm does violence in a *book* do? I don't kill anybody. The character does. I just don't accept the idea. And this porno business. . . if nobody's morals are corrupted, no effect is produced by a pornographic passage. . . I don't like it any better than you do, but my distaste for pornography is sufficiently required if I close the book and drop it in the wastebasket, which is what I have done.

#### A FOOTNOTE TO THE INTERVIEW

*The following individuals played a key role in the life of James M. Cain.*

**Walter Lippman** is the subject of a prize-winning biography by Ronald Steel which was published in 1981. The details, all fascinating, of this remarkable man's influence on journalism and on the thinking of American leaders, can be found there, treated thoroughly and in the medium of a fluid, supple English. But when Cain met him, Lippman was only 35 and was new at the *World*. Lippman had been born September 23, 1889, in New York of a family that had left Germany after the revolution of 1848. Interestingly enough, Mencken's family had come to Baltimore after the failure of the same revolution.

Lippman's father was a wealthy clothing manufacturer and real estate broker, and Lippman was educated at Julius Sachs' School for Boys on the West Side. He went on to Harvard and there organized, with John Reed (the hero of *Reds*), the Harvard Socialist Club and was elected its first president. He was apparently moved to organize the club after Harvard students had been called out to aid the Boston firemen in fighting a fire in one of the most wretched neighborhoods in the city. Lippman saw poverty there at close quarters for the first time. Lippman finished his work at Harvard in three years and spent the year before his graduation as assistant to George Santayana. After being graduated, he went to work for Lincoln Steffens, prince of the Muckrakers. He began at this time to drift from Marxist Socialism. In 1917, he was working for the *New Republic*, whose outlook was so congenial to the Administration that he was appointed assistant to the Secretary of War—and was shortly commissioned and did propaganda work on the Meuse-Argonne front. In 1921, he joined the *World*. Walter Lippman died December 14, 1974.

**Maxwell Anderson**, a North Dakota boy who came to New York to make good and whose fame in his lifetime was only eclipsed by that of O'Neill, was on the editorial staff of the *World* from 1920 to 1924. Then *What Price Glory* was sold, and after that Anderson went on to a career as one of America's finest playwrights.

**John Francis Larkin** (died January 7, 1965) is best remembered today for his association with the Charlie Chan films starring Sidney Toler, which were made just before World War II. Larkin wrote four of them, all among the better efforts: *Charlie Chan at Treasure Island* (1939; screen story and screenplay), *Charlie Chan in Panama* (1939; screen story, screenplay w/Lester Ziffren), *Charlie Chan at the Wax Museum* (1940; screen story, screenplay), and *Castle in the Desert* (1941; screen story, screenplay). Larkin also did the screenplay (along with Rex Taylor) for *The Mandarin Mystery*, an adaptation of the *Chinese Orange Mystery* by Ellery Queen. He later wrote the screenplay for *Quiet, Please, Murder* (1942) and also directed the George Sanders-Gail Patrick vehicle.

His career as moviewriter started in 1933, when his story "Christmas Girl" was released by First National as *She Had To Say Yes*. He was a newspaperman, foreign correspondent, magazine writer, and theatrical producer before he turned to screenplays; he's credited by *Who Wrote the Movie?* with 25 stories, screen stories, or screenplays, and in the late forties directed B's, then went to Britain, where he became a television producer: *M Squad* and *Fabian* of *Scotland Yard* among others.

**Joseph Siström** was born August 7, 1912, educated at Stanford University, and immediately upon being grad-

uated became assistant to Pandro S. Berman, an old-time Hollywood producer who had a long career. Then Siström became an assistant producer with Perleberg-Capra Productions and after that worked for William LeBaron at Paramount. Full credits are available in the *American Film Institute Index of Films*, Vols. 4-5. At the time Cain knew him, he had worked as producer on *The Wolf Spy Hunt* (Columbia, 1939), *Henry Aldrich for President* (Paramount, 1941), *Henry and Dizzy, Sweater Girl, Wake Island, and Star-Spangled Rhythm* (all Paramount, 1942). In 1943-44, he worked as producer on *Girls Town, Incendiary Blonde, Double Indemnity, and The Hitler Gang*, all for Paramount. After that, he drops out of sight.

**Aileen Pringle** was born in San Francisco (?) in 1895 (some sources give 1885), the daughter of Julie Goyhen (a French citizen) and George W. Bisbee. The family also had Baltimore connections (see the *New Mencken Letters*, ed. Carl Bode, particularly the one from Mencken to Cain in 1944 congratulating Cain upon his upcoming marriage to A.P.) Ms. Pringle was educated at Mrs. Murison's School in San Francisco, The School of the Sacred Heart in Paris, and Miss McKenzie's School in London. She was on stage in London with the Elliots, a famous theatrical pair, in 1915, acting in the London premiere of *The Bracelet*, and then went to Hollywood. She was married to Charles Pringle, son of Sir John Pringle (d. 1923). Biographical information about Ms. Pringle is not over-abundant, and a biography is sorely needed. Her first film was *Redheads* (1919).

While making a fun-filled progress (in the Elizabethan sense of the word) through Hollywood, Mencken renewed his friendship with Aileen Pringle, whom he'd met that June at the home of Joseph Hershberger. In 1926, the date of this descent upon Hollywood, Pringle had been a real, full-fledged star in Hollywood for only two or three years, but now the industry had recognized that she was a natural for those roles that called for beauty, sophistication, poise, and the kind of careful, almost cerebral acting that the best of silent films display. She had starred that year alone in three full-length features. She was cast as queens of distant countries, as English ladies, as the Other Woman, as libidinous service brats. Offscreen, she was literate, intelligent, cultured, lively, and married to the son of the late Governor-General of Jamaica. At this point, she had acted in 24 films.

When Mencken met her, both were happy, gay, and more or less unattached, and the friendship between the petite, redheaded star and the "conscience of American intellectuals" amused both parties and provided endless grist for journalistic mills. It was through Pringle that Mencken met Rudolph Valentino; the piece he wrote following that visit is one of the classic American essays. It was at a Hollywood party to which he was taken by Pringle that Mencken boasted of his visits, while a horny young reporter, to the whorehouses of Baltimore. "I thought your face looked familiar," the actress said.

Ms. Pringle is still alive and well in New York.

**Phillip Goodman** had come to New York from Philadelphia, and, while he had made good as an advertising man and publisher, his true *métier* was as a theatrical producer. He had put W. C. Fields on stage early in the careers of both men. As a publisher, he had come up with the idea, the results of which are everywhere today, of moving books through drugstores. Carl Bode, Mencken's most recent and best biographer, says of Goodman in *Mencken* (1969) that "he was a bravura kind of man. Weighing nearly three

hundred pounds, he had the joviality and gusto associated with his size. He loved good food and good jokes, and he regarded the world with a freebooter's cynicism that Mencken appreciated. Like Mencken, he was a Germanophile." Goodman's daughter **Ruth Goodman Goetz** and her husband Augustus have written *The Heiress* (opened September 29, 1947 for 410 performances and revived for a short run in 1950), *The Hidden River* (opened January 23, 1957 for 61 performances), *The Immoralist* (adapted from the Gide novel; opened February 8, 1954 for 96 performances), and *One-Man Show* (opened February 8, 1945 for 36 performances).

**Paul Patterson** became managing editor of the Baltimore *Evening Sun* in 1911 and senior editor of the *Sun* papers in 1919, a position he held until 1939. Bode says in Mencken's biography that he and Patterson "were both proud of the fact that they had become city editors while indecently young and were innocent of a college degree."

**Vincent Sergeant Lawrence** was a newspaperman and playwright and screenwriter who greatly influenced Cain and was his friend and mentor. Lawrence also, according to Cain in his introduction to *Three of a Kind*, influenced the approach storywriters in Hollywood took to characterization and dialogue when the talkies came in. Lawrence was born in Roxbury, Massachusetts in 1890 and was graduated from Phillips Andover and then spent a year or two at Yale College. His first job was as a sportswriter covering golf and tennis. He collaborated at age 26 with George Scarborough on *Fate Decides*, a play, and then wrote *Weary Wives* in 1917 and *In Love with Love* and *When He Comes Back* in 1919. One of his best years was 1923, when *Two Fellows and a Girl* and *The Twist* were in production, along with *In Love with Love*, which starred Lynn Fontanne, Frank Hull, and Henry Morgan. He wrote eighteen plays in all, the last *The Overtons*, produced in 1945.

George Jean Nathan's review of that play is worth quoting at length because of what one can infer from it about the conditions for success on the American stage in those days and because, if one reads between the lines, Lawrence's lessons about the powerful subject of male-female relations in America and their effect on Cain can be deduced with very little trouble.

"At his best," Nathan said, "Lawrence indicated that no comedy writer for our theater has had a shrewder understanding of the peculiar quirks in the amorous psyches of the male and female of the species. . . . Lawrence, while he undoubtedly likes his women, is far from wearing his heart on his playwrighting sleeve and appraises them pretty coolly for what inside them they really are."

Nathan goes on to remark that Hollywood has ruined Lawrence, a cliché that time has not made less attractive, but then goes on to say that "whatever [may be his plays'] freely admitted deficiencies, they offer moments and intermittent scenes which for sharp penetration of the sexual and amorous natures of human fowl are uncommon to our native playwrighting. . . . Its [*The Overtons*] failure at the hands of most of the reviewers and at the money-till is indeed as much due to these truthful moments and scenes as to its more general obvious weaknesses. For if there is one way to fail in our American theatre it is to deal with uncompromising honesty with men and women beset by the idiosyncracies of sexual passion and the spidery business called love. . . . To achieve eulogy and money, a writer of sex comedy, which is the immediate topic, must make his characters believe not what they honestly by their very natures believe, but rather what an audience would believe

in their places. Lawrence does not thus condescend to an audience's prejudices, or at least he does not condescend sufficiently, and his reward, over the years, has been preordained failure."

Cain goes into some detail about Lawrence in the preface to *Three of a Kind*, written in 1943: [His] banner bore a strange device indeed: *Technique*. Until then I had been somewhat suspicious of technique. Not that I didn't take pains with what I wrote, but I felt that good writing was gestative rather than fabricative, and that technique for its own sake probably anagrammed into formula, and perhaps into hoke. . . . Until then, my ideal of writing, as well as I can recall it, was that the story [should] correspond with life, mirror it, give a picture whose main element was truth. Lawrence had no objection to this, but insisted that truth was not all. He said if truth were the main object of writing, I would have a hard time competing with a \$3 camera."

Lawrence went on to expound the *love-rack*, which Lawrence once explained by saying that the balcony in the balcony scene of Romeo and Juliet was just such a love-rack: it kept the characters from proceeding to a normal, apple-pie meeting and made the audience care about them precisely because they were frustrated from meeting normally. But Lawrence gave another example which today we would call "meeting cute" (that wonderful Hollywood phrase). It appears the term was rather flexible, but to Lawrence as Cain remembered it, "Writing, narrative writing, whether in the theatre, a book, or picture house, he said, must first make you *care* about the people whose fortunes you follow. . . . In this true story you think you want to write, they meet, they have lunch, they talk, they

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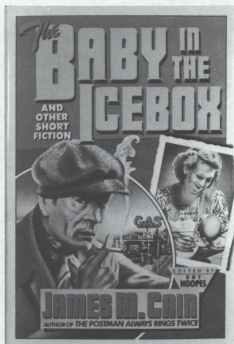
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like each other, they fall in love. That's how it does happen. But I don't pay \$5.50 for that."

He went against Lawrence's advice in writing *Double Indemnity*, but the love-rack is there, as he wrote in the excerpt quoted in the introduction.

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- Career in C Major*. See *Three of a Kind*, o.p.
- The Embezzler*. See *Three of a Kind*, o.p.
- Past All Dishonor*. Knopf, 1946. Five printings before publication, o.p.
- The Butterfly*. Knopf, 1947. NAL edition, 1949, preface by JMC, o.p. Now i.p. from Random Vintage.
- The Moth*. Knopf, 1948, o.p.
- Everybody Does It*. NAL, 1949 (alternate title for *Career in C Major*), o.p.

- Sinful Woman*. Avon, 1947, o.p. but see *Hard Cain*.
- The Math*. Knopf, 1948, o.p.
- Jealous Woman*. Avon, 1950, o.p. but see *Hard Cain*.
- The Root of His Evil*. Avon, 1950, o.p. but see *Hard Cain*.
- Galatea*. Knopf, 1953, o.p.
- Shameless*. Avon, 1958, o.p.
- Books in Print 1980-81*.
- The Enchanted Isle*. Stonehill, 1977 (entered as "cancelled" in *Books in Print 1980-81*).

##### Omnibus editions:

- Three of a Kind* (includes *Career in C Major*, *The Embezzler*, *Double Indemnity*, and a valuable introduction by JMC). New York, 1943, 1944, o.p.
- Cain Times Three*. New York, 1969. Valuable introduction by Tom Wolfe.
- Hard Cain*. Gregg Press (a reprint house), 1981. Includes the Avon o.p.'s
- Sinful Woman*, *Jealous Woman*, *The Root of His Evil*, but not *Shameless*. It is alleged the titles are not his.

##### See also:

- Three Novels*. Cleveland: World, 1946 (*The Postman Always Rings Twice*, *Serenade*, and *Mildred Pierce*), o.p.
- Two Novels*. New York, 1948 (*The Embezzler* and *Double Indemnity*), o.p.; facsimile reprint.
- Serenade* (*The Gay Experience*). AMS; reprint of the 1937 edition (\$26).

##### Short Stories

- "The Taking of Montfaucon." *American Mercury*, June 1929. Reprinted as Ch. XII of *Our Government*; twice reprinted in *Infantry Journal*.
- "The Baby in the Icebox." *American Mercury*, January 1933. Reprinted *ibid.*, September 1950; and in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, November 1946; *Rex Stout's Mystery Magazine*, December 1946; and in *Half-a-Hundred*, ed. Charles Grayson (1945) and *Alfred Hitchcock's Fireside Book of Suspense*, ed. Alfred Hitchcock (1947).
- "Dead Man." *American Mercury*, March 1936. Reprinted in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, October 1952; and in *Stories for Men*, ed. Charles Grayson (1936) and in *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of 1936* (1936). Also reprinted in *Bedside Tales*, ed. Peter Arno (1945); *Murder for the Millions* ed. Frank Owen (1946); and *Stories for Men* (1949).
- "Double Indemnity" serialized in *Liberty*, spring of 1936. First and shorter version of the novel.
- "The Birthday Party." *Ladies Home Journal*, May 1936.
- "Brush Fire." *Liberty*, December 5, 1936. Reprinted in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, November 1946; and in *As Tough As They Come*, ed. Will Oursler (1951) and *The Fourth Round*, ed. Charles Greyson (1952).
- "Coal Black." *Liberty*, April 3, 1937.
- "Everything But the Truth." *Liberty*, July 17, 1937.
- "Pastorale." *American Mercury*, March, 1938.
- "Two Can Sing." *American Magazine*, April 1938. First and shorter version of *Career in C Major*.
- "The Girl in the Storm." *Liberty*, January 6, 1940. Reprinted in *For Men Only* ed. James M. Cain (1944). Introduction by Cain. Six printings.
- "Money and the Woman." *Liberty*, February 17, 1940. Serialized in the spring of 1940. First and shorter version of *The Embezzler*.
- "Pay-Off Girl." *Esquire*, August 1952. Reprinted in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, February 1955.
- "Cigarette Girl." *Manhunt*, May 1953.
- "Two O'Clock Blonde." *Manhunt*, August 1953.



"Death on the Beach." *Jack London's Adventure Magazine*, October 1958.

**Articles** (Does not include *World* editorials or articles written for the Baltimore papers)

"Treason—To Coal Operators." *The Nation*, October 4, 1922.

"The Battleground of Coal." *Atlantic Monthly*, October 1922.

"West Virginia: A Mine-Field Melodrama." *Nation*, June 27, 1933.

"American Portraits I: The Labor Leader." *American Mercury*, February 1924.

"American Portraits III: The Editorial Writer." *American Mercury*, April 1924.

"Pedagogue: Old Style." *American Mercury*, May 1924.

"Politician: Female." *American Mercury*, November 1924.

"High Dignitaries of State." *American Mercury*, December 1924.

"The World Hits The Trail." *The Nation*, March 4, 1925.

"The Pastor." *American Mercury*, May 1925.

"The Pathology of Service." *American Mercury*, November 1925.

"The Man Merriwell." *Saturday Evening Post*, June 11, 1927.

"Are Editorials Worth Reading?" *Saturday Evening Post*, December 24, 1927.

"The Solid South." *Bookman*, November 1928.

"Paradise." *American Mercury*, March 1933.

"The Widow's Mite, or Queen of the Rancho." *Vanity Fair*, August 1933.

"Camera Obscura." *American Mercury*, October 1933.

"Tribute to a Hero." *American Mercury*, November 1933.

"How To Carve That Bird." *Esquire*, December 1934.

"Them Ducks." *Esquire*, January 1935.

"Oh, les Crepes Suzettes." *Esquire*, February 1935.

"Close Harmony." *American Mercury*, October 1935.

"An American Author's Authority." *The Screen Writer*, July 1946.

"Just What Is A.A.A.?" *The Screen Writer*, October 1946.

"Do Writers Need an 'AAA'?" *Saturday Review*, November 16, 1946.

"Vincent Sargent Lawrence." *The Screen Writer*, January 1947.

"Respectfully Submitted." *The Screen Writer*, March 1947. Supplement.

## Plays

"Servants of the People." *American Mercury*, April 1925, pp. 393-98; reprinted in *Our Government*.

"The Hero." *American Mercury*, September 1925, pp. 52-57. Reprinted in *Our Government*.

"Hemp." *American Mercury*, April 1927, pp. 404-9. Reprinted in *Our Government*.

"Red, White and Blue." *American Mercury*, October 1927, pp. 129-34. Reprinted in *Our Government*.

"Trial by Jury." *American Mercury*, January 1928. Reprinted in *Our Government* and in *The American Mercury Reader*, ed. Lawrence E. Spivak and Charles Angoff (1944). Angoff was an early Mencken biographer.

"Theological Interlude." *American Mercury*, July 1928, pp. 325-31.

"The Will of the People." *American Mercury*, April 1929. Reprinted in *Our Government* and in *Best American Humorous Short Stories* (1945) as "The Legislature."

"Citizenship." *American Mercury*, December 1929, pp. 403-8.

"Don't Monkey with Uncle Sam." *Vanity Fair*, April 1933, p. 39. *Our Government* (1930). Collection of plays.

## Filmscripts\*

*Algiers*. United Artists, 1938. Additional dialogue. *Stand Up and Fight*. MGM, 1939. Screenplay by Cain with Jane Murnin and Harvey Fergusson. Laurence Stallings [*What Price Glory?*], additional dialogue.

*When Tomorrow Comes*. Universal, 1939. Story.

*Gypsy Wildcat*. Universal, 1940. Credit with James Hagan and Gene Lewis for screenplay.

*The Bridge of San Luis Rey*. United Artists, 1944. (But not listed under entry-by-title in *Who Wrote the Movie?* May be an indexing problem.)

*Everybody Does It*. Fox, 1949. Story.

## Movies Made from Cain's Fiction

*She Made Her Bed* ("The Baby in the Ice Box") Paramount, 1934

*Wife, Husband, Friend* (*Career in C Major*) Fox, 1939

*When Tomorrow Comes* (*The Root of His Evil*) Universal, 1939

*Money and the Woman* (*The Embezzler*) Warner Bros., 1940

*Double Indemnity*, Paramount, 1944

*Mildred Pierce*, Warner Bros., 1945

*The Postman Always Rings Twice*, MGM, 1946; remake 1980 (and in France as *Le Dernier Tourment* and in Italy,

directed by Luchino Visconti, as *Obsessione* (see Note)

*Everybody Does It* (*Career in C Major*) Fox, 1949

*Serenade*, Warner Bros., 1934

*Slightly Scarlet* (*Love's Lovely Counterfeit*) RKO, 1936

Note on the *Obsessione* problem: The film was produced between 1939 and 1942 in Italy by G. Masso and directed by Luchino Visconti (*The Damned*, etc). MGM had sold the foreign rights to Gladiator Films in 1937 for five years because Hollywood believed there would be censorship problems if *The Postman Always Rings Twice* were made in this country, and in fact the problems were not overcome in the minds of the producers until 1946, when a Massachusetts appeals court ruled that *Serenade* was not obscene in a suit which had nothing to do with movie production of any of the other novels. In the meantime, Gladiator had made *Le Dernier Tourment* (*The Last Corner* was how they translated it into English) in 1938. It starred Fernand Gravit, Corinne Luchaise and Michele Simon. At that point, Germany invaded Poland.

During the war, Visconti directed *Obsessione*. The movie was censored by the Fascists, who did, however, allow a shortened version (the cuts have apparently never been restored, according to reviews) to be released before the collapse of the Axis. After the war, MGM and Gladiator sued Masso and his company, alleging plagiarism, even to camera angles and dialogue, and demanding a share of the profits.

*Obsessione* is still not available for viewing in this country.

Production information: ICL, producers. Cavinor-Marceau, distributors (in France). Starring Massimo Girotti, Clara Calamai; featuring Elio Marcuzzo, Juan de Landa, Vittorio Duse. Directed by Luchino Visconti. Screenplay by Pietrangeli (no other names given), Giuseppe de Santis, Mario Alicata, Gianni Puccini, Luchino Visconti from *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. Camera: Aldo Tonti, Domenico Scala. Edited by Mario Serandrei. 112 minutes.

*John Carr's book THE CRAFT OF CRIME will be published by Houghton Mifflin in April 1983.* □

\*As credited in *Who Wrote the Movie? 1936-1969*, published by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and Writers Guild of America, West (Los Angeles, 1970).

# CITY OF ILLUSION

## THE ROLE OF HOLLYWOOD IN CALIFORNIA DETECTIVE FICTION

By Nicholas O. Warner

*This article is dedicated to Branwen Bailey Pratt*

*"If California is a state of mind, Hollywood is where you take its temperature."*

— Ross Macdonald,  
Foreword to *Archer in Hollywood*

One of the most distinctive features of the novels of Ross Macdonald and Raymond Chandler is their Southern California setting, a setting which influences both theme and characterization in these works. Two basic patterns emerge in connection with the geographical setting of most Chandler and Macdonald novels: the pervasive, even domineering presence of Hollywood and its world of slick illusion (extending to Los Angeles and all Southern California) and a sense of California itself (and Hollywood in particular) as a final frontier, a land offering the last chance for fulfilling dreams that have gone sour elsewhere, the last chance for escaping a tarnished past. Both of these patterns reveal the detective in opposition not only to crime but to a delusive, image-obsessed mental set that dominates California life.

At times, of course, Hollywood sets the ambience for an entire book, such as Chandler's *The Little Sister*, which centers on the mysteries surrounding actress Mavis Weld and her circle, or Macdonald's trio of novels grouped under the collective title *Archer in Hollywood*.<sup>1</sup> In these as in other works by Macdonald or Chandler, however, what is most important about the Hollywood connection is not the explicit reference to Hollywood or the use of characters who work in cinema, but rather the whole environment of sham and illusion for which Hollywood becomes an emblem. The main significance of Chandler's and Macdonald's Southern California setting is as a suggestive image of gilded corruption

and prettified vice. As Marlowe tells the elusive Terry Lennox in *The Long Goodbye*:

"You were just as happy with mugs or hoodlums as with honest men. Provided the hoodlums spoke fairly good English and had fairly acceptable table manners . . . You've got nice clothes and perfume and you're as elegant as a fifty-dollar whore." (Chapter 53)

Marlowe's chief complaint about Lennox is the sham exterior of respectability, the shallow veneer of refinement that obscures the man's rancid moral core. This sense of moral hollowiness, even of rottenness, receives powerful expression in Chandler's *The Little Sister*, where it is extended to the entire city of Los Angeles, and particularly to Hollywood, the Hollywood where, as Marlowe says in *The Long Goodbye*, "anything can happen." Driving through the Southern California night on the way back from his fruitless, bizarre interview with the actresses Mavis Weld and Dolores Gonzales, Marlowe gives vent to a modern American version of Baudelaire's *Spleen de Paris*, a kind of spleen of L.A., as it were:

Malibu. More movie stars. More pink and blue bathtubs. More tufted beds . . . More wind-blown hair and sunglasses and attitudes and pseudo-refined voices and waterfront morals . . . I smelled Los Angeles before I got to it. It smelled stale and old, like a living-room that had been closed too long. But the colored lights fooled you. There ought to be a monument to the man who invented neon lights. Fifteen storeys high, solid marble. There's a boy who really made something out of nothing. (Chapter 13)

Making something out of nothing, as Marlowe bitterly puts it, is the ultimate motivation behind Orfamay and Orrin Quest, the brother and sister from Manhattan, Kansas, who end up vying with each other for the greatest advantage in a blackmail-

ing scheme aimed at their half-sister, the glamorous movie queen Mavis Weld. Los Angeles, especially Hollywood, proves to be an ideal context for the cunning Orfamay; she fits in perfectly with a world in which things are not as they seem, where Mavis Weld's lover, for instance, poses as a Hollywood restaurant-owner named Steelgrave in order to camouflage his real identity as Weepy Moyer, a gangster and murderer.

Throughout *The Little Sister*, the Southern California qualities that attract deceitful predatory

frame houses on the inter-urban line. Los Angeles was just a big dry sunny place with ugly homes and no style, but good-hearted and peaceful. It had the climate they just yap about now. People used to sleep out on porches. Little groups who thought they were intellectual used to call it the Athens of America. It wasn't that, but it wasn't a neon-lighted slum either." (Chapter 26)

To Dolores Gonzales's objection that "it is the same in all cities, amigo," Marlowe replies:

"Real cities have something else, some individual bony



L-R seated: Arthur Barnes, John K. Butler, Todhunter Ballard, Horace McCoy, Norbert Davis. Standing: unknown, Raymond Chandler, Herbert Stinson, Dwight Babcock, Eric Taylor, Dashiell Hammett.

outsiders such as Orfamay and Orrin Quest (as well as the unscrupulous Dr. Lagardie), and that make their deceptions possible, are the very things that repulse long-time Los Angeles private eye Philip Marlowe; Marlowe not only disapproves of these qualities (e.g. the city's size, commercialism, lack of tradition) but feels that they have spoiled a rough innocence that Los Angeles once possessed, as he explains to Dolores Gonzales:

"I used to like this town . . . a long time ago. There were trees along Wilshire Boulevard. Beverly Hills was a country town. Westwood had bare hills and lots offering at eleven hundred dollars and no takers. Hollywood was a bunch of

structure under the muck. Los Angeles has Hollywood—and hates it . . . Without Hollywood it would be a mail order city. Everything in the catalogue you could get better somewhere else." (Chapter 26)

Pondering the strange paths by which the characters with whom he deals came to be involved in the murder and deception that abound in *The Little Sister*, Marlowe again lashes out at Hollywood, this time not only as a sign but as a source of pretense and even of deadliness, for it is

wonderful what Hollywood will do to a nobody. It will make a radiant glamour queen out of a drab little wench

who ought to be ironing a truck driver's shirts, a he-man hero with shining eyes and brilliant smile reeking of sexual charm out of some overgrown kid who was meant to go to work with a lunchbox...it might even take a small town prig like Orrin Quest and make an ice-pick murderer out of him in a matter of months, elevating his simple meanness into the classic sadism of the multiple killer. (Chapter 23)

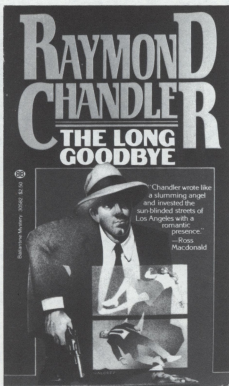
Perhaps because of this almost magical transformative power, part of Hollywood's (and California's) meaning is the tantalizing promise of escape from poverty, pain, or the past. In the words of Joan Didion calls the state's "boom mentality," a mentality that all too often blurs the boundaries between tired dreams and criminal nightmares. In *The Barbarous Coast*, a Lew Archer novel set in Hollywood, Macdonald eloquently describes the origins of such blurring:

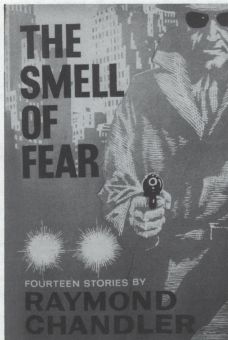
Didion describes here colors the dreams of many characters in California detective fiction. For these characters, California is often "the last stop" on their journey from somewhere else, "from the cold and the past and the old ways."<sup>3</sup> In the fiction of Chandler

and Macdonald, as in Didion's work, California seems to epitomize a land with no past; in "the department store state," as Chandler calls it,<sup>4</sup> one can seemingly choose any scenario for one's life, any role, any identity in an attempt to obliterate the past. But the past is ultimately inescapable as it haunts the illusory present built on glamour, money, or position. While both Chandler and Macdonald reject the superficiality and vulgarity they associate with certain aspects of Los Angeles (and of California as a whole), Macdonald in particular emphasizes what Didion calls the state's "boom mentality," a mentality that all too often blurs the boundaries between tired dreams and criminal nightmares. In *The Barbarous Coast*, a Lew Archer novel set in Hollywood, Macdonald eloquently describes the origins of such blurring:

Hollywood started as a meaningless dream, invented for money. But its colors ran, out through the holes in people's heads, spread across the landscape and solidified, north and south along the coast, east across the desert, across the continent. Now we were stuck with the dream without a meaning. It had become the nightmare we live in. (Chapter 13)

The form this meaningless dream/nightmare assumes often has to do with, some denial of the past that involves a lived falsehood in the present. In *The Far Side of the Dollar*, for instance, the respectable, even fashionable Hillman family gets increasingly caught up in duplicity and crime, largely because of the Hillman parents' inability to face the darker corners of their past. Indeed, their whole view of the past reflects what MacDonald sees as California's own temporal myopia; describing events supposedly taking place in 1964 (but with their roots extending back some nineteen years), Macdonald, through the persona of Lew Archer, ironically observes that "1945 was a long time ago, as time went in California" (Chapter 12). Deliberately cultivating their blindness to their own personal histories, hiding from their own pasts (often, in Macdonald, the past is not nearly as tragic or shameful as the lengths to which people go to cover it up), the characters in Macdonald's stories and novels repeatedly act out hollow, make-believe roles. One thinks of the Hillmans, whose veneer of Southern California *cum* Spanish Mission refinement strikes Archer as being "like something borrowed for a costume party" (*The Far Side of the Dollar*, Chapter 4), or of people like the Crandalls in *The Underground Man*. Rich at the time of the novel's action, the Crandalls live in a sterile, masquerade-like world, trying to fill roles they simply don't fit, raising their daughter in an environment more like a studio set than a home. When Archer first visits the Crandall house, he describes its cold, artificial interior:





The chandelier for all its blaze was like a cluster of frozen tears. The white marble mantel was tomblike. The flowers in the vases were plastic, unsmellable, giving off a dull sense of artificial life. (Chapter 14)

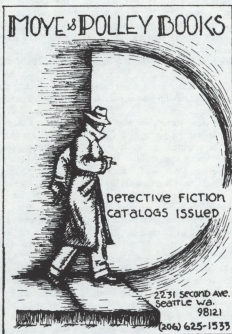
Later, Archer hears Mrs. Crandall tell her husband, in a reference to their posh neighborhood, that "We don't belong in this place. Everybody knows it except you" (Chapter 14). Even before Archer fully understands Mrs. Crandall's statement (after he discovers her violent and sordid sexual background, as well as her husband's part in that background), he comes to realize that the Crandall family was "a lonely trio, living like actors on a Hollywood set" (Chapter 14). Ironically, the Crandalls' fear of relinquishing their "Hollywood set" roles is a major obstacle in Archer's search for the Crandalls' missing daughter.

Throughout the novels and stories in which they appear, detectives Philip Marlowe and Lew Archer often find themselves up against a powerful set of attitudes that make the solution of crime all the more difficult. Again and again these attitudes boil down to Hollywood's and Southern California's naive belief in the superficial image as a validation for one's life, as the acme of human happiness. In the Hollywood-centered universe of Los Angeles and its neighboring towns and suburbs, celluloid illusions establish themselves as the norms and goals of

human existence, creating an unreal atmosphere in which crime and deceit thrive. What Chandler's and Macdonald's detectives constantly struggle with, in addition to simple criminal motivation, is the slippery issue of success Hollywood style; it is a style which, to use Ross Macdonald's description of murderous Hollywood publicity agent Millicent Dreen, invites us "not to conviction but to suspension of disbelief."<sup>1</sup> Far from merely adding some local color to their tales of mystery, Macdonald's and Chandler's use of Hollywood's deceptively glossy world constitutes a crucial element in their art. In the heady, dangerous atmosphere of the city where Archer and Marlowe work and live, these laconic, unassuming detectives' single-minded pursuit of truth stands out in stark, lonely relief.

#### Notes

1. *Archer in Hollywood* (1967) contains the following novels: *The Moving Target*, *The Way Some People Die*, *The Barbarous Coast*.
2. Joan Didion, *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1968), p. 172.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
4. Raymond Chandler, *The Little Sister* (London: Pan Books, 1979), p. 62.
5. Ross Macdonald, "Find the Woman," in *The Name is Archer* (New York: Bantam Books, Inc. 1955), p. 1. □





# AJH REVIEWS

Short notes...

*Palimpsest* (St. Martin's, \$11.95) is the second case for Inspector Henry Beaumont by Meg Elizabeth Atkins. It's very impressive: rich in atmosphere, suspense, and narrative excellence. It takes place in an English village where a successful, unpredictable, and iconoclastic female novelist invites an old school friend for a visit. But she's absent when the friend arrives, and the villagers tell curious stories and try to hasten her away. Car difficulties keep her in the village, and a childhood psychic gift revives with terrifying consequences. Beaumont arrives to bring calm, rationality, answers—and to prevent a death. Could the first Beaumont novel have been as good as this?

A notable first novel, with characters worthy of a reprieve, is *Promises To Keep* by Hy and Barbara Brett (Harper & Row, \$12.95). Gil Ferguson left the New York Police after one bullet too many, married his beloved Connie, and moved to New Hampshire to open an antique shop with her. But as others have found, antiques can be an unhealthy business. Certainly Eric Meade so finds, as a German beer stein, signed by Hitler, brings about his death. It seems New Hampshire is a hotbed of leftist Naziism, and Gil and Connie are drawn in, to their peril, as agents of the godly.

Jocelyn Davey has spaced his (now) six novels about Oxford don Ambrose Usher over an unusually large number of years (26), and in the last two has taken him from his native turf to foreign climes. Most recently he travels to a Caribbean island ripe for revolution in *Murder in Paradise* (Walker, \$11.95). Usher's old police friend Heywood is there, mysteriously investigating something mysterious and attracting the lethal attentions of the ungodly. Soon Ambrose is drawn into a whirl of



Allen J. Hubin, Consulting Editor

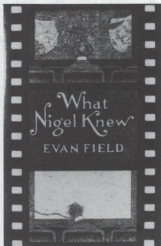
Photo: Robert Small

politics, intrigue, drug running, and murder. Pleasant enough, this tale, urbane, British, and perhaps not entirely comfortable in its setting.

*High Crimes* by William Deverell (St. Martin's, \$15.95) is preoccupied with drug smuggling and sex, and an artistic overabundance of the latter may obscure a tale with important strengths. It offers numerous revealing glimpses of character (the various Newfoundland smugglers and their associates, policemen of two countries, a fascinating shadow-world agent-on-call of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration) and the techniques of entrapment and double-cross. The narrative flows well, not without a sense of humor. Pete Kerrivan, guilty as charged and about to become a career statistic for Insp. Harold Mitchell, is unexpectedly released by the judge because of the tactics Mitchell has used. Mitchell is apoplectic, and, when Kerrivan sets out to bring a whole shipload of marijuana from Colombia to Canada, Mitchell will spare no expense or strategem to assist him. This time, Mitchell will surely get him on arrival in Canada, get him red-handed with fifty tons of prime marijuana. Problem is that everyone has his own agenda in this little caper, and at the end only one hero—an unlikely one at that—is left...

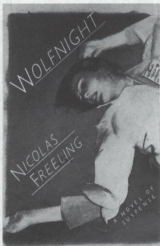
The third novel by Stephen Dobyns (matching his three volumes of poetry) is *Saratoga Swimmer* (Atheneum, \$12.95). Here we have again Charlie Bradshaw (from *Saratoga Longshot*), once a cop and now head of security for a large stable. His new job begins inauspiciously: the owner of the stable has his head blown off while swimming at the Saratoga YMCA. The police are archetypically obtuse and antagonistic, so reluctantly Charlie pokes about. He finds a gambling connection, a further corpse, and is well on his way to contributing personally to the toll... Very agreeable.

The two film writers who collaborate pseudonymously as Evan Field profess no active hatred of the film world. But the characters in *What Nigel Knew* (Potter, \$10.95) are so uniformly odious, so pervasively racist, so free of higher human instincts, that Field's "love" for the movie industry seems overly jugular in manifestation. Nigel Whitty is a gossip columnist. Or was. Never was anyone so widely, so deservedly, hated. When he is strangled at a



private New York showing, the rejoicing is unanimous if sometimes cloaked in pious sorrow. Into this sewer proceeds Lt. Michael Connelly of New York's finest, abetted by a beddable and filmwise female assistant. Entertaining and well written and possibly revealing is this novel, but a little bit of this goes a long way.

I don't know who is on a pendulum, me or Nicolas Freeling. I've a



feeling I go from pole to pole in my reactions to his books, but is it the books or something I eat? With Freeling's latest, *Wolfnight* (Pantheon, \$12.50), a further case for Commissaire Henri Castang, my verdict is negative. Oh, the plot does develop some interest and tension, and the narrative is liberally sprinkled with observations and expressions witty and incisive. But Freeling has chosen a style excessively obscure, and—perhaps as a consequence—on balance I can't swallow this tale. It begins simply with a dead lady who really isn't dead but then later really is. It gets considerably more complex when radical politics and terrorists intrude and the assault becomes very per-

sonal indeed for Castang, who with his superior retaliates most unconventionally.

I seem to have been part of a very small minority in not much liking P. D. James's *Innocent Blood*, but I can report much more favorably on *The Skull Beneath the Skin* (Scribners, \$13.95), which returns her to excellent form and to more classical lines. It also reintroduces Cordelia Gray from *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*. Cordelia is now sole proprietor of a private detective agency which specializes in investigations no more dangerous than finding lost pets for rich ladies. The husband of a noted actress asks Cordelia to spend a weekend with his wife on a small island to shield her from unpleasantness relating to a series of vaguely threatening letters while she performs the starring role in a privately staged play. Cordelia goes, and death—bloody and violent—goes, too. Sensitive portrayal of complex characters, fine integration of mood and setting—that's the fare here.

Michael Killian, a Washington-based columnist for the Chicago *Tribune*, debuts impressively with *The Valkyrie Project* (St. Martin's, \$14.95). This is spy stuff, Russians vs. the U.S. with other folks in between, set in Iceland. An alcoholic reporter with only a short time to live is just the chap for the CIA to send to Iceland to locate Gier Krog. Krog is an engineer, wanted for murder, possessor of the secret that could mean WW III. What has Moscow in mind to do in Iceland that's worth all the bloodshed and the attentions of its most successful agent, the psychopathic German Jahn? Well done.

I can't get as excited about the latest Peter Lovesey novel as others will be. The narrative is certainly well placed in history, it's smooth, and the ending is neatly surprising. But none of the characters greatly interested me, and I find the tale receding apace in memory. Lovesey forsakes the nineteenth century and Sgt. Cribb for 1921 and a trans-

atlantic voyage by ship in *The False Inspector Dew* (Pantheon, \$12.50). A prosaic dentist, married to a wealthy actress who orders his life to her fancy, falls in love with a dreamy virgin and they plot the demise of the actress. The dastardly act is to take place on the trip to America, to which the actress is dragging the dentist. All goes according to plan at first, but then (despite the plan) a body is discovered and the dentist finds himself identified as a famous retired Scotland Yard policeman and commissioned to solve the crime. He will be remembered, if at all, as one of the least conscious detectives in all literature.

*Chance* by Sara McAulay (Knopf, \$12.50) can be thought of as in our field, though I doubt the author had such categorization in mind. It's more character study than anything else: a study of Chance Griffin and the woman who loved him, believed him, and is trying to pin his murder on a racehorse owner in Nevada. Chance was a drifter, a dreamer, a risk-taker, a jockey, a person who made up his life story as he went along. Ellen Flint backtracks on that dubious story, totting a gun and aiming to extract vengeance from Lou French, if she can stay determined enough, brave enough, well enough... The continuing flashbacks are sometimes confusing, and the ambiguity of the ending won't please everyone, but you'll remember this tale.

One of the special settings to be identified in the settings index I'm compiling for the new edition of my *Bibliography of Crime Fiction* is historical—fiction clearly set earlier in time than the time of writing. This is proving to be a most popular settings category, offering enough material perhaps one day to provoke even a book-length study. One may think first of John Dickson Carr's works of this type, and I read them with high enjoyment years ago. A newcomer on this particular scene, G. J. A. O'Toole, offers nearly equal enjoyment—if less

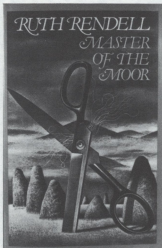
intense mood—in his second novel, *Poor Richard's Game* (Delacorte, \$16.95). Benjamin Franklin a traitor? Nonsense, you say, but such was the rumor in 1781 as the colonies were fighting for their independence. Desmond de Lawless, an Irish soldier of fortune and man of rare integrity and resourcefulness, is sent to France, where Franklin holds court and negotiates the end of the war. Desmond is to determine if the rumor has foundation in fact. His adventures comprise a most sprightly, a most beautifully evocative story. More, O'Toole!

Mysteries set in Iowa are uncommon. But a novel both Iowan and culinary is provided by first novelist Virginia Rich in *The Cooking School Murders* (Dutton, \$11.95). Well-to-do Widow Potter summers in Harrington, Iowa, where she relishes the small-town environment and accomplishes assorted good deeds. Such as organizing a cooking class to be taught by a famous chef vacationing nearby (does anyone vacation in Iowa?). Alas, however, violent death also attends the first session of the class. Mrs. Potter finds unsatisfactory the official solution to what become multiple corpses, and begins to ask questions. A tactic which, like cooking class, can prove fatal... Interesting glimpse of a small city and its denizens; no detection; not memorable.

Dorothy Simpson's second case for Insp. Luke Thanet is *Six Feet Under* (Scribners, \$10.95). It is not impressive. A mousy woman is killed in the English suburb of Nettleton. She proves to have bundles of cash under her mattress, a poisonous bedridden mother, and a secret life. None of which helps Thanet, who is struggling with an independence-declaring wife and a soon-to-be-married subordinate. In due course Thanet stumbles into the solution, which jumped out at me in the very early going.

A fine piece of work—telling in character and atmosphere—is Ruth Rendell's *Master of the Moor* (Pan-

theon, \$11.95). Stephen Whalby loves the moor on which he lives, loves it to distraction; toward his wife he is and always has been impotent. He draws his identity from the moor and from his relationship (however much on the wrong side of the blanket) to an earlier and famous moor writer. Stephen never knew his mother, who disappeared to Canada many years before; his father, called "Dad," is a huge man, a furniture maker given to spells of the blackest despondency. Someone spoils Stephen's moor: he finds there the body of a young woman, hair shorn



off. Further disintegration of his world follows, and Rendell catches this and its consequences beautifully.

Janwillem van de Wetering forsakes his Amsterdam policemen for the portrayal of the life—from murderous youth to age sixty—of an unsavory and amoral Dutchman named Eddie Sachs in *The Butterfly Hunter* (Houghton Mifflin, \$12.95). I think this is well done, but it lacks contrast: all the significant characters are cut from Sachs's cloth or worse, and on the whole the story is depressing. We meet Sachs first in

1933 as he is disposing of his half brother, and follow him through the war and his slippery career thereafter, as he tries to keep his magic—his ability to stay a step ahead of the consequences—alive.



A final word on a gem of non-fiction.

I am particularly pleased with Bill Pronzini's *Gun in Cheek* (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, \$15.95) for two reasons. For one, it's a joy to read in its wide-ranging, humorous, and incisive view of great bad crime fiction. For another, I'm most gratified personally to find something which began as a couple of articles in TAD ("The Saga of the Phoenix That Probably Should Never Have Risen," April 1977, and "The Worst Mystery Novel of All Time," Spring 1980) emerging as this unique book-length study. Pronzini here identifies many of the masterpieces of outrageously bad writing our cherished genre offers—mind-boggling similes, bizarre titles and names, prose so bad it rattles the senses and bids fair for immortality. *Gun in Cheek* will easily be the funniest book on your reference shelf—and there it certainly must be.

—AJH

# BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES FOR 1981

By Walter S. Albert

## Abbreviations

- CP? *Collecting Paperbacks?*  
EQMM *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*  
FIR *Films in Review*  
IDMB *The John D. MacDonald Bibliophile*  
LJ *Library Journal*  
NYRB *New York Review of Books*  
NYTAL *New York Times Arts and Leisure*  
NYTBR *New York Times Book Review*  
PQ *Paperback Quarterly*  
PW *Publishers Weekly*  
TAD *The Armchair Detective*  
TLS *Times Literary Supplement*  
TMF *The Mystery FANcier*  
TPP *The Poisoned Pen*  
WLB *The Wilson Library Bulletin*

## I. Bibliographies, Indices, Checklists

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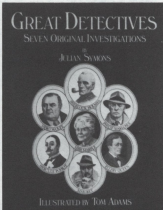
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Melville, James. "The Edogawa Ranpo Tradition." TLS 30 Oct 81:1265. Despite some minor errors involving dates and the spelling of names, this is an excellent article on Japanese mystery fiction. Included are short reviews of books by Seicho Matsumoto, Seishi Yokomizo, Shizuko Natsumi, Seichi Mormura, and other Japanese mystery writers. Melville concludes with the interesting comment that, apart from the language in which they are written and the local color involved, Japanese mysteries differ little from those



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Zone, Ray. "Mean Streets Revisited." *Mystery* 2:3:18-19. Photo. *Passim* for quotes by Timothy Harris, Arthur Lyons, Andrew Fenady, Murray Sinclair, Elliott Lewis and Karl Alexander.

B. Dime Novels, Pulp and Juvenile Series Cox, J. Randolph. "More Mystery for a Dime: Street and Smith and the First Pulp Detective Magazine." *Clues* 2:2:52-59. An important study of Street and Smith's *Detective Story Magazine*, the successor, in 1915, to *Nick Carter Weekly* and, according to Cox, the "primary source of the transition between the dime novel of the 1890s and the 'hero pulp' of the 1930s."

Drew, Bernard A. "Hoh-Hoh to Satan: *Detective Fiction Weekly's* Nutty Series Heroes of the 1930s." *Clues* 2:2:88-102. Illustrated. A history and bibliography of selected DFS series characters from 1933-37.

Hagemann, E. R. "The Black Mask." *Mystery* 2:1:51-53+. A factual article on the early years of *The Black Mask*.

— "Capt. Shaw and His 'Great and Regular Fellows': The Making of *The Hard-Boiled Omnibus, 1945-1946*." *Clues* 2:2:143-52. An essay on the assembling of *The Hard-Boiled Anthology*, a collection of stories from *The Black Mask*. Includes the publication of a list of writers and stories Shaw drew up at the beginning of the project.

— (ed.). In-Depth Section on Pulp Detective Fiction. *Clues* 2:2:37-153. Critical essays on the writers and fiction of *Black Mask* with a story by Herman Petersen from *Action Stories* and critical/autobiographical material by Carroll John Daly and Frederick John Nebel excerpted from *Writer's Digest*. Contents: William F. Nolan. "A Walk in the Pulpwoods: Random Recollections"; Bill Proznini, "Ante-Bellum Days, or 'My Koscoe Smeezed Ka-Chee!"; Robert Leslie Belloc, "Break It UP!"; J. Randolph Cox, "More Mystery for a Dime: Street and Smith and the First Pulp Detective Magazine"; Robert Sampson, "Life as a Series of Abstract Analyses"; Herman Petersen, "The Barbless Arrow"; Bernard A. Drew, "Hoh-Hoh to Satan: *Detective Fiction Weekly's* Nutty Series Heroes of the 1930s"; Michael A. Barson, "There's No Sex in Crime: The Two-Fisted Homilies of Race Williams"; Carroll John Daly, "The Ambulating Lady"; Dave Lewis, "The Backbone of *Black Mask*"; Will Murray, "Lester Dene: The Last of the Joe Shaw's *Black Mask* Boys"; Robert S. Powell, "Including Murder: An Unpublished Hammett Collection"; E. R. Hagemann, "Cap Shaw and His 'Great and Regular Fellows': The Making of *The Hard-Boiled Omnibus, 1945-1946*."

Lowndes, Robert A. W. "The Unique Mystery Magazine: Hugo Gernsback's *Scientific Detective Monthly*." Parts I through IV in TAD 14:24-30; 157-62; 243-46; 367-71. A history of the Gernsback pulp magazine featuring Arthur Reeve's Craig Kennedy. Correction by John Apostolou in letter TAD 14:383.

Russell, Luana. "A Judy Bolton Mystery—'Blacklisted Classics.'" *Clues* 2:1:35-44. A defense of a juvenile series for girls disparaged by librarians. Ms. Russell considers the series as being related to the "larger historical perspective of detective

fiction" and discusses it in the context of adult mysteries with female heroines.

Sampson, Robert. "The Chang Monster." *The Science Fiction Collector* 14:41-46. An examination of A. E. Apple's Mr. Chang pulp stories. Sampson suggests that the Chang stories may be a parody of sinister Oriental fiction. Includes a partial checklist of 27 of Mr. Chang's pulp appearances between 1919 and 1936. (Greg Goode)

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Woodworth, Fred, ed. "The Hardy Boys." *Mystery & Adventure Series*, Dec 4 (Spring 1981). A special issue on the juvenile series.

———. "Nancy Drew." *Mystery & Adventure Series* 5 (Winter 1981).

### C. Film, TV

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Conrad, Randall. "Mystery and Melodrama: A Conversation with Georges Franju." *Film Quarterly* 35:2:31-42. Stills. Filmography. The French master of "dark thrillers" discusses his films and his most recent TV film, *The Last Melodrama* (1978).

Dooley, Roger Burke. *From Scarface to Scarlett: American Film in the 1930s*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981. Illus. Index. 610 pp. Reviews: *American Film* 32 (June 81) 63; *FIR* Oct 81:506; *LJ* 106:900.

Edelman, Rob. "Director Series: Michael Mann, *Thief*." *FIR* May 81:295-96. Interview.

Groff, Mary. "All Too True." *TPP* 4:5/6: 59-62. A partial listing of films based on mysteries inspired by true crimes.

Guérif, François. *Le cinéma policier Français*. Paris: ed. Henri Veyrier, 1981. 223 pp. Stills. With a list of 414 directors and their films. Bibliography.

Hurd, Geoffrey. "The Television Presentation of the Police." In *Popular Television and Film*, ed. Tony Bennett et al. (London: British Film Institute, 1981), pp. 53-70. See also for "Parodying Genre: The Case of *Gangsters*," 71-72, Paul Kerr, "Gangsters: Conventions and Contradictions," 73-78; and Richard Paterson, "Gangsters: The Pleasure and the Pain in the Text," 79-82. Into the barren wasteland of TV, a team of British writers brings the tools of modern criticism.

Jenkins, Stephen, ed. *Fritz Lang: The Image and the Look*. London/New York: Zocetrope: British Film Institute, 1981. A reassessment by several writers of the films of director Fritz Lang, in which the films Lang made in America after his flight from Nazi Germany in 1933 are not seen as inferior to the masterpieces of his German period but as logical continuations of his distinctive film style and esthetic. Draws heavily on the revival of interest sparked by filmmakers and writers of the French

New Wave and *Cahiers du Cinéma* group. With a chronology and annotated filmography. Of particular interest for Lang's links with *film noir*.

Kaminsky, Stuart J. "The Mystery of Alfred Hitchcock." *Mystery* 2:3:26-29. Comments on Hitchcock's films.

Kaplan, E. Ann. *Fritz Lang: A Guide to References and Resources*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981. ix-xv+488 pp. With an index of proper names. The book consists of a detailed filmography and an impressive annotated bibliography of writings about Lang. There is also a useful appendix of biographical/autobiographical sources.

Levinson, Richard and William Link. "How We Created Columbo— and How He Nearly Killed Us." *American Film* March 81:27-28 + Photos.

Ottoson, Robert. *A Reference Guide to the American Film Noir: 1940-1958*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981. 285 pp. Index and bibliography. Film stills. An annotated list of films Ottoson classifies as *films noirs*. A selected list of credits for each film is given, and there is a short plot summary and some critical commentary. Ottoson's criteria are psychological, thematic and visual.

Pearry, Gerald, ed. *Little Caesar*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981. 187 pp. The film scenario and a critical introduction. Illustrated with still from the film.

Wood, Robin. *Howard Hawks*. Revised Edition. London: BFI, 1981. Originally published in 1968. Study of the films of the director of *The Big Sleep*.

### III. Periodicals

*Les amis du crime (Friends of Crime)*. Published irregularly by Jean-François Naudon, 7 rue de l'Abbe Grégoire, 92130 Issy-les-Moulineaux, France. Each issue is devoted to one writer and contains a detailed bibliography and some critical material.

*The Armchair Detective*. Edited by Michael Seidman and published quarterly by The Mysterious Press. \$16/year.

*The Bony Bulletin*. Ed./pub. Philip T. Asdell, 5719 Jefferson Blvd., Frederick, Md. 21701. \$3 for 3 issues. Not seen.

*Bulletin 813*. A newsletter/fanzine published for members of a society of friends of the mystery novel. For information about membership write: Secrétariat de 813, 14 rue de la Garenne, 78350 Les Loges en Josas, France.

*Clues: A Journal of Detection*. Ed. by Pat Browne. Published by Bowling Green University Popular Press. 2 issues annually/ \$10.

*Collecting Paperbacks?* Ed./pub. Lance Casebeer, 934 S.E. 15th, Portland, Ore. 97214. \$12 for 6 bimonthly issues. Letters, notes, checklists of interest to collectors of pb and to researchers.

DAPA-EM. The first detective amateur press association. Publishes a bimonthly mailing consisting of 35 fanzines. No subscriptions available and mailings are sent only to

contributors. For information write: Art Scott, 2833 Kennedy St., Livermore, Calif. 94550.

DAST. Ed./pub. Iwan Hedman. Flodins Vag 5, 8-15200 Strangvas, Sweden. A well-edited magazine with an international readership and list of contributors. Some material in English.

*The Dime Novel Round-Up*. 4 issues/\$5. Ed./pub. Edward T. Leblanc, 87 School Street, Fall River, Mass. 02720.

*The Dossier: The Official Journal of the International Spy Society*. Quarterly. \$12/year. Material of interest to readers of spy fiction. Film, fiction, bibliographies, interviews, reviews.

*Enigmatika*. Editor: Jacques Baudou, 4 rue de l'Avenir, Les Mesneux, 91500 Rilly-la-Montagne, France. Published two or three times a year. An essential publication for anyone interested in French mystery writers and in the international dimensions of the field. Essays, reviews, letters, critical notes, indexes to magazines and series publications.

*Le Fulmar: Mystere et Fantastique*. Published irregularly. For copies of the first issue and information on subscriptions write: François Ducloux, 6 bis, rue Jules Parent, 92500 Reuil-Malmaison, France. An offset fanzine. Issues on Doc Savage, the Yellow Peril and Psychic Detectives are scheduled.

*Hard-Boiled Dicks*. Editor: Roger Martin, 1, route d'Halanzy, Piedmont, 54350 Mont-Saint-Martin, France. One-author issues with bibliographical, critical and biographical dossiers.

*Huntress*. Publisher: Richard Davis. P.O. Box 1327, Harlan, Ky. 40831. Published irregularly. For fans of the Macnee/Rigg *The Avengers* TV series.

*JDM Bibliophile*. Edited by Ed. Hirschberg, Dept. of English, Univ. of South Florida, Tampa, Fla. 33630. Published semi-annually; \$3 for 2 issues. The John D. MacDonald fanzine; a chatty newsletter.

McAleer, John. "Rex Stout Newsletter." A news column of interest to readers of Rex Stout appearing regularly in *TAD*.

*The Maltese Falcon Flyer*. Monthly newsletter of the Tokyo Maltese Falcon Society. Foreign subscriptions: \$30 state, \$40 airmail. Editorial address: c/o Jiro Kimura, 2-10-11 Shimo-Ochiai, No. A202 Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan. Book reviews, panel discussion, letters. Most of the material is in Japanese. Photos and illustrations.

*Mystere Magazine*. Published in conjunction with EQMM, this French magazine was a short-lived attempt to publish a magazine of general interest with short stories, information about new and forthcoming books, interviews, film notes, announcements of jury prizes. 2 issues published.

*Mystery*. Bimonthly. \$10/6 issues. P.O. Box 26251, Los Angeles, Calif. 90026. Books, films, TV, personalities, fiction.

*The Mystery & Adventure Series*. Rev. Ed./pub. Fred Woodworth, P.O. Box 3488, Tucson, Ariz. 85722. Published quarterly. \$5/year. A handsome fanzine devoted to juvenile series.

*The Mystery Fancier*. Ed./pub. Guy M. Townsend, 2444 Shawnee Drive, No. 4, Madison, Ind. 47250. Bimonthly. \$12/6 issues. Essays, reviews and letters.

Mystery Writers of America. For information about membership, write MWA, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10001. Publishes a monthly newsletter, *The Third Degree*.

*The Not So Private Eye*. Ed./pub. Andy Jaysnovitch, 6 Dana Estates, Parlin, N.J. 08859. The P.E. in fiction, film and TV. No issues published in 1981 but resumed publication in 1982. 4 issues for \$8.

*Nuits Noires*. SARL Editions, Waterloo, 38

films and books and other features. With issue 12 the magazine ended its first series and, in 1982, began publishing a digested quarterly which has increased coverage of current market activities.

*The Rohmer Review*. Ed./pub. Robert E. Briney, 4 Forest Ave., Salem, Mass. 01970. The most elegant of the limited-circulation magazines. Articles, letters and book notes.

*The Science-Fiction Collector*. Ceased publication in 1981.

*The Thornydyke File*. Ed./pub. John McAleer. Published twice yearly. 2 issues/\$5. Write to Mr. McAleer at Mount Independence, 121 Folken Road, Lexington, Mass. 02173. Material on Freeman Wills Croft.



rue Victor Hugo, 92600 Asnières, France. Issue 1 appeared in November 1981. A newsprint publication with articles on fiction, films and comic strips. Appears to have ceased publication after the first issue.

*Paperback Quarterly*. Ed./pub. Charlotte Laughlin and Billy C. Lee, 1710 Vincent, Brownwood, Texas 76801. Quarterly, \$10/year. A digest "journal of mass-market paperback history." Interviews, articles on writers, artists, series. Reviews and letters.

*The Poisoned Pen*. Ed./pub. Jeffrey Meyerson, 50 First Place, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11231. Bimonthly. \$10/6 issues. Articles, checklists, reviews and letters. The magazine will shift to a quarterly schedule in 1982.

*Polar*. Published monthly at 37, rue Montholon, 75009 Paris. Each issue has a dossier on a mystery writer and reviews of

The Wolfe Pack. P.O. Box 822, Ansonia Station, New York, N.Y. 10023. The Nero Wolfe society. Current status of society and its review, *The Gazette*, unknown.

*Yellowback Library*. Ed./pub. Gil O'Gara, 2019 S.E. 8th Street, Des Moines, Iowa 50315. Bimonthly. \$8/year. For the "collector and enthusiast of juvenile series, dime novels, and related literature." Articles, checklists, reviews, letters, advertisements. Illustrated.

#### IV. Authors

ALBERT, MARVIN H.

Martin, Roger. "Marvin H. Albert." *Hard-Boiled Dicks I*. Photo and illustrations. All material in French. A biography, interview, bibliography, filmography and other material.

ALLEN, GRANT

Dueren, Fred. "Rogues for the New Century." *TMF* 5:3:11-14. A comparison of Grant Allen's *An African Millionaire* (1897) and George Randolph Chester's *Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford* (1908), pointing out similarities and differences between these two novels with "a common interest in swindlers and businessmen."

AMBLER, ERIC

Mitgang, Herbert. "The Thrilling Eric Ambler." *NYTBR* 13 Sept 81:3, 22, 24. Photo. Interview in which Ambler talks about his writing.

AVALLONE, MICHAEL

Anon. "Michael Avallone." *Amis du crime 8* (Feb 1981). 39 pp. Wraps. A bibliography of American and French editions of Avallone's books, a listing of his short stories and critical material which includes an interview first published in *The Not So Private Eye 8*, Francis M. Nevins's "Ed Noon et le ciel 'aidera'" ("Murder at Noon"), and an article by Avallone from *Writer's Yearbook 1977*. Jean Pierre Deloux in "Flash Sur Michael Avallone" discusses his career.

BAILEY, H. C.

Sarjeant, William Antony S. "In Defense of Mr. Fortune." *TAD* 14:302-12. A portrait of the H. C. Bailey character.

BAKER, SAMM SINCLAIR

Lachman, Marvin. "Dept. of Unknown Mystery Writers 15: Samm Sinclair Baker." *TPP* 4:1:17-18. Profile of the author of *One Touch of Blood* (Graphic, 1955) and *Murder, Very Dry* (Graphic, 1956), who came to prominence as the author of self-help books.

BALL, JOHN

Ball, John. "The Flashback Alternative." *Writer* 94:12-14 (Aug 81). Alternatives which do not interrupt story continuity.

BANKIER, WILLIAM

Anon. "Interview: William Bankier." *EQMM* 7 Oct 81:92-93; 4 Nov 81:99-100.

BARNES, DALLAS

Bishop, Paul. "The Enigma of the Policeman/Writer: A Look at the Police 'Insider Novels'." *Mystery* 2:1:34-40. Includes an interview with writer Barnes.

BARTON, BILLY

Barton, Billy. "Interview with Myself." *TMF* 5:4:13-17. Barton, in the dual role of interviewer and interviewee, discusses his recently-published mystery novel *Past Murder Imperfect* (Billbar Books), mystery fiction and writers, and his work-in-progress.

BELLEM, ROBERT LESLIE

Bellem, Robert Leslie. "Break It Up." *Cues* 2:2:50-51. Advice on how to write for the pulps. Extracted from an article first published in *Writer's Digest* 24 (July 1944) 17-19.

Proznini, Bill. "Ante-Bellum Days; or, 'My Roscoe Sneeze Ka-Cherr!'" *Cues* 2:2: 41-48. A survey of the outrageous shenanigans of Bellem's Hollywood private eye,

Dan Turner. With a partial checklist of stories in which Turner appeared.

BERGER, THOMAS

Madden, David. "Thomas Berger's Comic-Absurd Vision in *Who Is Teddy Villanova?*" TAD 14:37-43. Illus. Ways in which Berger uses conventions of the hard-boiled tradition in his 1977 parody.

BLOCH, ROBERT

Barson, Michael. "Interview with Robert Bloch." PQ 4:1:18-24. Bloch's pb publications with a checklist of pb originals.

BLOCK, LAWRENCE

Block, Lawrence. "Fiction." A monthly column on the writing of fiction in *Writer's Digest*. *Passim* for comments on his own fiction and that of other mystery writers.

—. "Little Boy on a Writer's Income." *Writer's Digest* 61:24-29 (Oct 81). Illus. A comic look at the vagaries of a writer's income.

—. *Telling Lies for Fun and Profit*. New York: Arbor House, 1981. A writer's manual. Review: Booklist 78:365 (1 Nov 81).

BOUCHER, ANTHONY

Nevins, Francis M., Jr. "Anthony Boucher." *Mystery* 3:2:18-19, 63. A survey of Boucher's career with a bibliography of his novels and short stories. Photo.

"BOX, EDGAR" / GORE VIDAL

Bargainnier, Earl F. "The Mysteries of Edgar Box (aka Gore Vidal)." *Clues* 2:1:45-52. Vidal's three mysteries, written under the

pseudonym of Edgar Box, considered as mysteries and as a part of Vidal's total work. Bargainnier studies most closely elements of social satire in the novels.

BROWN, FREDRIC

Baird, Newton. *A Key to Fredric Brown's Wonderland: A Study and an Annotated Bibliographical Checklist*. Talisman Literary Research, Inc., Box 455, Georgetown, Calif. 95634. \$15 hb, \$8.95 wraps. Review: WLB Feb 82:454.

McMillan, Dennis. "The Uncollected Fiction of Fredric Brown." CP? 3:1:15-19. A list of stories not anthologized or expanded into novels. In CP? 3:2:25-27, there is a list of republished and/or expanded material.

BURKETT, W. R.

Wilson, David. "A Literary Exile Comes Home." *Mystery* 3:2:26-29. Photos and illus. An interview.

BURNS, REX

Burns, Rex. "Plot and Life in the Police Procedural." *Writer* 94:11-14 (March 81). Distinctions between the whodunit and the how-to-prove-it and how Burns researches his procedurals.

CAIN, JAMES M.

Duka, John. "Hollywood's Long-Running Romance with James M. Cain." NYTAL 5 April 81:15. New interest in Hollywood filming Cain's works.

Edelman, Rob. "Director Series: Bob Rafelson. *The Postman Always Rings Twice*." FIR May 81:275-77. Photo. Interview with director of new film version of Cain novel.

Hoopes, Roy M. "Raising Cain." *West Coast Review of Books* Oct 81. Not seen.

Lavalley, Albert J., ed. *Mildred Pierce*. Madison: Univ. of Wisconsin Press, 1981. 259 pp. Illus. Script of Cain novel by Ronald MacDougall with introduction on the film's production by Lavalley.

Maslin, Janet. "The Story Is the Same but Hollywood Has Changed." NYTAL 26 April 81:D15. On the new film of Cain's *Postman*.

CARR, GLYN

Sarjeant, William A. S. "Detection Among the Mountains: The Writings of Glyn Carr." TPP 4:5/6:3-14. On the life and works of British writer Frank Shellwell Styles, author of 15 mysteries 1951-69.

CARR, JOHN DICKSON

Carr, John Dickson. "John Dickson Carr's Solution to *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*." TAD 14:4:291-94. Photo and 2 illustrations. Solution to Dickens's unfinished novel as communicated in a letter to writer Lillian de la Torre.

Greene, Douglas G. "Adolph Hitler and John Dickson Carr's Least-Known Locked Room." TAD 14:4:295-96. Carr as a writer of wartime scripts for the BBC.

Kingman, James. "John Dickson Carr and the Aura of Genius." TAD 14:2:166-67. A discussion of the "impossible gimmick" in Carr's *The Crooked Hinge*.

Miller, Edmund. "Stanislaw Lem and John Dickson Carr: Critics of the Scientific World-View." TAD 14:4:341-43. A brief discussion linking the two very different writers on the basis of their common dissatisfaction with scientific rationalism.

CHAMBERLAIN, ANNE

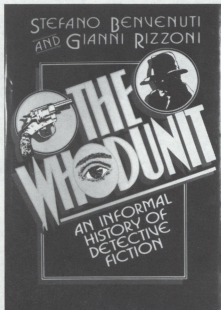
Chamberlain, Anne. "The Listening Ear." *Writer* 94 (Apr 81) 13-16, 45. Cultivating an ear for dialogue.

CHANDLER, RAYMOND

Bonitzer, Pasca. "Film and the Labyrinth." *Wide Angle* 4:4:56-64. Robert Montgomery's *Lady in the Lake* and questions about the place of suspense in film. Whodunits, according to Bonitzer, do not usually translate well visually.

Lachtman, Howard. "The Legendary Sleuths of Pre-WW II Los Angeles." *San Francisco Chronicle Review* 1 Feb 81:10-11. On Chandler and E. S. Gardner. (Kathi Maio) MacDermott, K. A. "Ideology and Narrative Stereotyping: The Case of Raymond Chandler." *Clues* 2:1:77-90. Stylistic stereotyping of characters in Chandler's work and the gradual replacement of the ideological concerns characteristic of the Depression years by those characteristic of the Cold War. MacDermott examines most closely Chandler's *The Little Sister* to support his thesis.

MacShane, Frank, ed. *Selected Letters of Raymond Chandler*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1981. 501 pp. Index. In spite of MacShane's statement in his introduction that "wherever possible, I have produced the entire letter," only about one-third of the letters are printed without





significant cuts. Selections in *Raymond Chandler Speaking* (Houghton Mifflin, 1962) included passages from 28 letters cut by MacShane, and these cuts are damaging both to the context of certain letters and in the distorted view they give of Chandler's comments on mystery fiction and writers. When Chandler says something favorable about mysteries or mystery writers, MacShane usually cuts it. When Chandler says something unfavorable, the comment is not edited. Annotations which might have been helpful are not supplied, while many of those which are prove to be irrelevant or obvious. What survives MacShane's cutting is entertaining and enlightening, but it is unfortunate that editorial decisions were made which seriously compromise Chandler's opinions and his complex views. (Brian Ken Knight) *New Yorker* 8 March 82:138, 140-41; NYTR 15 Nov 81:7, 45-46.

Mawer, Randall R. "Raymond Chandler's Self-Parody." TAD 14:4:355-59. Photo. Chandler's skillful use of language for comic effect. Mawer takes issue with Frank MacShane's analysis of burlesque elements in Chandler.

Spir, Jerry. *Raymond Chandler*. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1981. 166 pp. Bibliography and index. A study of Chandler's fiction. Reviews: TLS 5 June 81:619-20; *Choice* Sept 81:83.

Symons, Julian. "Raymond Chandler: An Aesthete Discovers the Pulp." In *Symons's Critical Observations* (Ticknor & Fields, 1981), 156-65. Originally published in Miriam Gross, ed., *The World of Raymond Chandler* (A & W Publishers, 1977), 19-30. Chandler's writing and these characteristics: romantic aestheticism, loneliness and its Anglo-American character. Also, the pulp stories and how Chandler reworked them. Thomson, David. "At the Acme Bookshop." *Sight & Sound* Spring 81:123-25. Stills. A close reading of the bookshop scene in *The Big Sleep*. The bookshop as "a seemingly infinite realization of male fantasies."

CHESTER, GEORGE RANDOLPH  
See Dueren entry under IV, Allen.

CHEYNEY, PETER

Anon. "Peter Cheyney. *Amis du crime* 9 (March 1981), 38 pp. Illus. A bibliography, filmography and a TV-filmography. The bibliography lists American, English and French editions. Critical material by François Guédir on the films, a tribute by J. P. Schweig, and a comparison of French translations showing differences in handling of stylistic elements.

CHRISTIE, AGATHA

Adams, Tom. *Agatha Christie: The Art of Her Crimes*. With a commentary by Julian Symons and an introduction by John Fowles. New York: Everest House, 1981. 144 pp. A portfolio of cover illustrations painted by artist Tom Adams for paperback editions of Christie works. Commentaries by Symons and Adams accompany each of the illustrations.

DePaolo, Rosemary. "From Howdouts to

Whodunits: Jane Austen to Agatha Christie." *Clues* 2:2:8-14. Realistic detail and the closed society in Austen and Christie.

Gregg, Hubert. *Agatha Christie and All That Mousetraps*. London: William Kimber, 1981. 170 pp. By the director of five of Christie's plays. Review: TLS 27 Feb 81:218.

Hall, Richard Paul. "Dame Agatha Christie." CP? 3:1:26-28. A checklist of paperback titles.

Patterson, Sylvia. "Agatha Christie's Alter Ego: Ariadne Oliver." TAD 14:3:222-27. A study of Christie's fictional detective-story writer, which Ms. Patterson sees as a "self-parody, self-portrait."

Rivière, François. *Agatha Christie, duchesse de la mort* (Agatha Christie, Duchess of Death). Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1981. 187 pp. An attempt by a novelist/critic to unravel some of the mysteries of Christie's life and work. Photos. With a bibliography, filmography and a note on the translation of Christie's novels into French. Reviews: *Nouvelles littéraires* 2-9 April 81:3; TLS 5 June 81:620.

Sampson, Robert. "The Solving Sixth." TMF 5:5:3-6. The birth of Miss Marple in a short story series *The Thirteen Problems* (American title: *The Tuesday Club Murders*).

Symons, Julian. "Agatha and Agatha." In *Symons's Critical Observations* (Ticknor & Fields, 1981), 139-47. First published in NYRB 21 Dec 78:39. Short biography of Agatha Christie and an analysis of her fictional world as a "fairytale." Ostensibly a review of four books: Kathleen Tynan, *Agatha*; and *Ten Little Indians, Destination and The Mousetraps and Other Plays*, all by Christie.

COX, ANTHONY BERKELEY / "FRANCIS ILES"  
Moy, Paul R. "A Bibliography of the Works of Anthony Berkeley Cox (Francis Iles)." TAD 14:3:236-38. A list of Cox's writings under his own name and his two pseudonyms Anthony Berkeley and Francis Iles. Corrections by Moy in letter TAD 14:4:381.

CRISPIN, EDMUND

Sarjeant, William A. S. "Obsèques About Oxford: The Investigations and Eccentricities of Gervase Fen." TAD 14:3:196-209. Photo and illus. A profile of Edmund Crispin's Oxford don detective.

CROSS, AMANDA

Cross, Amanda. "The Manners of the Mystery." *Washington Post Book World* 19 July 81:5. Cross's preferences in mystery novelists and novels.

DALY, CARROLL JOHN

Barson, Michael S. "There's No Sex in Crime: The Two-Fisted Homilies of Race Williams." *Clues* 2:2:103-12. The major shortcomings and modest successes of Carroll John Daly as a writer of pulp fiction.

Daly, Carroll John. "The Ambulating Lady." *Clues* 2:2:113-15. Excerpts from an article of Daly's on writing for the pulps, first

published in *Writer's Digest* 27 (April 44) 19-24. Also includes a short letter from Daly published in *Black Mask* 7:9:128.

DANIELS, NORMAN

Barson, Michael S. "An Interview with Norman Daniels." PQ 4:3:5-14. Illus. With a preface on "Norman Daniels—The Writer as Assemblage" and a chronological list of pb originals. A pulp writer who made the transition to pb originals.

DEIGHTON, LEN

McDowell, Edwin. "Len Deighton." NYTR 21 June 81:34. Photo. Interview.

DENT, LESTER

Murray, Will. "Lester Dent: The Last of the Joe Shaw's *Black Mask* Boys." *Clues* 2:2:128-35. A discussion of the publication of two Dent stories in *Black Mask* and of Dent's relationship with editor Joseph T. Shaw.

DICKENS, CHARLES

(See also IV, Carr; Carr)

Cox, Arthur J. "Dickens' Last Book: More Mysteries Than One." TAD 14:31-36. A discussion of Dickens's debt to Wilkie Collins in *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

ENDREBE, MAURICE BERNARD

Baudou, Jacques, ed. "Maurice Bernard Endrebe." *Enigmatica* 19 (June 81). An interview with the Belgian writer, a bibliography of his writings, and a selection of his book reviews and essays. Photos.

FAST, HOWARD

McDowell, Edwin. "Howard Fast." NYTR 22 Nov 81:50. Brief profile of Fast, giving some biographical data and information on his latest historical novel, *The Legacy* (1981). Although the article reveals such things as Fast's enthusiasm for Zen, which is shared by his most famous detective, Masao Masuto, and reveals that he was blacklisted and sent to jail for being a Communist in the 1950s, it tells nothing about his activities as a mystery writer under the pseudonym E. V. Cunningham. (Greg Goode)

FERNALD, CHESTER BAILEY

Bleiler, Everett F. "A Chinese Detective in San Francisco." TMF 5:3:2-4. Bleiler analyzes a dialect story by Fernald ("Chan Tow the Highrob") appearing in *The Cat and the Cherub and Other Stories* (Century, 1896) and finds in it a traditional Chinese detective story.

FISH, ROBERT

Anon. "Robert Fish: In Memoriam 1912-1981." TAD 14:2:118-21. Photo. Tributes by friends of the writer.

FITZSIMMONS, CORTLAND

Breen, Jon L. "Cortland Fitzsimmons and the Sports Mystery." TAD 14:2:129-32. A review of mystery writer Fitzsimmons's sports and non-sports fiction.

FLEMING, IAN

Lee, Billy C. "Ian Fleming: Alias James Bond." PQ 4:1:41-47. Illus. Background on Fleming and his series and information on the pb publishing history of the Bond novels.

FOLLETT, KEN  
Handler, David. "A New Breed of Authors." *Pittsburgh Press Sunday Roto* 8 Jan 81: 14-15. Photo. An interview with Ken Follett.

FOX, GARDNER F.  
Murray, Edwin L. "The Versatile Gardner F. Fox." CP? 5:5-11. Illus. A list of titles in pb by Fox and his various pseudonyms.

DRESSER, DAVID  
McCloy, Helen. "The Return of Michael Shayne." TAD 14:4:344-45. Illus. The importance of reader identification with fictional characters.

FRANCIS, DICK  
Blouven, Michael. "The Stretch Drive of Dick Francis." *Boston Globe* 7 April 81. Interview.

Daniels, Mary. "Dick Francis: The Will To Win." *Practical Horseman* 44:22:47-48. Photo. Interview with ex-jockey Francis about his racing career.

McDowell, Edwin. "Teamwork." NYTBR 12 April 81:47. Photo. Brief report on an interview with Dick Francis.

Smith, Jeff and "Freff." "The Francis Plot Key." TTP 4:5:6:19-23. Revision of an article first published in *Khatru* 6 (April 1977) and reprinted in revised form in *Red Herring* 30 (May 81). Plot summaries of the Francis novels.

GARDNER, ERLE STANLEY  
See IV, Chandler, Lachman.

GARDNER, JOHN  
Anon. "John Gardner." *The Dossier* 1:1: 11-13. Photo and illus. Interview with writer Gardner on the subject of Ian Fleming and the Bond series.

Hanscom, Leslie. "James Bond's Back in Business." *Boston Globe* 21 May 81:49-50. Photos. Interview with Gardner on the subject of the revival of Fleming's character. (R. E. Briney)

Larkin, Philip. "The Batman from Blades." TLS 5 June 81:625. Review-essay on Gardner's new Bond confection *License Renewed*.

McDowell, Edwin. "John Gardner." NYTBR 7 June 81:30. Photo. Interview.

GILBERT, MICHAEL  
Anon. "Interview Michael Gilbert." EQMM 12 Aug 81:109-10; 9 Sept 81:108-9.

GOES, JOE  
Jendresen, Erik. "Joe Goes Clears Up Some Mysteries." *Mystery* 3:2:42-44. An interview in which Goes talks about writing and writers.

GREENE, GRAHAM  
Cassis, A. F. *Graham Greene: An Annotated Bibliography of Criticism*. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1981. Author Bibliographies No. 55. Index.

VAN GULIK, ROBERT  
Fitzpatrick, Al (Letter to the Editor). TMN 5:4:13. Contains a short chronology of the Judge Dee stories which is sometimes spotty, sometimes listing places of the stories without dates. Although it does not

include *Dee Goong An, Poets and Murder*, or *Judge Dee at Work*, it does include *Necklace and Calabash* which van Gulik's own chronology lacks. Fitzpatrick's letter also contains an interesting note about the two distinct series of Judge Dee's stories. (Greg Goode)

HAMMETT, DASHELL  
Bentley, Christopher. "Murder by Client: A Reworked Theme in Dashiell Hammett." TAD 14:1:78-79. Hammett's use of material from earlier stories in *The Maltese Falcon*.

Lamb, Margaret. "Expressionism and American Popular Literature: Hammett as a Continental Op-Eye." *Clues* 2:1:26-34. Not a study of influences of European Expressionism on Hammett but of similarities between what Hammett saw in American cities and what "others saw in a disintegrating Europe." A well-supported and persuasive argument.

Layman, Richard. *Shadow Man: The Life of Dashiell Hammett*. New York: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich, 1981. 285 pp. Illus. Index. An appendix contains a bibliography of his writings and the transcript of Hammett's U.S. District Court Testimony, July 9, 1951. Reviews: NYTBR 23 Aug 81:9, 20; TLS 5 June 81:619-20; *Time* 20 July 81:73; *Washington Post Book World* 19 July 81:4.

Lyles, William L. "Dashiell Hammett in the Dell Mapbacks." PQ 4:2:15-23. Illus. A discussion of the Hammett stories published in Dell Mapbacks with print runs, identification of artists and discussion of artwork.

Powell, Robert S. "Including Murder: An Unpublished Hammett Collection." *Clues* 2:2:135-42. A report on papers in the Hammett Manuscript Collection at the University of Texas which appear to be a draft for a collection of Continental Op stories.

Stone, Judy. "Hammett: The Writer as Private Eye." *San Francisco Examiner & Chronicle Datebook* 2 March 80:17. Photo. An interview with members of the Hammett film team. (Kathi Maio)

Symons, Julian. "Dashiell Hammett: A Writer and His Time (1979)." In Symons's *Critical Observations* (Ticknor & Fields, 1981), 166-71. Originally published as "Dashiell Hammett: The Onlie Begetter" in H. R. F. Keating, ed., *Crime Writers* (London: BBC, 1978), 80-93. Hammett as the "onlie begetter" of the American crime story. Remarks on his style, his short stories, and his novels, with *The Glass Key* seen as his masterpiece.

HARRINGTON, JOYCE  
Anon. "Interview: Joyce Harrington." EQMM 22 April 81:94-96.

HIGHSMITH, PATRICIA  
Cooper-Clark, Diana. "An Interview with Patricia Highsmith." TAD 14:4:313-20. Photo and illus. The writer on crime, the criminal, and her fiction.

Highsmith, Patricia. *Identifying and Plotting Suspense Fiction*. Revised edition. Boston:

The Writer, 1981. Review: WLB Oct 81:138.

HILLERMAN, TONY  
Bakerman, Jane S. "Hunter and Hunted: Comparison and Contrast in Tony Hillerman's *People of Darkness*." TMF 5:1:3-10. In this first novel featuring Navajo tribal policeman Jim Chee, Bakerman compares Chee with his series regular Joe Leaphorn and contrasts him with his killer-for-hire antagonist Colton Wolf.

— "Joe Leaphorn and the Navajo Way: Tony Hillerman's Detective Fiction." *Clues* 2:1:9-16. An analysis of Hillerman's four mystery novels (as of 1978) with their "authorial command" of the Navajo world and Hillerman's "skillful development of his protagonist."

Taylor, Bruce. "Interview with Tony Hillerman." TAD 14:1:93-95. Photo and illus. Hillerman talks about his fiction, working habits, and comments briefly on other writers. Includes a checklist of his principal publications.

HOWARD, CLARK  
Anon. "Interview: Clark Howard (1)." EQMM 2 Dec 81:102-3.

JAMES, P. D.  
Anon. "An Interview with P. D. James." TLS 5 June 81:641-42.

Cleary, Maryell. "Face-to-Face with P. D. James." TTP 4:1:8. A report on a talk given by James in Fort Myers, Florida, at the first annual writers' conference sponsored by Edison Community College.

James, P. D. Foreword to James Brabazon, *Dorothy L. Sayers: A Biography* (New York: Scribner's, 1981), xiii-xvi. A tribute to Sayers as a writer of detective fiction.

Pym, John. "An Unsuitable Job for a Woman." *Sight & Sound* Winter 81:2: 38-39. Still. An interview with Chris Petit, director of the film adaptation of the James novel.

Siebenheller, Norma. P. D. James. New York: Ungar, 1981. Recognition Series. 154 pp. Bibliography and index. Reviews: *Choice* March 82:921; LJ 1 Dec 81:2317.

KEATING, H. R. F.  
Clark, Meera T. "Detective Fiction and Social Realism: H. R. F. Keating's India." *Clues* 2:1:1-8. Indian society seen through the eyes of an insider (Inspector Ghote) in *Inspector Ghote Breaks an Egg* (1971).

KEELER, HARRY STEPHEN  
Bates, David. "Harry Stephen Keeler." TTP 4:2:3-6. A biography and a "partial listing of the novels."

KEENE, DAY  
Schleret, J.-J., et al. "Day Keene." *Amis du crime* 10 (Oct 81). 51 pp. An annotated bibliography of his works, a filmography and a listing of works adapted for television; an interview with Keene's son, Al James; and two critical essays. Profusely illustrated.

KEYES, EDWARD  
Brown, Richard H. "PW Interviews: Edward Keyes." PW 5 June 81:6. Photo. Edgar-winning author for *The Michigan Murders*

(nonfiction, 1976), now author of *Double Dare*, a fictional crime novel.

KNEBEL, FLETCHER

Dahlin, Robert. "PW Interviews: Fletcher Knebel." PW 14 Aug 81:6-7. Knebel talks about his new novel (*Crossing in Berlin*) and politics and his fiction.

KNOX, RONALD A.

Reynolds, William. "The Detective Novels of Ronald A. Knox." TAD 14:3:275-83. A survey.

LATHEN, EMMA

Revzin, Philip. "Business-World Whodunit Writers Discover That Research Pays Off." *Wall Street Journal* 6 March 81:1, 9. An interview in which Mary Jane Latsis and Martha Henissart talk about their readers, reviews, their passion for secrecy and the role of research in their work.

LEBKUN, MICHEL

Anon. "Michel Lebrun." *Polar* 19 (May 1981). An interview with the French critic and novelist, a bibliography and a filmography.

LEBLANC, MAURICE

Vareille, Jean-Claude. *Filatures: Itinéraire à travers les cycles de Lupin et de Rouletabille (Shadowings: Guide to the Lupin-Rouletabille Cycles)*. Grenoble, France: Presses universitaires de Grenoble, 1980. A study of metaphors in Leblanc and Leroux. Extensive notes with detailed bibliographical references and comments. No index.

LACARRÉ, JOHN

Dawson, Harry D. "The Fathers and Sons of John Le Carré." TMF 5:3:15-17. Dawson points out the "commonplace motif in spy fiction of the parallel between spy/spymaster and father/son relationships" and analyzes it in Le Carré's Smiley novels.

Ericson, Carol. "Judah and Other Spies." *Christian Century* 98:318-19 (25 March 81). A comparison of the narrative of betrayal in Le Carré's *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy* with the Maundy Thursday meeting of Jesus and the twelve apostles.

King, Holly Beth. "George Smiley - The Reluctant Hero." *Clues* 2:1:70-76. Le Carré's "survivor" hero, a paradoxical character in a morally ambivalent world.

LEM, STANISLAW

See IV, Carr: Miller.

LEROUX, GASTON

(See also IV, Leblanc: Vareille)

Olivier-Martin, Yves, et al. "Gaston Leroux." *Europe* Nos. 626-27 (June-July 81). A special issue on Leroux with critical and biographical articles, a filmography by Francis Lacassin, and a chronology-narrative of his writings by Yves Olivier-Martin. Includes a scenario by Leroux for a projected silent film, *La course à l'echauffaud (The Race to the Scaffold)*.

LOVESEY, PETER

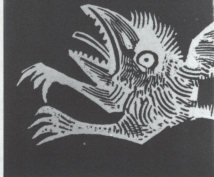
Cooter-Clark, Diana. "An Interview with Peter Lovesey." TAD 14:3:210-17. Photo and illus. A thin interview in which the interviewer is a more active participant than the writer.

## THE FANTASTIC STORIES OF CORNELL WOOLRICH

EDITED BY CHARLES G. WAUGH  
AND MARTIN H. GREENBERG

With an Introduction by Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

Illustrated by Barry N. Malting



MACDONALD, JOHN D.

Barson, Michael. "An Interview with John D. MacDonald." PQ 4:1:5-9. JDM's relations with Fawcett and comments on his pb originals. With a checklist (pp. 10, 12) of his pb originals.

Peek, George S. "Beast Imagery and Stereotypes in the Novels of John D. MacDonald." *Clues* 2:1:91-97. JDM's stereotyped characters. "The very stuff of modern America," and his use of animal imagery in the creation of his stereotypes.

Shine, Walter and Jean. *A Bibliography of the Published Works of John D. MacDonald: With Selected Biographical Materials and Critical Essays*. Gainesville, Fla.: Patrons of the Libraries, University of Florida, 1981. vii-xi + 109 pp. Illus. Index. With its exhaustive bibliography of American, British and foreign editions of MacDonald's works, information on his non-fiction writings, and a bibliographical and critical listings, this is an essential publication for any serious researcher or research library. The Shines have also been collating and issuing periodic additions, corrections and updates.

MACDONALD, ROSS

Combs, William W. "The Detective as Both Tortoise and Achilles: Archer Gets The Feel of the Case in *The Chill*." *Clues* 2:1:98-105. Archer's discovery in *The Chill* that his contradictory feelings about his cases (everything is connected/nothing is related,

he's solving the case but getting nowhere) were subjects of discourse in Greek philosophy.

Fishman, Charles. "Another Heraldic Cry: Heraldic Birds in Five Lew Archer Novels." *Clues* 2:1:106-15. Fisher categorizes MacDonald's use of bird imagery as sentinals, predators, scavengers and dead birds.

MALET, LÉO

Goupil, Jacky. "Léo Malet." *Nuits Noires* 1:9. Photo. A short interview with the creator of detective Nestor Burma.

MALING, ARTHUR

Maling, Arthur. "Right Idea." *Writer* 94 (April 81) 9-12. Observations on ideas that come to life for the writer with Maling's suspense thriller *From Thunder Bay* (Harper and Row, 1981) cited as an example.

MARSH, NGAO

Ball, John. "A Visit with Dame Ngaio Marsh." *Mystery* 31:23-25. Photo. John Ball and Nan Hamilton visit Dame Ngaio and chat briefly.

Marsh, Ngaio. *Black Beach and Honey Dew: An Autobiography*. Rev. edition. London: Collins, 1981. Illus.

MAUGHAM, W. SOMERSET

Shropshire, F. "W. Somerset Maugham as a Mystery Writer." TAD 14:2:190-91. A discussion of the merits of *Ashendon* (1928).

"McRAIN, ED" / EVAN HUNTER

Dahlin, Robert. "PW Interviews: Evan Hunter." PW 3 April 81:6-7. Photo.

Harlequin, David. "Ed McBain." *Mystery* 2:1:14-17+. Interview.

McDONALD, GREGORY

Dahlin, Robert. "PW Interviews Gregory McDonald." *PW* 18 Dec 81:14-16. Photo. McDonald reflects on his writing career.

MELVILLE, HERMAN

Fulcher, James. "Melville's 'Benito Cereno'—An American Mystery." *Clues* 2:1:116-22. Melville's novella as a "story of crime and detection."

MICHEL, SCOTT

McCahery, Jim. "Scott Michel: An Interview." *TPP* 4:4:3-8. Michel talks about his life and writing. With a bibliography.

NEBEL, FREDERICK JOHN

Lewis, Dave. "The Backbone of *Black Mask*." *Clues* 2:2:127. An overview of Nebel's series characters for *Black Mask* and a checklist.

NOLAN, WILLIAM F.

Nolan, William F. "A Walk in the Pulgwoods: Random Recollections." *Clues* 2:2:38-40. A tribute to the pulp writers and a description of writer Nolan's debt to them.

O'DONNELL, LILLIAN

Maida, Patricia. "Interview with Lillian O'Donnell." *TAD* 14:2:164-66. Illus. Includes a list of her novels.

ORCZY, BARONNESS

Dueren, Fred. "Was the Old Man in the Corner an Armchair Detective?" *TAD* 14:3:232-33. Dueren, on the basis of a close reading of the Orczy stories, doubts that he was.

PARKER, ROBERT B.

Karagianis, Maria. "The Parker Code." *Boston Globe Magazine* 12 April 81:14-15+. Feature article with the cover title "Sleuth Slayer/The Mysteries of Robert B. Parker." (Kathi Maio)

Parker, Robert B. "Creating a Series Character." *Writer* 94:15-17 (Jan 81). General remarks on writing with a description of Parker's technique as he proceeds from a 2-page treatment to a chapter outline to the writing of a book.

PENDLETON, DON

Derkacy, David. "Date with the Executioner." *Writer's Digest* 61:18-19 (March 81). Photo. Don Pendleton talks about his writing.

PENTECOST, HUGH / "JUDSON PHILIPS"

Drew, Bernard A. "Phillips and Pentecost, Inc." *Writer's Digest* 61:14-15 (May 81). Photo. An interview.

Anon. "Interview: Hugh Pentecost." *EQMM* 25 Jan 81:89-90; 25 March 81:102-3.

PETIEVICH, GERALD

Petievich, Gerald. "It's the Police Not the Procedure." *Writer* 94:13-14, 45 (Sept 81). Characterization in the procedural.

POE, EDGAR ALLAN

Fisher, Benjamin Franklin IV. "Fugitive Poet References: A Bibliography." *Poe Studies* 14:2:25-30. An annual listing of references in which Poe is not the primary subject but where the author is discussed "with a larger

perspective or with a special angle of vision." The entries are annotated.

Frank, Frederick S. "Polarized Gothic: An Annotated Bibliography of Poe's *Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*." *Bulletin of Bibliography* 38:117-27.

PRONZINI, BILL

Deloux, Jean-Pierre, et al. "Dossier Bill Pronzini." *Polar* 20 (July 81). An essay on his work by Deloux, an interview, a bibliography compiled by Jacques Baudou, and an unpublished story.

Pronzini, Bill. "But That's Impossible." *Writer* 94:11-15 (Nov 81). Research tools for the writer of locked-room mysteries. Pronzini comments on two of his stories.

RAWSON, CLAYTON

Erisman, Fred. "Clayton Rawson and the Flexible Formula." *TAD* 14:2:173-75. The Merline novels as conscious analyses of the formulas of the traditional detective story.

"RAY, JEAN" / RAYMOND JEAN MARIE DE KREMER

Ducos, François. "Les Contes du Whiskey de Jean Ray." *Le Fulmar* 1:63-67. Illus. Essay on stories by Ray "owing much to Dickens, Hodgson and Conan Doyle," first published in 1925.

Truchaud, François and Jacques Van Herp. "Jean Ray." *Cahiers de l'Herne* 38. An elaborate dossier on the Belgian writer who continued in French the adventures of the "American Sherlock Holmes" Harry Dickson (originally published in German) in over 100 stories. The Harry Dickson saga is only a part of his enormous output, and the articles on the life and work, and the extensive bibliography, chronicle the labyrinthian career of this intriguing mythologist.

RENDELL, RUTH

Bakerman, Jane S. "Humor, Horror and Intellect: Giles Mont of Ruth Rendell's *A Judgement in Stone*." *TMF* 5:4:5-10. A character study relating characterization and plot.

— "One in Two: Some Personality Studies by Ruth Rendell." *TMF* 5:6:21-28. A discussion of pairs of similar and contrasting characters in two non-series novels, *In Sickness and in Health* and *A Demon in My View*.

Cooper-Clark, Diana. "Interview with Ruth Rendell." *TAD* 14:2:108-17. Photo and illus. Her life, work and comments on other writers.

RITCHIE, JACK

Anon. "Interview: Jack Ritchie." *EQMM* 17 June 81:87-89; 15 July 81:97-98.

ROHMER, SAX

Van Ash, Cay. "Sax Rohmer in the 1920's: Notes on Chronology." *Rohmer Review* 18:21-24. Additional information on Rohmer's literary activities in the 1920s, not included in *Master of Villainy* (1972).

Avallone, Michael and Frank Hamilton. "Fu Manchu Revisited." *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine* Dec. 81:109-10. Illus by Frank Hamilton. Fu Manchu as the blueprint of Oriental mastermind-villains.

Biggers, Julian L. "A Walking Tour of Sax Rohmer's London." *Rohmer Review* 18: 13-15.

Hall, Richard Paul. "The Papyrocunabula of Sax Rohmer." *CPY* 3:4:15-16. Sax Rohmer tells in pb.

Herzog, Evelyn A. "On Finding Petrie's Correct Name." *Rohmer Review* 18:25-28, 24. Dexter identified as Flinders Petrie's first name.

Lacassin, Francis. Bibliography. In Rohmer, *La malédiction des mille baisers* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1981). Not seen.

ROSAMUND, BARBETTE

Lachman, Marvin. "Department of Unknown Mystery Writers 16: Babette Rosamund." *TPP* 4:2:19-20. See also letter from Walter and Jean Shine in *TPP* 4:5:6/91-92.

RYCK, FRANCIS

Anon. "Dossier Francis Ryck." *Nuits Noires* 1:4-7. A critical overview and an interview with the popular French writer of thrillers.

SAVAGE, ERNEST

Lachman, Marvin. "Department of Unknown Mystery Writers 17: Ernest Savage." *TPP* 4:3:11-13. See also: E. Savage letter in *TPP* 4:5:6/33-34; and additions to checklist in letter (Bob Randia) *TPP* 4:5:6/83 and letter (E. Hoch) in *TPP* 4:5:6/99.

SAYERS, DOROTHY L.

(See also IV, James James)

Brabazon, James. *Dorothy L. Sayers*. New York: Scribner's, 1981. First American edition. ix-xvi+308 pp. Bibliography. Index. Foreword: P. D. James. Preface: Anthony Fleming. The first authorized biography based on papers made available by Sayers's son, Anthony Fleming, is an able if not imaginative job. With a wealth of biographical documents available to him, Brabazon provides more of an understanding for Sayers's life, but spends very little time discussing her detective stories and novels. (Kathi Maio) *Reviews*: *TLS* 5 June 81:629-30; *Choice* Oct 81:234; *NYTBR* Aug 81:9, 20.

Gaillard, Dawson. *Dorothy L. Sayers*. New York: Ungar, 1981. "Recognitions" Series. Bibliography. Index. As a literary study that examines only the detective fiction of Sayers, Gaillard's work was greatly needed — especially the early chapter on Sayers's short stories (including those about Montague Egg). Gaillard's style approaches that of a sentimental sermon at times, but the book is still an adequate critical introduction to the mysteries of Dorothy L. Sayers. *Review: Choice* Sept 81:78-79. (Kathi Maio)

Reynolds, William. "Dorothy L. Sayers' Detective Short Fiction." *TAD* 14:2:176-81. Photo and illus. An analysis of the stories in *Lord Peter* (Avon, 1972).

Youngberg, Ruth Tansie. *Dorothy L. Sayers — A Reference Guide*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1981. 159 pp. An annotated bibliography of secondary material on Sayers.

SIMENON, GEORGES

Anon. "Dossier Simenon." 813 Reims Festival



Spécial. Short essays on Simenon and a bibliography of secondary sources.

Anon. "Georges Simenon." *Cistre* (Belgian periodical). A special issue with an interview, critical articles, a filmography, and other material. Not seen but described in *Enigmatika* 19:114.

Fabre, Jean. *Enquête sur un enquêteur Maigret: Un essai de sociocritique*. Montpellier: Université Paul Valéry, 1981. A sociocritical study of Simenon's work. Not seen.

Gothot-Mersch, Claudine, et al., eds. *Live Simenon*. Paris: Fernand Nathan, 1981. Collection: Dossier Média. Five essays on Simenon's work. Not seen.

Symons, Julian. "A View of Simenon." In *Symons's Critical Observations* (Ticknor & Fields, 1981), 148-55. Essay first published in *NYRB* 12 Oct 78:347. A psychological study of Simenon's life and work and a view of some recently translated books of which the Maigrets are not, Symons claims, "particularly good."

SINCLAIR, FIONA

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 23: Fiona Sinclair." *TPP* 4:5/6:49-50.

SMITH, MARTIN CRUZ

Bannon, Barbara B. "PW Interviews: Martin Cruz Smith." *PW* 20 March 81:6-7. Photo. Smith talks about *Gorky Park* and his writing.

McDowell, Edwin. "Behind the Best Sellers: Martin Cruz Smith." *NYTBR* 3 May 81:46. Photo. Interview with writer Smith on the publication of *Gorky Park*.

SPILLANE, MICKEY

Jones, Robert F. "Mickey Spillane Chucks His Shamuses and Molls to Write for a Tougher Audience: Kids." *People* 27 July 81:52-54, 56, 59. Photos by Thomas E. England. Spillane profiled at his Carolina beach house.

STOUT, REX

Lachman, Marvin. "President Nero Wolfe." *TMF* 5:3:22-26. Ways in which Nero Wolfe appears to have identified with U.S. Presidents.

STRAHAN, KAY CLEAVER

DeMarr, Mary Jean. "Kay Cleaver Strahan: A Forgotten Detective Novelist." *Cues* 2:1:53-61. A study of the seven mysteries written between 1928 and 1936 by novelist Strahan in which Ms. DeMarr attempts to show that Strahan was an "original creator of character and plot" and still interesting for some of her experiments with the conventions.

STRIBLING, T. S.

Sampson, Robert. "Life as a Series of Abstract Analyses." *Cues* 2:2:61-76. Illus. A survey of T. S. Stribling's psychologist-criminologist, Dr. Henry Poggoli, and his career in the pulps and in EQMM. With a checklist of the stories in their original appearance and in selected anthology and book reprintings.

TREAT, LAWRENCE

Dahlin, Robert. "PW Interviews Lawrence Treat." *PW* 7 Aug 81:6-7. Photo. On his

writing career and MWA.

TRENCH, JOHN

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 16: John Trench." *TPP* 4:1:19-20. Profile of detective Martin Cotterell and author John Chevenix-Trench.

TWOHY, ROBERT

Anon. "EQMM Interviews Robert Twohy." *EQMM* 1 Jan 81:70-71; 28 Jan 81:95-96.

UHNAK, DOROTHY

McDowell, Edwin. "Dorothy Uhnak." *NYTBR* 25 Oct 81:50. Photo. Interview. Uhnak, Dorothy. "Engaging the Emotions of Your Reader." *Writer* 94:11-13 (Dec 81). Uhnak sees vulnerability as the key to the reality of her characters.

UNDERWOOD, MICHAEL

Underwood, Michael. "The Importance of Being Plausible." *Writer* 94:13-14, 24 (Oct 81). The importance of sound plot construction.

URQUHART, MACGREGOR

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 20: MacGregor Urquhart." *TPP* 4:4:19-20.

VALIN, JONATHAN

Valin, Jonathan. "The Challenge of Detective Story Conventions." *Writer* 94:19-21 (Aug 81). Detective fiction as a "pure" form.

VILLIERS, GERARD DE

Donaldson-Evans, Lance K. "The Anatomy of a Spy Novel: Gérard de Villiers and the Modern French *Roman d'espionnage*." *Cues* 2:2:28-36. De Villiers's Prince Malko von Linge, a contemporary spy hero and descendant of Jean Bruce's OSS 117, is profiled, and the structure of de Villiers's fictional world is examined.

WADE, HENRY

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profiles 21: Henry Wade." *TPP* 4:5/6:45-48.

WALLACE, EDGAR

Anon. "Dossier Edgar Wallace." *Le Fulmar* 1 (Jan-March 1981). A bibliography and a filmography. Illus. Short essays on Wallace and the fantastic and his imitators. Also an essay on films based on Wallace's fiction and on Wallace and the comic strip.

Touchant, Jean-Louis. "Edgar Wallace 1." *Amis du crime* 11 (Nov 81). 36 pp. Illus. Touchant discusses his infatuation with the work of Wallace and comments on the contents and publication history of the fiction that has been translated into French. A very personal, absorbing narrative.

WAMBAUGH, JOSEPH

Kalina, Mike. "Wambaugh Tackles Hollywood—Again." *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* 8 June 81:21. Photo. Interview with Wambaugh on the films made from his books.

Reed, J. D. "Those Blues in the Knights." *Time* 8 June 81:76-79. Essay-review of *The Glitter Dome* (1981) and an informal look at Wambaugh's novels and career. Reed compares *The Glitter Dome* to *M\*A\*S\*H* and calls it more a "tortured battle hymn" than a novel about murder. Includes an excerpt from the novel and a photo of Wambaugh. (Greg Goode)

Sachs, Sylvia. "Wambaugh Back Home."

*Pittsburgh Press* 6 June 81:A-10. Photo. Interview with home-town boy who made good in writing.

WATSON, COLIN

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 17: Colin Watson." *TPP* 4:2:21-22.

WENTWORTH, PATRICIA

Wynne, Nancy Blue. "Patricia Wentworth Revisited." *TAD* 14:1:90-92. Illus. An overview of Wentworth's life and work with a bibliography of her fiction.

WEYMOUTH, ANTHONY

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 18: Anthony Weymouth." *TPP* 4:3:13-14.

WHITE, ETHEL LINA

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 22: Ethel Lina White." *TPP* 4:5/6:48-49.

WHITE, T. H.

Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 19: T. H. White." *TPP* 4:3:14.

WHITFIELD, RAOUJ

Hagemann, E. R. "Ramon Decolta, a.k.a. Raoul Whitfield, and His Diminutive Brown Man: Joe Gar, The Island Detective." *TAD* 14:1:3-8. A portrait of the Filipino detective who appeared in 24 stories in *Black Mask* (1933) and in stories in *Cosmopolitan* (1935, 1937). With a checklist of stories giving date and place of publication. See additions to checklist by Frank D. McSherry, Jr. in letter *TAD* 12:4:382 and by John Apostolou in letter *TAD* 14:4:383.

WHITNEY, PHYLLIS A.

Whitney, Phyllis A. "Help Your Characters Be Themselves." *Writer* 94:7-10 (March 81). PAW describes how she writes detailed character sketches as preparation for her novels.

WHITTINGTON, HARRY

Barson, Michael S. "Interview with Harry Whittington." *PQ* 4:2:17-28. Includes a list of his pb originals. Prefaced by a short critical piece, "Fires That Create—The Versatility and Craft of Harry Whittington," pp. 13-16. Illus. Cover photo.

WILCOX, COLLIN

Pierce, Jeff. "The Great Mystery Series No. 1." *Mystery* 3:2:2-23. The Lt. Hastings series with a checklist of the novels. Photo and illus.

WOOLRICH, CORNELL

Malzberg, Barry. "Afterword." In Charles G. Waugh and Martin G. Greenberg, eds., *The Fantastic Stories of Cornell Woolrich* (Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1981), pp. 329-33. A tribute to Woolrich and his work.

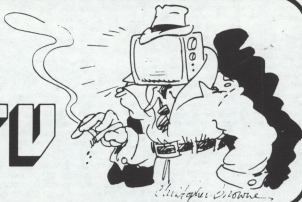
Nevis, Francis M., Jr. "Brief Loves: The Early Short Stories of Cornell Woolrich." *TAD* 14:2:168-72. Magazine fiction written 1926-34.

— "The Poet of the Shadows." Introduction to Waugh and Greenberg, eds., *The Fantastic Stories of Cornell Woolrich* (Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1981), vii-xxvi. A biographical and critical survey ending with a discussion of the nature of the "nightmare world" Woolrich portrayed in his fiction. □



# TAD ON TV

By Richard Meyers



You know what I'm tired of already? I'm tired of sensitive, whimsical male hunks with machismo drooling from every pore. I'm tired of look-alike clone concepts. More than anything else, I'm tired of mustaches.

It is only one month into the new 1982-83 TV season, and I'm already tired of mustaches. There are more mustaches per cubic series this year than almost any other in recent memory. And you know why, don't you? *Magnum P.I.*, that's why.

It's not enough that at least three series on three different networks have "borrowed" concepts (and locales—and villains—and time frames—and who knows what else) from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. No, they have to attempt to embody the virtues that have made Tom Selleck/Thomas Magnum famous. That includes the sensitivity, the whimsy, and yes, the mustache.

The sign of the hairy upper lip doesn't always mean a *Raiders* ripoff. It can also mean *Matt Houston*, a mystery/private eye program that seems to be *Magnum* by way of *Burke's Law*. Lee Horsley, late of the ill-fated *Nero Wolfe* series, stars as the title character—a multi-millionaire Texan who takes on cases because he loves the excitement.

I've said this before, but maybe not in this column, so stop me if you've heard it. Lee Horsley is not an actor...he is an impressionist. On *Wolfe*, he didn't "play" Archie Goodwin...he played Wayne Rogers playing Archie Goodwin. Now on his new show, he isn't playing Matt Houston...he's doing James Garner doing Matt Houston. Close your eyes and listen. There's Maverick/Rockford crawling over every line.

But Horsley is a good impressionist who never lets the seams show, so his characters work. Unfortunately, his co-star Pamela Hensley is not a good impressionist. Playing fellow Texan C. J. Parsons, her southern twang is artificial and annoying. Having her narrate the episodes only makes it more apparent and a lot worse.

Her voice is a grating sing-song filled with swallows, gulps, and gasps that never changes. No matter if the line is "I hate you"



Catherine Hicks stars as Amanda in *Tucker's Witch*, a fanciful new mystery series on CBS. © CBS, Inc.

or "I love you," she reads it the exact same way. That is not to say she isn't an attractive, capable person, but the effect is marred every time she opens her mouth; it's the same old song.

So is the show, although it tries very hard to be lively, innocent, harmless, and lovable. And it almost pulls it off, especially in the art department. This is one of the lushest detective shows in a while. The screen is constantly filled with fancy cars, clothes, and accoutrements. But that is to be expected on an Aaron Spelling-produced program.

Unfortunately, a stale sameness goes along with all the flashy ingredients. To its credit, *Matt Houston* tries to trot out a valid mystery every week, but, to its debit, it also tries to make murder and all its by-products into the stuff of fluff. The program is like spicy food—it seems all right, even good, on first bite,

but after a while it might make you sick to your stomach.

As mediocre and familiar as it is, *Gavilan* makes *Matt Houston* look like *cinéma vérité*. This thing is unbelievably derivative. Now, I like star Robert Urich and co-star Patrick Macnee, but I don't like shows that straddle every fence it can find.

Although the basic location is Malibu Beach (like *Rockford*), it is made to look like a cross between Hawaii (*Magnum P.I.*) and the South Seas (*Raiders*). Robert Urich plays Robert Gavilan, an ex-spy turned oceanology troubleshooter (*Sea Hunt*). Instead of living in the guest house of an absent author (*Magnum*), he has a British major-domo type living in his guest house on the beach (shades of the *Magnum/Higgins* relationship, not to mention *The Odd Couple*).

The similarities don't end there. On the

premiere episode, the secondary villain of the show was played by the same actor who played the secondary archeologist villain of *Raiders*. It also shares the creator of *Hart to Hart* (Tom Mankiewicz) and the producer of *The Incredible Hulk* (Nicholas Corea). It has everything but the mustard.

Otherwise, it is a mass of clichés trying to pass itself off as realistic dialogue and identifiably human behavior. The general attitude here seems to be: "Let's have jaunty fun at any cost." The price the audience pays is labored plotting and numbing boredom after the first thirty minutes. Suffice to say this is not one of my favorite shows.

The couples have better luck than the male loners this year, although not by much. Luck is not really a word one can use in the same sentence with *Tucker's Witch*. This is one of the unluckiest shows around. It started as a "high concept." If *Hart to Hart* and *Bewitched* were successful, a combination of the two would be a guaranteed winner as well.

Creators William Bast and Paul Huson discovered otherwise upon delivering the pilot episode of what was then called *The Good Witch of Laurel Canyon* starring Art Hindle and Kim Cattrall. CBS loved the idea, hated the title and stars. Hindle was a dour-faced hunk who had been in movies such as *The Brood* and *The Invasion of the Body Snatchers* remake. Cattrall hit some paydirt in *Porky's*. Both were out of luck here.

When *Tucker's Witch* premiered in October, the stars were Tim Matheson, who proved his jauntness as the womanizing "Otter" in *Animal House*, and Catherine Hicks, who proved her appeal and ability in the TV movie *Marilyn: The Untold Story*. Backing them up was Barbara Barrie, best known in the genre for playing Mrs. Barney Miller.

The series itself can best be compared to—believe it or not—*Bosom Buddies*. That was the *Some Like It Hot*-like sitcom featuring two guys who disguise themselves as girls to live in an all-female hotel. That was the idea that got it on the air, but that wasn't what it was about. Same with *Tucker's Witch*. Once it hit the air, people started doing hand-offs of the witchcraft.

Now Amanda Tucker (Hicks), the wife of private eye Rick Tucker (Matheson) is a self-professed psychic and telekinetic—capable of getting muddy mental clues and turning off lights in a single bound. In other words, her powers are nowhere near "Samantha class." She's lucky to get a fleeting image or open a door once a week.

This is not a wildly ingratiating, stunningly effective show, but it does make for a pleasant 48 minutes. It, like its stars, is charming—with just enough realism and hard edges to keep one watching. The same cannot be said of *Remington Steele*. Not so much that its stars aren't charming, but realism and hard edges take a back seat to action that the network wags are no doubt calling "madcap."

I can't help feeling that MTM Productions (the same people who brought us *Low Grant*, *Hill Street Blues*, and the new, very good *St.*

*Elsewhere*) were looking for a Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn combination to pull off their version of the antic murder mysteries of the 'forties, wherein bodies dropped like flies and their deaths had about as much effect on the fast-talking, wise-cracking heroes.

Here we have a female private eye named Laura Holt (Stephanie Zimbalist) who must create a fictional male boss so her mostly male clients will trust her. Then along comes a devil-may-care rake who says he is that boss—Remington Steele (Pierce Brosnan).

This sets the stage for romantic fireworks as the bickering, bantering pair wade through one case after another, alternately saving each other's skins. This makes for some fun, but it goes sour in my mouth every time someone else gets croaked. I'm sorry... I can't laugh murder off and quip my way around it with the apparent ease Steele and company have.

Still, Brosnan is really neat, and Zimbalist does well in a thankless role that requires her to be a bit of a stick all the time. They almost make me forget the fact that they and the show view each poor victim with jolly apathy.

Now let's talk returns here. There's jolly apathy in abundance on *T. J. Hooker*, another Aaron Spelling production returning as a full-fledged series after premiering as a midseason replacement. On my initial viewing several columns ago, I called it things like "bombastic." This time I'm going to call it "simplistic" and "sensationalized."

One thing Spelling and company know how to do is exploit. On the first two episodes of this new year, Hooker (William Shatner at his sensitive, pontificating best) and young partner Vince Romano (muscle-bound Adrian Zmed, who's someone's idea of an Italian/Romanian Erik Estrada) went after a rapist and murderer of female dancers. All the commercials highlighted shapely bodies being threatened. What hasn't been threatened so far is anyone's intelligence, and I'm not going to wail around to find out if or when that happens.

*Cagney and Lacey* and *Simon and Simon* are back, putting a strain on the "ands" in this sentence. Although there is a new "Cagney" (Sharon Gless replaced Meg Foster, who was labeled too "butch" by an unidentified power wielder), both shows are much the same.

The former series about two tough big-city female cops still has realistic production values and somewhat casual scripts, while the latter program featuring the diametrically-opposed San Diego private eye siblings sports a nifty new theme song and a premiere guest-starring the *Magnum P.I.* cast.

*Mystery!* and *Smiley* are back as well. PBS started this season of imported English shows with a two-partter called "Dying Day." Ian McKellan starred as a neurotic who overhears his own murder being planned. Being the paranoid frenetic I am, I saw through the plot almost instantly and cringed through the remainder of the story, praying that what I figured would happen wouldn't.

It did, and I hated it. Personally, I find stories of little men getting caught in webs until they strangle oppressive. I much prefer tales in which little men muster up that reserve which sees them triumph at the fade-out. I find that sort of thing far more civilized than drawing-room puzzles which render the victim secondary.

So, naturally, I was quite pleased with the subsequent "Father Brown" dramatizations starring Kenneth More as the detective-priest. Here was a humble, innocuous sort quietly moving forward to improve the world with incisive thinking and action. That is more my cup of tea. And *Mystery!* serves it up just the way I like it—with a dash of honey (humor) and milk (smooth direction).

*Smiley's People*, the sequel to *Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy*, was scarfed up by Paramount's "Operation Prime Time," which sold it out to a variety of independent syndicators instead of showing it on PBS. Although the director was different (Simon Langford instead of John Irving), Alec Guinness was still in fine, fine form as England's quiet, cold master spy who comes out of retirement for a final battle of wits with his Moscow adversary/counterpart, code-named "Karla."

Instead of six one-hour shows, O.P.T. delivered three two-hour episodes which were full of understated yet marvelous performances and rich with inherent emotion. I was quite taken with the whole somber but engrossing effort. We all should have adaptations of our books done with such care and fidelity. □

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# TAD at the MOVIES

By Thomas Godfrey

As this column goes off to New York, I'll be going off to San Francisco and the Bouchercon-by-the-Bay. We'll be looking at a whole slew of mystery films with a San Francisco setting, and I'll be reporting on them in my column for the next issue. I'll also be reviewing *Hammett* and *I, the Jury* then, as well as any other new mystery-suspense films due out this fall.

Meanwhile, here are some older films of the genre reconsidered:

★★½ *Deathtrap* (1982) Michael Caine, Christopher Reeve, Dyan Cannon (D: Sidney Lumet)

Producer-adaptor Jay Presson Allen has opened up Ira Levin's stage play in the conventional fashion and smoothed out its up-and-down development, but she does not disguise the fact that she is working with a bony dramatic skeleton that has been covered with flowery gimmicks.

Perhaps, in an effort to make up for the deficiencies of the story, director Sidney Lumet has encouraged his actors to a number of dramatic excesses, particularly a surfeit of screaming and yelling that does not seem implicit in the material. Michael Caine is never less than competent, but he seems to have no real feel for Sidney Bruhl, the burnt-out playwright who would kill for another success. To say his playing is one-dimensional is to exaggerate by one dimension.

Dyan Cannon, on the other hand, has elected to play Sidney's wife Myra as a good-natured tootsie, which is commendable, but she is compromised by some broad theatrical gestures and moments of shrill stridency that might work if projected from a stage but which wear poorly on the screen.

Only Christopher Reeve as the hunky young playwright with the million dollar property is able to set his character and stick to it. He uses his Superman looks to the advantage of his convoluted role and adds imaginative touches that stop well short of mannerism.

Irene Worth does as much as could be expected with Helga ten Dorp, the Dutch psychotic-next-door, but this part has "desperate plot device" plastered all over it and consequently emerges with all the humanity of a running gag.

The set design is excellent, if a trifle stagey, and the music is all harpsichord-tinkling jollity cranked out like paper towels.

The over-use of close-ups adds further to the general impression of over-emphasis being used to compensate for under-development.

★★★ *The Eye of the Needle* (1981) Donald Sutherland, Kate Nelligan, Milo O'Shea (D: Robert Mulligan)

Director Mulligan (*Up the Down Staircase*, *Love With the Proper Stranger*) has taken a thoughtful, scrupulous approach to Ken Follett's Edgar-winning bestseller with discouraging results. Much of the plot's structure shows through the cinematic dressing, and there is a good deal of time, provided by leisurely pacing, for anticipating almost every dénouement.

Consequently, this thriller is seldom thrilling, even when fingers are being hacked off with an axe or when the law starts closing in on "The Needle."

Donald Sutherland is fine as the notorious Needle, a top Nazi spy trying to escape from wartime Britain with information about the Normandy invasion, and so is Nelligan as the loveless wife who first falls for Sutherland and then must stop him. Sutherland's lazy, mechanized half-acting and Nelligan's reticence are charming in this context, but one needs something more startling from one of the characters if the ending is to have any punch.

It is unfortunate to be disparaging about what is, in many ways, an earnest and well-crafted production, but, in the end, there is that lingering feeling that a less sensitive director might have rattled this through in "high hack" fashion and given it more of the excitement it most grievously lacks.

★★★★ *Don't Look Now* (1974) Donald Sutherland, Julie Christie, Massimo Serato (D: Nicholas Roeg)

Arguably the finest mystery-suspense film of the 1970s, this brilliant adaptation from a Daphne du Maurier story combines mystery and the occult in a way that is singularly successful. Among its most notable achievements is its ability to disguise its plot as a murder mystery among its many elements. Meanwhile, Roeg's photography provides screen art of the highest order. Just watch the way he uses the color red as a *leit-motif* in the visual storytelling.

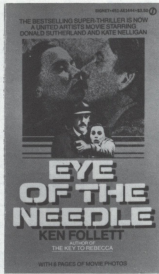
The performances of Sutherland and Christie, potentially two of the most irritat-

ing stars of the past decade, is both inventive and resourceful. Serato's performance as the worldly priest is a model of ambiguity. Hilary Mason and Celia Matarina are similarly effective as two weird sisters, one of whom may be psychic.

Roeg also shows an uncanny sense of just how far to play the suspense and innuendo without tiring his audience. Add moments that are genuinely erotic and some that are thoroughly chilling, and you get one of the fullest and most satisfying mystery-suspense experiences in the past millennium.

★★★★ *The Conversation* (1974) Gene Hackman, Harrison Ford, Frederic Forrest (D: Francis Ford Coppola)

Among the mystery-suspense films of the 1970s, two stand out for successful innovation in the genre. *Don't Look Now* (reviewed above) looked back to the gothic Romanticism of the nineteenth century, with its focus on emotion and the supernatural. Yet it served up its story with a style and look that





Hirschfeld's cartoon for *Deathtrap*.

© Warner Bros., Inc.

was as chic and contemporary as next year's fashions.

*The Conversation*, on the other hand, pointed the way to the future, and a decade in which humanity and human beings were in danger of getting lost in a welter of high technology and mechanical gadgetry. In that sense, it prefigured films such as *Tron* and *Diva*, which threaten to set the style for years to come.

Director-writer-producer-mogul Coppola was working at the peak of his talent and sensitivity when he made this film. The loss of dramatic timing and sense of artistic proportion that would later mark the disintegration of a potentially great filmmaker were still to come. Operating on a smaller scale and a more limited budget, he was to produce a small masterpiece that is *New Wave* in its feeling but thoroughly American in content.

Harry Caul (Gene Hackman) is an electronics whiz and eavesdropping-surveillance ace who has been hired by a powerful but anonymous client to bug a couple of employees who are romantically entangled. All goes brilliantly true to form until Caul begins to suspect that his client intends to murder the two people (Frederic Forrest and Cindy Williams) and wants out. Fear turns to paranoia as Caul discovers that his client, known only as "The Director" (Robert Duvall in an unbillable cameo), intends to get the tape at any price.

Coppola does an excellent job of building on this fear by playing up the monolithic, impersonal symbols of contemporary mass society. But it is the film's relentless dissection of its protagonist Harry Caul that provides the meat of the experience. Hackman is beyond criticism as the isolated, ordinary Everyman locked in a world of his own compulsion and false sense of power. It is

perhaps the best piece of non-bravura acting of the past decade, and Hackman somehow mesmerizes the audience with his drab forgettability.

Forrest, whom Coppola would later try to turn into a star (unsuccessfully) in *One from the Heart* and *Hammett*, does commendably in a role that looks deceptively easy, as does Cindy Williams, the comedienne from TV's dippy *Laverne and Shirley*. She seems initially miscast, yet looks strangely effective for just that reason.

Occasionally, there are shots that seem overly set-up and artistic touches which border on the contrived, but the sweep and proportion of the picture are quite impressive.

In 1974, critics related to its post-Watergate morality and sensibility. Now it looks equally effective as a personal statement about the individual retreating into an electronic society over which he has almost no control, as well as a riveting mystery thriller.

With Allan Garfield (Goorwitz), Teri Garr, John Cazale, and other members of the Coppola stock company.

\*\*\* 1/2 *Silent Partner* (1978) Elliott Gould, Susannah York, Christopher Plummer (D: Bob Clark)

A Canadian production that was in and out of theaters almost unnoticed, *Silent Partner* later acquired a reputation as one of the genre's recent sleepers. It's easy to see why. The suspense builds early and never lets up.

Elliott Gould plays an ineffectual bank clerk who takes advantage of a holdup to embezzle some of the funds. Plummer is the demented holdup man who sets out to make Gould's life miserable when he finds out he's been ripped off.

Gould gives us Gould again—the shaggy '60s campus radical gone to seed. He trades a lot on this persona with his usual success. Plummer is back to villainy again (after playing Sherlock Holmes for the same director) and reaching new heights in sadism and brutality. York is Gould's love interest, who is always at the periphery of the plot.

There is an aura of repugnant unpleasantness that hangs over this picture like a cloud. There's no fun to be had in Gould's character. And besides, while Plummer's character is despicable, Gould's is a cheat, though Clark's direction makes you root for him.

The suspenseful twists are well detailed and cleverly manipulated, though the film has more than its share of gore, with a particularly ghoulish beheading. An efficient suspense film, then, for those with strong stomachs, but ultimately a rather lusher one, too.

★ *The Missing Juror* (1954) Jim Bannon, Janis Carter, George MacReady (D: Budd Boetticher)

A Boetticher retrospective at USC provided the opportunity to see this obscure B from the early '50s. Boetticher was still basically an unknown director then. (He's billed as Oscar Boetticher, Jr. in the credits.)

It would be nice to report this as a lost classic, but honestly it's awful, a trite, amateurish run-through about a mysterious murderer who slowly eliminates members of a jury that has convicted an innocent man. The script is full of howlers, and the scenery looks as if it were cut out of old cardboard boxes. Bannon, who never had much of a career (mostly early TV soap) reads his lines lamely. Carter, who usually played the other woman in bigger productions looks like just that here.

MacReady, who could be a master of silken malvolence, is successful in a rather obvious fashion. The biggest problem is that the identity of the murderer is no mystery at all. You can guess it standing out in the lobby.

Boetticher's contribution seems to be a few unusual visual effects, such as starting a scene with a shot through the gratings of a fence. A comprehensive concept of how to deliver suspense escapes him. Perhaps that is what separates a cult director from a great one.

\*\*\* *The Cat and the Canary* (1939) Bob Hope, Paulette Goddard, Gale Sondergaard (D: Elliott Nugent)

This was actually the second remake of *The Cat and the Canary*, the wheezy old prototypical play about the terrorized girl in the creepy old house. This time it was tailored to the talents of Bob Hope and was such a big success that it established Hope as a popular draw at the movies. It even spawned a quasi-sequel, *Ghost Breakers* (1940), with both Hope and Goddard.

It still succeeds against over-familiarity because of Hope's performance as a boastful fraisey-cat. Goddard is also appealing as the warm, vulnerable heroine. It was a shot in the arm for her career as well, establishing her at the time as a leading lady away from Charlie



Chaplin, to whom she was professionally and maritally attached.

Reliable character performances by Sondergaard, Nydia Westman, George Zucco, Elizabeth Patterson, and others help flesh out the story, but, more than forty years later, there is just not enough freshness left to completely redeem it as entertainment. Still, it spawned a whole sub-genre of films such as *One Body Too Many* and the Red Skelton *Whistling* series, which were enormously popular and entertaining, and it was later redone in 1978 with some half-hearted updates. So, stay tuned for a high-tech version with humanoids some time in the future.

\*\*\* *Gilda* (1946) Rita Hayworth, Glenn Ford, George MacReady (D: Charles Vidor)

The jury is still out on *Gilda*, some 35 years later. Any male wondering about all the post-war salivating over Rita Hayworth will find his curiosity more than satisfied by a look at *Gilda*. The plot, however, is another matter.

MacReady is the owner of a Rio de Janeiro gambling establishment. Ford is his right-hand man. Hayworth is the unexpected wife who puts things on boil. The story implies a relationship between MacReady and Ford which seems quite daring for 1946. The net effect is like a variation on D. H. Lawrence's *The Fox* with a sex change. MacReady, as ever, is the most mannered of monsters. Ford plays it close to the chest, and Hayworth offers 21-gun sexuality exploding all over everything.

The story finally meanders aimlessly, the direction lacks some of the tightness it needs, but as a curiosity, and for Hayworth, worth a look.

\*\*\*½ *The Red House* (1947) Edward G. Robinson, Judith Anderson, Lon McCallister (D: Delmer Daves)

The film came at the peak of Edward G. Robinson's distinguished film career. He had just finished John Huston's ripe, romantic *Key Largo* with Bogart and Bacall. Before that, he'd been equally impressive as the Nazi hunter in Orson Welles's *The Stranger*, and his humanly inhuman insurance investigator from Billy Wilder's *Double Indemnity* was still fresh in the public mind. The trouble with the Red-baiting, right-wing politicians which would dog him in the '50s and relegate him to a host of B's was still a few years away.

This original suspense-thriller (which he co-produced) has its admirers, mostly, I would think, for his accomplished performance. But there is a bit much here that looks corny and over-played. Writer-director Daves gets maximum mileage out of milking the audience's curiosity about *The Secret of the Red House*. Too many scenes being building by pricking the viewer's curiosity about *The Secret* and then go dramatically nowhere.

Judith Anderson is strong in support as Robinson's sister who knows all, but there just isn't a lot for her to do. Ultimately, one's regard for this film comes down to Lon McCallister's central performance as the

young protagonist-hero who uncovers *The Secret*. His playing is perfectly acceptable in a familiar, light, juvenile, Midwestern tradition of wholesomeness and innocence. But it's not a style that carries very far today, and you keep waiting for Robinson to reappear and give the proceedings some substance.

Miklos Rosza's score oozes atmosphere, as does the shadowy black-and-white photography. But for my money, Daves forgets that we have to keep caring about *The Secret* in order to sustain the picture, and that's what fatally compromises it over all.

\*\*\* *Something For Everyone* (1970) Angela Lansbury, Michael York, Jane Carr (D: Harold Prince)

Harold Prince, the Broadway producer-director of *Sweeney Todd* and other notable successes, took his first stab at the cinema with this black comedy offering. Though clearly inspired by the same thoughts that gave us *Kind Hearts and Coronets* and *The Best of Everything*, this picture is (surprisingly) dramatically heavy and flat.

Prince gives us Michael York as Conrad, an ambitious, omni-sexual itinerant who schemes his way into the household of an impoverished countess (Angela Lansbury) whose castle he secretly dreams of owning. Through devious means that sometimes involve murder, he arranges a marriage between the daughter of a crass *nouveau riche* and the countess's homosexual son. Finally, as he is about to marry the now wealthy countess herself, his plans are thwarted and the film sputters to a fizzled conclusion.

Much blame must fall on the slow pacing and an overabundance of beery Germanic *Luftwaffen* in the story which seriously undermine the wit and zip this film would need to succeed. Only Lansbury brings her scenes to life, and this in spite of a German accent that wanders in and out like an FM radio signal. York is just too angular and perversely decked out for a character who is supposed to be getting by on his charm.

Let's face it. Prince's success in the theatre could never be deduced from anything in this picture.

\*\*\*½ *Bulldog Drummond's Bride* (1939) John Howard, Heather Angel, H. B. Warner (D: James Hogan)

By the time this seventh and last entry in Paramount's Bulldog Drummond series had rolled around, John Howard had relaxed enough into the character of Drummond to suggest he might be having some fun with the role. He didn't effect an English accent or play to non-existent balconies, but he did give the sleuth-adventurer enough dash and authority to dominate the hour.

Of course, John Barrymore had since departed the part of Colonel Nielson, so he didn't have to worry about the wholesale theft of every theatrical moment in sight as he delivered his lines. H. B. Warner, who succeeded Barrymore as Howard's Scotland Yard superior, is entirely more benign and avuncular, and Heather Angel's return to the

part of Drummond's fiancée Phyllis posed no dramatic threats either.

Maybe that's the trouble, because, with Barrymore gone, the sort of theatrical she-nanigans that might have put this sort of foolishness across are sadly missing. The plot is more imaginative than most (due to mystery writer Stuart Palmer's presence among the scripters?), but the Drummond writers just never learned when to shut up. More than one potentially suspenseful scene gets talked to death, and Reginald Denny's Algy is allowed to bluster beyond endurance in scene after scene. If the dialogue were on a par with the Thin Man series, it would be another story, but this stuff has the entertainment value of weak-old pudding.

This time, master bank robber Eduardo Cianelli confounds Drummond's wedding plans by hiding some loot in a radio intended as a wedding present. Cianelli is as colorfully entertaining (as he was to be the following year in *Kitty Foyle*); Howard's smooth underplaying is delightfully engaging as the hero; and there is some frantic fun with a rooftop chase and some exploding wine bottles at the end. But ultimately this stuff is just too civilized for its own good.

\*\*\*\* *After the Thin Man* (1936) William Powell, Myrna Loy, James Stewart (D: W. S. Van Dyke)

One of the greatest films with a San Francisco setting, *After the Thin Man* is also one of those rare birds of the cinema, a sequel that matches the standards of the original.

Hammett worked on the original story. Albert Hackett and Frances Goodrich again provided a screenplay filled with electric verbal knockabout. W. S. "One Take" Van Dyke repeated behind the cameras. Hunt Stromberg again produced, and Powell, Loy, and Asta were once more as good as their inspiration in the leading roles.

This time, the mystery concerns the murder of a shiftless socialite and layabout relative of Nora's during a New Year's Eve fog on Nob Hill.

Jimmy Stewart, then at the start of his career, figures prominently in the story. So does the brittle Elissa Landi as the wrongfully-accused suspect. It was one of her last Hollywood roles.

Jessie Ralph, the flinty society dowager of Van Dyke's *San Francisco*, made the same year, does similar service here as Nora's formidable cane-wielding Aunt Katherine. Joseph Calleja impresses as a slick, sinister gangster and nightclub owner, and Penny Singleton, the movies' *Blondie*, is appropriately shrill as Polly Barnes, the club's singer and resident trollop. Only Sam Levene's hammy, over-wrought police lieutenant mars an otherwise flawless cast.

In the end, though, it is Powell and Loy's playing which provides the richest delights. As the screen's greatest husband-and-wife sleuths, they conveyed intelligence and affection, sexiness and devotion. Cinematic marriage never had it so good. And neither did mystery moviegoers. □

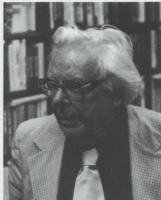


# The Radio Murder Hour

By Chris Steinbrunner



The recent gathering of The Friends of Old Time Radio at their annual convention brought together some of the greatest voices and creative forces of that now all but vanished medium. Old-time radio buffs have been honoring the radio stars of yesteryear at these annual get-togethers (held usually in Connecticut or New Jersey) since 1971 and have managed to resurrect many of the players one would have thought were now just memories. Raymond Edward Johnson, the host of *Inner Sanctum*, was there, as was Walter Gibson, the creator of *The Shadow*, still hale and hearty. One could chat with Lee Allman, who had appeared in *The Green Hornet* and *The Lone Ranger*, or Sidney Slon, who wrote and directed *The Abbott Mysteries*, or Lon Clark and Charlotte Manson of the *Nick Carter* series, or snarling gangster Donald Buka of *Crime Does Not Pay*, or Bob Readick of *Yours Truly Johnny Dollar*, or Elspeth Eric of *Front Page Farrell*. So much of radio's golden age devoted itself to mystery shows, and those many murder hours were here gloriously revisited.



Walter Gibson at an autographing party at The Mysterious Bookshop

Among the many stars who shared their reminiscences, announcer-actor Jimmy Beck was delightfully expansive. Settling back, smoking a cigarette (but *not*, however, the Regie brand which Philo Vance, one of his many roles, would have lit), Beck told—among other memories—of his days as one of

the two announcers on the *Superman* show. The daytime serial enjoyed the absolute luxury of tandem announcers, sharing in the litany of the opening—*Faster than a speeding bullet—able to leap tall buildings with a single bound*... (Beck alternated the lines with fellow announcer Dan McCullough, who mostly did the pitches for the Kellogg's Pep sponsor, a breakfast cereal with many nifty premiums, among them wartime enemy plane spotters). In addition to his narrator chores on *Superman*, Beck also played an occasional role in the stories; his deep-register voice was perfect for snarling, guttural gangsters, and he was also the squeaky voice of *Daily Planet* office boy Beany, the only employee on that newspaper's staff whose status was lower than Jimmy Olson's.

Beck was also the lead in the radio *Philo Vance* mysteries, and to portray that epicure detective he read all the S. S. Van Dine books. He was well aware that Vance was far from the trench-coated private eye with which radio audiences were familiar, and he was careful to give him the erudition and class which was his due—without alienating him from mass appeal. It was a difficult task, but Beck felt he "humanized" the aristocratic sleuth without betraying his essential character.

The highlight of the convention was the re-creation of an actual *Green Hornet* play—the fourteenth in the series—played by many of the actual actors in the series against wondrous old microphones with organ music and sound effects swirling in the background. Once more the mysterious *Green Hornet* roared in his sleek night car through the dark streets of the metropolis in a single-handed battle against crime czars; it was a breathtaking re-creation of a great mystery moment. For information about The Friends of Old Time Radio, one can contact Jay Hickerson, Box C, Orange, Connecticut 06477.

English mystery author Simon Brett visited our shores recently and chatted about British radio mystery shows—which, enviably, are to be heard far more frequently than our domestic variety! Brett himself has been active in the medium as well, having produced dramatizations of Lord Peter Wimsey books every year since 1973. The current radio success is a series called *Detectives*, crime stories set in a C.I.D. department, and frequently there are mystery stories on the daily *Afternoon Theatre* hour and on the

*Saturday Night Theatre*, which runs ninety minutes. As well, actual mystery novels are often just read on the air in installments; Brett's own *Murder Unprompted* was presented in ten quarter-hour parts.



Philo Vance

(Brett also remarked on some good English crime shows on television: *Juliet Bravo*, about a uniformed lady cop, with the title derived from a police call sign, and *Minder*, about a professional bodyguard involved in crime. As television is an upstart, derivative medium, we shall pass quickly on.)

Douglas G. Greene, who put together the John Dickson Carr collection *The Door to Doom*, which contained several of Carr's superb radio mystery scripts, has written this column about the comments made in a recent issue on *Cabin B-13*. "It is one of Carr's finest plays," he writes, "and, indeed, has one of his finest plot devices in any form." We can but agree. Greene now has Xeroxes and in some cases original mimeographs of all of Carr's surviving British radio scripts. Happily, the Doubleday Crime Club plans soon to issue these scripts in a collection edited by Greene called *The Dead Sleep Lightly*. Included will be such "impossible crime" mysteries as the title piece and *The Black Minute*, both with Dr. Gideon Fell as the detective, and such wonderfully plotted puzzles as *Vampire Tower* and *The Devil's Saint*—the latter a chilling Gothic yarn Peter Lorre did on *Suspense*, in which we are asked to spend a night in a castle chamber from which no one has emerged alive. The Crime Club will do nine programs in all, and the book is certainly one to eagerly await. For once, a full measure of radio murder hours! □



# THE TRACER OF LOST PERSONS

By Robert W. Chambers

Do you remember the wonderful old radio series, "Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons"? It was one of the most popular and longest-running series on the air, making its debut in 1937 and, while undergoing several changes of format, remaining on the air into 1954.

The show, distinguished by its memorable theme, "Some Day I'll Find You," was based on a book by a master of fantasy fiction, Robert W. Chambers.

Published in 1906 by Appleton, *The Tracer of Lost Persons* had as its hero a character referred to only as "Mr. Keen, Tracer of Lost Persons," with no first name ever used.

As other publishers have done through the years, Appleton attempted to disguise the short story collection as a novel by breaking the book into chapters, three or four of which comprised a single story, with no titles to identify individual tales.

While a difficult book for collectors to find in fine and fresh condition since it was published in pink cloth which spoiled rapidly and thoroughly, ordinary reading copies often turn up in second-hand shops. It

is worth picking up this charming volume because Chambers, as the following tale will attest, was a good storyteller whose books and stories have aged pleasantly.

—OTTO PENZLER

I

HE was thirty-three, agreeable to look at, equipped with as much culture and intelligence as is tolerated east of Fifth Avenue and west of Madison. He had a couple of elaborate rooms at the Lenox Club, a larger income than seemed to be good for him, and no profession. It follows that he was a pessimist before breakfast. Besides, it's a bad thing for a man at thirty-three to come to the conclusion that he has seen all the most attractive girls in the world and that they have been vastly overrated. So, when a club servant with gilt buttons on his coat tails knocked at the door, the invitation to enter was not very cordial. He of the buttons knocked again to take the edge off before he entered; then opened the door and unburdened himself as follows:

"Mr. Gatewood, sir, Mr. Kerns's compliments, and wishes to know if 'e may 'ave 'is coffee served at your tyble, sir."

Gatewood, before the mirror, gave a vicious twist to his tie, inserted a pearl scarf pin, and regarded the effect with gloomy approval.

"Say to Mr. Kerns that I am—flattered," he replied morosely; "and tell Henry I want him."

"'Enry, sir? Yes, sir."

The servant left; one of the sleek club valets came in, softly sidling.

"Henry!"

"Sir?"

"I'll wear a white waistcoat, if you don't object."

The valet laid out half a dozen.

"Which one do you usually wear when I'm away, Henry? Which is *your* favorite?"

"Sir?"

"Pick it out and don't look injured, and don't roll up your eyes. I merely desire to borrow it for one day."

"Very good, sir."

"And, Henry, hereafter always help yourself to my *best* cigars. Those I smoke may injure you. I've attempted to conceal the keys, but you will, of course, eventually discover them under that loose tile on the hearth."

"Yes, sir; thanky', sir," returned the valet gravely.

"And—Henry!"

"Sir?" with martyred dignity.

"When you are tired of searching for my olivine and opal pin, just find it, for a change. I'd like to wear that pin for a day or two if it would not inconvenience you."

"Very good, sir; I will 'unt it hup, sir."

Gatewood put on his coat, took hat and gloves from the unabashed valet, and sauntered down to the sunny breakfast room, where he found Kerns inspecting a morning paper and leisurely consuming grapefruit with a cocktail on the side.

"Hullo," observed Kerns briefly.

"I'm not on the telephone," snapped Gatewood.

"I beg your pardon; how are you, dear friend?"

"I don't know how I am," retorted Gatewood irritably; "how the devil should a man know how he is?"

"Everything going to the bowwows, as usual, dear friend?"

"As usual. Oh, read your paper, Tommy! You know well enough I'm not one of those tail-wagging imbeciles who wakes up in the morning singing like a half-witted lark. Why should I, with this taste in mouth, and the laundress using vitriol, and Henry sneering at my cigars?" He yawned and cast his eyes toward the ceiling. "Besides, there's too much gilt all over this club! There's too much everywhere. Half the world is stucco, the rest rococo. Where's that Martini I bid for?"

Kerns, undisturbed, applied himself to cocoa and toasted muffins. Grapefruit and an amber-tinted accessory were brought for the other and sampled without mirth. However, a little later Gatewood said: "Well, are you going to read your paper all day?"

"What you need," said Kerns, laying the paper aside, "is a job—any kind would do, dear friend."

"I don't want to make any more money."

"I don't want you to. I mean a job where you'd lose a lot and be scared into thanking Heaven for carfare. You're a nice object for the breakfast table!"

"Bridge. I will be amiable enough by noon time."

"Yes, you're endurable by noon time, as a rule. When you're forty you may be tolerated after five o'clock; when you're fifty you, wife and children might even venture to emerge from the cellar after dinner —"

"Wife!"

"I said wife," replied Kerns, as he calmly watched his man.

He had managed it well, so far, and he was wise enough not to overdo it. An interval of silence was what the situation required.

"I wish I *had* a wife," muttered Gatewood after a long pause.

"Oh, haven't you said that every day for five years? Wife! Look at the willing assortment of dreams playing Sally Waters around town. Isn't this borough a bower of beauty—a flowery thicket where the prettiest kind in all the world grow under glass or outdoors? And what do you do? You used to pretend to prowl about inspecting the yearly crop of posies, growling, cynical, dissatisfied; but you've even given that up. Now you only point your nose skyward and squall for a mate, and yowl mournfully that you never have seen your ideal. I know you."

"I never have seen my ideal," retorted Gatewood sulkily, "but I know she exists—somewhere between heaven and Hoboken."

"You're sure, are you?"

"Oh, I'm sure. And, rich or poor, good or bad, she was fashioned for me alone. That's a theory of mine; you needn't accept it; in fact, it's none of your business, Tommy."

"All the same," insisted Kerns, "did you ever consider that if your ideal does exist somewhere, it is morally up to you to find her?"

"Haven't I inspected every debutante for ten years? You don't expect me to advertise for an ideal, do you—object, matrimony?"

Kerns regarded him intently. "Now, I'm going to make a vivid suggestion, Jack. In fact, that's why I subjected myself to the ordeal of breakfasting with you. It's none of my business, as you so kindly put it, but—*shall* I suggest something?"

"Go ahead," replied Gatewood, tranquilly lighting a cigarette. "I know what you'll say."

"No, you don't. Firstly, you are having such a good time in this world that you don't really enjoy yourself—isn't that so?"

"I—well I—well, let it go at that."

"Secondly, with all your crimes and felonies, you have one decent trait left: you really would like to fall in love. And I suspect you'd even marry."

"There are grounds," said Gatewood guardedly, "for your suspicions. *Et après?*"

"Good. Then there's a way! I know —"

"Oh, don't tell me you 'know a girl,' or anything like that!" began Gatewood sullenly. "I've heard that before, and I won't meet her."

"I don't want you to; I don't know anybody. All I desire to say is this: I do know a way. The other day I noticed a sign on Fifth Avenue:

KEEN & CO.  
TRACERS OF LOST PERSONS

It was a most extraordinary sign; and having a little unemployed imagination I began to speculate on how Keen & Co. might operate, and I wondered a little, too, that the conditions of life in this city could enable a firm to make a living by devoting itself exclusively to the business of hunting up missing people."

Kerns paused, partly to light a cigarette, partly for diplomatic reasons.

"What has all this to do with me?" inquired Gatewood curiously; and diplomacy scored one.

"Why not try Keen & Co.?"

"Try them? Why? I haven't lost anybody, have I?"

"You haven't precisely *lost anybody*, but the fact remains that you can't *find somebody*," returned Kerns coolly. "Why not employ Keen & Co. to look for her?"

"Look for whom, in Heaven's name?"

"Your ideal."

"Look for—for my ideal! Kerns, you're crazy. How the mischief can anybody hunt for somebody who doesn't exist?"

"You say that she *does* exist."

"But I can't prove it, man."

"You don't have to; it's up to Keen & Co. to prove it. That's why you employ them."

"What wild nonsense you talk! Keen & Co. might, perhaps, be able to trace the concrete, but how are they going to trace and find the abstract?"

"She isn't abstract; she is a lovely, healthy, and youthful concrete object—if, as you say, she *does* exist."

"How can I prove she exists?"

"You don't have to; they do that."

"Look here," said Gatewood almost angrily, "do you suppose that if I were ass enough to go to these people and tell them that I wanted to find my ideal—"

"Don't tell them *that*!"

"But how—"

"There is no necessity for going into such trivial details. All you need say is: 'I am very anxious to find a young lady'—and then describe her as minutely as you please. Then, when they locate a girl of that description they'll notify you; you will go, judge for yourself whether she is the one woman on earth—and, if disappointed, you need only shake your head and murmur: 'Not the same!' And it's for them to find another."

"I won't do it!" said Gatewood hotly.

"Why not? At least, it would be amusing. You haven't many mental resources, and it might occupy you for a week or two."

Gatewood glared.

"You have a pleasant way of putting things this morning, haven't you?"

"I don't want to be pleasant: I want to jar you. Don't I care enough about you to breakfast with you? Then I've a right to be pleasantly unpleasant. I can't bear to watch your mental and spiritual dissolution—a man like you, with all your latent ability and capacity for being nobody in particular—which is the sort of man this nation needs. Do you want to turn into a club-window gazer like Van Bronk? Do you want to become another Courtlandt Allerton and go rocking down the avenue—a grimacing, tailor-made sepulcher?—the pompous obsequies of a



dead intellect?—a funeral on two wavering legs, carrying the corpse of all that should be deathless in a man? Why, Jack, I'd rather see you in bankruptcy—I'd rather see you trying to lead a double life in a single flat on seven dollars and a half a week—I'd almost rather see you every day at breakfast than have it come to that!

"Wake up and get jocund with life! Why, you could have all good citizens stung to death if you chose. It isn't that I want you to make money; but I want you to worry over somebody besides yourself—not in Wall Street—a pool and its money are soon parted. But in your own home, where a beautiful wife and seven angel children have you dippy and close to the ropes; where the housekeeper gets a rake off, and the cook is red-headed and comes from Sligo, and the butler's cousin will bear watching, and the chauffeur is a Frenchman, and the coachman's uncle is a Harlem vet, and every scullion in the establishment lies, drinks, steals, and supports twenty satiated relatives at your expense. That would mean the making of you; for, after all, Jack, you are no genius—you're a plain, non-partisan, uninspired, clean-built, wholesome citizen, thank God!—the sort whose unimaginative mission is to pitch in with eighty-odd millions of us and, like the busy coral creatures, multiply with all your might, and make this little old Republic the greatest, biggest, finest article that an overworked world has ever yet put up! . . . Now you can call for help if you choose."

Gatewood's breath returned slowly. In an intimacy of many years he had never suspected that sort of thing from Kerns. That is why, no doubt, the opinions expressed by Kerns stirred him to an astonishment too innocent to harbor anger or chagrin.

And when Kerns stood up with an unembarrassed laugh, saying, "I'm going to the office; see you this evening?" Gatewood replied rather vacantly: "Oh, yes; I'm dining here. Good-by, Tommy."

Kerns glanced at his watch, lingering. "Was there anything you wished to ask me, Jack?" he inquired guilelessly.

"Ask you? No, I don't think so."

"Oh; I had an idea you might care to know where Keen & Co. were to be found."

"That," said Gatewood firmly, "is foolish."

"I'll write the address for you, anyway," rejoined Kerns, scribbling it and handing the card to his friend.

Then he went down the stairs, several at a time, eased in conscience, satisfied that he had done his duty by a friend he cared enough for to breakfast with.

"Of course," he ruminated as he crawled into a hansom and lay back buried in meditation—"of course there may be nothing in this Keen & Co. business. But it will stir him up and set him thinking; and the longer Keen & Co. take to hunt up an imaginary lady that doesn't exist, the more anxious and impatient poor old Jack Gatewood will become, until he'll catch the fever and go cantering about with that one fixed idea in his head. And," added Kerns softly, "no New Yorker in his right mind can go galloping through these five boroughs very long before he's roped, tied, and marked by the 'only girl in the world'—the only girl—if you don't care to turn around and look at another million girls precisely like her. O Lord!—precisely like her!"

Here was a nice exhorter to incite others to matrimony.

## II

MEANWHILE, Gatewood was walking along Fifth Avenue, more or less soothed by the May sunshine. First, he went to his hatters, looked at the straw hats, didn't like them, protested, and bought one, wishing he had strength of mind enough to wear it home. But he hadn't. Then he entered the huge white marble palace of his jeweler, left his watch to be regulated, caught a glimpse of a girl whose hair and neck resembled the hair and neck of

his ideal, sidled around until he discovered that she was chewing gum, and backed off, with a bitter smile, into the avenue once more.

Every day for years he had had glimpses of girls whose hair, hands, figures, eyes, hats, carriage, resembled the features required by his ideal; there always was something wrong somewhere. And, as he strolled moodily, a curious feeling of despair seized him—something that, even in his most sentimental moments, even amid the most unexpected disappointment, he had never before experienced.

"I do want to love *somebody!*" he found himself saying half aloud; "I want to marry; I—" He turned to look after three pretty children with their maids—"I want several like those—several—seven—ten—I don't care how many! I want a house to worry me, just as Tommy described it; I want to see the same girl across the breakfast table—or she can sip her cocoa in bed if she desires—" A slow, modest blush stole over his features; it was one of the nicest things he ever did. Glancing up, he beheld across the way a white sign, ornamented with strenuous crimson lettering:

KEEN & CO.  
TRACERS OF LOST PERSONS

The moment he discovered it, he realized he had been covertly hunting for it; he also realized that he was going to climb the stairs. He hadn't quite decided what he meant to do after that; nor was his mind clear on the matter when he found himself opening a door of opaque glass on which was printed in red:

THE TRACER OF  
LOST PERSONS

51

KEEN & CO.

He was neither embarrassed nor nervous when he found himself in a big carpeted anteroom where a negro attendant bowed him to a seat and took his card; and he looked calmly around to see what was to be seen.

Several people occupied easy chairs in various parts of the room—an old woman very neatly dressed, clutching in her withered hand a photograph which she studied and studied with tear-dimmed eyes; a young man wearing last year's most fashionable styles in everything except his features: and soap could have aided him there; two policemen, helmets resting on their knees; and, last of all, a rather thin child of twelve, staring open-mouthed at everybody, a bundle of soiled clothing under one arm. Through an open door he saw a dozen young women garbed in black, with white cuffs and collars, all rattling away steadily at typewriters. Every now and then, from some hidden office, a bell rang decisively, and one of the girls would rise from her machine and pass noiselessly out of sight to obey the summons. From time to time, too, the darky servant with marvelous manners would usher somebody through the room where the typewriters were rattling, into the unseen office. First the old woman went—shakily, clutching her photograph; then the thin child with the bundle, staring at everything; then the two fat policemen, in portentous single file, helmets in their white-gloved hands, oiled hair glistening.

Gatewood's turn was approaching; he waited without any definite emotion, watching newcomers enter to take the places of those who had been summoned. He hadn't the slightest idea of what he was to say; nor did it worry him. A curious sense of impending good fortune left

him pleasantly tranquil; he picked up, from the silver tray on the table at his elbow, one of the firm's business cards, and scanned it with interest:

KEEN & CO.  
TRACERS OF LOST PERSONS

*Keen & Co. are prepared to locate the whereabouts of anybody on earth. No charges will be made unless the person searched for is found.*

*Blanks on application.*

WESTRELL KEEN, Manager.

"Mistuh Keen will see you, suh," came a persuasive voice at his elbow; and he rose and followed the softly moving colored servant out of the room, through a labyrinth of demure young women at their typewriters, then sharply to the right and into a big, handsomely furnished office, where a sleepy-looking elderly gentleman rose from an armchair and bowed. There could not be the slightest doubt that he *was* a gentleman; every movement, every sound he uttered, settled the fact.

"Mr. Keen?"

"Mr. Gatewood!"—with a quiet certainty which had its charm. "This is very good of you." Gatewood sat down and looked at his host. Then he said: "I'm searching for somebody, Mr. Keen, whom you are not likely to find."

"I doubt it," said Keen pleasantly.

Gatewood smiled. "If," he said, "you will undertake to find the person I cannot find, I must ask you to accept a retainer."

"We don't require retainers," replied Keen. "Unless we find the person sought for, we make no charges, Mr. Gatewood."

"I must ask you to do so in my case. It is not fair that you should undertake it on other terms. I desire to make a special arrangement with you. Do you mind?"

"What arrangement had you contemplated?" inquired Keen, amused.

"Only this: charge me in advance exactly what you would charge if successful. And, on the other hand, do not ask me for detailed information—I mean, do not insist on any information that I decline to give. Do you mind taking up such an extraordinary and unbusinesslike proposition, Mr. Keen?"

The Tracer of Lost Persons looked up sharply:

"About how much information *do* you decline to give, Mr. Gatewood?"

"About enough to incriminate and degrade," replied the young man, laughing.

The elderly gentleman sat silent, apparently buried in meditation. Once or twice his pleasant steel-gray eyes wandered over Gatewood as an expert, a connoisseur, glances at a picture and assimilates its history, its value, its artistic merit, its every detail in one practiced glance.

"I think we may take up this matter for you, Mr. Gatewood," he said, smiling his singularly agreeable smile.

"But—but you would first desire to know something about me—would you not?"

Keen looked at him: "You will not mistake me—you will consider it entirely inoffensive—I say that I know something about you, Mr. Gatewood?"

"About me? How can you? Of course, there is the social register and the club lists and all that—"

"And many, many sources of information which are necessary in such a business as this, Mr. Gatewood. It is a necessity for us to be almost as well informed as our clients' own lawyers. I could pay you no sincerer compliment than to undertake your case. I am half inclined to do so even *without* a retainer. Mind, I haven't yet said that I *will* take it."

"I prefer to regulate any possible indebtedness in advance," said Gatewood.

"As you wish," replied the older man, smiling. "In that case, suppose you draw your check" (he handed Gatewood a fountain pen as the young man fished a check-book from his pocket)—"your check for—well, say for \$5,000, to the order of Keen & Co."

Gatewood met his eye without wincing; he was in for it now; and he was always perfectly game. He had brought it upon himself; it was his own proposition. Not that he would have for a moment considered the sum as high—or any sum exorbitant—if there had been a chance of success; one cannot compare and weigh such matters. But how could there be any chance for success?

As he slowly smoothed out the check and stub, pen poised, Keen was saying: "Of course, we should succeed sooner or later—if we took up your case. We might succeed to-morrow—to-day. That would mean a large profit for us. But we might not succeed to-day, or next month, or even next year. That would leave us little or no profit; and, as it is our custom to go on until we do succeed, no matter how long it may require, you see, Mr. Gatewood, I should be taking all sorts of chances. It might even cost us double your retainer before we found her—"

"Her? How did—*why* do her say 'her'?"

"Am I wrong?" asked Keen, smiling.

"No—you are right."

The Tracer of Lost Persons sank into abstraction again. Gatewood waited, hoping that his case might be declined, yet ready to face any music started at his own request.

"She is young," mused Keen aloud, "very beautiful and accomplished. *Is she wealthy?*" He looked up mildly.

Gatewood said: "I don't know—the truth is I don't care—" And stopped.

"O-ho!" mused Keen slowly. "I—think—I understand. Am I wrong, Mr. Gatewood, in surmising that this young lady whom you seek is, in your eyes, very—I may say ideally gifted?"

"She is my ideal," replied the young man, coloring.

"Exactly. And—her general allure?"

"Charming!"

"Exactly; but to be a trifle more precise—if you could give me a sketch, an idea, a mere outline delicately tinted, now. *Is she more blond than brunette?*"

"Yes—but her eyes are brown. I—I insist on that."

"Why should you not? You know her; I don't," said Keen, laughing. "I merely wished to form a mental picture. . . . You say her hair is—is—"

"It's full of sunny color; that's all I can say."

"Exactly—I see. A rare and lovely combination with brown eyes and creamy skin, Mr. Gatewood. I fancy she might be, perhaps, an inch or two under your height?"

"Just about that. Her hands should be—*are* beautiful—"

"Exactly. The ensemble is most vividly portrayed, Mr. Gatewood; and—you have intimated that her lack of fortune—er—we might almost say her pecuniary distress—is more than compensated for by her accomplishments, character, and very unusual beauty. . . . *Did I* so understand you, Mr. Gatewood?"

"That's what I meant, anyhow," he said, flushing up.

"You *did* mean it?"

"I did; I do."

"Then we take your case, Mr. Gatewood. . . . No haste about the check, my dear sir—pray consider us at your service."

But Gatewood doggedly filled in the check and handed it to the Tracer of Lost Persons.

"I wish you happiness," said the older man in a low voice. "The lady you describe exists; it is for us to discover her."

"Thank you," stammered Gatewood, astounded.

Keen touched an electric button; a moment later a young girl entered the room.

"Miss Southerland, Mr. Gatewood. Will you be kind enough to take Mr. Gatewood's dictation in Room 19?"

For a second Gatewood stared—as though in the young girl before him the ghost of his ideal had risen to confront him—only for a second; then he bowed, matching her perfect acknowledgment of his presence by a bearing and courtesy which must have been inbred to be so faultless.

And he followed her to Room 19.

What had Keen meant by saying, "The lady you describe exists!" Did this remarkable elderly gentleman suspect that it was to be a hunt for an ideal? Had he deliberately entered into such a bargain? Impossible!

His disturbed thoughts reverted to the terms of the bargain, the entire enterprise, the figures on his check. His own amazing imbecility appalled him. What idiocy! What sudden madness had seized him to entangle himself in such unheard-of negotiations! True, he had played bridge until dawn the night before, but, on awakening, he had discovered no perceptible hold-over. It must have been sheer weakness of intellect that permitted him to be dominated by the suggestions of Kerns. And now the game was on: the jack declared, cards dealt, and his ante was up. Had he openers?

Room 19, duly labeled with its number on the opaque glass door, contained a desk, a table and typewriter, several comfortable chairs, and a window opening on Fifth Avenue, through which the eastern sun poured a stream of glory, washing curtain, walls, and ceiling with palest gold.

And all this time, preoccupied with new impressions and his own growing chagrin, he watched the girl who conducted him with all the unconscious assurance and grace of a young chatelaine passing through her own domain under escort of a distinguished guest.

When they had entered Room 19, she half turned, but he forestalled her and closed the door, and she passed before him with a perceptible inclination of her finely modeled head, seating herself at the desk by the open window. He took an armchair at her elbow and removed his gloves, looking at her expectantly.

### III

"THIS is a list of particular and general questions for you to answer, Mr. Gatewood," she said, handing him a long slip of printed matter. "The replies to such questions as you are able or willing to answer you may dictate to me." The beauty of her modulated voice was scarcely a surprise—no woman who moved and carried herself as did this tall young girl in black and white could reasonably be expected to speak with less distinction—yet the charm of her voice, from the moment her lips unclosed, so engrossed him that the purport of her speech escaped him.

"Would you mind saying it once more?" he asked.

She did so; he attempted to concentrate his attention, and succeeded sufficiently to look as though some vestige of intellect remained in him. He saw her pick up a pad and pencil; the contour and grace of two deliciously fashioned hands arrested his mental process once more.

"I beg your pardon," he said hastily; "what were you saying, Miss Southerland?"

"Nothing, Mr. Gatewood. I did not speak."

And he realized, hazily, that she had not spoken—that it was the subtle eloquence of her youth and loveliness that had appealed like a sudden voice—a sound faintly exquisite echoing his own thought of her.



Troubled, he looked at the slip of paper in his hand; it was headed:

SPECIAL DESCRIPTION BLANK  
(Form K)

And he read it as carefully as he was able to—the curious little clamor of his pulses, the dazed sense of elation, almost of expectation, distracting his attention all the time.

"I wish you would read it to me," he said; "that would give me time to think up answers."

"If you wish," she assented pleasantly, swinging around toward him in her desk chair. Then she crossed one knee over the other to support the pad, and, bending above it, lifted her brown eyes. She could have done nothing in the world more distracting at that moment.

"What is the sex of the person you desire to find, Mr. Gatewood?"

"Her sex? I—well, I fancy it is feminine."

She wrote after "Sex" the words "She is probably feminine"; looked at him absently, glanced at what she had written, flushed a little, rubbed out the "she is probably," wondering why a moment's mental wandering should have committed her to absurdity.

"Married?" she asked with emphasis.

"No," he replied, startled; then, vexed, "I beg your pardon—you mean to ask if *she* is married!"

"Oh, I didn't mean *you*, Mr. Gatewood; it's the next question, you see"—she held out the blank toward him. "Is the person you are looking for married?"

"Oh, no; she isn't married, either—at least—I trust—not—because if she *is* I don't want to find her!" he ended, entangled in an explanation which threatened to involve him deeper than he desired. And, looking up, he saw the beautiful brown eyes regarding him steadily. They reverted to the paper at once, and the white fingers sent the pencil flying.

"He trusts that she is unmarried, but if she *is* (underlined) married he doesn't want to find her," she wrote.

"That," she remarked, "goes under the head of 'General Remarks' at the bottom of the page"—she held it out, pointing with her pencil. He nodded, staring at her slender hand.

"Age?" she continued, setting the pad firmly on her rounded, yielding knee and looking up at him.

"Age? Well, I—as a matter of fact, I could only venture a surmise. You know," he said earnestly, "how difficult it is to guess ages, don't you, Miss Southerland?"

"How old do you *think* she is? Could you not hazard a guess—judging, say, from her appearance?"

"I have no data—no experience to guide me." He was becoming involved again. "Would you for practice, permit me first to guess your age, Miss Southerland?"

"Why—yes—if you think that might help you to guess hers."

So he leaned back in his armchair and considered her a very long time—having a respectable excuse to do so. Twenty times he forgot he was looking at her for any purpose except that of disinterested delight, and twenty times he remembered with a guilty wince that it was a matter of business.

"Perhaps I had better tell you," she suggested, her color rising a little under his scrutiny.

"Is it eighteen? Just her age!"

"Twenty-one, Mr. Gatewood—and you *said* you didn't know her age."

"I have just remembered that I *thought* it must be eighteen; but I dare say I was shy three years in her case, too. You may put it down at twenty-one."

For the slightest fraction of a second the brown eyes rested on his, the pencil hovered in hesitation. Then the eyes fell, and the moving fingers wrote.

"Did you write 'twenty-one'?" he inquired carelessly.

"I did not, Mr. Gatewood."

"What did you write?"

"I wrote: 'He doesn't appear to know much about her age.'"

"But I do know—"

"You said—" They looked at one another earnestly.

"The next question," she continued with composure, "is: 'Date and place of birth?' Can you answer any part of that question?"

"I trust I may be able to—some day. . . . What *are* you writing?"

"I'm writing: 'He trusts he may be able to, some day.' Wasn't that what you said?"

"Yes, I did say that. I—I'm not perfectly sure what I meant by it."

She passed to the next question:

"Height?"

"About five feet six," he said, fascinated gaze on her.

"Hair?"

"More gold than brown—full of—er—gleams—" She looked up quickly; his eyes reverted to the window rather suddenly. He had been looking at her hair.

"Complexion?" she continued after a shade of hesitation.

"It's a sort of delicious mixture—bisque, tinted with a pinkish bloom—ivory and rose—" He was explaining volubly, when she began to shake her head, timing each shake to his words.

"Really, Mr. Gatewood, I think you are hopelessly vague on that point—unless you desire to convey the impression that she is speckled."

"Speckled!" he repeated, horrified. "Why, I am describing a woman who is my ideal of beauty—"

But she had already gone to the next question:

"Teeth?"

"P-p-perfect p-p-pearls!" he stammered. The laughing red mouth closed like a flower at dusk, veiling the sparkle of her teeth.

Was he trying to be impertinent? Was he deliberately describing her? He did not look like that sort of man; yet *why* was he watching her so closely, so curiously at every question? Why did he look at her teeth when she laughed?

"Eyes!" Her own dared him to continue what, coincidence or not, was plainly a description of herself.

"B-b-b—" He grew suddenly timorous, hesitating, pretending to a perplexity which was really a healthy scare. For she was frowning.

"Curious I can't think of the color of her eyes," he said; "is—isn't it?"

She coldly inspected her pad and made a correction; but all she did was to rub out a comma and put another in its place. Meanwhile, Gatewood, chin in his hand, sat buried in profound thought. "*Were* they blue?" he murmured to himself aloud, "*or were* they brown? Blue begins with a *b* and brown begins with a *b*. I'm convinced that her eyes began with a *b*. They were not, therefore, gray or green, because," he added in a burst of confidence, "it is utterly impossible to spell gray or green with a *b*!"

Miss Southerland looked slightly astonished.

"All you can recollect, then, is that the color of her eyes began with the letter *b*?"

"That is absolutely all I can remember; but I think they *were*—brown."

"If they *were* brown they must be brown now," she observed, looking out of the window.

"That's true! Isn't it curious I never thought of that? What are you writing?"

"Brown," she said, so briefly that it sounded something like a snub.

"Mouth?" inquired the girl, turning a new leaf on her pad.

"Perfect. Write it: there is no other term fit to describe its color, shape, its sensitive beauty, its— *What did you write just then?*"

"I wrote, 'Mouth, ordinary.'"

"I don't want you to! I want—"

"Really, Mr. Gatewood, a rhapsody on a girl's mouth is proper in poetry, but scarcely germane to the record of a purely business transaction. Please answer the next question tersely, if you don't mind: 'Figure?'"

"Oh, I do mind! I can't! Any poem is much too brief to describe her figure—"

"Shall we say 'Perfect?'" asked the girl, raising her brown eyes in a glimmering transition from vexation to amusement. For, after all, it could be only a coincidence that this young man should be describing features peculiar to herself.

"Couldn't you write, 'Venus-of-Milo-like?'" he inquired. "That is laconic."

"I could—if it is true. But if you mean it for praise—I—don't think any modern woman would be flattered."

"I always supposed that she of Milo had an ideal figure," he said, perplexed.

She wrote, "A good figure." Then, propping her rounded chin on one lovely white hand, she glanced at the next question:

"Hands?"

"White, beautiful, rose-tipped, slender yet softly and firmly rounded—"

"How can they be soft and firm, too, Mr. Gatewood?" she protested; then, surprising his guilty eyes fixed on her hands, hastily dropped them and sat up straight, level-browed, cold as marble. Was he deliberately being rude to her?"

#### IV

As a matter of fact, he was not. Too poor in imagination to invent, on the spur of the moment, charms and qualities suited to his ideal, he had, at first unconsciously, taken as a model the girl before him; quite unconsciously and innocently at first—then furtively, and with a dawning perception of the almost flawless beauty he was secretly plagiarizing. Aware, now, that something had annoyed her; aware, too, at the same moment that there appeared to be nothing lacking in her to satisfy his imagination of the ideal, he began to turn redder than he had ever turned in all his life.

Several minutes of sixty seconds each ensued before he ventured to stir a finger. And it was only when she bent again very gravely over her pad that he cautiously eased a cramped muscle or two, and drew a breath—a long, noiseless, deep and timid respiration. He realized the enormity of what he had been doing—how close he had come to giving unpardonable offense by drawing a perfect portrait of her as the person he desired to find through the good offices of Keen & Co.

But there was no such person—unless she had a double: for what more could a man desire than the ideal traits he had been able to describe only by using her as his inspiration.

When he ventured to look at her, one glance was enough to convince him that she, too, had noticed the parallel—had been forced to recognize her own features in the portrait he had constructed of an ideal. And she had caught him in absent-minded contemplation of the hands he had been describing. He knew that his face was the face of a guilty man.

"What is the next question?" he stammered, eager to answer it in a manner calculated to allay her suspicions.

"The next question?" She glanced at the list, then with a voice of velvet which belied the eyes, clear as frosty brown pools in November: "The next question requires a description of her feet."

"Feet! Oh—they—they're rather large—why, her feet are enormous, I believe—"

She looked at him as though stunned; suddenly a flood of pink spread, wave on wave, from the white nape of her neck to her hair; she bent low over her pad and wrote something, remaining in that attitude until her face cooled.

"Somehow or other I've done it again!" he thought, horrified. "The best thing I can do is to end it and go home."

In his distress he began to hedge, saying: "Of course, she is rather tall and her feet are in some sort of proportion—in fact, they are perfectly symmetrical feet—"

Never in his life had he encountered a pair of such angrily beautiful eyes. Speech stopped with a dry gulp.

"We now come to 'General Remarks,'" she said in a voice made absolutely steady and emotionless. "Have you any remarks of that description to offer, Mr. Gatewood?"

"I'm willing to make remarks," he said, "if I only knew what you wished me to say."

She mused, eyes on the sunny window, then looked up. "Where did you last see her?"

"Near Fifth Avenue."

"And what street?"

He named the street.

"Near here?"

"Rather," he said timidly.

She ruffled the edges of her pad, wrote something and erased it, bit her scarlet upper lip, and frowned.

"Out of doors, of course?"

"No; indoors," he admitted furtively.

She looked up with a movement almost nervous.

"Do you dare—I mean, care—to be more concise?"

"I would rather not," he replied in a voice from which he hoped he had expelled the tremors of alarm.

"As you please, Mr. Gatewood. And would you care to answer any of these other questions: Who and what are or were her parents? Give all particulars concerning all her relatives. Is she employed or not? What are her social, financial, and general circumstances? Her character, personal traits, aims, interests, desires? Has she any vices? Any virtues? Talents? Ambitions? Caprices? Fads? Are you in love with her? Is—"

"Yes," he said, "I am."

"Is she in love with you?"

"No; she hates me—I'm afraid."

"Is she in love with anybody?"

"That is a very difficult—"

The girl wrote: "He doesn't know," with a satisfaction apparently causeless.

"Is she a relative of yours, Mr. Gatewood?" very sweetly.

"No, Miss Southerland," very positively.

"You—you desire to marry her—you say?"

"I do. But I didn't say it."

She was silent; then:

"What is her name?" in a low voice which started several agreeable thrills chasing one another over him.

"I—I decline to answer," he stammered.

"On what grounds, Mr. Gatewood?"

He looked her full in the eyes; suddenly he bent forward and gazed at the printed paper from which she had been apparently reading.

"Why, all those questions you are scaring me with are not there!" he exclaimed indignantly. "You are making them up!"

"I—I know, but"—she was flushing furiously—"but they are on the other forms—some of them. Can't you see you are answering 'Form K'? That is a special form—"

"But why do you ask me questions that are not on Form K?"

"Because it is my duty to do all I can to secure evidence which may lead to the discovery of



the person you desire to find. I—I assure you, Mr. Gatewood, this duty is not—not always agreeable—and some people make it harder still."

Gatewood looked out of the window. Various emotions—among them shame, mortification, chagrin—pervaded him, and chased each other along his nervous system, coloring his neck and ears a fiery red for the enlightenment of any observer.

"I—I did not mean to offend you," said the girl in a low voice—such a gently regretful voice that Gatewood swung around in his chair.

"There is nothing I would not be glad to tell you about the woman I have fallen in love with," he said. "She is overwhelmingly lovely; and—when I dare—I will tell you her name and where I first saw her—and where I saw her last—if you desire. Shall I?"

"It would be advisable. When will you do this?"

"When I dare."

"You—you don't dare—now?"

"No... not now."

She absently wrote on her pad: "He doesn't dare tell me now." Then, with head still bent, she lifted her mischief-making, trouble-breeding brown eyes to his once more.

"I am to come here, of course, to consult you?" he asked dizzily.

"Mr. Keen will receive you—"

"He may be busy."

"He may be," she repeated dreamily.

"So—I'll ask for you."

"We could write you, Mr. Gatewood."

He said hastily: "It's no trouble for me to come; I walk every morning."

"But there would be no use, I think, in your coming very soon. All I—all Mr. Keen could do for a while would be to report progress—"

"That is all I dare look for: progress—for the present."

During the time that he remained—which was not very long—neither of them spoke until he arose to take his departure.

"Good-by, Miss Sutherland. I hope you may find the person I have been searching for."

"Good-by, Mr. Gatewood. . . . I hope we shall . . . but I—don't—know."

And, as a matter of fact, she did not know; she was rather excited over nothing, apparently; and also somewhat preoccupied with several rather disturbing emotions the species of which she was interested in determining. But to label and catalogue each of these emotions separately required privacy and leisure to think—and she also wished to look very earnestly at the reflection of her own face in the mirror of her own chamber. For it is a trifle exciting—though but an innocent coincidence—to be compared, feature by feature, to a young man's ideal. As far as that went, she excelled it, too; and, as she stood by the desk, alone, gathering up her notes, she suddenly bent over and lifted the hem of her gown a trifle—sufficient to reassure herself that the dainty pair of shoes she wore, would have baffled the efforts of any Venus ever sculptured. And she was perfectly right.

"Of course," she thought to herself, "his ideal runaway hasn't enormous feet. He, too, must have been struck with the similarity between me and his ideal, and when he realized that I also noticed it, he was frightened by my frown into saying that her feet were enormous. How silly! . . . For I didn't mean to frighten him. . . . He frightened me—once or twice—I mean he irritated me—no, interested me, is what I do mean. . . . Heigho! I wonder why she ran away! I wonder why he can't find her? . . . It's—it's silly to run away from a man like that. . . . Heigho! . . . She doesn't deserve to be found. There is nothing to be afraid of—nothing to alarm anybody in a man like that."

So she gathered up her notes and walked slowly out and across to the private office of the Tracer of Lost Persons.

"Come in," said the Tracer when she knocked. He was using the telephone; she seated herself rather listlessly beside the window, where spring sunshine lay in gilded patches on the

rug and spring breezes stirred the curtains. She was a little tired, but there seemed to be no good reason why. Yet, with the soft wind blowing on her cheek, the languor grew; she rested her face on one closed hand, shutting her eyes.

When they opened again it was to meet the fixed gaze of Mr. Keen.

"Oh—I beg your pardon!"

"There is no need of it, child. Be seated. Never mind that report just now." He paced the length of the room once or twice, hands clasped behind him; then, halting to confront her:

"What sort of a man is this young Gatewood?"

"What sort, Mr. Keen? Why—I think he is the—the sort—that—"

"I see that you don't think much of him," said Keen, laughing.

"Oh, indeed I did not mean that at all; I mean that he appeared to be—to be—"

"Rather a cad?"

"Why, no!" she said, flushing up. "He is absolutely well-bred, Mr. Keen."

"You received no unpleasant impression of him?"

"On the contrary!" she said rather warmly—for it hurt her sense of justice that Keen should so misjudge even a stranger in whom she had no personal interest.

"You think he looks like an honest man?"

"Honest?" She was rosy with annoyance. "Have you any idea that he is dishonest?"

"Have you?"

"Not the slightest," she said with emphasis.

"Suppose a man should set us hunting for a person who does not exist—on our terms, which are no payment unless successful? Would that be honest?" asked Keen gravely.

"Did—did he do that?"

"No, child."

"I knew he *couldn't* do such a thing!"

"No, he—er—couldn't, because I wouldn't allow it—not that he tried to!" added Keen hastily as the indignant brown eyes sparkled ominously. "Really, Miss Southerland, he must be all you say he is, for he has a stanch champion to vouch for him."

"All I say he is? I haven't said anything about him!"

Mr. Keen nodded. "Exactly. Let us drop him for a moment. . . . Are you perfectly well, Miss Southerland?"

"Why, yes."

"I'm glad of it. You are a trifle pale; you seem to be a little languid. . . . When do you take your vacation?"

"You suggested May, I believe," she said wistfully.

The Tracer leaned back in his chair, joining the tips of his fingers reflectively.

"Miss Southerland," he said, "you have been with us a year. I thought it might interest you to know that I am exceedingly pleased with you."

She colored charmingly.

"But," he added, "I'm terribly afraid we're going to lose you."

"Why?" she asked, startled.

"However," he continued, ignoring her half-frightened question with a smile, "I am going to promote you—for faithful and efficient service."

"O-h!"

"With an agreeable increase of salary, and new duties which will take you into the open air. . . . You ride?"

"I—I used to before—"

"Exactly; before you were obliged to earn your living. Please have yourself measured for habit and boots this afternoon. I shall arrange for horse, saddle, and groom. You will spend most of your time riding in the Park—for the present."

"But—Mr. Keen—am I to be one of your agents—a sort of detective?"

Keen regarded her absently, then crossed one leg over the other.

"Read me your notes," he said with a smile.

She read them, folded them, and he took them from her, thoughtfully regarding her.

"Did you know that your mother and I were children together?" he asked.

"No!" She stared. "Is that why you sent for me that day at the school of stenography?"

"That is why. . . . When I learned that my playmate—your mother—was dead, is it not reasonable to suppose that I should wish her daughter to have a chance?"

Miss Southerland looked at him steadily.

"She was like you—when she married. . . . I never married. . . . Do you wonder that I sent for you, child?"

Nothing but the clock ticking there in the sunny room, and an old man staring into two dimmed brown eyes, and the little breezes at the open window whispering of summers past.

"This young man, Gatewood," said the Tracer, clearing his voice of its hoarseness—"this young man ought to be all right, if I did not misjudge his father—years ago, child, years ago. And he is all right—" He half turned toward a big letter-file; "his record is clean, so far. The trouble with him is idleness. He ought to marry."

"Isn't he trying to?" she asked.

"It looks like it. Miss Southerland, we must find this woman!"

"Yes, but I don't see how you are going to—on such slight information—"

"Information! Child, I have all I want—all I could desire." He laughed, passing his hands over his gray hair. "We are going to find the girl he is in love with before the week ends!"

"Do you really think so?" she exclaimed.

"Yes. But you must do a great deal in this case."

"I?"

"Exactly."

"And—*and what am I to do to?*"

"Ride in the Park, child! And if you see Mr. Gatewood, don't you dare take your eyes off him for one moment. Watch him; observe everything he does. If he should recognize you and speak to you, be as amiable to him as though it were not by my orders."

"Then—then I am to be a detective!" she faltered.

The Tracer did not appear to hear her. He took up the notes, turned to the telephone, and began to send out a general alarm, reading the description of the person whom Gatewood had described. The vast, intricate and delicate machinery under his control was being set in motion all over the Union.

"Not that I expect to find her outside the borough of Manhattan," he said, smiling, as he hung up the receiver and turned to her; "but it's as well to know how many types of that species exist in this Republic, and who they are—in case any other young man comes here raving of brown eyes and 'gleams' in the hair."

Miss Southerland, to her own intense consternation, blushed.

"I think you had better order that habit at once," said the Tracer carelessly.

"Tell me, Mr. Keen," she asked tremulously, "am I to spy upon Mr. Gatewood? And report to you? . . . For I simply cannot bear to do it—"

"Child, you need report nothing unless you desire to. And when there is something to report, it will be about the woman I am searching for. *Don't you understand?* I have already located her. You will find her in the Park. And when you are *sure* she is the right one—and if you care to report it to me—I shall be ready to listen. . . . I am always ready to listen to you."

"But—I warn you, Mr. Keen, that I have perfect faith in the honor of Mr. Gatewood. I know that I could have nothing unworthy to report."

"I am sure of it," said the Tracer of Lost Persons, studying her with eyes that were not quite clear. "Now, I think you had better order that habit. . . . Your mother sat her saddle perfectly. . . . We rode very often—my lost playmate and I."

He turned, hands clasped behind his back, absently pacing the room, backward, forward, there in the spring sunshine. Nor did he notice her lingering, nor mark her as she stole from the room, brown eyes saddened and thoughtful, wondering, too, that there should be in the world so much room for sorrow. □

# THE ORIENTAL DETECTIVE

## Part III

By Greg Goode

From the dusty provinces of Sung China (960-1279) to the mean streets of modern Japan; from the picturesque, romantic shores of Honolulu to the bustling metropolis of prewar Indianapolis, the Oriental has neverendingly fought fictional crime. Oriental detectives provide the mystery genre with several superlatives. They are among the first, the most famous, the best loved, the most mysterious, and the most intelligent detectives in mystery fiction. Still other Oriental detectives are among the most justifiably forgotten, most maligned, and most implausibly drawn by their authors of any heroes in the genre.

There have been Orientals as consulting detectives, private eyes, secret agents, traveling magistrates, Great Detectives, and, most often, professional policemen. The attraction, especially for Western readers, of an Asian as a detective hero, is the combination of curiosity, novelty, and exoticism of his presence and sometimes of his methods. The interplay between the strange and the familiar in stories with any ethnic minority hero can work to make those stories lastingly memorable or soporific and disastrous. There are many stories of each kind among the cases of the Oriental detective.

### THE ANCIENTS

This is intended primarily to be a survey of detectives created by English-speaking authors. But there is such a long and important detective fiction tradition in the Far East, especially in China and Japan, that some Oriental detective fiction should be

considered. It is perhaps well known that China had detective fiction before the West had it. In fact, Chinese crime fiction, which antedates that of other Asian countries, derives from a thousand-year-old oral tradition of fictionalized exploits of magistrate-detective heroes and other gallants. Chinese interest in true crime accounts is also ancient, and the accounts were often laced with bits of fiction. The accounts were sometimes written in bamboo books and date back to the Ch'in dynasty (221-206 B.C.). The written versions of courtroom plays which were originally spoken or sung, and which include plays of Magistrate Pao, date back to between 1200 and 1350 A.D.<sup>1</sup> The Chinese crime novel and short story are younger, starting around 1600.

Although there are many ancient Chinese detectives,<sup>2</sup> Magistrate Pao and Judge Dee are probably the best known, whether in Chinese or English. They are both based on historical Chinese government officials, and their fictional accounts often included elements from mysterious and sensational true crimes of the times. Magistrate Pao's real-life prototype was Pao Cheng (999-1062), who served as a magistrate, political censor, and fiscal minister. Because of Pao's great devotion to combatting injustice, crime, and corruption, there developed during and after his lifetime an ever-growing legend about him. He became a folk hero, and the perfect choice for one of the world's first series detective heroes. Magistrate Pao's cases were cast into story and dramatic form, and, fortunately, both are available in English. In addition to the more familiar volume of six stories rendered by Leon Comber as *The Strange Cases of Magistrate Pao*,<sup>3</sup> there is the literal translation of

three of the best Pao plays by George Hayden in *Crime and Punishment in Medieval Chinese Drama: Three Judge Pao Plays*.<sup>4</sup>

In a form as old as the Chinese detective story, it would not be surprising to find anticipated many of the devices and patterns of the later Western form. One of these patterns is the inverted plot structure. In Comber's volume are English renditions of six inverted crime stories from the sixteenth century. Usually these stories present the commission of a crime of adultery, passion, and murder (often committed by a lecherous Buddhist monk, a hooligan, or a thief), followed by the suspicion turning to an innocent man and the investigation and solution by Magistrate Pao. Since in China the penal code held that no one could be sentenced to a crime without having confessed to it, Pao's methods involve trickery and often torture, which was legal. In Comber's "The Key," we see the adulterous act between a renegade scholar and the daughter of a rich official and the robbery of jewels from the official's household. Pao is called in; he gathers physical evidence, interviews witnesses, apprehends the suspect (the right one), and tortures him. But the suspect does not confess until confronted with the jewels he had stolen. In "The Case of the Passionate

Monk," Pao plays a clever psychological trick on a Buddhist monk in order to bring a confession from him.

Hayden's literally translated dramatic versions of Pao's cases make abundantly clear the inverted plot structure. Since the plays have no "stage direction" comments in the script, all information is given through dialogue and monologue. For example, in "Selling Rice at Ch'en-chou," the criminals introduce themselves:

"I'm Liu Te-chung, son of Lord Liu, and this is my brother-in-law, Yang Chin-wu. Under the protection of our father, we thieve and grab, pocket and pinch, meddle and loaf, riot and run amuck."<sup>5</sup>

Very soon, we see young Liu and Yang robbing the Ch'en-chou townspeople of their hard-earned money. In this play, Pao travels about in disguise, gathering information from witnesses. In court, Pao makes Liu confess, and executes him along with Wang.

Certain forms of torture were legal in order to extract confessions. In "The Ghost of the Pot," Magistrate Pao knows that Chao the Jug and his wife Chih-hsiu have committed a bizarre murder, but he needs their confession. In court, he commands his bailiff:

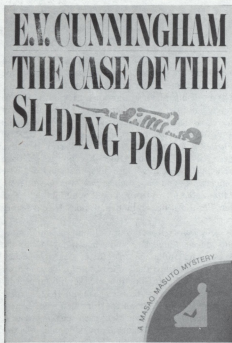
Chang Ch'ien, pick out a large staff and give each one of them a hundred strokes. Then have the secretary get their confessions down on an official form."<sup>6</sup>

After their confessions are given, Chao the Jug and his wife must be punished. Pao commands:

"Once they've signed it [the official form], I'll sentence them to death in this very session. On this same day they are to be taken to the execution ground and put to death by a thousand or ten thousand slashes."<sup>7</sup>

Normally, though, Magistrate Pao is not so harsh. His methods, in the plays and the stories, are primarily the extensive interviewing of witnesses, gathering of physical evidence, disguise, hints from dreams and ghosts, and a courtroom manner echoed centuries later by the imperious Nero Wolfe.

Readers of Robert van Gulik's Judge Dee saga are perhaps familiar with van Gulik's five distinctions between Chinese and Western detective fiction. The Chinese form has these characteristics that the Western form lacks: the criminal is introduced at the beginning; clues and murders involve ghosts, goblins, and spirits; there are hundreds of characters; there are two hundred or more chapters; and tortures and punishments are described. But in the least representative Judge Dee story that van Gulik could find to translate, *Dee Goong An*, an eighteenth-century novel,<sup>8</sup> there are remarkable similarities to Western detective novels. For in *Dee Goong An*, van Gulik's

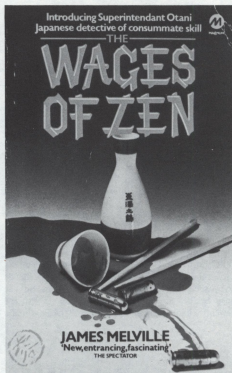




only Judge Dee translation, we see a very early police procedural, complete with the delegation of responsibilities, the paperwork, and the worries about allocating time and manpower among three distinct cases. The cases in this novel are all murder cases: the "Double Murder at Dawn," "The Strange Corpse," and "The Poisoned Bride." Dee has four subordinates, including former highway robbers skilled in martial arts and heroics, to whom he delegates tasks and responsibilities.

Judge Dee's methods in *Dee Goong An*, though surrounded by the aura of official Chinese pomp and respectability, are very similar to those of Western detectives. The investigative and analytic elements are similar also. There are disguises, such as in "The Strange Corpse" when Dee's helpers impersonate spirits to trick the murderer into confessing. There are medical examinations and an autopsy. There is explicit analysis of means, motive, and opportunity, and deductions in terms of clues abstracted from the messy network of facts. In "The Strange Corpse," there is even a clue based on a homonym. In addition to these similarities, there is the emphasis on cerebration. Since the case of "The Strange Corpse" is so difficult, Judge Dee stops at one point to close himself into a quiet chamber to ponder and ratiocinate. There is even a mild challenge to the reader in "The Poisoned Bride" when Dee says that he has the solution. There are literary clues, i.e., clues based on quotations from the Chinese classics. The solution to "The Poisoned Bride" is formally similar to that of Dorothy L. Sayers's *The Nine Tailors*. There is a J. D. Carr-esque impossible crime, in which the dominant investigative question is not whodunit, but howdunit. This is emphasized in "The Strange Corpse." After the autopsy has failed to show the means of death, the accused shouts to her accuser in Dee's court: "You miserable coward. You abject cur! If I killed my husband, tell them how I did it! Tell them...if you can!"<sup>9</sup>

Both the Judge Dee and the Magistrate Pao stories spawned sequels and imitators in China, such as the nineteenth-century *San-hsia Wu-yi* (*Three Heroes and Five Gallants*) and several other *Gallants* novels featuring Pao. Influence from these stories spread to other Far Eastern countries, such as Japan, Korea, and perhaps Burma and Vietnam. Perhaps Japan's most famous book of ancient detective tales is the *Honcho Oin Hiji*, or *Tales of Japanese Justice*,<sup>10</sup> written by Saikaku Ihara in 1683.<sup>11</sup> It features 44 civil and criminal cases solved by a Japanese official referred to as "His Lordship," whose wisdom, insight, and methods resemble those of Solomon combined with a dash of trickery. In the story "An Order to Pile Up Four or Five Bowls," His Lordship devises a simple but clever test to discern the true identity of a thief. The test is abstractly similar to one



in a Pao story, "The Chalk Circle," and one in Bertolt Brecht's "The Caucasian Chalk Circle." In the story "The Short Bow of the Ten-night Nembutsu," His Lordship plays still another trick, this time to reveal a murderer. There are several medieval Korean novels which feature detective heroes, such as the anonymous *Changhwa hongnyon chon* (*Tale of Rose Flower and Ping Lotus*) with its warrior-detective hero Chong Tong-u. Other Korean novels have detective characters more like the staid Chinese officials Dee and Pao, such as *Pak Munsu chon* (*Pak Munsu, the Royal Inspector*). It is undoubtable that the Far East has a long and rich detective-story heritage.

Long before Robert van Gulik and Leon Comber introduced Judge Dee and Magistrate Pao to the West, the influence of stories featuring such detectives reached the United States. Not long after sinologist Herbert Giles translated several supposedly "true crime" cases into English in 1882,<sup>12</sup> there appeared several detective stories in the ancient Chinese style but written by English-speaking writers. "Chan Tow, the Highrob" by sinophile Chester Bailey Fernald appeared in *The Century* magazine in

1895.<sup>13</sup> Its detective, the Magistrate Tsan Ran Foo, went disguised as a lowly fortune-teller in search of the murderer of a merchant. With the element of adultery, and with the wife's plot to kill the husband, this story is quite similar to many ancient Chinese detective stories. In 1900, another detective story appeared in *The Century*, George Hays's "The Peril of Fan-way-chin."<sup>14</sup> Similar in style to several Pao plays, this story tells of scholar Fan-way-chin's journey to Peking to take an examination for an official post. On the way, he is lured to the luxurious home of Lady Fang with a story of his being a long-lost relative of hers. Lady Fang's hospitality is almost burdensome, and soon Fan-way-chin finds that he has been secretly taken prisoner. He wakes up one morning in jail and screams his complaints to the jailer, who, fortunately for Fan, is accompanied by a mandarin. The mandarin, also called "the inspector," hears Fan's case, travels to Lady Fang's village, and, with the aid of close observation and keen questioning, uncovers the plot to kidnap and eventually execute Fan.

Although there might be other Oriental detectives in stories buried in back issues of periodicals, most fiction featuring Orientals, from the mid-nineteenth century to the late 1930s, was of the Yellow Peril or Sinister Oriental kind. But there were to be several unforgettable exceptions.

#### THE GOLDEN AGE

Most of the well-known Oriental detectives or secret agents are products of the Golden Age of detective fiction, that is, the period between the world wars. Charlie Chan, Jo Gar, James Lee Wong, and Mr. Moto all made their debut in the ten-year period between 1925 and 1935. There were other Oriental detectives also; some are well drawn, intelligent characters; others are eminently forgettable.

Of course, the prototypical Oriental detective is Charlie Chan. He is not only one of the best known, best-loved detectives in all crime fiction, but if one adds together his cases in books, films, radio, comic books, comic strips, short stories, and television, he is also one of the busiest. As a purposefully created reaction to the image of sinister doings and Yellow Peril which plagued Chinese characters in the 1920s, Charlie's image was completely unthreatening, and even romantic in a favorable way. Where Sinister Orientals had been evil, Charlie was benevolent. Where the speech pattern of Fu Manchu was sometimes more forceful, intelligent, and articulate than that of the Anglo characters, Charlie's speech was indirect, flowery, and sometimes ungrammatical. Where Sinister Orientals were tall, gaunt, and invariably yellow of color, Charlie was of medium height, rather corpulent, and ivory in color. He was also something of an innovation for being a detective

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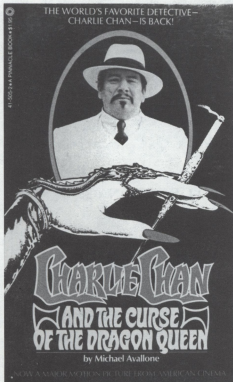
with a large family. A chubby, softspoken, gentle man with a wife and eleven children can hardly be threatening.

Much of the romance about Charlie came from the romance surrounding the territorial Hawaii of the 'twenties, combined with Earl Derr Biggers's affection for the long-ago and far away. As the "Crossroads of the Pacific," Hawaii was not so Asian as to intimidate Americans and British, yet it was exotic enough to lure them to it in fact and fancy. It was a perfect combination of the far-away with the familiar, the exotic with the safe. From the opening scenes in the first Chan novel, *The House Without a Key* (1925), to Charlie's own allusions to ancient China in the last novel, *Keeper of the Keys* (1932), there are frequent mentions of times past and places distant. In the Honolulu of *The House Without a Key*, the well-to-do Bostonian Dan Winterslip reminisces about the simple, naive, beautiful, unspoiled, vanished Hawaii of the 1880s, with its monarch Kalakaua, the friendly natives, and the absence of technological clutter. In *The Black Camel* (1929), Charlie himself savors bittersweet memories about the courtship of his wife on the beautiful beach of Waikiki "many years ago." All during the first half of *Charlie Chan Carries On*

(1930), Chief Inspector Duff of Scotland Yard thinks warmly of the intelligent but gentle Chinese detective from distant, warm Hawaii, whom he has met several years before in *Behind That Curtain*. To the Westerners in the novels, as well as to some readers, Charlie became a symbol of Hawaii and its romance.

Much has been said about Charlie's intuitive methods of crime detection and his sharp psychological insight. In *Behind That Curtain* (1928), Charlie explains to the eminent British detective Sir Frederic Bruce that he shuns science and mechanics as investigative aids and instead thinks deeply about "human people" and "human passions." Charlie does quite well at this—he sees through people's banter and conversational ploys to their motivations and values. People are more egoistic to Charlie's unclouded vision than they are to their own flattering self-images. In *The Black Camel*, a character laments the death of movie star Shelah Fane, saying, "Poor Shelah! . . . Life was very sweet to her," but Charlie replies with, "It is sweet to all of us . . . Even the beggar hesitates to cross a rotting bridge." In *Charlie Chan Carries On*, a rich old lady, a seasoned traveler, tries to compliment Charlie, announcing, "My favorite race, the Chinese, Mr. Chan." Charlie bows and answers, "After your own, of course." This sharpness of insight, combined with the occasional method of selecting the "essential clue" which Charlie inherited from Sir Frederic Bruce, are what allow Charlie to solve his cases, even though he attributes his successes to the psychic nature of the Chinese people, and to luck.

The next Oriental detective to appear was also from an island, the Philippines, "Pearl of the Orient." Although Jo Gar is half Spanish and half Filipino, he speaks Japanese, Malay, and some Chinese, in addition to English, Spanish, and the Spanish-like Tagalog. Gar appeared first in 1930 in *Black Mask*<sup>15</sup> and is the first Oriental private eye. Author Raoul Whitfield's style is crisper and more action-packed than Biggers's but nonetheless romantic in its evocation of the tropics. In the novella-like string of short stories *The Rainbow Murders* (1931),<sup>16</sup> Gar has a case typical for a private eye, a quest mission. He searches for the Von Loffler diamonds, ten gems worth a total of \$200,000 which were stolen from Delgado's jewelry store in Manila. Gar's search takes him from the sweltering, bustling, multi-racial streets of Manila to the Japanese liner *Cheyo Maru* to the cool, breezy veranda of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, to the hilly streets of San Francisco. Like several other detectives, Gar looks least alert when he is most alert; he talks lazily and tends to squint his eyes when he is after important information. Although he is polite, well-mannered, and careful with his speech, he can be instantly and unexpectedly violent when the need arises. He is easily puzzled, however, and not at all



assertive or insistent about his deductions or conclusions. And, unlike Charlie Chan, Gar slightly resents American colonialism in the Pacific islands, as evidenced by his dislike for the American Chief of Constabulary, the haughty, supercilious Arnold Carlyse. In the hard-boiled stories in which he appears, Jo Gar is a gray-haired, brown-skinned, white-suited Filipino whose methods resemble a combination of those of Philip Marlowe and Columbo.

The third Oriental detective of the Golden Age was a sophisticated, competent, educated, intelligent Chinese American who worked undercover for the U.S. State Department, mostly in San Francisco. James Lee Wong appeared in some twenty stories between 1934 and 1940 in *Collier's*, perhaps to continue where Charlie Chan left off in his last story in the *Saturday Evening Post* in July 1932. Author Hugh Wiley provided in Wong a character to suit the tastes of the readers of the day, just as he had done fourteen years earlier with his tales of clever Sinister Orientals in the SEP.

Tall, slim, usually dressed stylishly in a suit and tie, sometimes in a trenchcoat and fedora hat, James Lee Wong cut a dashing figure, as shown by Irving Nurick's realistic illustrations. Wong's Yale education, his knowledge of Chinese language, history, and culture, as well as his familiarity with criminology and science, make him an ideal investigator, somewhat like an Oriental version of Nick Carter or V. W. Mason's Hugh North. For example, in one of the last stories, "The Heart of Kwan Yin," Wong utilizes his knowledge of Oriental languages to decipher the inscription on the pedestal of the statue of Kwan Yin. Naturally, this inscription baffles the American policeman, Lieutenant Roper:

"All that Chink writin' is Greek to me," growled Roper. "What has that got to do with the crime?"

"It may have everything to do with the crime [Wong replies]. Look. These are a transcript of the four characters *Mo Lo Kie To*, in the Buddhist form, corresponding to the sanscrit *Marakata*. They come from the seventeenth-century *Tsu Mu Lu*, which in turn is taken from the Persian *Zumurrud*—emerald!"<sup>17</sup>

This case, like many others, is solved by Wong's superior intelligence and knowledge of facts and cultures alien to the official investigators.

In other stories, Wong, like Mason's Hugh North, starts to solve a crime and ends up embroiled in international intrigue. In the first story, "In Chinatown,"<sup>18</sup> he begins by investigating the murder of a Russian woman and ends up discovering Japanese espionage, Russian intrigue, and a plot to control the world's quicksilver for use in the upcoming world war. But Wong is at his best when involved in cases which emphasize the Chinese side of his nature. He provided a positive ethnic hero image at a time when

Sinister Orientals abounded, Jo Gar was less well known, and Charlie Chan was often dismissed as a comic figure. Of course, James Lee Wong's image was much different in the six films starring Boris Karloff as a sort of mysterious figure.

Where Charlie Chan was endearing to many, where Jo Gar was diffident and persevering, where James Lee Wong was sophisticated, the fourth Oriental hero was mysterious. Mr. Moto (full name, I. A. Moto) is one of the most mysterious and elusive heroes in crime fiction. He would appear in and disappear from the stories quietly and unobtrusively, and much of what he accomplished would be done behind the narrative scenes, including the necessary elimination of troublesome adversaries.

In the early 1930s, stories in the "slick" magazines featuring Oriental characters, whether good guys or bad guys, were quite popular. Charlie Chan's last story had appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1932, his career cut short because of Earl Derr Biggers' death one year later. *Collier's* started the James Lee Wong stories in 1934 and had run Sax Rohmer's Fu Manchu stories since 1913. So early in 1934, SEP editor George Horace Lorimer, who had vowed to "reinterpret America to itself" through his magazine, encouraged John P. Marquand to travel at SEP's expense to the Orient to gather material for yet more Oriental stories. In China, Marquand saw quite a bit of evidence of Japanese imperialism and was perhaps influenced from what he saw to create his patriotic Japanese agent, Mr. Moto.

Despite the rising anti-Japan feelings in the U.S. and England during the late 1930s, Mr. Moto was popular, and his stories were serialized in SEP until 1942, when *Mercator Island*, later to be known in book form as *Last Laugh, Mr. Moto*, was serialized in *Collier's*. Although Mr. Moto worked for his government, he was still able to coexist peacefully with the American characters because in certain cases Japan and America had a common "enemy" in Russia, as in *No Hero* (1935) and *Mr. Moto Is So Sorry* (1938), or in Germany, as in *Last Laugh, Mr. Moto* (1942). Such third-party antagonists made possible brief alliances between Mr. Moto and the American protagonists. Another reason for Mr. Moto's popularity in the late 'thirties could be his extremely polite, sensibly moderate approach to the problems faced by all agents. In *Thank You, Mr. Moto* (1936), he apologizes for and attempts to neutralize the efforts of his countryman Takahara, a fellow agent of a more "radical" political party. Mr. Moto warns, "If I had the opportunity I should have to dispose of Mr. Takahara." Even in 1942, during war between the U.S. and Japan, Mr. Moto regrets all the misunderstanding: in *Last Laugh*, he deplors the necessity for trouble between Japan and the U.S. and attributes it to a mere "cultural misunderstanding."



Even in war, and even having admitted that he does not intend to fail to wrest a military secret from the American representative, Mr. Moto is polite and thoughtful.

Of course, in 1957 a new opportunity for temporary alliance between Japan and America was possible. A new mutual enemy had presented itself—Communism. So in *Stopover: Tokyo* (1957), Mr. Moto could again work with the Americans, this time to foil a Communist plot to take over Japan. Given that Mr. Moto was a Japanese agent, Marquand probably could not have made him more inoffensive politically without sacrificing his value as a character.

Besides these well-known Oriental detectives of the Golden Age, there were others. One of the most forgettable of all is Joan Cowdroy's Lih Moh, who made his debut in 1931 in *Watch Mr. Moh* and appeared in five more books up to 1940. Perhaps the first Oriental detective created by a British author, Lih Moh is a member of the California State Police, stationed in San Francisco. Now San Francisco would be an excellent place for a Chinese detective to operate; it worked fine for James Lee Wong. But, following the "write what you know" principle, Cowdroy had the murder in *Watch Mr. Moh* occur in London, to which Moh travels disguised as a cook. He speaks an English both humble and euphuistic that sounds like a caricature of Charlie Chan's. He describes himself as a "diligent cook of child-like aspect and small English of poor pidgin variety regarded by employers with indifference meted out to feline dumb animal."<sup>19</sup> The book is overburdened with clues and details about the suspects, and since Mr. Moh does not appear in person until the last chapter, another detective, Chief Inspector Gorham, works on the case. In the last chapter, we find that the cook, who has appeared in insignificant cameos, is really the famous California detective Lih Moh. Mr. Moh enters in person and tells how he has solved the case. But his investigation and solution has occurred largely behind the scenes, thus rendering unnecessary all of Gorham's work, and all of the previous details.

In the subsequent books, Mr. Moh's unfortunate character emerges. He is married to a poor Englishwoman whom he met in his first case, has a daughter Molly, likes to vacation, has retired to England, but routinely takes on jobs as a cook or servant. His language is always excessively flowery, and he is always modest. He is also extremely bland, insignificant, and forgettable, as though author Cowdroy were ashamed to have a Chinese detective play an important part. There is no mystery, very little wisdom, no Oriental atmosphere, and, worst of all, no pride in Moh's subservient character. To make matters worse, the books themselves are poorly written. There are devices borrowed from Charlie

Chan novels, such as Moh's method of finding the "essential clue" in *Murder of Lydia* (1933). And several times it is Inspector Gorham, not Mr. Moh, who solves the case! Finally, Cowdroy's style is difficult to read, with too much padding, too many useless clues, and a lot of offensively xenophobic language directed at Mr. Moh.

Two high spots during the Golden Age were E. Phillips Oppenheim's Mr. Cheng and Harry Stephen Keeler's Yung Cheung. In Oppenheim's *The Dumb Gods Speak* (1937), Mr. Dheng is not really a detective but a private agent seeking to save the world from the warlike machinations of Russia, Germany, Italy, and Japan. Raised in a monastery, educated at Harvard, Mr. Cheng is intelligent and worldly. He has lived in Russia and Germany and traveled to other countries. About his intelligence, one character says:

"He absorbs in a flash what it would take some men weary years to assimilate. His judgments seem to come to him as naturally as the breath he draws, and he is always right."<sup>20</sup>

As the chief of the Bureau of International Espionage based in Nice, Mr. Cheng exerts a masterful control over events, and is the driving force in Oppenheim's book—a Fu Manchu in reverse.

Harry Keeler's Yung Cheung is one of the most intelligent of all fictional detectives and is a joy to watch in action. He appears in *Cheung, Detective* (1938) as a business detective, a "Locator of Business Leaks" (as it says on his card), and a specialist in industrial espionage. Cheung knows mathematics, civil, electrical, and chemical engineering, anthropology, ethnology, and can quote Confucius backwards and forwards. Yet he acknowledges his position of "color" in the Indianapolis of the 1930s, where he is hired for a job by a white supremacist. Milford Haven, president of the Central Indiana Construction Company, hires Cheung to solve a sort of impossible crime. Information on bidding prices has been disappearing from a hermetically-sealed room and ending up in the hands of Haven's business rival. Cheung finds the leak and in the process solves a famous cryptogram which is present by means of the typical Keelerian device of inserting a short story in the middle of the book. Cheung is not at all mysterious, but he is exotic and less Americanized than James Lee Wong. He makes clever, logical deductions in an engaging way, just as one would expect from a book so characteristic of Keeler's intellectual vivacity.

In the late 1930s, there were two Hawaiian detectives who were professional policemen working around Honolulu. Clifford Knight's Inspector Noah Kalani appeared in *The Affair of the Splintered Heart* (1942). Kalani is a huge, solidly muscular man of Polynesian stock, with a kindly face framed by curls



of graying hair. An intelligent, strong, and silent type, Kalani is faced in *Ginger Lei* with the murder of one of a yacht racing party. Assisted by Doctor Foo, a research physician who provides medical examiner's services to the police department, Kalani goes through policeman-like motions, but gradually his investigation is eclipsed by Huntoon Rogers, Knight's series character. Unfortunately, as Rogers is about to solve the case, Knight has Kalani declare, "The Polynesian mind...has been confused." In the later case, Kalani plays even a less important part. But this is not uncommon, for an amateur detective like Rogers needs a policeman as a counterbalance, as someone he can outshine.

In Max Freedom Long's three novels set in Hawaii, however, detective Komako Koa, a plantation cop, was *supposed* to be the series character. But it is doubtful whether any series detective was ever treated more slightly by his creator. Long's publishers had high hopes for Kalani, thinking that he would be compared with Charlie Chan and Mr. Moto.<sup>21</sup> The potential was present for an interesting series set in an exotic locale. And like Chan, Komako Koa could have been made to use his native intelligence to see through the illusions and pretensions of the Bostonian socialite characters in the books. Even Long's crimes were interesting, involving natural and native phenomena, such as lava blow holes, killer sharks, and lava flows. Koa himself is an interesting, alert character. He speaks English, Cantonese, Japanese, and all the dialects of the Hawaiian islands. He has his own sly methods of asking disarming questions in the most innocent manner and succeeds in getting information from people without their knowledge of its importance. Komako's sonorous name is even amusing, though somewhat belittling. His parents wanted to name him after a tomato, and since there are no "t"'s in Hawaiian (there really aren't; "k" sounds are substituted), his name came out "Komako." "Koa" means "brave."

But in spite of all this potential for a good detective series, Koa was to make a very poor showing and was treated demeaningly by the worst possible person, his Watson. In his debut in *Murder Between Dark and Dark* (1939), he tackles the case of an apparent blow-hole murder. Anything dropped into a blow hole, the beach-level end of an undrained lava tube, is shredded when a wave comes. Koa makes deductions, but throughout he is described by his American deputy and Watson as primitive, childlike, unsophisticated, and "not up to the keen intelligence of the white man." None of the American characters trusts his judgment, and he is made to apologize for his lack of sophistication and admit that he is unaccustomed to the complex motives of the civilized mainlanders. Such treatment at the hands of so many people seems completely to overshadow his virtues as a detective.



In *The Lava Flow Murders* (1940), another wealthy New England family vacations in Hawaii, this time on a small cove which ends up surrounded by molten lava from a nearby volcano. Koa solves the murder of one of the family, but only in spite of the efforts of Hastings Hoyt, his deputy, who narrates all the stories. Hoyt does not respect Koa; he insults him, gives him unflinchingly erroneous advice, and even calls him a racist! In *Death Goes Native* (1941), the weakest of the series, an American playwright is murdered by a Hawaiian fishing spear. Koa is treated with more respect by Hoyt and the other American characters but is made to appear childishly superstitious by believing in murder jinxes. It is remotely possible that author Long was attempting to poke fun at the prejudices of the wealthy Americans by having Koa solve his cases in spite of their efforts, but Koa is never made to redeem himself at the conclusion of the stories as Charlie Chan so shinningly does. Unless a social satire or a spoof of the genre at large, there is no excuse for a writer treating his detective so poorly.

The Golden Age, for Oriental detectives, was characterized by the broadening of conventions and supplied Oriental policemen, private eyes, spies, and world-savers with a multivarieted set of personalities,

abilities, methods, and locales. Even *The Shadow* took on the Chinese alias of Ying Ko, spoke Chinese, and used the deadly martial art of jiu-jitsu to aid his investigation in *The Teeth of the Dragon* (1937). Richard Foster contributed a sort of Tibetan detective hero, the Green Lama, in several *Double Detective* novelettes in 1940. But at the outbreak of World War II, Western writers had little reason to want to create Oriental detectives, especially Japanese. It was to be almost twenty years before significant Japanese detectives appeared, penned by Western writers. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the West's war wounds had healed and to a certain extent were replaced by curiosity about the Orient. But after the outbreak of World War II, it would be more than thirty years before the West would see Oriental detectives in the variety and numbers similar to those of the Golden Age.

#### THE MODERNS 1943-1966

The first wave of postwar mysteries with Oriental detectives followed, for the most part, the patterns set down by the Golden Age writers. For example, there was the Oriental who assisted the main character, such as Lily Wu and Janice Cameron in four Hawaii-set novels by Juanita Sheridan, notably, *The Chinese Chop* (1949) and *Kahuna Killer* (1951). Janice is the daughter of a deceased college professor and Hawaiian expert. Lily Wu comes from a large, friendly, generous family which adopted Janice upon her father's death. Although Janice conducts the investigations (usually of murders), she enlists Lily's aid when things get difficult. Lily speaks Mandarin Chinese as well as English and is rational, cool, clever, and thinks ahead. She also serves as Janice's link to the Chinese and Hawaiian communities, otherwise closed to her.

There were other Oriental assistants, among them Captain Pilanung Pokh of the Bangkok Imperial Troop, who aided Van Wyck Mason's Hugh North in some of his Asian cases such as *Secret Mission to Bangkok* (1960) and *Trouble in Burma* (1962). Gavin Black's Paul Harris received help and sometimes harassment from Chinese Inspector Kang of the Singapore police. A stiff but increasingly respectful relationship developed between Kang and Harris in *Suddenly, At Singapore...* (1961) and other books. There was Don Von Elsner's powerful, mysterious, intelligent Mr. Chung, who attempted to help David Danning smash a Communist takeover plot in *Countdown for a Spy* (1966).

Besides these aides and assistants there were several unique, if unbelievable, Oriental detectives. From his earlier Green Lama prototype, Richard Foster created private eye Chin Kwang Kham for *The Laughing Buddha Murders* (1944) and *The Invisible*

*Man Murders* (1945). Kham likes to boast that he is the only Tibetan detective in the U.S.<sup>22</sup> Half-owner of the Barrett & Kham detective agency, Kham is 35 years old, a Methodist, and speaks English, Chinese, and Pali, the religious language of Tibet. He is well educated, having gone to a university in the U.S. and to the Tibetan university of Trashiilhumpo. He is a magician and a fan of the magic tricks of Walter B. Gibson, the creator of *The Shadow*. Kham can speak a flowery English infused with Chinese accents when it is convenient, for many people compare him to Charlie Chan. As a magician, he specializes in solving impossible crimes. Although he has no other special skills or areas of expertise, he has strong powers of observation and recall.

Kham, though an unlikely character, is much more interesting than Trygve Yamamura. Appearing in three books by science-fiction writer Poul Anderson, *Perish by the Sword* (1959), *Murder in Black Letter* (1960), and *Murder Bound* (1962), Yamamura is a P.I. working in Berkeley. His mother was Norwegian and his father with the Japanese surname came from an old Hawaiian planting family. He refers to himself jokingly as "Nippowegian." Yamamura is a Buddhist, a judo expert, a Samurai sword collector, and speaks the Norwegian of the "old pronunciation." But all these characteristics emerge in the third-person "omniscient" narration. Yamamura himself is almost a stick figure. There is very little Oriental flavor (or any other) to his character, and he plays no very important part in the books other than walking through a solution to the crime. The books, of which *Murder in Black Letter* is the most interesting, are strong on background description but weak in plot and detection.

A bright spot for the Oriental detective of this period is H. R. F. Keating's Mr. Utamaro, a Japanese Zen master who appeared in *Zen There Was Murder* (1960). Mr. Utamaro has come to England to give a series of Zen lectures for an adult education course. After the valuable Senzo Muramasa wakizashi (companion knife to a Samurai sword) is stolen, one of the classmates is found with it protruding from her chest. Among the students are several hilariously semi-intellectual busybodies who dutifully try to gather facts and solve the case.

What is original and intriguing about Mr. Utamaro is his clear-sighted ability to observe and record *without* constructing chains of inference. He is probably the only Oriental detective who successfully incorporates Zen and detection. His method in detection, as in life, is to eschew logic in favor of a Zen-like, inference-less apprehension of facts. His speech is filled with such utterances as, "Thought makes you blind. It is best to see," koans (what is the sound of one hand clapping?), haiku verses, and non-sequitur anecdotes. He can be logical if necessary, as when he is forced to converse with

the plodding police inspector who later arrives. But on his own, Mr. Utamaro makes shrewd, exacting observations uncluttered by illusion of appearances. As we find that he has solved the case in his own way, we are shocked to hear:

"I know who committed the murder and why," said Mr. Utamaro.

"And have you got proof?"

"What is proof?" Mr. Utamaro said. "A concoction of logic. No, I haven't got proof."<sup>23</sup>

But as Mr. Utamaro explains what he saw and remembered, he convinces the logical busybodies that there is something to Zen after all. He also makes us say something we say after reading the very best detective stories: "I should have seen that!"

There were still other Oriental detectives, such as Cecil Bishop's Ah Foo of *Adventures of Ah Foo, the Chinese Sherlock Holmes* (1943), but, other than Keating's Mr. Utamaro, the most innovative and important detectives to appear during this period were Judge Dee and Magistrate Pao in book-length English translation in 1949 and 1964, respectively. With their authority and majesty, they were so unlike earlier Oriental detectives, such as the inconsequential Lih Moh and the unrealistic Chin Kwang Kham, that they were evidence of the strengthening postwar readiness of the English-speaking world for Asian detectives with positive, realistic, unsterotypical images.

#### THE CONTEMPORARIES

Whether and how to make these historical divisions is somewhat arbitrary. On one hand, to end the Golden Age with World War II is perhaps justified because of the relation between the parties of that war, the particular ethnic origin of the detectives at hand, and the number and quality of the stories in which they appear. On the other hand, the next division is not so easy to make. Surely it was some time after World War II until a serious detective novel portrayed an Oriental detective in a realistic, positive manner. Because this happened in 1967 with the appearance of E. V. Cunningham's Masao Masuto, and because Masuto has recently emerged as a series character, perhaps it is appropriate to begin the "contemporary" era at 1967.

Since 1967, there has been a renaissance for the fictional Oriental detective. There have been paperback reprints of the Mr. Moto and Judge Dee stories. There have been two original Charlie Chan novels, as well as Chan comic books, digest short stories, TV and radio shows, frequent late-night showings of the old Chan films on TV, and paperback reprints of the novels written by Biggers. But there have also been other Oriental detectives: two major series characters in novels, four series charac-

ters in short stories, and various single appearances. Perhaps the increasing ethnic consciousness in the 'sixties and 'seventies helped create this small boom. Almost without exception, the characters seem much prouder, less subservient, and more involved with their ethnic heritages. And they are now less apt to be written off as mere novelties or comic figures as were their prewar kin.

E. V. Cunningham is the *nom-de-crime* of popular historical novelist Howard Fast (*The Establishment*, Detective Sergeant Masao Masuto, of the Beverly Hills Police Department, made his debut in *Samantha* (1967) and became a series character ten years later in *The Case of the One-Penny Orange* (1977) and in three more, the latest of which is *The Case of the Sliding Pool* (1981). The Masuto books are what could be called "cozy" police procedurals, with very little explicit sex, profanity, or violence. Masuto is the head of the tiny two-member homicide squad of this department—there is not usually much murder in Beverly Hills.

Masao Masuto himself is a tall, slender Nisei (second-generation Japanese) whose Japanese has an American accent. He lives in a Japanese-style two-bedroom cottage in Culver City, an area significantly lower in property value than Beverly Hills, although located quite close. Like Charlie Chan, Masuto has a family: Kati, his proper, sheltered, unamericanized wife; Ana, a daughter aged seven; and Uraga, a son aged nine. Like Sergeant Cuff, Masuto is a rose fancier, and his small rose garden boasts 43 different varieties. He is a Zen Buddhist and tries to meditate every day. And like Mr. Utamaro, The Shadow, and Mr. Moto, he knows judo. Unfortunately, he must suffer many barbs and comparisons to Charlie Chan at the hands of the slightly ethnocentric Beverly Hills characters. But Masuto is secure—he knows the rich Americans, their fears and prejudices, better than they know him.

In *Samantha*, Masuto is faced with a series of murders of prominent people in the TV industry. The murders seem to be connected with an eleven-year-old sexual incident in which a young actress, Samantha, was bribed into sleeping with most of the male personnel of a TV station in order to get a part. She never got the part, and now the personnel are being threatened with death notes from "Samantha." Masuto proceeds by visiting the scenes of the crimes and the homes of the suspects and absorbing everything he sees and hears.

In *Samantha*, as in the other novels, Masuto's method is extremely intuitive. He becomes struck by a Zen-like inspiration which results in a lead. He calls his inspirations lucky guesses, and he is almost always lucky enough to guess correctly. Author Fast's enthusiasm for history gives these cases an interesting twist. In most of the novels, Masuto must

solve a historical mystery in order to solve a murder case. For example, in *One-Penny Orange*, he must determine the provenance of the most valuable postage stamp in the world. In *Sliding Pool*, he must learn the identity of a thirty-year-old skeleton which has been buried beneath a swimming pool. Much of Masuto's investigative effort is invested in solving these historical mysteries, and they are sometimes more interesting than the crimes themselves. Masuto's intuitive method makes the novels less deductive or procedural than they would otherwise be, for with his lucky guesses he saves himself the effort of checking out various leads and following false trails. But in spite of this weakness of plotting, Masuto is one of the most important postwar Oriental detectives because of his early arrival and the seriousness, detail, and pride with which he is portrayed.

Between the publication of *Samantha* and the boom of Oriental detectives in the late 1970s, there was an extraordinary novel featuring a Chinese policeman. *The Bengali Inheritance* (1975) by Owen Sela is a smooth combination of police procedural and well-researched international intrigue story. Its detective, Senior Chief Inspector Richard Chan of the Wanchai, Hong Kong CID, is the toughest-minded, grittiest, least stereotypical of all Oriental detectives. He was born in Hong Kong as Chan Yan-wo but went to a Roman Catholic school where he was pressured into changing his name to Richard Chan. Ever since, he has felt a sense of loss and betrayal. He lives with his Cantonese wife Li-li and children Tony and Blossom. He is proud of his Chinese heritage and bristles at having to work with narrow-minded British police administrators. He has his sights set on being Superintendent of the Wanchai force but sees that this might be difficult to achieve: he hears demeaning Charlie Chan jokes from most of the British, especially his supercilious subordinate, who has the same goal.

Chan's case begins with the tortured, broken, mutilated body of an Indian journalist, and ends with a complex web of intrigue involving the World War II Japanese Kempetai and present-day Chinese Communism. It is a pleasure to watch Chan easily handle the mass of data in the sprawling case. The plot and Chan's character are both drawn in a detailed, complex, realistic manner worthy of John Le Carré.

The second major series character is James Melville's Japanese detective, Tetsuo Otani, Superintendent of the Hyogo Prefectural Police. Otani's first appearance was in 1979 in *The Wages of Zen*, and he returned in *The Chrysanthemum Chain* (1980) and *A Sort of Samurai* (1981). Otani lives midway between Kobe and Osaka in a house on the slopes of Mount Rokko, overlooking the Inland Sea. Like

most other Oriental policemen, he has a family, many of whose activities we are let to see. His wife Hanae is in her mid-forties and still attractive. His daughter Akiko is married to ex-radical Akira Shimizu,<sup>24</sup> who is now a businessman. Since Akiko and Akira have a son Kazuo, Supt. Otani is a grandfather.

The books, of which *A Sort of Samurai* is clearly the best, are police procedurals. Otani has several detectives on his force who are interesting, well-developed characters in their own right. His method, when he and Melville are at their best, is to divide the investigative load into pieces which are suited to the strengths and capabilities of each man. In this respect, Otani resembles Commander Gideon, although Otani tackles one case at a time.

Melville, a student of Japanese-language crime novels, has been in diplomatic service in Asia and puts his knowledge and experience to use by providing backgrounds full of sociological and ethnocentric details. We learn, for example, that Japan has very little murder not connected to family squabbles or gangland crime. We get to view the little enclaves of resident Westerners from the eyes of Japanese characters and see ourselves as Japanese see us. The crimes always involve an element which is either singularly Japanese or which depends upon the relationship between Japanese and Western cultures. Perhaps the greatest virtue of Melville's novels is that they do for urban Japan what James McClure has done for South Africa, Arthur Upfield for the Australian outback, and Tony Hillerman for the Native American Southwest.

Between 1978 and 1981, after Masao Masuto's first series appearance, there appeared four Oriental detectives in stories in EQMM and AHMM. Like Masuto and Otani, they are seriously portrayed. Their stories are sometimes pastoral, sometimes romantic, but always picturesque. Nan Hamilton created Detective Sam (Isamu) Ohara (not O'hara) of the LAPD. Ohara, who first appeared in "Too Many Pebbles" in EQMM in 1978,<sup>25</sup> is a Sansai (third-generation Japanese) who speaks Japanese and who likes hot dogs and hamburgers as well as sukiyaki. He is a Vietnam veteran and knows aikido and kendo. He hears a lot of Irish jokes about his name. Ohara's investigations take him to the streets and neighborhoods of Los Angeles, which we see at close focus. The crimes present nice deductive puzzles even though they occasionally depend for their solution upon specialized knowledge of things Japanese.

Seiko Legru is the pseudonym of an English-speaking author. His Japanese Inspector Saito is the busiest of the digest Oriental detectives, having appeared in AHMM from 1978 to 1981. Inspector Saito of the Kyoto Police is quiet, thoughtful, a bit



nonconformist and romantic. He is well read and has a good knowledge of law, ancient and modern. From time to time he quotes from the *T'ang-yin-pi-shih* (*Parallel Cases from Under the Pear Tree*), a thirteenth-century manual of Chinese jurisprudence. His first story, "Inspector Saito's Small Satori,"<sup>26</sup> is poetic and serene, quite typical of the series. An American girl is stabbed at a temple in Kyoto. Inspector Saito investigates, using character analysis and simple physical clues. After he has solved the case, he is struck by a mild *satori* (Zen-ish burst of enlightenment) whose content or message is a mystery in itself. In this story, as in the others, Saito's growth of character and lessons learned from the crimes seem to be just as important as the cases themselves. The settings, whether in the city or country, seem pastoral and are described in relaxed, serene prose. In a way, the Saito stories are like Melville's Otani novels, with ethnographic details generously woven into the plots. Legru has a knack for being able to select the matters of Japanese culture which should be taken for granted and which should be emphasized so as to intrigue the Western readers of AHMM.

Ta Huang Chi may or may not be a pseudonym. He is a student of Chinese chess and Chinese poetry. His Chinese detective Feng Da-wei, later Dave Feng, is a private investigator in prewar China. He made his debut in "The Shanghai Gold Bars" in EQMM in 1981.<sup>27</sup> One of the stories, "The Spirit Sword,"<sup>28</sup> features a mysterious murder the means of which is more puzzling than the motive or identity of the murderer. By observation of physical evidence, Feng pieces together the answer to the particularly Chinese murder. The idea of an investigator in the Peking of 1925 is a very good one and is a bit reminiscent of the early Marquand mysteries. But Feng is not a clearly or strongly drawn character. And although the crimes are interesting, Ta Huang Chi's style is heavy and sometimes muddled, with uneven pacing.

My personal favorite is the creation of Ron Butler, an anthropologist who has taught for several years at the Okayama University in Japan. His attention and devotion to the interplay between Japanese and American culture is evident in the stories. Butler's detective, Police Inspector Toshiko Ueki (in later stories, *Toshihiko* Ueki), is 47 years old and has a gruff exterior but a kind heart. He has studied for two years at the University of Oregon and knows enough about the English language and American culture to respect them. But whenever possible in cases involving Westerners or the English language, he relies on Sam Brent, his American Watson and narrator of the stories.

As one might expect, Ueki works in Okayama. He first appeared in "The Courage of Akira-Kun" in

AHMM in 1981. By early 1982, Sam Brent, who works for a computer company in Okayama, had married Ueki's daughter Noriko. Thus in "The Willow Woman,"<sup>29</sup> Ueki finds it convenient to call Brent in as his resident "Western expert." In this inverted crime story, Ueki needs to learn why the beautiful Japanese wife of Professor Okamoto hates and denigrates Japanese culture. It is Ueki, however, who solves the case; meanwhile, we are treated to several cultural tid-bits, such as the reason for the careful restaurant preparation of the poisonous Fugu fish. Butler's stories do not feature crimes as interesting as Nan Hamilton's. The beautiful, stately Japanese milieu does not emerge as it does in Legru's stories. But there is something romantic in the stories, something reminiscent of those postwar tales of servicemen and American innocents in the Orient, such as Richard Mason's *The World of Suzie Wong* or Michener's *Sayonara*.

Last and perhaps least are the Oriental detectives who are martial-arts experts. After the kung fu films of the early 1970s, such as *Fists of Fury* and *Five Fingers of Death*, the martial-arts craze swept the U.S. This craze was the partial cause of the publication of several short-lived paperback martial-arts/detective series. Among them were several which

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featured Oriental detectives or helpers, such as Marshall Macao's "K'ing Kung-Fu" series. Published by Freeaway Press in 1974, "K'ing Kung-Fu" starred nineteen-year-old Chong Fei K'ing, who is called in to help the LAPD because of his knowledge of the Chinese underworld in Los Angeles. K'ing appeared in books such as *Son of the Flying Tiger* (K'ing Kung-Fu #1) and *Mark of the Vulture* (#7).

Much more violent and action-packed were the books in the "Kung Fu" series by Lee Chang, published in 1973-75 by Manor. These books, with titles such as *Year of the Tiger* ("Kung Fu #1) and *The Year of the Ape* (#8), featured a violent Oriental hero with a Western name and a cloudy identity, Victor Mace. Mace is the powerful Kung Fu Monk-Master who works for the CIA. As he foils Russian and Chinese Communist plots to discredit and take over the U.S., Mace kicks, strikes, jabs, and yells at his enemies. The descriptive passages are filled with Chinese, Japanese, and Korean martial-arts terms for deadly blows and defensive positions.

Antedating the martial arts craze was Richard Sapir and Warren Murphy's "Destroyer" series, which started in 1971 with *Created, the Destroyer* and today is one of the most popular paperback action series, regardless of genre. Remo Williams of the title role is assisted by the temperamental, acerbic Chiun, Master of Sinanju, the deadly (but fictional) Korean martial art. Chiun is Williams's Sinanju instructor, assistant, and spiritual advisor.

The Oriental has contributed an enjoyable depth and richness to the crime-fiction genre. The engaging shrewdness of Charlie Chan, the mysterious efficiency of Mr. Moto, the exotic scenery of Komako Koa's cases, the stateliness of Judge Dee and Magistrate Pao, the realism of Richard Chan, the insights of Otani, and the exuberant violence of Chiun and Victor Mace have all given the genre added dimensions. As for the future, I am curious to see how the following sorts of ideas would work: a female Oriental detective; a modern Oriental private eye; police procedurals in other Asian countries such as China, Korea or Malaya—perhaps a Peking-style *Gorky Park*. Who knows? Time will tell.<sup>30</sup>

## Notes

1. E.g., the Pao play "The Flower of the Back Courtyard," in *Lu Kwei pu (Roster of Ghosts)* by Sou-ch'eng Chung, 1330.
2. Including Judge Chou, Judge Shih ("Shih the Incomplete"), Judge Pan, Judge Lu-chow, Liao T'sai, Judge Peng, and Chen Lien.
3. Leon Comber, trans., *The Strange Cases of Magistrate Pao*. Tokyo and Rutland, Vt.: Charles E. Tuttle, 1964. Comber translated six of the stories from the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) work *Luang-t'u kung-an (Crime Cases of the Luang-t'u Judge)*, which contains 100 cases.
4. Harvard University Press, 1978.

5. In Hayden, p. 36.
6. Hayden, p. 123.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 123. This punishment is similar to the "Death of a Thousand Cuts."
8. In English, *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee*, Dover, 1976. Van Gulik's distinctions are on pages ii-iv of the Introduction. Originally published as *Dee Goong An*, Toppan Printing Company, 1949.
9. *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee*, p. 198.
10. Available in English as *Tales of Japanese Justice* by Saikaku Ihara, translated by Thomas M. Kondo and Alfred H. Marks, University Press of Hawaii, 1980. Many of the tales and gimmicks in these stories are similar to those found in *Tang-yin-pi-shih (Parallel Cases from Under a Pear Tree)* written by Wang-Jung Kuei in 1211.
11. There were other Japanese collections of detective tales, including *Honcho Toin Hiji*, 1707 (*Japanese Trials in the Shade of the Wisteria Tree*), and *Okawa Jinseiroku*, 1854-57 (*Records of the Benevolent Administration of Okawa*).
12. In Herbert A. Giles, *Historic China and Other Sketches*, London, Thomas de la Rue, 1882. Contains a section called "Lan Lu-chow's Criminal Cases," which features twelve stories.
13. *The Century* 49:5:797-800, March 1895.
14. *The Century* 51:1:60-66, November 1900.
15. In "West of Guam," *Black Mask*, 12, Feb. 1930, pp. 50-57. For a checklist of the Jo Gar stories, see E. R. Hagemann's "Ramon Decolta a.k.a. Raoul Whitfield and His Diminutive Brown Man: Jo Gar, the Island Detective" in *TAD* 14:1:3-8.
16. Composed of six short stories which are better read together in order. These stories were reprinted in EQMM eighteen years later, from February to July 1949, with several title changes.
17. *Collier's*, Feb. 17, 1940, p. 24+. Quote from p. 40.
18. *Collier's*, June 30, 1934, p. 12+.
19. Joan Cowdroy. *Watch Mr. Moh*, Hutchinson, 1931. U.S. title, *The Flying Dagger Murder*, McBride, 1932. Quote from U.S. edition, p. 280.
20. E. Phillips Oppenheim, *The Dumb Gods Speak*, Triangle Books reprint, 1938, p. 32. Originally published by Hodder, 1937.
21. Publisher's remarks on front free endpaper of *Murder Between Dark and Dark*, Lippincott, 1939. Max Long was a schoolteacher who was sent to Hawaii as a principal of "outlying schools." In 1919, he saw a lava flow at Hawaii Nei and was inspired to write all three mysteries about natural or native phenomena.
22. But according to John Ball, whose ward Miss Kesang Dolma Ngokhang is from Lhasa, Tibet, the name Chin Kwang Kham is definitely not Tibetan.
23. H. R. F. Keating, *Zen There Was Murder*, Gollancz, 1960. Reprinted by Penguin Books, 1963. Quote from Penguin edition, p. 185.
24. Otani's son-in-law appears to have an alter ego in another fictional Japanese named Akira, in Ron Butler's short story "The Courage of Akira-Kun," AHMM, June 24, 1981.
25. EQMM, Sept. 1978, p. 105.
26. AHMM, Dec. 1978, p. 106.
27. EQMM, Mar. 25, 1981.
28. EQMM, Jan. 1, 1982.
29. AHMM, Jan. 6, 1982. Ueki's first story, "The Courage of Akira-Kun," appeared in AHMM, June 24, 1981.
30. I would like to thank John Apostolou for his friendly and generous bibliographical assistance with the stories in AHMM and EQMM. Of course, any errors in fact or in judgment are mine. □



# COLLECTING Mystery Fiction

By Otto Penzler

## JUDGE DEE

It is difficult to know who is the most remarkable entity—Robert van Gulik, Ti Jen-chieh, or Judge Dee.

In addition to writing the splendid series of complex novels, novelettes, and short stories featuring Judge Dee as the wise solver of mysteries, van Gulik had an extraordinary life and career as a scholar and diplomat.

Born in Zutphen, The Netherlands, on August 9, 1910, van Gulik joined the Dutch Foreign Service in 1935 and served in a variety of positions, first in Tokyo, then East Africa, Egypt, India, and as First Secretary of the Embassy in Chungking, China, from 1943 to 1946. He then served in Washington, D.C. (1947-48), Tokyo (1948-51), India (1952-53), and was promoted to Director of the Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau back in The Hague before being elevated to the rather exalted-sounding position of Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of The Netherlands in Beirut, Lebanon, and (concurrently) in Damascus, Syria (1956-59), and then moving to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia (with the title Ambassador Extraordinary) from 1960 to 1962. After a three-year tenure back in his native country, he had those titles again for his service in Tokyo and Seoul, Korea, from 1965 until his death in 1967.

During those active and nomadic years, he wrote more than twenty volumes of prodigious scholarship on such subjects as *Hayagriva: The Mantrayanic Aspect of Horse-cult in China and Japan* (his 1935 doctoral thesis), *The Lore of the Chinese*

*Lute* (1940), *Erotic Color Prints of the Ming Period* (1951), *Siddham: An Essay on the History of Sanskrit Studies in China and Japan* (two volumes in one, 1956), *Sexual Life in Ancient China* (1961), and *The Gibbon in China* (1967).

In addition to writing these frivolities, van Gulik discovered an early eighteenth-century Chinese manuscript of a detective story which recounted the adventures and wisdom of Judge Dee Jen-djeh (in Chinese, the surname precedes the personal name), heavily based on the real-life Ti Jen-chieh (630-700), a successful magistrate who had become a powerful statesman in the T'ang dynasty. Van Gulik translated this manuscript, entitled *Dee Goong An (Criminal Cases Solved by Judge Dee)*, into English and had it published in a limited edition of 1,200 copies in Tokyo in 1949.



The original of Judge Dee was highly regarded, even twelve centuries after his death, and many Chinese detective story writers through the centuries had based works on his actual cases.

Still, the fictionalized version of the Eastern Solomon was probably an even more remarkable individual. After serving briefly as a magistrate in several provinces during his younger years, Dee was appointed President of the Metropolitan Court of

Justice at the age of forty-six, where he proved to be virtually infallible.

Unlike judges in Western courts, Dee does a great deal of the detective work himself (assisted by his worthy advisor, Hoong Liang, and his lieutenants, Ma Joong, Chiao Tai, and Tao Gan), often traveling in disguise with his three wives and several sons.

The books about Judge Dee follow a traditional Chinese pattern of having three cases brought to the court, all of which are quickly seen to have some connection. Although each of the crimes is separate and distinct, they are somehow intertwined, only to have the wise magistrate unravel them in the end. In the truly authentic Chinese detective novel, the murderers and villains are revealed almost immediately. In an attempt to appeal to more Western tastes, van Gulik altered the form sufficiently to maintain suspense throughout. Nonetheless, even in its altered state, the form is a difficult and complex one which does not appeal to every taste.

Including *Dee Goong An*, there are only seventeen Judge Dee books, one of which is a short story collection. Still, a comprehensive collection of first editions is enormously difficult and bewildering, due in part to the international perambulations of the author. The first book was published in Tokyo, and subsequent volumes saw the first light of day in The Hague, Kuala Lumpur, Beirut, and London. And this takes into account only English-language editions. For the purposes of this study, the chronological listing will be in accordance with the first publication of the work in the English language, regardless of where that work may have been produced or issued.

It should be noted that, although the author's first language was Dutch, all of the Judge Dee mysteries were written in English, with all other editions being translations—even when those works were previously published in other languages. A large number of the Judge Dee books were first published in Holland, and several had translations in Chinese and Japanese before their English-language appearances. The books were, furthermore, written in a sequence that varies considerably from their English-language publications.

The only mystery story written by van

Gulik which does not feature Judge Dee is *The Given Day*, an Amsterdam thriller written in English but translated into Dutch for its first publication by van Hoeve, Ltd., The Hague, in 1963. Its first English-language publication appeared the following year in what has become an extremely scarce paperback volume produced by the Art Printing Works in Kuala Lumpur.

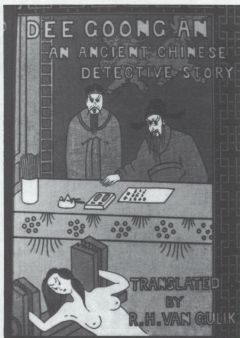
#### Dee Goong An

*First Edition:* (Tokyo, Japan: Privately printed for the author by Toppan Printing Company, 1949). Boards, covered in an original wood block print of nine colors. Issued in a plain, unprinted, light tan dust wrapper.

*First American Edition:* New York, Dover Publications, (1976). Published in predominantly orange-yellow pictorial wrappers under the title: *Celebrated Cases of Judge Dee (Dee Goong An)*. This large format paperback is an unabridged but slightly altered version of the original. It should be noted that the first and all subsequent printings of this edition were published at \$3.50 and it appears to be impossible to distinguish between the first printing and later printings.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First Edition		
Good	\$ 200	\$ 150
Fine	750	650
Very fine	1,250	1,100

*Note:* This old (eighteenth-century) Chinese detective novel was translated into English by van Gulik, who also added an introduction and notes, and enhanced his privately-printed edition with six original illustrations. The first printing consisted of 1,200 copies, each of which was numbered and signed by the



author, with his seal affixed. A few copies were produced as an over-run; one has been seen marked with an "X" where the number usually appears, and one has been seen with neither a number nor the "X".

The wood block print used as the binding cover for the limited edition had an over-run of approximately 100 copies, several of which have turned up in recent years.

The fragile texture of the paper used for these prints militates against truly pristine copies of the original edition of *Dee Goong An*, virtually all copies being severely rubbed and worn along the lower edges because of shelfwear.

Arno Press produced the first American hardcover edition of *Dee Goong An* the same year that the Dover paper edition was published (without a dust wrapper). There does not appear to have been an English edition.

#### The Chinese Maze Murders

*First Edition:* The Hague and Bandung, W. van Hoeve Ltd., 1956. Black cloth, printed in orange on front cover and spine. Issued in a predominantly orange dust wrapper, with white and black printing on front cover and spine only, the back panel being blank. Issued with a black wraparound band, printed in black, with a tribute from Agatha Christie.

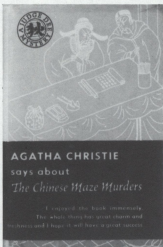
*First English Edition:* London, Michael Joseph, (1962). Black cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly black

dust wrapper, printed with red, white, and blue.

*First American Edition:* New York, Dover Publications, (1977). Published in predominantly dark green pictorial wrappers (in a single volume with *The Haunted Monastery*). This large format paperback is an unabridged but slightly altered version of the original. It should be noted that the first and all subsequent printings of this edition were published at \$5.00 and it appears to be impossible to distinguish between the first printing and later printings.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First Edition		
Good	\$125	\$ 35
Fine	350	70
Very fine	600	100
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 25	\$ 7.50
Fine	65	10
Very fine	125	12.50

*Note:* The first of van Gulik's Judge Dee stories to be published in English, although the second to have been written (preceded by *The Chinese Bell Murders*), *The Chinese Maze Murders* was written in 1950 while the author was in Tokyo. It was translated into Japanese the same year by Yukio Ogaeri and published (with an introduction by Edogawa Rampo) by Kodan-sha in Tokyo in 1950. Van Gulik himself translated it into Chinese for publication in 1953, three years prior to its first English-language publication in The Netherlands.



#### "New Year's Eve in Lan-Fang"

*First Edition:* Beirut, (Privately printed for the author), 1958. Ivory-colored wrappers, printed in dark brown on front cover only.

#### Estimated retail value:

Good	\$200
Fine	500
Very fine	800

*Note:* Published as a New Year's greeting for friends, "New Year's Eve in Lan-Fang" was written in Beirut in 1957 as "Murder on New Year's Eve"; it is the first Judge Dee short story. The author stated that only 200 copies were printed, but the edition is not numbered, and it is possible that the printer supplied van Gulik with a number of extra copies. Since it was sent as a greeting to friends and colleagues, it is not uncommon for this particular title to be found with presentation inscriptions. The story was later collected in *Judge Dee at Work* (see below).

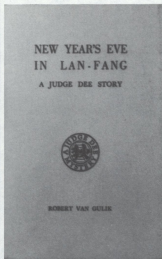
#### The Chinese Bell Murders

*First English Edition:* London, Michael Joseph, (1958). Maroon cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly blue dust wrapper, printed in white, yellow, and black.

*First American Edition:* New York, Harper & Brothers, (1958). Green boards, the Harper logo in white on the front cover, and black cloth spine, lettered in white, with a gold vignette. Issued in a predominantly grey dust wrapper, printed in red, yellow, white, and black. Issued with a white wraparound band, printed in red with tributes by John Dickson Carr on the front and Erle Stanley Gardner on the back.

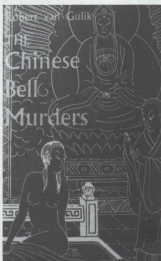
Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 25	\$ 7.50
Fine	85	10
Very fine	125	12.50
First American Edition		
Good	\$ 10	\$ 5
Fine	60	7.50
Very fine	100	10

*Note:* The first original Judge Dee mystery to be written by van Gulik, *The Chinese Bell Murders* was produced in 1949, while the author was in Tokyo. He claimed that his English-language text was meant only as a basis for a printed Chinese and/or Japanese edition, the aim being "to show modern Chinese and Japanese writers that their own ancient crime literature has plenty of source material for detective and mystery stories." Japanese publishers, however, feared that the anti-Buddhist tendency of the novel would offend Buddhist readers, and they decided not to publish it. In December of 1951, van Gulik rewrote the opening chapters to tone down the offending material, and it had an immediate Japanese publication. Some years later, prior to its publication in The Netherlands, van Gulik decided to rewrite the ending as well, to make it more dramatic, and it is this final, revised version that was



published in England in 1958 by Michael Joseph.

The first American edition must state "First Edition" on the copyright page. The wrap-around band evidently was issued with the earliest copies of the book, not as a later sales device, since it has been recorded on an advance review copy.



#### The Chinese Nail Murders

*First English Edition:* London, Michael Joseph, (1961). Orange cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly red dust wrapper, printed with green, white, and black.

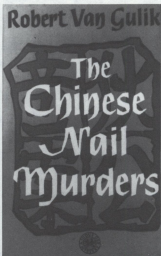
*First American Edition:* New York, Harper & Row, (1961). Red boards, printed with a dark blue and gold pattern on front and back covers, and red cloth spine, lettered in black. Issued in a predominantly green and black dust wrapper, printed with orange, white, and black.

#### Estimated

retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 20	\$ 7.50
Fine	60	10
Very fine	125	12.50
First American Edition		
Good	\$10	\$ 5
Fine	50	7.50
Very fine	75	10

*Note:* Written in Beirut in the summer of 1958, *The Chinese Nail Murders* was the fifth Judge Dee novel and planned as the last. The postscript, published both in the English and American editions, explained how van Gulik came to write the novels, his methods, and so on.

The first American edition must state "First Edition" on the copyright page.

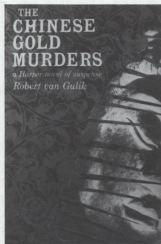


#### The Chinese Gold Murders

*First English Edition:* London, Michael Joseph, (1959). Salmon-pink cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly light blue dust wrapper, printed with white, dark blue, and black.

*First American Edition:* New York, Harper & Brothers, (1959). Rose-colored boards, with the Harper logo in fuchsia on front cover, and black cloth spine, lettered in gold and fuchsia. Issued in a predominantly rose-colored dust wrapper, printed with yellow, white, and black.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 20	\$ 7.50
Fine	75	10
Very fine	150	12.50
First American Edition		
Good	\$ 10	\$ 5
Fine	65	7.50
Very fine	110	10



Note: Written in 1956 in Beirut and Damascus, *The Chinese Gold Murders* was published virtually without alteration from the first draft manuscript. Having completed it in only six weeks without having to make any major changes, van Gulik was especially fond of this work. He was confident, he wrote, that he had "at last found a formula that satisfied me and probably would be acceptable also to Western and Asiatic readers. A sign of progress is that I needed for the plot 22 characters, whereas *Bell* had 27, *Maze* 24, and *Lake* 26. And, whereas *Bell*, *Maze* and *Lake* ought to be rewritten, I think *Gold* can stand as it is."

The first American edition must state "First Edition" on the copyright page.

#### The Chinese Lake Murders

First English Edition: London, Michael Joseph, (1960). Blue cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly green dust wrapper, printed with white and black.

First American Edition: New York, Harper & Brothers, (1960). Blue boards, with the Harper logo in fuchsia on front cover, and black cloth spine, printed in gold and fuchsia. Issued in a predominantly white dust wrapper, printed with red, blue, and black.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 20	\$ 7.50
Fine	60	10
Very fine	125	12.50
First American Edition		
Good	\$ 10	\$ 5
Fine	50	7.50
Very fine	100	10

Note: Written in 1952 while the author was in New Delhi, *The Chinese Lake Murders* remained unpublished until 1959, when his Dutch publisher asked for another Judge Dee book. At that time, van Gulik rewrote the entire novel, giving it a new beginning and changing the villain. The author's own assessment of the book: "Although a better novel than *The Chinese Bell Murders* and *The Chinese Maze Murders*, I think it is too complicated and far too long." His plans to rewrite it again, to simplify it, apparently never reached fruition.

The first American edition must state "First Edition" on the copyright page.

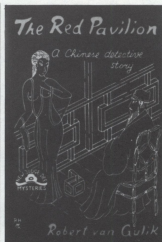


#### The Red Pavilion

First Edition: (Kuala Lumpur), Art Printing Works, (1961). Pictorial wrappers, predominantly black, printed with red and white.

First English Edition: London, Heinemann, (1964). Blue cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly red dust wrapper, printed with black and white.

First American Edition: New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1968). Brick red cloth, printed with gold vignette on front cover and gold and black lettering on spine.



Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First Edition		
Good		\$100
Fine		300
Very fine		450
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 25	\$10
Fine	75	12.50
Very fine	135	15
First American Edition		
Good	\$ 15	\$ 7.50
Fine	40	10
Very fine	75	12.50

Note: Written in Beirut in exactly one month (March 22 to April 22, 1959), *The Red Pavilion* is actually the third in the new series of Judge Dee mysteries to have been written, and the eighth overall. Michael Joseph, van Gulik's British publisher, did not want to publish more than one Judge Dee a year. Having written three within six months, van Gulik needed a publisher who would release at least two a year and settled on Heinemann. At this time, with none of the new series yet in print, van Gulik was transferred to the Federation of Malaya (now called Malaysia) and decided to have his books produced locally at his expense. He made contact with the Art Printing Works in Kuala Lumpur and paid to have 2,000 copies of *The Red Pavilion* printed in a handsome, though relatively inexpensive, format. The author drew the cover illustration himself, selected the typeface, and personally supervised the entire production process. The success of this volume induced him to follow the same procedure for the two books which had been written previously but which were still unpublished, *The Haunted Monastery* and *The Lacquer Screen*.

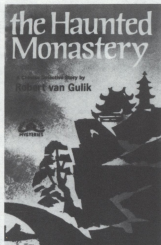
The first English edition was revised, with considerable textual alteration. It is surpris-



ingly elusive in fine condition in a fine dust wrapper.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-1.68 (MC)". The letter "A" indicates first printing; 1.68 indicates that the book was printed in the first month of 1968; "MC" is the publisher's code for the printer. This format appears on the copyright page of all Judge Dee books published by Scribner.

There is a second printing of the Malaysian edition, which is so indicated.



#### The Haunted Monastery

*First Edition:* (Kuala Lumpur), Art Printing Works, (1961). Pictorial wrappers, predominantly orange, printed with white, red, and black.

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1963). Purple cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly orange dust wrapper, printed with maroon and white.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1969). Purple cloth, dark blue vignette on front cover, lettered in silver on the spine. Issued in a predominantly blue dust wrapper, printed with blue, purple, white, and black.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First Edition		
Good		\$100
Fine		300
Very fine		450
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	75	12.50
Very fine	135	15
First American Edition		
Good	\$15	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	50	10

*Note:* Written in Beirut between November 22, 1958 and the middle of January 1959, *The Haunted Monastery* was also published in an edition of 2,000 copies by the Art Printing Works. It was slightly revised for its first English edition.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-11.68 (MC)".

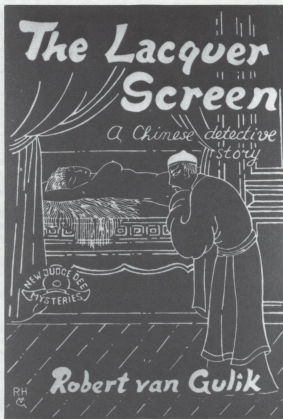
#### The Lacquer Screen

*First Edition:* (Kuala Lumpur), Art Printing Works, 1962. Pictorial wrappers, predominantly red, printed with white and black.

*First English Edition:* London: Heinemann, (1964). Purple cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly blue dust wrapper, printed with purple and white. Scribner's Sons, (1969). Yellow cloth, printed with gold vignette on front cover and red lettering on spine. Issued in a predominantly red dust wrapper, printed with black illustration and yellow and white lettering.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
First Edition		
Good		\$100
Fine		300
Very fine		450
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	75	12.50
Very fine	135	15
First American Edition		
Good	\$15	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	50	10

*Note:* Although actually written in Beirut in October and November of 1958, *The Lacquer Screen* had been largely plotted while van Gulik was on holiday in Greece earlier in the autumn. This was the first of the new Judge Dee series to be written, van Gulik's publisher having requested more. (Although van Gulik did not identify which of his publishers made the request, it seems likely that it was W. van Hoeve, his Dutch



publisher, as neither of his previous English-language publishers, Michael Joseph and Harper & Row, published it.)

Like the previous two books, *The Lacquer Screen* was first published in the English language by the Art Printing Works in an edition of 2,000 copies. Unlike those two volumes, however, there were no textual changes made for the first English edition.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-10.69 (JU)".

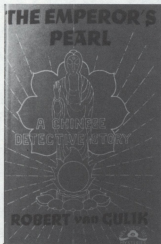
#### The Emperor's Pearl

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1963). Blue cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly grey dust wrapper, printed with purple and white.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1963). Gold cloth, black vignette on front cover and black lettering on spine. Issued in a predominantly orange dust wrapper, printed in yellow-brown, red, white and black.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
<b>First English Edition</b>		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	75	12.50
Very fine	135	15
<b>First American Edition</b>		
Good	\$15	\$ 5
Fine	35	7.50
Very fine	65	10

*Note:* Written in March and April 1960, after van Gulik's return to the East in Kuala Lumpur, *The Emperor's Pearl* was originally titled *The Dragon Boat Race Murder*. Heavy reading of Chinese literature, both new and old, drained some of the self-confidence van Gulik had felt in his work, causing him to rewrite it entirely during the summer of 1960



and subsequently let the manuscript languish for several years before its eventual publication.

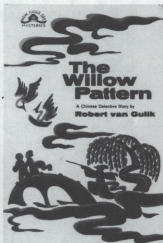
The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-6.64 (MH)".

#### The Willow Pattern

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1965). Purple cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly blue dust wrapper, printed with white and black.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1965). Turquoise cloth, dark blue vignette on front cover, dark blue lettering on spine. Issued in a predominantly white dust wrapper, printed with blue, turquoise, and dark brown.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
<b>First English Edition</b>		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	65	12.50
Very fine	110	15
<b>First American Edition</b>		
Good	\$15	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	50	10



*Note:* Written in The Hague in 1963, *The Willow Pattern* was the sixth book written in the new series of Judge Dee mysteries (the eleventh overall) but was published before *Murder in Canton*, which had been planned as the last of the series. Heinemann, van Gulik's new English publisher, believed that there would be a strong and continuing market for further episodes, so van Gulik had to write novels that would be published prior

## THE MONKEY AND THE TIGER

Robert van Gulik



to *Murder in Canton*. *The Willow Pattern* was published originally in serial form in the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf*.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-3.65 (MV)".

#### The Monkey and the Tiger

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1965). Black cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly red dust wrapper, printed with green, white, and black.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1966). Orange cloth, printed with brown vignettes on front cover and brown lettering on spine. Issued in a predominantly white dust wrapper, printed in green, yellow, red, and black.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
<b>First English Edition</b>		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	75	12.50
Very fine	125	15
<b>First American Edition</b>		
Good	\$10	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	50	10

*Note:* Contains two novelettes, "The Morning of the Monkey" and "The Night of the Tiger." The former was first published in a Dutch paperback edition under the title *Vier Vingers (Four Fingers)* in 1964 as a "Bonus Book" during the National Week of the Book by The Netherlands Society of the Promotion of the Book.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-2.66 (MV)".

### The Phantom of the Temple

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1966). Blue cloth, lettered in gold on spine. Issued in a predominantly black dust wrapper, printed with white and red.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1967). Grey cloth, dark

green vignette on front cover, dark green lettering on spine. Issued in a predominantly grey dust wrapper, printed with white, orange and black.

*Estimated retail value:*

	with d/w	without d/w
First English Edition		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	60	12.50
Very fine	100	15
First American Edition		
Good	\$15	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	50	10

*Note:* Written mainly in The Hague but completed in Tokyo in February 1965, *The Phantom of the Temple* was conceived as a comic strip. Van Gulik had been approached to write a Judge Dee strip for Dutch and Scandinavian syndication, with him writing the plots and professional cartoonists (trained by van Gulik) drawing the strips. After its publication in that format, van Gulik rewrote it as a novel, much as Mickey Spillane did with his comic book *Mike Danger*, which never saw publication but had its plot recycled for novel publication as *I, the Jury*.

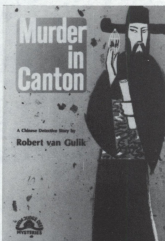
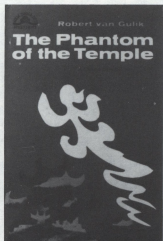
The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-1.67 (v)".

### Murder in Canton

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann,

(1966). Purple cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly purple dust wrapper, printed with white and black.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1967). Grey linen cloth, printed with orange vignette on the front cover and orange lettering on the spine.



## BOUCHERCON XIV

New York City

Barbizon-Plaza Hotel

October 21-22-23, 1983

Advance Registration: \$30.00

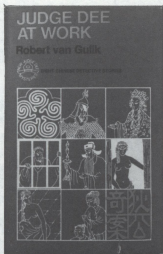
For further information, please write:

Otto Penzler

129 West 56th Street

New York, New York 10019

Tel: (212) 765-0900



Issued in a predominantly rose-pink dust wrapper, printed with blue, red, white, and black.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
<b>First English Edition</b>		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	60	12.50
Very fine	100	15
<b>First American Edition</b>		
Good	\$15	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	50	10

*Note:* Written in Kuala Lumpur in the winter of 1961 through the spring of 1962, *Murder in Canton* was planned as definitely the last of the Judge Dee books. To crown the series, van Gulik had decided to do substantial historical research, but, in his opinion, he overburdened the book with it and was displeased with the final product.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-6.67 (H)".

#### Judge Dee at Work

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1967). Black cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly grey dust wrapper, printed with white, orange, and black.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1973). Red boards, printed in black on the spine. Issued in a predominantly red dust wrapper, printed with white, green, and black.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
<b>First English Edition</b>		
Good	\$ 20	\$10
Fine	50	12.50
Very fine	100	15

#### First American Edition

Good	\$10	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	50	10

*Note:* A collection of eight short stories, *Judge Dee at Work* contains: "Five Auspicious Clouds," "The Red Tape Murder," "He Came with the Rain," "The Murder on the Lotus Pond," "The Two Beggars," "The Wrong Sword," "The Coffins of the Emperor," "Murder on New Year's Eve." A 1961 Dutch edition of six stories contained all but the first and third. The last story had been published privately in 1958 as "New Year's Eve in Lan-Fang" (see above).

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-1.73 (c)".

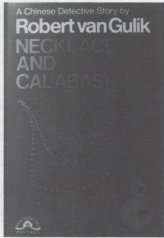
#### Necklace and Catbush

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1967). Orange cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly black dust wrapper, printed with white and orange.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1971). Grey cloth, printed in red on the spine. Issued in a predominantly red dust wrapper, printed with silver and white.

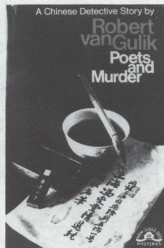
Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
<b>First English Edition</b>		
Good	\$ 15	\$ 7.50
Fine	50	10
Very fine	100	12.50
<b>First American Edition</b>		
Good	\$10	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	40	10

*Note:* Although *Judge Dee at Work*, done again, been planned as the absolute last



in the series, van Gulik's British publisher again assured him of the continued and continuing interest in the adventures of the "Sherlock Holmes of the East" (as he was called, again and again, by his publishers on both sides of the Atlantic). The author therefore began still another series of novels, with a different formula, with *Necklace and Catbush* and the next volume, *Poets and Murder*, the result.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-1.71 (C)".



#### Poets and Murder

*First English Edition:* London, Heinemann, (1968). Black cloth, lettered in gold on the spine. Issued in a predominantly black dust wrapper, printed with white and pale green.

*First American Edition:* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, (1972). Grey boards, green cloth on spine, lettered in black. Issued in a predominantly black dust wrapper, printed with white and green.

Estimated retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
<b>First English Edition</b>		
Good	\$ 15	\$ 7.50
Fine	50	10
Very fine	100	12.50
<b>First American Edition</b>		
Good	\$10	\$ 5
Fine	25	7.50
Very fine	40	10

*Note:* The last Judge Dee book, *Poets and Murder* was written in Japan. It is generally conceded that the last two books in the series were inferior to the others.

The first American edition must have the following code on the copyright page: "A-2.72 (C)". □

# CHECKLIST

## MYSTERY, DETECTIVE AND SUSPENSE FICTION PUBLISHED IN THE U.S. JULY-SEPTEMBER 1982

Adams, Ian: **S**, *Portrait of a Spy*. Ticknor & Fields, 11.95  
 Aird, Catherine: **L** *Last Respects*. Doubleday, 11.95  
 Allen, Michael: **S** *Spence at Marlby Manor*. Walker, 11.95  
 Allberry, Ted: **S** *Shadow of Shadows*. Scribners, 12.95  
 Ashford, Jeffrey: **G** *Guilt with Honor*. Walker, 11.95  
 Babson, Marian: **D** *Death Warmed Up*. Walker, 11.95  
 Barth, Richard: **O** *One Dollar Death*. Dodd, 11.95  
 Block, Lawrence: **E** *Eight Million Ways To Die*. Arbor House, 13.50  
 Burley, W. J.: **W** *Wycliffe's Wild Goose Chase*. Doubleday, 11.95  
 Burton, Anthony: **E** *Embrace of the Butcher*. Dodd, 10.95  
 Castoire, Maurice and Richard Posner: **G** *Shield*. Putnam, 14.95  
 Charteris, Leslie: **T** *The Fantastic Saint*. Doubleday, 11.95  
 Crighton, Richard: **R** *Red for Terror*. Dodd, 9.95  
 Curtiss, Ursula: **D** *Dog in the Manger*. Dodd, 9.95  
 Deverell, William: **H** *High Crimes*. St. Martin's, 15.95  
 Devine, Dominic: **T** *This Is Your Death*. St. Martin's, 10.95  
 Dewhurst, Eileen: **C** *Curtain Fall*. Doubleday, 10.95  
 Dunnett, Dorothy: **D** *Dolly and the Nanny Bird*. Knopf, 12.95  
 Estleman, Loren D.: **T** *The Midnight Man*. Houghton, 12.95  
 Fraser, Antonia: **C** *Cool Repentance*. Norton, 12.95  
 Freeling, Nicolas: **W** *Wolfnight*. Pantheon, 12.50  
 Garnet, A. H.: **M** *Maze*. Ticknor and Fields, 14.50  
 Gilbert, Michael: **E** *End-Game*. Harper, 12.98  
 Greene, Harris: **I** *Inference of Guilt*. Doubleday, 15.95  
 Grimes, Martha: **T** *The Old Fox Deceiv'd*. Little, 13.95  
 Hebden, Mark: **P** *Pei and the Faceless Corpse*. Walker, 11.95  
 Hentoff, Nat: **B** *Blues for Charlie Darwin*. Morrow, 11.00  
 Hilton, John Buxton: **T** *The Sunset Law*. St. Martin's, 9.95  
 Hoyt, Richard: **T** *Trotsky's Run*. Morrow, 12.00  
 Jacobs, Ava: **A** *...And Nobody Came*. Academy Chicago, 11.95

By M. S. Cappadonna

James, P. D.: **T** *The Skull Beneath the Skin*. Scribners, 13.95  
 Jones, Margaret: **T** *The Confucius Enigma*. St. Martin's, 10.95  
 Keating, H. R. F.: **A** *A Rush on the Ultimate*. Doubleday, 10.95  
 Kenyon, Michael: **T** *The Man at the Wheel*. Doubleday, 11.95  
 Lemarchand, Elizabeth: **T** *Troubled Waters*. Walters, 11.95  
 Linington, Elizabeth: **S** *Skeletons in the Closet*. Doubleday, 10.95  
 Livingston, John: **A** *A Piece of the Silence*. St. Martin's, 13.95  
 Lovell, Marc: **S** *Spy on the Run*. Doubleday, 10.95



McCormick, Clare: **R** *Resume for Murder*. Walker, 11.95  
 McNerny, Ralph: **A** *A Loss of Patients*. Vanguard, 9.95  
 Melville, James: **T** *The Chrysanthemum Chain*. St. Martin's, 9.95  
 Michaels, Barbara: **B** *Black Rainbow*. Congdon, 13.95  
 Mitchell, Gladys: **U** *Uncoffin'd Clay*. St. Martin's, 9.95  
 Rendell, Ruth: **M** *Master of the Moor*. Pantheon, 11.95  
 Scott, Hardiman: **O** *Operation 10*. Harper, 12.95

Simpson, Dorothy: **S** *Six Feet Under*. Scribners, 10.95  
 Stainton, Audrey: **S** *Sweet Rome*. Holt, 15.50  
 Treat, Lawrence, ed.: **A** *A Special Kind of Crime*. Doubleday, 10.95  
 Truman, Margaret: **M** *Murder in the Supreme Court*. Arbor House, 12.95  
 Underwood, Michael: **G** *Goddess of Death*. St. Martin's, 10.95  
 Williams, David: **C** *Copper, Gold and Treasure*. St. Martin's, 9.95  
 Woods, Sara: **V** *Villains by Necessity*. St. Martin's, 10.95

### Paperbacks

**The Big Apple Mysteries**. Avon, 2.75  
 Block, Lawrence: **A** *Stab in the Dark*. Berkley, 2.75  
 Byron, James: **O** *Or Be He Dead*. Harper, 2.95  
 Collins, Wilkie: **T** *The Haunted Hotel: A Mystery of Modern Venice*. Dover, 3.00  
 Dunnett, Dorothy: **D** *Dolly and the Cookie Bird*. Vintage, 2.95  
 Dunnett, Dorothy: **D** *Dolly and the Doctor Bird*. Vintage, 2.95  
 Dunnett, Dorothy: **D** *Dolly and the Singing Bird*. Vintage, 2.95  
 Dunnett, Dorothy: **D** *Dolly and the Starry Bird*. Vintage, 2.95  
 Gill, Bartholomew: **M** *McGarr on the Cliffs of Moher*. Penguin, 2.95  
 Halliday, Michael: **D** *Dividend on Death*. Raven House, 2.25  
 Huxley, Elspeth: **M** *Murder on Safari*. Harper, 2.95  
 Innes, Michael: **H** *Hare Sitting Up*. Harper, 2.95  
 Innes, Michael: **T** *The Man From the Sea*. Harper, 2.95  
 Gores, Joe: **H** *Hammett*. Harper, 2.95  
 Hill, Reginald: **R** *Ruling Passion*. Dell, 2.95  
 Keating, H. R. F.: **G** *Go West, Inspector Ghote*. Penguin, 2.95  
 Lathen, Emma: **G** *Going for the Gold*. Pocket, 2.75  
 Lutz, John: **T** *The Shadow Man*. Berkley, 2.75  
 Lyons, Arthur: **C** *Castles Burning*. Holt, 3.95  
 Lyons, Arthur: **T** *The Killing Floor*. Holt, 3.95  
 Lyons, Arthur: **A** *All God's Children*. Holt, 3.95  
 Marsh, Ngaio: **S** *Singing in the Shrouds*. Jove, 2.50  
 Mitgang, Herbert: **T** *The Montag Fault*. Ballantine, 2.95  
 Murphy, Warren: **S** *Smoked Out*. Pocket, 2.25  
 Olsen, Jack: **M** *Missing Persons*. CBS, 2.95  
 Rendell, Ruth: **D** *Death Notes*. Ballantine, 2.50  
 Uhnak, Dorothy: **F** *False Witness*. Fawcett, 3.50  
 Vaughn, Hillary: **T** *The Doria Rafe Case*. Raven House, 2.25





# Real Life Cases

# CRIME HUNT

By T. M. McDade

## THE PROBLEM OF WILL WEST (The Case That Doomed the Bertillon System of Identification)

On the morning of May 1, 1903, there arrived at the United States Penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kansas, a new prisoner named Will West. There was nothing unusual about his appearance; he was of average build, with no distinguishing features except that he was a Negro. The arrival of this man at the prison, despite his ordinary appearance, was to overthrow the whole system then being used to identify criminals, not only in the United States but throughout the world.

Will West had been sentenced to serve a term of ten years for manslaughter. When the newly-arrived prisoner was brought to the record bureau, the clerk in charge thought he recognized him as a previous offender.

"Haven't you been here before?" he asked. "No, sir. I never been in jail before," replied West. The clerk, still skeptical, began to take the prisoner's measurements. At this period, fingerprinting was not in use in this country, and the established system for identifying criminals was that devised by Alphonse Bertillon, the French criminologist. Bertillon's father had been a leading French anthropomorphist, a branch of anthropology concerned with measurements of the human body. Bertillon had been employed as a clerk in the Prefecture of Police in Paris, filling out descriptions of prisoners. These descriptions were obtained to check whether the prisoner had a prior criminal record. Dissatisfied with the vague, general descriptive phrases then in use, he constructed a scientific system based on the measurements of eleven different parts of the body. He selected those measurements easiest to take. They were: the length and width of the head, the height, the span with outstretched arms from middle fingertip to fingertip, the length of the trunk, the length and width of the right ear, the left foot, the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, and the length of the middle and little fingers.

The clerk took each of West's measurements, verifying them by a second to insure

accuracy. The longer he looked at the prisoner, the more he became convinced he had registered him before. With the measurements completed, he began his search of the files. The feature of the Bertillon system was the mathematical arrangement which made all the records instantly available. This was the only one which could be indexed and referred to as readily as the title of books in a library catalogue. For this reason, it rapidly became the standard in all countries with civilized judicial systems. Its scientific basis rested on three principles: (1) easy and exact measurement of the parts of the body in a living subject; (2) extreme diversity of such dimensions in different subjects, no two ever closely approximating each other; (3) almost absolute fixity of the skeleton after age twenty.

The length of the head was the first breakdown. West's being 197 millimeters in length, fell into the third or large size category. This section was subdivided into widths, and that subsection further divided by the length of the middle finger. Using each of the figures he had jotted down for West, the clerk continued to follow through the various subdivisions—next, the left foot, the forearm, height, length of little finger, and finally a descriptive category under color of eyes. This last group was quite small, and, running through the remaining cards rapidly, the identification officer pulled one out with a cry of triumph.

"Here you are," he said. "I knew you were in here before. Even have your picture. Isn't that you?" He passed the card to the prisoner, who, ignoring the description which was written on it, stared at the photograph.

"That's me, all right," the Negro said, continuing to stare at the picture. "I don't know how you got it, cause I ain't never been in here before."

The guard smiled and, pointing to the name at the top of the card, asked, "And how about that?"

The name on the record was William West, No. 2626.

Bertillon measurements were taken in the metric system, partially because of the origination of the system in France but also because of the ease which a decimal system permits. The clerk now began to compare in detail the measurements of Will West, the prisoner before him, and those of the William West whose record had come from the file.

In height, the man before him was 5 feet 10½ inches; the man on the record in his hand was only one centimeter or two-fifths of

an inch shorter. In trunk measurement, or height when sitting, the two subjects were identical, each exactly 36 inches. Outstretched, the prisoner measured 73.6 inches; the man of the record was only one centimeter or two-fifths of an inch longer.

These variations were so slight, representing one of the smallest units of measure, that they might well represent differences due to technique in measuring. There was an element of imprecision in this part of the system. In height, there was an allowable variation of one centimeter, and outstretched, variations up to three centimeters have been found.

In length and width of head, the two differed by only a millimeter, or four-one-hundredths of an inch. Their measurements for the left ear, both height and width, were identical, while the left forearm did not differ by one-twenty-fifth of an inch. Perhaps the largest relative difference in all measurements occurred in the left foot. The prisoner's was 11.1 inches; that on the record was a quarter of an inch shorter. In actual shoe sizes, each would probably wear a size seven and a half.

In regard to this difference, a manual of instructions for taking Bertillon measurements stated: "The limit of approximation allowed for measurement of the foot is one, and in certain cases two, millimeters which, taking into consideration the doubling up of errors, may cause a variance of three millimeters between two consecutive measurements of the same foot."

It has been computed that the odds against two individuals having the same eleven bodily measurements would be more than forty million to one. What odds, therefore, would one quote, not only that this event should happen, but that the persons whose measurements so agreed, should be so identical in physical appearance as to have one of them accept the photograph of the other as his own—and lastly, that they should bear the identical name!

If the clerk who was then gazing at the card of William West thought of these possibilities, it was not for long. For, while looking from the subject to the card before him, he suddenly noted an entry which up to now had escaped his attention. William West, No. 2626, the subject on the record before him, had been convicted of murder and, according to the card, should still be in the penitentiary. It required but a few moments to verify that fact; and then but a little longer to produce the other half of the West "brothers."



# REX STOUT

## Newsletter

By John McAleer

Rex Stout created Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin on 18 October 1933. That means their golden jubilee is coming up in 1983. I should think the stalwarts who read this column would want to plan a semicentennial celebration that befits the occasion. Let's have some suggestions.

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Louis P. Becker, Bismarck, North Dakota, has found Rex's jacket essay, "Reading and Writing Detective Stories," on the jackets of two Richard Lockridge books—*Murder, Murder, Murder* (1956) and *Show Red for Danger* (1960), both published by Lippincott. The list grows.

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"I don't think I've ever done anything that wasn't fun."

— Rex Stout

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In Sunnyvale, California, there's a N. Wolfe Road. Do you suppose? My thanks to the MWA's George McCrevan, Boston.

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"I was taken with the aspects of the forest, and thought that to Nero advertising for a new pleasure, a walk in the woods should have been offered. 'T' is one of the secrets for dodging old age."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

Pfui! Unless, of course, Emerson meant a rain forest, bulging with one-of-a-kind orchids.

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David Rife, an English professor at Lycoming College, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, has made what I recognize as a discovery of substantial interest to admirers of Rex Stout.

In 1950, when William Faulkner delivered his Nobel Prize Address at Stockholm, one passage, especially, was acclaimed the world over: "It is easy enough to say that man is immortal simply because he will endure; that when the last ding-dong of doom has clanged and faded from the last worthless rock hanging tideless in the last red and dying evening, that even then there will still be one more sound: that of his puny inexhaustible voice, still talking. I refuse to accept this. I believe that man will not merely endure: he will prevail. He is immortal, not because he alone among creatures has an inexhaustible voice but because he has a soul, a spirit capable of compassion and sacrifice and endurance." The whole passage is memorable, of course, but it is the phrase "the last ding-dong of doom" that has caught the fancy of scholars. Much ink has been spilled trying to account for it. Now, thanks to Professor Rife, the solution is in our grasp. He has found that in Chapter XXI of *The League of Frightened Men* (1935), Nero Wolfe says to Nicholas Cabot: "I am aware, Mr. Cabot, that this vote is not the last ding-dong of doom. As you shall see, if I lose" (see p. 293, first edition).

That William Faulkner should quote Nero Wolfe in his Nobel Prize Address, on the occasion of receiving the Nobel Prize for Literature, should not surprise us unduly. His family has reported that Faulkner admired Rex Stout and counted Nero Wolfe among his favorite fictional characters. Our thanks to David Rife for confirming it overwhelmingly.

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I once asked Rex Stout if either Somerset Maugham or James M. Cain had influenced his writing in any way. Rex told me: "I don't see how they could have. Possibly Cain did in a way, completely subconsciously, because I think he's a hell of a good storyteller, a marvelous storyteller. That way of telling a

story—I don't think you can do it any better than *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. It can't be done better than that. I think it's a perfect job. If I were asked to name the living writer who I think has stuck most closely to that idea—stick to the story, stick to the goddamn story—it probably would be James M. Cain. There's not a word in Cain that does not apply to the story he's telling you."

That set me thinking. Once I was finishing writing Rex's biography, wouldn't Cain be the right subject to tackle next? I sent off an inquiry to Cain and he answered at once. Roy Hoopes had previously sought his permission to do his biography, but a couple of years had gone by and nothing seemed to be happening. Cain saw no reason why both of us should not be writing books about him. He told me to proceed with his blessings. After a few interviews, however, he mentioned to Roy that I was hard at work, and Roy was disappointed. He really had an ambitious book in mind and hoped to have exclusive use of Cain's papers while he was doing it. We effected a compromise. Hoopes would do the biography. With Cain's active cooperation, I would do a critical study of his works. I had this project under way when Cain died suddenly on 27 October 1977, two years to the day after Rex Stout's sudden death. That made me feel like a jinx. I packed away my Cain materials and signed a contract with Little, Brown to do a massive biography of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Emerson died on 27 April, but don't blame me. I had nothing to do with it. He died in 1882.

My Emerson biography—250,000 words—is all but done. And Roy Hoopes's *Cain* is just out. It's a generously produced book, at least as big (684 pages) as *Days of Encounter: A Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson* will be. A copy has just come to hand, and I've only had time to skim it, but indications are that Cain made no mistake in keeping his commitment to Roy Hoopes. One line already has made an impression on me: "He liked Rex Stout and called Nero Wolfe 'a masterful creation'; but

he would not read Dashiell Hammett or Raymond Chandler" (p. 470). That doesn't surprise me, because Cain told me: "Rex Stout is at the very top of that list of writers I keep, whom I never, never read—from being afraid I'll start copy-casting, a vice we're all subject to. And yet of course I do read him—peep at him, from not being able to resist—and regard Nero Wolfe as one of the master creations, as well as an inspiration. And Rex is inspiring too. Long may he reign!"

I wish Roy Hoopes well. After all, we belong to the world's most exclusive club, the membership of which is made up of biographers whose subjects died on 27 October. And now that his book is safely delivered to the bookstores, I may dig out my box of Cain materials and resume mine.

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Peter Blas, now editor-in-chief of the *Baker Street Journal*, has reviewed the revised edition (Penguin, 1982) of William S. Baring-Gould's *Nero Wolfe of West Thirty-fifth Street* in the March 1983 issue of the *Journal*. Through the years, Pete, whom, I'm sorry to say, I've never met, has sent me scores of items relating to Rex Stout and Nero Wolfe.

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Jeff Hatfield, manager of Uncle Edgar's Mystery Bookstore, Minneapolis, sends this item:

"While watching the NBC sitcom *Taxi*, I was rudely awakened to the point of falling out of my chair. The story involved the compulsive gambler, Alex, fighting the urge by leaving an Atlantic City crap table while on a winning streak. When he returns to his New York taxi garage, boss Louie is aghast and goads him into a crap game taking place in a restaurant 'not five minutes from here.' Scene changes to the restaurant back room where the high-buck game is going on... commercial...and when they return the setting is established with a façade shot of the restaurant with its high canopy over the door identifying in display letters—RUSTER-MAN'S.

"To say the very least, Marko Vukic [which Rex said rhymes with 'book-stitch'] would roll over in his grave, and heaven only knows what Nero Wolfe will say when he hears about it. As for myself, I couldn't let it go unacknowledged—and it *wasn't* my imagination!"

Jeff, my guess is that this Rusterman's was left over from William Conrad's abortive Nero Wolfe TV series. Maybe Conrad liked the food there and wouldn't let them dismantele it.

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"I accept no designation but biped."

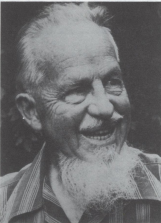
—Rex Stout

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Under a banner headline—"They're planning a meal worthy of the great Nero Wolfe"

—the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, on 2 September 1982, carried the following article by John Corr:

"A famous, although imaginary, restaurant will come into existence for only one night and one only in Philadelphia. The restaurant is Rusterman's, and it will be created in a large room over an art gallery off Rittenhouse Square. The original, imaginary Rusterman's was created by the late mystery writer Rex Stout, and it is owned by the boyhood friend of Stout's gourmet detective hero, Nero Wolfe. The detective is a recluse, and the prospect of dining at Rusterman's is one of the few things that can lure him from his apartment on West 35th Street in Manhattan.



"The Philadelphia Rusterman's will come into existence on 25 September for the annual meeting of the Manhattan-based Wolfe fan club, a group called the Wolfe Pack.

"The group has previously met only in Manhattan and usually in a hotel function room. Generally, the membership—which includes people like cartoonist Gahan Wilson and author Isaac Asimov—complained about the quality of the food. It was often noted that the great detective himself would sneer at such fare and would be scandalized that a group named in his honor would countenance it.

"A Philadelphia member, public-relations man James O'Boyle, was talking about this one day with Ed Markus, owner of the 20th Street Cafe at 261 S. 20th St. Markus became fascinated by the idea of attempting to create a real Rusterman's. O'Boyle came up with copies of the *Nero Wolfe Cookbook* and the recently published 'biography' called *Nero Wolfe of West 35th Street*.

"The dinner will cost \$45 a person, including drinks, and there is room for some non-members of the Wolfe Pack. Markus, at the cafe, is handling the arrangements."

This dinner, of course, was a Philadelphia event and did not supplant the annual Pack dinner in New York.

Now what did Corr mean—"people like cartoonist Gahan Wilson and author Isaac Asimov"? Believe me, Gahan and Isaac are unique.

My thanks to that admirable Neronian, Linda Toole, of Rochester, New York, for picking up this item for us.

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I have written the foreword to Countryman Press's handsome new volume, *a.k.a. Chip Harrison*, which contains Lawrence Block's two Chip Harrison stories in which Chip falls in with Leo Haig, a Nero Wolfe fan who sets up, in New York City, his own detective agency, modeling his methods on Nero Wolfe's in the fond hope that Wolfe, whom he firmly believes in, will be so impressed by his methods that he will invite him to dinner. Stout was never paid a lovelier or more astounding tribute. Incidentally, Leo has in his library a complete, leather-bound set of first editions of Nero Wolfe. Eat your heart out.

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Some melancholy news:

Rex Stout's first cousin, Mabel Todhunter, who was custodian of the family's Franklin memorabilia (Rex was descended from Ben's sister, Mary Franklin Holmes), died on 12 August 1982, seventeen days before her 94th birthday. She was a wonderful help while I was doing the biography. Jay Stout died recently, too. Jay was the oldest son of Rex's oldest brother, J. Robert Stout, and a heavily decorated hero in World War II.

Pola Stout tells me that Czarna, Rex's wonderful Labrador retriever, died lately, at seventeen. Czarna, whose name means "Nero" in Polish, sometimes turns up in TAD, sitting at my side, in a picture taken of Rex and myself at High Meadow.

My thanks to Rex's lovely niece, Juanita DeBrock, for keeping us posted on recent events.

Some happy news, too. Rex's oldest granddaughter, Lizbeth McCullough, who now makes High Meadow her home, is awaiting the birth of her first child, Rex's first great-grandchild.

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My latest book, *Royal Decree: Conversations with Rex Stout*, is now available in a limited edition, signed and numbered. Price \$6.50, postpaid, and may be ordered from me. Subscription fee for *The Thorndyke File* and membership fee in the R. Austin Freeman Society is \$5.00 domestic, \$6.50 other (American dollars). Keep writing to John McAler, Mount Independence, 121 Follen Road, Lexington, Massachusetts 02173. And thanks for the loyal support that never finds me without material for this column. □





# DOROTHY L. SAYERS

## Newsletter



Our Convention went off really well. The performance of the play by William Munro, *DLS, A Modern Mystery*, was even better than at Bluntisham last year, the fourteenth-century church was full, and £60 profit was made for the restoration fund. The Society made a donation. The Seminar proceedings will be ready by October (£1.00 as usual), but sound tapes (£2.50) of each of the three speakers are now available—Trevor Hall on C. W. Scott-Giles, Mackey on G. K. Chesterton, and Reynolds on GKC and DLS.

The Anagram Competition has evoked no fewer than 37 new anagrams on the letters DOROTHYLSAYERS, so surely the last word has been said! The winning entry is Aidan Mackey's DARES HOLY STORY, the runner-up Marianne Thormahlen's HARDLY TOY ROSES. Mackey specially distinguished himself (besides speaking at the seminar) by submitting the first and largest number (14) of all the entries; and what a tale they tell!

Celebration at Sunnyside: LO TODAYS SHERRY! LO THE ROSY YARDS! Indeed, but enough is enough; next time TRY ROSES OH LADY (a famous brand of lime juice)! As for British politics, those HORSEY TOY LADS would be enough to make our SHY LADY ROOSTER say SHE'D STAY TOY or TRY HEALYS DOORS. So back to literature...

Harriet, the SHORE STORY LADY, starts with HARDLY TOY ROSES because they looked like splashes of blood. But then Urquhart nearly DESTROYS ROYAL H. ROYAL? Between SHEDS OR ROYALTY, we must alas opt for sheds in spite of the admiral's coat of arms. Either way, justice, O Harriet, would have been laid at THY SAYER'S DOOR if a trifle late. But as it turns out, Urquhart fails to DESTROY OR SLAY H.

Of times have we admired DLS DO HER SLAY-STORY, but OH D'S EARLY STORY hath a strange plot: LO, SHY ROY TRADES. In what? HEARTY ROSY ROY! To whom? O THE LADY'S RORY'S

(Sydney Rory, the despicable white slaver; but he fails to pay cash). Although SHORT DELAYS ROY (these modern cars!), OLD RORY HE STAYS to fight. ROY EARL SHOT SYD; YES, SHOT RORY LAD; and serve him right for imitating ROD'S HOARY STYLE. Awful, isn't it? HOLD SAYER STORY! But no! Charles Parker to the rescue! Astonished to HEAR Y'SOLD STORY to YARD'S SLY HERO.

When one READS HOLY STORY about the TARDY HOLY ROSES (the Christmas ones that never seem to open until Easter), one is SO DEATHLY SORRY. But DLS is the first who DARES HOLY STORY for broadcasting. SHE'D ROYAL STORY to tell (about the king of kings), and what a plot! O SAD SORRY DEATH, but after three days thou canst SAY THE LORD ROSE. Marianne Thormahlen adds OLD S.Y. THOR'S YARE, which shows that Norse mythology has an answer to anything.

Many thanks also to Margaret Pitz Banks, Eileen Bushell, Paul de Voil, Walter Scott, Judith Hurley, and others who have helped write this lunatic paragraph, and to our panel of judges.

### Dorothy L. Sayers and Karl Barth

Das grosse Drama aller Zeiten, three religious essays by DLS ("The Greatest Drama Ever Staged," "The Triumph of Easter," and "Creed or Chaos?") in German translations by Karl Barth, Margrith Naegli, and others. Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 1982; 91 pp., paperback (18 Swiss francs). With an exchange of letters between Barth and DLS. Edited with an introduction and notes by Hinrich Stoevesandt.

Karl Barth (1886-1968), the great Swiss theologian who held the Chair of Systematic Theology (i.e., dogmatics) in the University of Basle from 1935 until 1962, had for many years admired DLS for her detective stories, which he read avidly for relaxation and to improve his English. When in June 1938 a Scots friend who knew of his enthusiasm sent him a copy of *The Greatest Drama Ever*

Staged, Barth was astounded to find in DLS additionally a brilliant religious writer who was actually capable of making dogma interesting to the non-theologian. He deplored a tinge of Pelagianism in her views to be sure, but graciously attributed this to her Englishness!

After also obtaining and reading DLS's Canterbury Festival play *The Devil To Pay* (which so displeased James Agate), Barth was moved to translate the *Drama* and *The Triumph of Easter* into German, a compliment that he paid during his whole life to only one other writer, John Calvin. Owing to the war, the translated essays were not published until 1959 (by Evangelischer Verlag Zollikon), and they are now joined by a new translation of *Creed or Chaos?* Barth's letter of 7 Sept. 1939 (in German), asking for guidance on certain points, and DLS's reply (in English) are included in the book. The latter has suffered in transcription, and a corrigenda slip is available from the Society on request (10P plus postage). How sad for us that the difficulties of wartime correspondence stifled this unique collaboration of two great minds before it was properly born!

Pastor Dr. Stoevesandt is curator of the Karl Barth Archive in Basle.

—Anton R. Obrist

### The Wrong Set!

Canon Arthur Payton, the local vicar, once asked Margery Allingham who lived at Tolleshunt Darcy some six miles from Witham, whether she had seen anything of Dorothy L. Sayers recently. "No," said Margery, who was Evangelical, "I do not see anything of her now. She has got into the wrong set, I am afraid." This was a reference to DLS's high church activities in London with Father Patrick McLaughlin and the St. Anne's Society mission to intellectuals.

### Postscript to the Anagram Competition

A special prize has been sent to Rutherford Morse for these excellent late entries: YES, RASH OLD TOY, one who RARELY STOOD SHY.

*Bluntisham House* is on the market again.

We have heard from the property agents Messrs. Jackson-Stops and Staff of 168 High Street, Newmarket CB8 9AJ. This is a lovely Georgian house in the village of Bluntisham, Cambridgeshire, DLS's home when her father the Rev. Henry Sayers was rector from 1897 until 1917. We held there our 1981 Seminar.

### Clerihw

Dorothy L. Sayers  
Was not the most keen of tax payers  
She was often heard to say  
There's the Devil to Pay.

—With thanks to Miss M. F. Hodges

To join the Dorothy L. Sayers Society, send a check for £3.00 (\$7.00 US or \$8.00 Canadian) to Roslyn House, Witham, Essex, CM8 2AQ. □



# A CATALOGUE OF CRIME

## S183 Allbeury, Ted

*Shadow of Shadows*

Scrib 1982

This second tale of espionage by the author of *The Other Side of Silence* follows the standard formula with competence and a modicum of charm, especially in dialogue. Two intertwined love stories occupy a fair amount of space, but it is in the tough, cynical parts that the sentimentality required by the genre comes out—attitudinizing about life, death, secrecy, indifference, honor, and impossible delicacy.

The plot involves finding a "mole" at the heart of British Intelligence, debriefing a scared defector, and rescuing the wife torn from him by the KGB. One must regret the multiple sandwich method by which we are told what goes on among the fellows on the other side, for the story stands up attractive and complete without all those pages in italics.

## S184 Bechofer-Roberts, C. E.

*Famous American Trials*

Preface by Sir Roland Burrows, K. C.  
Jarrolds, 1947 (1933)

English writers have seldom attempted to do for American trials what they have admirably performed for their own. Our procedure, social scene, and vocabulary (one may surmise) scare them off. But the brilliant and versatile "Ephesian"—our author's pseudonym—put together in this little volume a dozen essays averaging 9,000 words that are as entertaining as they are sound. The English cult of good prose charged with subdued wit and human understanding flourishes here at its best, and American society past and present is reported on with sureness and sympathy. The cases are: John Brown, Sacco and Vanzetti, Benedict Arnold and Major André, Leopold and Loeb, The Salem Witches, Harry K. Thaw, Jesse James, Snyder and Gray, President Lincoln's assassins, Charles D. Waggoner, Professor Webster, Hall-Mills. The learned barrister's preface is negligible and unnecessary.

## S185 Cumberland, Marten

*Grave Consequences*

CCD 1952

It is these reviewers' contention that Marten Cumberland has not received his due. We go further and say that he and his Commissaire, Saturnin Dax, provide everything that Simenon never thought of, and without the latter's irritating surplussage—rain in excess of the statistical norm, domestic by-play, and shoddy philosophizing about justice and the difference between what did happen and what officials think happened.

Cumberland knows Paris as well as anybody, and he renders the feel of the place almost as well as Henry James or Henry Miller. His plots are sound, his interpolations in French also. Characterization, when it is not excellent, is adequate, and situations are plausible even when intentionally extraordi-

## By Jacques Barzun and Wendell Hertig Taylor

nary. In this story, things start with the murder of an employer who has just sacked a faithful little wretch of a clerk. Like the Maigret that he is, Dax has his doubts about the *prima facie* case, and his investigation takes us to high life (or its approximation), where patiently, steadily, all is unraveled.

## S186 Kuttner, Henry

*Man Drowning*

Harper 1952

The works written by this gifted author under his own name are hard to come by but worth seeking on the strength of *Murder of a Wife* (C. of C. No. 1325), which is a triumph. *Man Drowning* is not. It is the story of a decline and fall, told in the first person, of one Nick Banning, whose love for his former wife, a pop singer, brings about his ruin. If not the first, this is one of the early tales of the husband or lover who agonizes page after page over the compulsive stupidities that he has committed and will continue to commit in dealings with his woman. It has all the details that have become clichés—muscles tensing, anxiety flooding and then draining away, anger flowing and ebbing, uncontrollable violence, drinking and bumbling and stealing to "get back" to the loved one, "pressure" in or on the stomach, loins, throat, temples, eyeballs; and finally the catastrophe and conclusion: "This is what I had always wanted." Too bad for one's general appreciation of the late H. K.

## S187 Freeman, Kathleen

*The Murder of Herodes and Other*

*Trials* (Illus.)

MacD. 1946

At a time when there has been a small upsurge of ancient-classic tales of detection (Doodly, Clemeau), this piece of lively scholarship will interest readers who want to know how, in fact, the Greeks handled their murder and other cases. For they too had courts, advocates, witnesses, and convicts to dispose of. The author begins with an excellent survey of law, procedure, and advocacy, after which we are given four murder trials—of a seducer, a poisoner, an embezzler, and a judicial murderer. Three other trials are for violence to the body. The remaining eight are civil cases. The headnotes are as well turned as the translations of the original pleadings for prosecution and defense—altogether a superb book for the connoisseur. It adds a touch of pleased surprise to remind oneself that Kathleen Freeman is our old friend Mary Fitt in her original scholarly guise.

## S188 Procter, Maurice

*Hurry the Darkness*

Harper 1951

Here is another writer who once in a while wanted to change his spots. Bred a police-

man, he began with a couple of murders in decent society, but he soon made capital of what he knew best, police procedure, and he created the impressive and likable Martineau, whose Manchester-like manor is full of really able criminals, many of them the troops of Dixie Costello. Procter's breakthrough in the present tale offers a criminal who is *not* able, except in the short run. He is ruined by his charm, good background, and temperate lust after women. Perhaps because we get impatient at so intelligent a young man's repeating his mistakes, we lose sympathy about half way through his odyssey. The result is that the author's ingenious episodes and good dialogue cease from then on to strike as forcefully as they did before. One could formulate one more empirical law of our genre: To follow the criminal from beginning to end soon spells boredom and disbelief—unless the author's name begins with D—Dickens, Dostoevsky...

## S189 Stern, Richard Martin

*Murder in the Walls*

Scrib 1971

The author, now living in Santa Fe, N.M., wrote nine or ten stories of crime before this one. *Manuscript for Murder* (1970) was a good suspense tale, but the author was wise to think up a new hero for what promises to be a continuing series that exploits the color and customs of the Southwest. Lt. Johnny Ortiz, of the Santa Cristo police, is half Apache and half Spanish-American. His first recorded case involves the murder of a girl in a discreetly run house of prostitution—a venerable adobe structure whose preservation against the inroads of change is nicely interwoven with the Lieutenant's chief problem. Johnny is a good character, his peculiarities are not overdrawn, and his relations with the black cultural anthropologist Cassie Enright are agreeably convincing. For later cases handled by Johnny Ortiz, see *You Don't Need an Enemy* (1972) and *Death in the Snow* (1973).

## S190 Underwood, Michael

*Hand of Fate*

St. Martin's 1981

The dependable Underwood, gifted with writing ability and an extensive first-hand experience of the law, has never received his due for a varied and satisfying body of work. Here he gives us another tale with excellent courtroom scenes and some welcome divergence from formula. The trial of Frank Wimble for the murder of his wife is heard before Justice Dame Isabella Gentry, who is made credible and appealing. The case against Wimble is scanty—only the bones of one hand (bearing a distinctive ring) have been recovered. That he gets off is no great surprise, but the author has provided a clever and unusual explanation of hand and ring which it would be a pity to give away. That Wimble is actually a murderer has already been told the reader on page 1. □

# Minor Offenses

By Edward D. Hoch

A semi-professional magazine is generally considered to be one that pays for contributions but has no national distribution. Semi-pro magazines are nothing new in the science-fiction and fantasy fields, where they have flourished for decades, but they're a quite recent addition to the mystery publishing scene. At this writing, there are two of them in existence, both on a more-or-less quarterly publication schedule—*Black Cat Mystery Magazine* and *Spiderweb*.

*Black Cat* is a Canadian magazine, the product of March Case Publishing, 45 Southport Street, Suite 712, Toronto, Canada, M6S 3N5. Single copy price is \$2.50 (plus 50¢ postage if ordered by mail), and a year's subscription is \$8.00 in the U.S. and Canada. There is some Canadian distribution, but in America it can be found only in specialized mystery bookstores. Five issues have been published to date, all edited by F. Clare-Joynt, who is also the publisher.

*Black Cat's* first issue appeared early in 1981, leading off with a reprint of a Sherlock Holmes story, Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder." Ambrose Bierce and Edgar Allan Poe were also represented by reprints. There was an excerpt from a longer story by F. Charles, a poem by Alice

Clare, and the beginning of a three-part Canadian serial by Felicity Cameron. The second issue featured more new material and the first story by a familiar professional name—Hal Charles. Other professionals, including Jon L. Breen, Joe R. Lansdale, and Edward D. Hoch, have appeared in subsequent issues, along with reprints by Conan Doyle and Dorothy L. Sayers.

There's been a tendency in recent issues toward more supernatural stories and fewer mysteries, and a crossword puzzle and astrology column have been added. Stories are generally quite short in the 88-page quarterly, and even a reprint of Doyle's "Charles Augustus Milverton" had to run in two parts. Still, the magazine remains a well-produced showcase for new writers, especially Canadian ones, and we wish it well.

*Spiderweb* has published only three issues to date, beginning with Winter 1982, but it is an outgrowth of *Skullduggery* magazine, which published eight issues during 1980 and '81. It's put out by Corsair Press, Drawer F, MIT Branch Station, Cambridge, MA 02139. Single copies are \$2.50, and subscription is \$10.00 per year. The magazine's staff consists of William H. Desmond, Karen Shapiro, and Michael Thornton, with each issue's editori-

al being signed by Ms. Shapiro. A typical issue is 75 pages long.

The first issue of the old *Skullduggery* had started off with a story by Bill Pronzini and Barry N. Malzberg, followed by Michael Avallone. The first issue of *Spiderweb* contained new stories by Robert Sampson, Dan Marlowe, Hal Charles, Janwillem Van de Wetering, W. S. Doxey and Ray Jay Wagner, plus an interview with Max Collins and book reviews by Annie Sebastian. Some of these authors have reappeared in subsequent issues, along with James Reasoner and others.

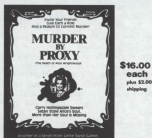
*Spiderweb's* glossy cover and striking cover illustrations, somewhat in the style of the old pulps but done in crisp black and white by artist Frank Hamilton, add considerably to its visual appeal. Each story is illustrated too, by a variety of artists. (*Black Cat* uses the same feline illustration on each of its covers, but prints them on different-colored stock.) *Spiderweb* uses no reprints and seems to attract more familiar professional names than *Black Cat*, resulting in a higher quality overall: There's certainly room for both magazines in the field, and mystery readers should find them rewarding—as long as they realize they're not reading EQMM or AHMM when they pick up a copy.

The best new mystery from the general magazines is Paul Theroux's "A Tomb With a View" in the September issue of *Harper's*. Theroux's unnamed American consul was first introduced in the twenty short stories collected as *The Consul's File* (1977), one of which was reprinted in *Best Detective Stories of the Year—1978*. The stories were a mixed lot, somewhat in the style of Somerset Maugham, about murder, intrigue, adultery, and even ghosts in a small Malaysian town. Now Theroux's consul has been assigned to London, and in "A Tomb With a View" he's asked to investigate the odd behavior of a young lodger believed to be an American. This story, and other new ones about the consul, are collected in *The London Embassy*, published by Hamish Hamilton last October and due from Houghton Mifflin this spring.

A new collection by Ruth Rendell, *The Fever Tree and Other Stories*, was recently published by Hutchinson in England. One of the eleven stories is new but the other ten have already appeared here in the pages of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. It's doubtful if a finer collection of crime-suspense stories will be published this year—or next.

And the December issue of EQMM includes what is apparently the first American publication of Anthony Berkeley's "White Butterfly," one of the author's rare short stories about Roger Sheringham. It's not as good as "The Avenging Chance," but then how many stories are? □

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The game kit includes some nice touches. There are special illustrations that can be read to the players ahead of time to fill them in on the game's background. There's also a short 33 p.m. record of a dialogue among the characters that helps set the mood at the start of play.

—Paddy Smith

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# THE PAPERBACK REVOLUTION

AGATHA CHRISTIE

**The Moving Finger** (1942) (Dell) writes, and is responsible for a series of vicious poison pen letters that accuse leading citizens of Lymstock, an idyllic English town, of the most hateful and perverted acts. Suspicion and uncertainty turn to naked fear, and a murder is committed. Obviously, it's time for Miss Jane Marple to intercede.

In addition, Dell has chosen the month of September to pay tribute to this author's most famous series characters. Poirot stars in **13 at Dinner** (1933), **Murder in Mesopotamia** (1936), **Poirot Loses a Client** (1937), and **Sad Cypress** (1940). Miss Marple is featured in **The Murder at the Vicarage** (1930) and the short story collection **The Tuesday Club Murders** (1932).



REGINALD HILL

**Ruling Passion** (1973) (Dell) starts with series character Sergeant Peter Pascoe's discovery that his weekend holiday with friends has erupted into a grisly triple murder—and there's promise of further carnage to come. This relatively new author has been cited with much favorable critical attention, and I tend to find myself in agreement with his aficionados.

FREDERIC VINCENT HUBER

Two experts sabotage New York City's vast computer system, and the result is chaos in **Apple Crunch** (1981) (Avon). These enterprising gentlemen also demand a twenty million dollar ransom in exchange for some vital information that will guarantee a huge federal loan—and time is running out. This fast, funny, informative, and original caper novel should appeal to all.

By Charles Shibuk

FERGUS W. HUME

The last mystery novel I would ever expect to see reprinted is **The Mystery of a Hansom Cab** (1886) (Dover). The first of many works by a barrister's clerk, this went on to become the biggest best-selling mystery of the nineteenth century. Time has not dealt as harshly with this work as with many of its contemporaries, and it remains a soundly-constructed, sometimes powerful, and always readable work today.

ELSPETH HUXLEY

**Murder on Safari** (1938) (Perennial) starts as a mildly satiric portrait of a big game hunt, but turns very serious when a titled lady's valuable jewels are stolen. This is Mrs. Huxley's second and best detective novel; it stars series character Superintendent Vachell and has been called first class by Messrs. Barzun and Taylor.

JOAN KAHN (ed.)

**Some Things Dark and Dangerous** (1970) and **Some Things Fierce and Fatal** (1971) are anthologies selected by our premier mystery editor and reprinted by Avon. The first collection is aimed at young readers, and, along with its successor, contains a substantial amount of true crime material. But there are enough off-trail crime fiction stories to satisfy most devotees of the short form.

JAY ROBERT NASH

John Howard Journey, Chicago journalist and true crime historian, is summoned by the newly-elected governor to represent all the news media when his son is violently murdered in bed. The unimaginatively titled **A Crime Story** (1981) (Dell) is a straightforward and interesting novel that has many affinities to the complex, moderately hard-boiled, first-person private eye tale.

ROBERT J. RANDISI

Miles Jacoby, professional boxer and newly-qualified private detective, is sorely beset by many problems in **Eye in the Ring** (Avon, 1982). His best friend and mentor is brutally slain, and his own worthless brother is arrested as the obvious murderer. There's also his brother's wife, a slew of corpses, and a professional hit man, who is after Miles, in this lively and engaging narrative.

CHARLES MERRILL SMITH

The blameless protagonist of **Reverend Randolph and the Holy Terror** (1980) (Avon), one of the many attractive characters in this novel, is threatened by an unknown, who has previously murdered three clergymen for their sins. Once again, crime fiction elements vie with concerns of an ecumenical

nature, but the mixture is an attractive and highly readable one.

HENRY WADE

A financier with a well-known heart condition collapses and dies at the foot of **The Duke of York's Steps** (1929) (Perennial). Who was the unknown man who jostled him before he fell? This work, which questions the British legal system, was the most favorably reviewed of all Wade's novels, and many of the older historians also cite it as Wade's best work. Barzun and Taylor call it a classic of the golden age.

CORNELL WOOLRICH

Ballantine has started a systematic program to reissue the work of this master of the twentieth-century suspense novel. **The Black Curtain** (1941) may not be the first novel to deal with a recovered amnesiac who is suspected of murder, but it is one of the very best. Less successful is **The Black Path of Fear** (1944), which is set in Havana and concerns a gangster's attempt to commit the perfect frame against his murdered wife's lover. Introductions by Mike Nevins, though familiar to long-time TAD readers, are of considerable value. □

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# PAPER CRIMES

By Raymond Obstfeld

In college, I made three resolutions. First, never turn down a game of poker with anyone who asked me to bring the cards. Second, never go out again with a girl who mentioned any of the Apostles' names on our first date. And third, to keep an index file of all the books, stories, poems, and plays I ever read. And I stuck to all three. Firmly. Absolutely. Irrevocably.

For a while.

The first two were fairly easy to keep, their practicality being obvious and requiring no maintenance. But the third became an unwieldy mass of bookkeeping. Soon I modified my original intentions, eliminating

poems from the catalogue, then stories, then plays. And eventually even books.

I recently discovered that old catalogue, however. And as I sat in the garage amongst my musty papers about "The Hemorrhoid Motif in *Moby Dick*" and a battered button that read "Dump LBJ," I reread all those cards I filled out back in the Age of Aquarius. What a delight! They actually did everything I had intended: they quickly summarized plot, discussed the strengths and weaknesses,

and were graded with a letter from A to F for quick reference. In that afternoon of reading, I became reacquainted with some old books I didn't like. Of course, when looking at some of the reasons why, I realized it may have been a matter of being too young to appreciate a certain plot or style, and I decided I'd give them another chance.

And now I'm back to keeping the catalogue again. So I thought I'd share with you how it works. Perhaps you'll be more successful at maintaining it than I was the first time around.

**TITLE:** THE RED MOON  
**AUTHOR:** Warren Murphy  
**PUBLISHER:** Fawcett  
**OTHER BOOKS BY AUTHOR:** Destroyer Series  
**TYPE NARRATIVE:** Third-person, multiple narrators  
**PLOT SUMMARY:** Iranians try to take over a small Texas oil company for sinister reasons. After some underhanded manipulations, including a murder, ex-CIA agent Chris Caldwell is brought in to discover, with the help of a beautiful lawyer, the secret meaning of RED MOON.  
**STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES:** It starts well, flipping from one character to another with ease, always with a mounting interest. The characters are well drawn, including all the minor ones. But after a couple hundred pages the reader starts to become impatient. You get the feeling that the book's been padded to make it Big, Important. Too bad. It would have been a crackling novel with a hundred fewer pages.  
Still, it has a strong plot and dynamic characters to recommend it, so take a chance.  
**GRADE:** B

**TITLE:** ARARAT  
**AUTHOR:** Robert Houston  
**PUBLISHER:** Avon  
**OTHER BOOKS BY AUTHOR:** CHOLO; MONDAY, TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY  
**TYPE NARRATIVE:** Third-person, single narrator  
**PLOT SUMMARY:** Brick Rustin, a journalist living in Turkey, takes a job as translator for a suspicious group in search of Noah's ark on Mount Ararat. But of course no one is who he, or she, seems, and an international chase is on that takes us all over the world.  
**STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES:** Brick is an appealing character, sincere, naive, rugged. The style is very smooth and lurks with ominous undertones. But the book is a bit ponderous, mostly because it seems to want to be taken more seriously than it deserves. There's so much angst and Weltschmerz that Brick starts to get on your nerves.  
But if you can hold out through his self-indulgences and gullibility, then you'll enjoy the faster pacing of the last half of the book.  
**GRADE:** B-



TITLE: COUNTDOWN TO CHINA  
AUTHOR: Steven L. Thompson  
PUBLISHER: Warner  
OTHER BOOKS BY AUTHOR: RECOVERY  
TYPE NARRATIVE: Third-person, multiple narrators  
PLOT SUMMARY: Max Moss, first introduced in RECOVERY, is sent to recover a canister of "secret satellite photos that could prove that the Russians are about to start World War III." And that's the easy part.  
STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES: Max Moss is a kind of updated Mack Bolan-type of hardguy, but with a little more depth. The writing style isn't very elaborate, it's merely functional. Keep the story moving. Period. Believe me, there's nothing inherently wrong with that philosophy--certainly both Mr. Murphy and Mr. Houston could have used a bit of it in their books. The problem is that you never care about the characters as much as you do in the aforementioned novels. Even though the pace is fairly relentless, you come out of it all a little breathless. And a little empty. As if you've run all the way to your favorite ice cream store with only the thought of a sundae to keep you going. And when you finally arrive, panting and sweating, it's closed.  
GRADE: C+

THE SERIES SERIES. Reading the Fletch series is like watching the downhill slide of a close friend who used to take only a glass of Chablis with dinner and now is sucking on empty Sterno cans.

What happened to the crisp pace and clever wit of *Fletch*? It was a flawed book, sure, but it showed great promise. *Confess*, *Fletch* showed the same flaws, mostly plotting, but also demonstrated the same strengths of style and tone. Surely the next book would pull it all together, we hoped.

Nope. *Fletch's Fortune* brought us a different Fletch, not the one with the acerbic wit but one who was just nasty and unattractively arrogant. The plot was even weaker than the others, being so predictable you wondered why Fletch was slow in figuring it out.

Then author Gregory McDonald switched publishers from Avon to Warner and came out with two new books, *Fletch and the Widow Bradley* and most recently *Fletch's Moxie*. Rather than stay the downward plunge of this series, both have contributed to shoving the whole thing over the edge of the cliff. The humor, what little there is, is forced and uncomfortable. The character has become so adolescent in tone and attitude that it's like babysitting with your neighbor's bright but spoiled kid.

Because of my fondness for the first two books in the series, I've felt compelled to keep buying the others, hoping McDonald will rediscover the original naughty-but-nice spirit. But next time, I'll think long and hard before picking a new Fletch off the rack.

RECONSIDERED. When asked who my favorite writer is, it's not hard to come up with a list of half a dozen names. One name near the top of that list is Ross Thomas, author of many fine novels under his own name and under his popular pseudonym, Oliver Bleek. Easily his best book under either name is *The Fools in Town Are On Our Side*.

Similar in plot to Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest*, it has everything a good suspense novel should have: interesting characters, involving plot, sophisticated wit, teeth-gnashing action. And it has one other thing most novels--of any genre--don't have. Depth. Resonance. Taste.

Plotting has always been a particular weakness of Thomas. It's almost as if he doesn't really care about where the characters end up as long as the trip has been fun. And

in his books I usually agree. Forget the many coincidences and unlikely twists, just hang on for the sheer thrill of being there.

But *Fools* doesn't even have that usual weakness. It is a tight narrative that alternates among the hero's current activities trying to corrupt a small town, his fall from grace as a government agent, and his childhood as an American boy growing up in war-torn China.

Thomas's stylistic brilliance is in his ability to write with such casual knowledgeability that the reader is willing to accept anything he says. And wit. Sophisticated, subtle humor that at once makes you chuckle, wince, and delight at absurdities both harmless and destructive. In people. In what they want. And in what they're willing to do to get it.

Do yourself a favor. Get hooked on Ross Thomas. This one should do it.



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## CURRENT REVIEWS

**The Chrysanthemum Chain** by James Melville. St. Martin's Press, 1982. \$9.95

Superintendent Otani's second recorded case is a splendid blend of characterization and vivid background setting of modern Japan. In many ways, Otani is not the focus of the novel—rather, it is British Vice-Consul Andrew Walker. The vivacious characterization of Walker and depiction of diplomatic life add contrast and humor to Otani's rather grim, more serious tracking down of the killer. The worlds of cautious diplomatic protocol, traditional Japanese life, and modern police investigation clash following the death of an English teacher at the University.

The victim, David Morrow, has chosen to leave England and settle permanently in Japan, living in every way possible the classical Japanese life. It is part of Walker's job to "process" the death of an Englishman in a foreign country. And doing so, he is drawn into a skirmish with the current elections and organized Japanese crime. As excellent as the rest of the book is, the ending is somewhat disappointing. The crime is revolved, but not solved in the usual manner of crime fiction. Lack of convention can be refreshing and interesting. Here it leads to the effect of pulling a rabbit out of a hat.

—Fred Dueren

**The Palace Guard** by Charlotte MacLeod. Avon, 1981.

I have not yet read a bad review of one of Charlotte MacLeod's books. As a result, I was expecting perfection and was a bit disappointed when all I got was a very good book. Her hallmark is bizarreness and a rollicking good time—she has a sense of humor and social criticism similar to Entma-

Lathen's, but more on a level of slapstick with a pound or two of bawdiness thrown in.

The plot is relatively simple. Sarah Kelling, Boston's leading boarding house proprietor, and her "favorite lodger," Max Bittersohn, witness a murder (more or less) at a private art museum. (The poor guard is dumped three stories off a balcony, splatters in the tile courtyard, and is hardly thought of again as the other characters airily reveal their eccentricities and jokes.) An art fraud is uncovered, and Max, a noted art historian, runs around

solving the murder and identifying art criminals. (The second corpse is handled as summarily as the first, by the way.)

Fake Russian countesses, lecherous cousins, and bosomy assistants have more to do with it all than reality. The seriousness of death would never survive in such a rarified atmosphere. But when it was all over, I found myself thinking how much I enjoyed it, and wanted to get on to the rest of MacLeod's books.

—Fred Dueren



## RETRO REVIEWS

**The Most Dangerous Game** (1964), *Shooting Script* (1966) by Lyall Gavin. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

I don't know how many books and stories I've read entitled *The Most Dangerous Game*—all of them agreeing on what the most dangerous game is—but this one is my favorite. Bill Cary is a charter pilot flying mineral surveys and hunting trips in Lapland, close to the Russian border. He becomes entangled with smuggling, counterfeiting, and ultimately the British secret service and a night flight under Russian radar. Also with lost treasure, a brother and sister from Virginia, and his own past. Some of the hinges in the plot are weak, but the narrative

is so well paced that I didn't notice that until afterwards. A couple of minor characters are murdered, mostly to keep the action moving and to get Cary involved with all the various plot elements, but this is primarily a suspense thriller, and a very good one.

By comparison, *Shooting Script* is a far weaker book. The plot is similar. Keith Creel is a charter pilot in Jamaica, but everyone remembers him as a fighter pilot in Korea. He is mistaken for a rebel sympathizer by the military junta ruling an island republic and his plane is confiscated. Creel agrees to fly a mission against the junta in a World War II surplus bomber. This is the climactic sequence, and even though it becomes more

incredible as the story progresses, I enjoyed it. There is much more going on here—Creel is hired as a camera pilot by a film company, and a minor character is murdered—but the attraction of the novel lies in the bomber mission. Unfortunately, this ends well before the book does, and the plot deteriorates to silliness, unlike *The Most Dangerous Game*, in which the climax barely ends in time to wrap up all the disparate plot elements.

I found some other comparisons between these books to be illuminating. The plots are similar, the heroes are similar, and the themes are similar; but *The Most Dangerous Game* is a much superior book. One reason has been mentioned: since the climax occurs so near

the end of the book, its plot never has a chance to show its weakness and fall apart. Neither book has especially well-developed characters, and dialogue is not Lyall's strong point. *The Most Dangerous Game* overcame this problem mostly by avoiding it; there are relatively few characters, and their conversations are generally perfunctory. *Shooting Script* has many more characters, and all of them seem compelled to give their views on politics, revolution, society, and everything else; this would be tolerable if the characters were interesting or insightful or entertaining, but they are not. But the biggest reason that the one novel is so much better than the other is the setting. The Finnish locale gives *The Most Dangerous Game* an immediate atmosphere of loneliness, bleakness, and doom, the classic components of a thriller; there is no one else to rely on, nowhere else to go, and no way to escape one's fate (which in these books is decided by the past). All of these are missing in *Shooting Script*. The Caribbean is crowded with people and sunshine. Winter and night, synonymous in the Arctic Circle, never come to the tropics. There is no sense of the past in the tropics; most opponents were recently an ally, not a nemesis. And a military junta in the Caribbean is a much less imposing opponent than the Soviet Union.

This is not to mean that *Shooting Script* is not worth reading; it has some sustained suspense, and a lot of information about flying. But *The Most Dangerous Game* overshadows it, and ranks high on my list of thrillers.

\* \* \* \* \*

**The Mystery of Norman's Court** by John Chancellor. Hutchinson, 1923; Small, 1924.

Most of the usual reference books contain no information about John Chancellor.

*The Bibliography of Crime Fiction* tells us that this author is really Charles de Balzac Rideaux (1900-1971) and has nine crime fiction novels and a series character named Frass, who appears in at least two of the later volumes, plus six additional marginal novels, to his credit.

Chancellor also supervised the creation of *Double Death* (Gollancz, 1939) and contributed a preface and prologue. *Double Death* is a collaborative novel similar to such Detection Club efforts as *The Floating Admiral* and contains contributions by Sayers, Crofts, and others. Further details are available in *A Catalogue of Crime*.

*The Mystery of Norman's Court* is Chancellor's crime fiction debut, and it's a fair effort, but not an outstanding one. It admittedly pales into insignificance when compared to previous debuts by Christie and Crofts, as well as that of Sayers in the same year.

This novel's chief point of interest is its baffling and impossible locked-room murder. Unfortunately, its solution is neither new nor original. There is also one detail (or mistake), that I cannot mention, which renders the crux of Chancellor's puzzle fallacious, and the

entire structure disintegrates like a house of cards in a hurricane.

Characterization is of interest. Everyone is well defined and certainly more than the usual two-dimensional cardboard. Almost everybody suffers from either tangled motives or guilty secrets in his past, and many of the characters refuse to impart often vital information that could possibly lead to an early solution.

Chancellor's prose style is about what one might expect from a minor writer of the period, and it does show a bit of a strain at times, mainly because it runs to the somewhat excessive length of 347 pages, which are not supported by enough plot, puzzle, and variety of incident.

Sir James Sadder, head of the C.I.D. at New Scotland Yard, is an impressive detective, but he assumes the burden of the investigation from the ineffectual local police rather late in the proceedings. He thinks and acts rapidly, however, and is able to produce all the answers to this country-house murder problem in fine style at the usual gathering of the suspects.

*The Mystery of Norman's Court* adds little radiance to the golden age of the detective story, and, while perfectly readable, it is mainly of interest to aficionados of British detective novels of the '20s. It is not, alas, a work that demands, or is worthy of, immediate revival.

—Charles Shibus

\* \* \* \* \*

**Death in Budapest** by Val Gielgud and Holt Marvell. London: Rich & Cowan, 1937.

The map in this book and a severe case of cartomania (the inability to avoid buying and reading books with maps in them) overcame my certainty that it would turn out to be like one of those Colonel Granby spy things. Negative certainty was replaced with a positive expectation that a Forgotten Classic of the Golden Age was at hand. Maps do strange things to me.

What I found was not Beeding, nor a Forgotten Classic. But *Budapest* does have something uncommon in it. From pages 116 through 121 of this 1937 tale, in attendance at the Opera House Budapest for a performance of *La Bohème*, are many of the greatest detectives of fiction. The First International Police Conference has brought them to Budapest; an opportunity to see a famous Italian prima donna has brought them to the Opera House. What they see, unknowingly, is a murder. These unwitting witnesses include Lord Peter, a "tubby Roman Catholic priest," and a certain "Joe" complete with a pocket-protruding timetable. Reggie Fortune and Miles Bredon are present. And Hanaud (with Ricardo), Colonel Gore, Philo Vance, and Poirot are heard to speak, albeit briefly.

The possibility that any of these sleuths will assist is soon dismissed: Father Brown cannot be found. French is considered useless for a case that doesn't include time- or tide-tables. Vance (with his tiresome "stage-American and English-country" voice) is a pest.

Hanaud won't help. Wimsey is too recently married. Colonel Gore walks away having formed a wrong first impression, "as always." The Coles' Wilson, still in London, offers his help but is rejected. Vance is still persisting six pages later, but then this surprising and amusing interlude is regrettably at an end.

The rest of the book is less interesting and amusing. But it does have several agreeable elements: A train, a mysterious woman, the Budapest setting, the Opera House scene-of-the-crime, and four interesting protagonists. Of these latter, one is Simon Spears of the C.I.D. (in town for the Police Conference), two are holidaying BBCers, and the fourth is an American girl who has a romantic relationship with the other three and who is taking a correspondence course in how to be a detective. Spears had appeared in two earlier tales by these authors, and one of the BBCers, Julian Caird, had appeared in one. Caird, I suppose the main character, sports a pointed beard, as did Val Gielgud (see his photograph in the recently reprinted *Herewith the Clues* by Dennis Wheatley and J. G. Links, New York: Mayflower, 1982). Another good character is Istvan Marton, the henpecked, harassed, and befuddled Chief of Police of Budapest.

Many readers may appreciate the list of characters following the Table of Contents, and some, especially those suffering from cartomania as I do, will welcome the map of the Opera House. But many may not enjoy the frequent descriptions of Budapest. And if anyone is looking for commentary on the war that was soon to come, all they'll find is: "Berlin, under the boy scout regime of the Nazis, is as dull as Peebies on a wet Sunday in Lent." But for me the picture of a 1937 Budapest, blissfully ignorant of what is to come, is full of charm. Not so charming, but mildly amusing at times, are the many stereotypes: An overbearing German, an Italian named Brageot, a sabre-wielding count, a fiery opera star, and an emotional Frenchman, to name but a few. With all the characters (and there are as many as in the early Queens), the Budapest travelogue, night-clubbing, humor (the aforementioned Peebies quote is an example), the opera, and the romancing, one might wonder how a worthwhile detective story could be worked in. Alas, it cannot! The detective story is so slight as to be almost incidental, and, worse luck, the murderer is too easily guessed. Barzun and Taylor and many others, I'd bet, would not be pleased.

Withal, this melange, which reads as if it were written by Dorothy Sayers, early Allingham, and whomever writes the Michelin Guides, could have been a modest success, were it not for an ending spoiled by disunities of place and impression; an ending (I'll spare you the details) reminiscent of *Little Caesar*. To greatly paraphrase one of the characters in *Budapest*, if ever such a mixture should appear before my eyes again, I'll undergo treatment (sodium bicarbonate?) for my cartomania and stop reading books just because they have maps in them.

—Jim Frenzel

# LETTERS

From Greg Goode:

I would like to correct a typo, an error of commission, and three errors of omission in my article "The Sinister Oriental" and in the bibliography of secondary sources in TAD 15:3. On p. 202, footnote 8 should start off with "See Briney, op. cit." and not simply "Briney." I think that is a typo. An error of commission that is all mine is the misspelling of Jon L. Breen's name as "John" on p. 206 under the bibliographical listing of Wu. I think I got his name right everywhere else.

The errors of omission are all in the bibliography, and are more serious. Again, p. 206, under the listing for Wu, the book version of *The Yellow Peril*, I stated that Wu's coverage of the stories in the "slicks" was perfectly adequate. This is not true. Wu shares the belief held by some other writers that there were only three James Lee Wong stories in *Collier's*. If I hadn't left Wu's book in the U.S. when I came to Germany, I could quote the page where he states or strongly implies that there are only three. When I looked the stories up, I was pleasantly surprised to find at least *thirty* James Lee Wong stories! Thus, Wu somehow missed the other 27, and I omitted to mention it in my entry.

The other two errors of omission I really should not have committed! Under the sections for Charlie Chan (§III) and Mr. Moto (§IV), I should add the excellent pieces by Otto Penzler in his *The Private Lives of Private Eyes, Spies, Crimefighters, and Other Good Guys* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1977). Pages 42-51 contain a biography and personality profile of the literary (as opposed to the filmic) Charlie Chan. It is perhaps the longest biography of Chan in English (I have seen quite a long one in French) and features the largest selection of the Chan-o-grams from the books. The piece on Mr. Moto (pp. 140-43) is also a biography and personality profile and is noteworthy for conveying the shadowy, mysterious impression that Moto himself makes. Both pieces are illustrated, the Chan especially well so.

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From Raymond Obstfeld:

I appreciate Mr. DeAndrea's encouraging review of *Dead Bolt*. But just to set the record straight, it was *Dead Heat* that was nominated for an Edgar, not *Dead Bolt*.

I missed twice; the wrong mention in *Bill's column and*, as the book's editor, the wrong charge card. The first is my fault; the second error belongs to a group of people who no longer have jobs. —Michael

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From Mike Nevins:

The latest TAD, with its first-rate articles on non-beaten-to-death subjects such as the

Teilhets and William R. Cox, is one of the finest issues in a long time. Neat coincidence that consecutive TAD issues should run my piece on William Ard, who created the Buchanan series of paperback Westerns, and Jim Traylor's profile of William R. Cox, who carried on the series in the 1970s.

I also admired Part I of Greg Goode's work on Orientals in crime fiction and am eagerly awaiting his comments on my revered Harry Stephen Keeler's contributions to that subject. Keeler was fiercely anti-racist and loved Chinese culture passionately. His first novel, *The Voice of the Seven Sparrows* (1924), was among other things a comedy about racial prejudice in which a white-knight newsmen from Chicago comes to New Orleans hunting for a rival newspaper publisher's missing daughter and, against all the inbred instincts of the American people, finds himself falling in love with a beautiful Chinese woman. In the last chapters, Keeler lets his hero off the hook and unleashes one of his most fantastic coincidences by revealing that the woman isn't Chinese at all but the missing daughter in disguise! Fifteen years later, in *Y. Cheung, Business Detective* (1939), Keeler created his only Chinese detective hero, a sort of almond-eyed Virgil Tibbs who talks and acts exactly like every member of Keeler's small army of WASP heroes. But H.S.K. also worked the other side of the Oriental street, producing several books (almost none published in the United States) about the sinister Hong Lei Chung, head of the Tong of the Lean Grey Rats, who owes much to Dr. Fu Manchu but is more likely to remind contemporary readers of a scarlet-robed Wile E. Coyote as his nutty schemes to win for his tong a huge bequest under the Will of Poo Ping Fu are perpetually frustrated by Keeler Coincidences.

There are enough Oriental motifs in Keeler to fill a book, and I'm looking forward to Greg Goode's treatment.

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From Tom Galvin:

You committed an error in TAD 15:3. Mr. DeAndrea made reference to meeting Anita Corsault. Her last name is spelled Corsaut.

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From Jim Doherty:

By way of introduction, I am the Berkeley cop who, at the recent Bouchercon-by-the-Bay, made you annoyed by continually bringing up the question of British writers at the PWA panel, and later asked you why TAD no longer publishes a "Series Synopsis" column. Remember now? This is my first letter to TAD, so I'll probably cover a lot of ground, and digress, and wander, but that's why I'm writing a letter instead of submitting an article. So I won't have to write in a disciplined manner.

At the con, and in "The Uneasy Chair" editorial in TAD 15:3, you brought up the possibility of a fan award somewhat in the manner of the "Hugo" given by s.f. fans at the Worldcon. I think it's a splendid, long-overdue idea. I'd like to offer a few thoughts.

First of all, I think the proposed name, the Bogie, should be changed. Humphrey Bogart, familiar to all mystery fans as Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe, is, nevertheless, not completely appropriate as the namesake of an award for crime writing. In the first place, Bogie appeared in many non-mystery movies, from Westerns such as *The Oklahoma Kid* to war films like *Sahara* and *The Caine Mutiny* to romantic comedies such as *Sabrina*. In the second place, those crime films in which he did appear, either as hero or villain, were always fast-action-type stories. While my particular tastes tend to run in that direction, naming a mystery award for somebody so identified with a particular kind of story seems to disenfranchise those who prefer more genteel mysteries. In the third place, the name "Bogie" is a trifle ambiguous. When I mentioned the proposed name to another person, he thought the name more appropriate for a horror story award, thinking "Bogie" referred to the Bogyman.

I have three alternate suggestions. First, the Sherlock. It may be argued that, if Humphrey Bogart is identified with one school of crime fiction, Sherlock Holmes is surely identified with the other school. But Holmes is, without doubt, the most famous detective in fiction and is so easily recognizable to everyone, whether a big fan or not, that it is not inappropriate to name what is to be a universal detective fiction award for this figure.

Second, since it is suggested that the award be made part of Bouchercon, it might be called the "Tony" or (since that name has prior usage for another award) the "Boucher." I don't suppose it is necessary for me to list the many reasons why the late Anthony Boucher deserves to have his memory honored.

Finally, since this proposed award draws its inspiration from the Hugo, why not take a leaf from the s.f. fans' book. They named their award for Hugo Gernsback, the most famous science-fiction editor. The most famous mystery editor is undoubtedly Ellery Queen. Moreover, Ellery Queen's name is almost as well known as Holmes's. My first choice for a name for the award is, therefore, the "Ellery."

So much for the name; now for the site. The main problem with having the award part of the Bouchercon is that the Private Eye Writers of America are already giving their Shamus awards there. Should two separate awards presentations be part of one event? Perhaps not. It isn't a major sticking point,

certainly, but maybe it should be thought about.

Finally, if it is logistically possible, I would like to see a broader base of fans eligible to vote on the awards than simply those who can afford to go to the Bouchercon every year. I suppose that that's easy for me to say since I won't have to count the ballots, but there are many mystery readers who simply can't make it to Bouchercon every year. Should they be disenfranchised for that reason? Besides, part of the reason for an award like this is to mobilize dormant mystery fandom. At least one letter in every issue of TAD bemoans the fact that mystery fans aren't as well organized as science fiction or comics fans. Here we have an opportunity to form a point around which mystery fans can rally and organize, but this opportunity is missed if voting eligibility is limited to a dedicated hard core. Well, enough about the award.

Comments about recent issues: Bill DeAndrea says in TAD 15:3 that Andrew Neiderman's *Pin* should not have been nominated for the 1981 paperback Edgar because it was a supernatural. Well, I half agree with him. It shouldn't have been nominated, but, Bill, where did you get the idea that it was a supernatural horror story? The main character is the son of a physician who deludes himself into believing that his dad's life-sized, plastic "visible man" model is actually alive. Encouraged by his imaginary friend, he murders his sister's fiancé, Pin, the plastic dummy, is given life only by the character's delusions, not by supernatural means. I don't particularly like the novel, but I think it falls squarely within our genre. Besides, what have you got against supernatural horror stories, anyway? Would you say that Ed McBain's 87th Precinct novel *Ghosts* is not a mystery because of its supernatural elements? How about Leslie Whitten's *Progeny of the Adder*? How about William Hjortberg's hard-boiled P.I. novel *Falling Angel*? I don't say that every horror story fits, but there are plenty of novels in which the two genres intersect, and I think that they shouldn't be rejected out of hand just because they have supernatural elements.

However, I'm happy to see that I'm not the only one who's getting a trifle bored with the sour outlook on life that hard-boiled P.I.s seem to develop once they move to L.A.

While I've got your attention, Bill, when are you going to write a sequel to *The Lunatic Fringe*? Soon, I hope. You do a damned good Irish brogue for a guy who's only one-sixteenth mick.

I've always wanted to correct somebody on a minor mistake, and now, thanks to Richard Meyers, I have the chance. Ric, in your review of *McClain's Law* (TAD 15:2), you refer to the hero's bailiwick as "the mythical town of San Pedro." Gotcha. In the first place, it's San Pedro, with a *d*. In the second place, it isn't mythical; it's a very real municipality in Los Angeles County.

Otherwise, I'm glad that you softened your views about *Hill Street Blues*, and I agree that *T. J. Hooker* is very disappointing, but why do you have such a low opinion of William

Shatner as an actor? He can't do better than the scripts, after all. Lighten up.

Although I disagreed with much of your book *TV Detectives*, I enjoyed it very much. How about somebody doing a similar book about radio detective shows? Are you listening, Chris Steinbrunner?

Well, I'm running on, so I'll sign off. Looking forward to your next issue.

*I have no problem with another name for the Jan award. I do, though, have difficulty with "open balloting." How do you prevent people from voting "early and often," as it were?*

*Was I annoyed? Pests annoy; legitimate questions don't.* —Michael

From Jim Goodrich:

Mike Nevins's piece on William Ard made the current TAD worthwhile. Also, there were no *o-p-o-p* articles from the academicians, thankfully. I would like to see more response from you in the letters section and brief information on new contributors. Otherwise you are continuing to revive TAD.

*Thanks for the kind words and the support. When I have something to say, I'll comment. Otherwise, discretion... And we'll try to get "blurbs" on contributors.* —Michael

From Alexandria Maxwell:

Re *Song Poison* by Dorothy L. Sayers, I cannot stand idly by and see Harriet Vane accused of murdering Philip Bayes [Dorothy Sayers Newsletter, TAD 15:2] on the strength of signing that appointment letter "M." Of course she did not sign it "M." She signed it "Me."

The whole issue between them was Harriet's integrity—value as a person—pride—self-respect. Of all these Philip was determined to rob her.

She *hand* wrote the letter; making the "M" large and the "e" small—so small it looked like a little curlie or flourish on the capital M.

The note—it was only that—ends with her teeth gritted and her jaw stuck out—"but you certainly will not make me change my mind." "Harriet" would not do—it suggests exactly the wrong kind of terms between them. "Vane" was out as that was her professional name, and besides, there was the double meaning: vain—useless and vain—conceited. Her business—her living—depended absolutely on words. So she knew.

The pronoun was exactly right. Almost everyone has trailed off the final word or letters of a note or card at some time.

The note, then, was copied by typewriter, Xeroxed, X-rayed, folded, examined, etc., etc. (the police were determined to make their case). By the time the jury saw it, and by the time it was made into print for the book, the round-off of the script "M" had been dropped entirely.

That is all there was to it.

And I am surprised that the brilliant little demons of TAD did not work it out for themselves.

I expect a roar of rebuttal—"but you certainly will not make me change my mind." "Me"

From Joe R. Christopher:

I reviewed Roy Vickers's *The Department of Dead Ends*, edited and introduction by E. F. Bleiler (Dover, 1978), in TAD 14:4. Since then, Paul McCarthy has sent me his "The Short Stories of Roy Vickers," *The Poisoned Pen* 5:1 (July 1982), which lists Vickers's stories by volume, by series and non-series, and by anthology appearance. Perhaps a few more will show up from some long-lost magazine publication, but it looks amazingly complete and it certainly fulfills my desire for a complete list of the Department of Dead Ends stories. (McCarthy's lists also show that I was wrong in believing the Penguin edition had the same stories as the Besteller Mystery edition, both titled *The Department of Dead Ends*); they have only three stories in common.) I'd still love to see a *Complete Department of Dead Ends* (all 37 stories)... or at least a volume having those stories I don't have!

I was delighted with the "Dorothy L. Sayers Newsletter." I'm glad to see her importance reflected in a special department. I don't know if you will receive enough on her to run it each time, but I hope so. Even fairly regularly would be nice. (You've got two items from me on her at the moment, I realize.) Perhaps you could pick up some material from Christie McMenomy, 3138 Sawtelle Boulevard #4, Los Angeles, CA 90066; she last announced *The Sayers Review* would appear three times a year, but it has not appeared (I think) since January 1981 (Vol. 4, No. 2). She might be happy to make (say) one or two installments per year of the "Dorothy L. Sayers Newsletter" into equivalents of *The Sayers Review*. (Will you be liberal enough to run material on Sayers's non-mysteries in that section?) I promise to send some more things for it within a year.

By the way, your contents page called it the "Dorothy L. Sayers Newsletter," but the title page of the department called it the "Dorothy Sayers Newsletter"; in light of the emphasis Sayers put on including her middle initial in all her publications, I think you need the *L.* on the department.

Speaking of slip-ups, Steve Stillwell wrote me in response to my letters about *The Armchair Detective Index*. He gently pointed out that, despite missing my two items, all the indexing of the letters proved the work was not done from the contents pages. My apologies; he's quite right. It's a useful work, and he said the missed items would be picked up in the next index, covering a five-year span.

And now, I've got two items about Ellery Queen that I don't think have been mentioned in your pages. In *Fantasma: A Bibliography of the Literature of Jack Vance*, compiled by Daniel J. H. Levack and Tim Underwood (San Francisco, California, and Columbia, Pennsylvania: Underwood/Miller, 1978), I find that he wrote three of the E.Q. paper-



backs: *The Four Johns* (1964), *A Room to Die In* (1965), and *The Madman Theory* (1966). There are three additional here: (1) The ms. title of the 1965 book was "Death of a Solitary Chess Player" (p. 43). (2) The compilers' note on these books is: "Mr. Vance does not acknowledge authorship of these Ellery Queen titles and therefore our source of information must be kept confidential. In fact, four authors of speculative fiction [science fiction and fantasy] are said to have written novels under the Ellery Queen by-line" (p. 55). (3) All three of these books are noted to have been rewritten by the publishers (pp. 30, 36, 43). This fits the rumor I've heard (I don't know its truth) that Manfred B. Lee was editing these E.Q. paperbacks and re-writing them to his taste as they came in. At any rate, since Mike Nevins in his *Royal Bloodline* carefully listed these paperbacks as "signed as if by Ellery Queen," there's no surprise that Lee and Dannay themselves did not write them.

What is surprising is that they seem not to have written all the hardcover novels about Ellery Queen (*A Study in Terror* doesn't count in this connection, for it was a paperback in the U.S.—and I think TAD has already published information about a third hand in its writing). In *Theodore Sturgeon: A Primary and Secondary Bibliography*, compiled by Lahna F. Diskin (Boston: G. K. Hall, 1980), I find listed, without any note about the background, *The Player on the Other Side*, "Ellery Queen, pseud" (p. 25, item A150 of the Primary Bibliography). Perhaps I've been naive about the Queen by-line—I remember Manfred B. Lee in a letter to the old *Queen Canon Bibliophile* saying that the two cousins had written all the hardcovers under the Queen name—but I must admit this surprised me. After I thought about it, however, I decided that this explained the variation in style in *The Player on the Other Side*. I hope that sometime a real bibliography of the Queen authors can be published. (I decided years ago that I could make a case—maybe a weak one, but a case—for *The Fourth Side of the Triangle* having been written by Frederic Dannay and Anthony Boucher—but now I wonder if what I considered a mere intellectual lark might not be true.)

*I'll run as much as I can on Dorothy L. Sayers, and we've corrected the "L," I think. But it will be balanced by Americans...*

—Michael

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From Arthur J. Cox:

No, I'm not writing to comment on Dr. Fleissner's latest communication, but to correct a small error as printed in my own letter in what I suppose to be the Fall issue (TAD 15:3)—the date of the *Dickens Studies Newsletter* mentioned near the bottom of the middle column on p. 279 should read March 1977, not 1967.

I find that my copy of the letter gives the correct date; but it's a draft, not a carbon or

photocopy, so it's possible that the "typo" is mine and not your printer's.

My thanks for the latest issue and my congratulations on a very handsome publication.

*I'll check on the typo. And thanks from all of us for the appreciation.*

—Michael

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From William X. Kienzle:

Charles Shibuk, in his review of *Reverend Randolph and the Wages of Sin* (TAD 15:3), while stating that he has "a profound disinterest in clergyman detectives," makes exceptions for Father Brown and Sister Ursula. Sister is not and cannot be a clergyman. She cannot even be a clergyperson. And that's what a lot of the fuss is about.

Meanwhile, as author of a mystery series whose main man in a Catholic priest, I do not find Mr. Shibuk's cavalier prejudice amusing.

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From Stephan P. Clarke:

As a devoted TADian for some years now, I am turning to you for some assistance with a project of my own which my fellow readers may find interesting and with which they might care to help. I am preparing an annotation of the Lord Peter Wimsey short stories and novels—what I choose to call an "informal annotation" in that the finished work will be a dictionary-style book without the stories and intended for use by interested casual readers—something in the line of Jack Tracy's *Encyclopaedia Sherlockiana*. Work on the book is very near completion, but some items remain elusive. The enclosed list of quotations or items that I think are quotations is presented as a challenge to one and all. At this point, they have eluded me and quite a few others as well. The usual dictionaries of quotations and poetry indices have been checked, and some additional comments have been provided by each item where they are needed.

The challenge is this: Do any of TAD's readers recognize any of the quotations or allusions listed? If they do, they should write to me directly at 148 Greenway Boulevard, Churchville, New York 14428, citing as complete details as they can. In thanks for each item submitted, all I can do is to credit that person in bibliography/acknowledgments, but my gratitude would be most sincere!

Otto Penzler plans to publish the work when it is completed, and the Dorothy L. Sayers Historical and Literary Society are working with me closely on the accuracy and completeness of all entries. At present I expect that there will be about 5,500 content entries.

Thank you for your consideration and help.

Items to identify from the Wimsey canon: 1. "I am striving to take into public life what any man gets from his mother." Attributed to Lady Astor, *Clouds of Witness*, Ch. 6.

2. "... Gertrude Rhead's observation, 'All this self-sacrifice is a sad mistake!'" Who is Gertrude Rhead, and where might she have said this? *Clouds of Witness*, Ch. 11.

3. "Like the man in Max Beerbohm's story, Wimsey 'hated to be touching.'" *Strong Poison*, Ch. 16.

4. "It'd rather be alive than not." Where did G. K. Chesterton say that? It is not in the poems. *Five Red Herrings*, Ch. 15.

5. "I thought as much, / It was a little window cleaner." "Footsteps that Ran." It sounds like a poem but may be a variation on a popular song.

6. "Sorrow vanquished, labour ended, Jordan passed." This is a hymn line, but from what hymn? *Unnatural Death*, Ch. 11.

7. "Where there is no love there is no wealth, but he that is bold shall have gold for the asking." "Incredible Elopement." Perhaps a DLS original, but cannot be certain.

8. "Whistle 'em up Michael, whistle 'em up; East and West will rise from the dead at the sound of a policeman's whistle." "Haunted Policeman." Possibly a part of some sort of music hall ditty or routine; a popular song of the day?

9. "You are my garden of beautiful roses, / My own rose, my one rose, that's you!" *Whose Body?* Ch. 3.

10. "Blossoms of honey-sweet and honey-coloured menuphar—" *Have His Carcase*, Ch. 4. "Menuphar" should be "menuphar," the water lily or lotus. The line is not Biblical, Shakespearean, or from Tennyson's "Lotus-Eaters."

11. "Any book had served as well. Any book had stopped the bullet—that may be, I cannot tell." *Have His Carcase*, Ch. 16. Possibly a corrupted quotation?

12. "*Mais si quelque un venoit de la part de Cassandre, / Ouvrir-tout la porte, et ne le fais attendre, / Soudain entre dans ma chambre, et me vien accoster.*" *Have His Carcase*, Ch. 15.

13. "Now is it that it will no, or that it cannot speak?" *Murder Must Advertise*, Ch. 6. This sounds like it ought to be from *Hamlet* or *Macbeth*, but it is not Shakespearean. Wimsey may be showing off linguistically, but one cannot be certain.

14. "... like the lady in Maeterlinck who's running around the table while her husband tries to polish her off with a hatchett." *Bellona Club*, Ch. 18. Reference was not found in the major plays.

15. Miscellaneous items from Ch. 19, *Murder Must Advertise*: "Oh, dry those tears." "Oh say, what are you weeping for?" "I weep, I know not why." "In the deep midnight of the mind." The latter may be from Lord Byron.

16. "He whipsers, he hisses, he beckons for the bodies of his saints." *The Nine Tailors*, Ch. 5.

17. "The University is a Paradise. Rivers of knowledge flow there." Where in John Donne? *Gaudy Night*, title page.

18. "God made the integers; all else is the work of man." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 2.

19. "The word and nought else / in time endures. / Not you long after, / perished and



mute / Will last, but the defter / viol and lute." This poem appears in *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 3.

20. "...a greater than he, which is my Lady of Shrewsbury." Where did Sir Francis Bacon say that? *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 3.

21. "...not you, but Fate has vanquished me." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 4.

22. "His lordship has drunk his bath and gone to bed again." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 8.

23. "...mulier vel meretrix, cuius consortio Christianus prorsus interdictum est"—"wife or harlot, the fellowship of which is absolutely forbidden to Christians." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 12.

24. "...to spread the tail of vanity." Is this a quotation? *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 14.

25. "If she bid them, they will go barefoot to Jerusalem." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 16.

26. "King Darius said to the lions:— / Bite Daniel. Bite Daniel. / Bite him. Bite him. Bite him." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 17.

27. "And she was as fine as a melon in the cornfield / Gliding and lovely as a ship upon the sea." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 17.

28. "The real tragedy is not the conflict of good with evil but of good with good." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 17.

29. "The greater the sin, the greater the sacrifice—and consequently the greater devo-

tion." Is this even a quotation? *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 17.

30. "Ye'll no fickle Tammas Yownie." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 17.

31. "The Duke drained a dipper of brandy-and-water and became again the perfect English gentleman." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 17.

32. "Make her a goodly chaplet of azur'd Columbine, / And wreath about her coronet with sweetest Eglantine, / With roses damask, white, and red, and fairest flower delice, / With cowslips of Jerusalem, and cloves of Paradise." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 20.

33. "...fix a vacant stare and slay him with your noble birth." *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 20.

34. "The virgin's gone and I am gone; she's gone, she's gone and what shall I do?" *Gaudy Night*, Ch. 20.

35. "My lady gave me a tiger, / A sleek and splendid tiger, / A striped and shining tiger, / All under the leaves of life." *Busman's Honeymoon*, Ch. 1 (following "Prothalamion").

36. "If I were on Greenland's coast." *Busman's Honeymoon*, Ch. 3.

37. "It was a robber's daughter, and her name was Alice Brown. Her father was the terror of a small Italian town." *Busman's Honeymoon*, Ch. 18. Perhaps a P.W. invention (not likely, but...)?

38. "My snow-white horses foam and fret—" *Busman's Honeymoon*, Ch. 16.

39. "Mr. Urquhart held up a document resembling in bulk that famous one of which it was said that there was not truth enough in the world to fill so long an affidavit." *Strong Poison*, Ch. 14.

*It's our pleasure to help by running the letter. Good luck!*  
—Michael

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From Frank D. McSherry:

The cover for the latest TAD (15:3) is one of the best, its colors beautifully and tastefully done. The green border, the scene of the golden-costumed Oriental sneaking up on the detective, the lack of captions make for a subtle but striking effect. My congratulations to the person responsible—Mr. Grastorf, the art director?

The level of quality is higher this issue than in several earlier ones; I'm tempted to just tie all the articles. Douglas Greene gets first place by a nose with his excellent account of a colorful and overlooked detective of the Golden Age, Baron von Kaz and his creator(s), and the events that provided the background for his cases. Goode's awesome biography of the sinister Oriental theme in film and fiction gets second place for its remarkable

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### A NOTE TO OUR READERS

*The Armchair Detective* has expanded! We have added sixteen pages to our magazine beginning with this issue—Vol. 16, No. 1.

Unfortunately, we must raise the cover price of TAD not only to pay for these extra pages but also to keep up with inflation.

Beginning July 1, 1983, the cost of TAD will increase by *one dollar*. Any new or renewal subscription received after July 1 will be billed at the higher price.

#### THE NEW SUBSCRIPTION RATES

##### Domestic:

One year: \$20.00      Two years: \$36.00

##### Foreign:

Surface mail: One year: \$24.00      Two years: \$44.00  
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The cost of all back issues of TAD purchased after July 1 will also increase by *one dollar*; all issues will cost \$5.00. The Index will remain \$7.50.

If you wish to subscribe, renew your subscription, or purchase issues *before* July 1, you will be billed at the current and lower rates.

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thoroughness. Only the shortness of Goode's article on the subject keeps it from taking second, and I'm looking forward to the rest of his well-thought-out—and superbly researched—work. Almost tying with this is Taylor's fine interview with and study of William K. Cox, very enjoyable insights on the pulp world of the 'thirties. (Did I list this as fourth just because of my tendency to turn slightly green-eyed when Cox said things such as "I never had a rejection slip... you want a story? I'll give you a story..." etc.? Oh, well...)

The average level of quality of *all* the departments was higher than it's been for quite some time, too! (Especially Penzler on collecting Rawson.) Incidentally, it's not widely known that Erle Stanley Gardner once did a Fu Manchu lookalike—“The Warlord of Darkness” in *Adventure* for July 1934. Billed as a “Complete Novel of Chinese Mystery and Adventure” (actually 28 pages), it has troubleshooter Jimmy Harder trying to intercept a shipment of illegal arms to Yeah Jing Suh, Warlord of Darkness, who seeks to drive foreigners from China and make South China an independent kingdom. The Warlord, whose fanatic followers dress in black and move invisibly in the night, is a striking figure: “attired in a flaming red jacket above black pantaloons. A skullcap of black, trimmed with... red and surmounted by a red button, was on his head. The eyes held a strange sardonic look of cynical appraisal. The lips were twisted into a cruel leer... emphasized by a black, stringy mustache which hung down on either side of the upper lip. His fingernails were long and stained, until they seemed like great yellow claws. In his right hand he held a slender steel dagger, the point of which had been dipped in a jade box... Harder knew at once that this was the face of a leader, a man with [a] warped intellect... and he knew... the box contained... the deadly green poison known to... the old mandarins, a poison which paralyzes instantly and brings on agonized, rapid death.” The story has a dramatic and colorful climax, as Harder plays chess with the highly skilled Warlord for great stakes—the loser dies—and an ammunition ship explodes at night in a gout of flame along the Yellow River. This is one of Gardner's better pulp stories, never reprinted anywhere.

Friends of Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer will want to know that the first of two volumes reprinting all the Mike Hammer comic strip has been published—*Mike Hammer: The Comic Strip* by Mickey Spillane and Ed Robbins, 64 large-format, slick-paper pages, with four daily strips to a page and containing three complete stories: “Half Blonde,” “The Sudden Trap,” “The Bandaged Woman,” “The Child,” and the short concluding tale, “Christmas Story.” Edited by Catherine Yronwode and Max Allan Collins, it's \$5.95 from Ken Pierce, the publisher, P.O. Box 332, Park Forest, Ill. 60466. At the same price, same format, Pierce puts out three paperback volumes of *Modersty Blaise* by Peter O'Donnell and Jim

Holdaway, British comic strips little known to U.S. newspaper readers, the first two volumes containing two stories each with four daily strips per page—Vol. 1: “Top Traitor” and “The Vikings”; Vol. 2: “The Mind of Mrs. Drake” and “Uncle Happy.” The third volume has five daily strips per page and three stories, one quite rare even in England since it was done during a newspaper strike and was printed in only a few papers that didn't participate—“The Jericho Cap,” “The Killing Ground,” and “Bad Suki.” All three volumes are excellent exploits of Modesty; recommended.

I'm looking forward to the rest of the Greene and Goode articles, as I mentioned; and usually what I dislike about a TAD article is coming to the end; but there's an exception to every rule, and George Wyuek's information-packed and valuable “Necrology” was much too sadly long... so many good writers gone; so many people who have done so much to amuse and entertain and inform their readers... They'll be missed.

Glad you liked the issue. And while thanking Otto, thank him for the cover. He picks 'em; Dennis ensures quality. —Michael

\* \* \* \* \*

From George Wyuek:

My article [“The Future Is Upon Us: A Necrology for the Year 1981,” TAD 15:3] contains the defects of one-fingered typing late at night; an error (or two?) and awkward wording. The error is on page 439: “Don Ford” should be corrected to Don Whitehead.

The death notices were taken from the *New York Times*, but recent volumes of *Contemporary Authors*, using other sources, reported the deaths of others in the genre. So, together with my recent research on those already listed in the necrology (indicated by an asterisk \*), I offer the following supplement to the 1981 list:

**Anderson, John Richard Lane.** Died August 21, 1981; age 70. Born June 17, 1911, Georgetown, British Guiana. Journalist, small boat sailor (he crossed the Atlantic in 1966 in a 44-ft. cutter, duplicating Leif Ericsson's voyage), and author. His books include *Reckoning in Ice* (1971), a mystery, and a series of Major Peter Blair stories beginning with *Death on the Rocks* (1973).

**\*Bagnold, Enid Algerine.** *The Chalk Garden* was refused by London producers and finally presented by Irene Mayer Selznick at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre, New York, on October 26, 1955; it was a success with 181 performances.

**\*Bond, Raymond Tostevin.** Born 1893, Brooklyn, New York. Joined Dodd, Mead in 1920; editor of many Red Badge Mysteries.

**Carow, Dudley Charles.** Died March 22, 1981. Born 1903. Journalist; member of the *London Times* for over thirty years. Author of *The Puppets Part* (London: Home and Van Thal, Ltd., 1948).

**\*Corley, Edwin Raymond.** New York stage manager and publisher of *Off-Broadway* (1952-58), advertising copywriter and vice-president (1958-69), and finally full-time writer.

**Du Breuil, Elizabeth Lorinda Hagen.** Died December 9, 1980; age 56. Born October 20, 1924, LeRoy, Ill. Divorced twice; two children. Widow of Frank Du Breuil. Prolific writer of over 400 books under almost twenty pseudonyms. She wrote mystery paperbacks as Linda Du Breuil and under the pseudonym Kate Cameron.

**Gerahy, Digby George.** Died 1981, Valbonne, France; age 83. Born 1898. Had a varied career as a Ceylon tea planter, Malayan rubber planter, Australian sheep station rider, and Asian and North African journalist as well as author of over 60 books under the pseudonym Robert Standish, including *The Window Hack* (1966), a crime novel, *Private Enterprise and Other Stories* (1954), a mixed collection, and *Prince of Storytellers* (1957), a biography of E. Phillips Oppenheim.

**Gloag, John Edwards.** Died July 17, 1981; age 84. Born August 10, 1896, London. Advertising executive and author of technical books, poems, short stories, and novels, including crime fiction beginning with *Sweet Racket* (1936) and *Ripe for Development* (1936), the latter introducing Lionel Buckley.

**\*Judson, Jeanne Margaret Antonia.** Born 1890, Three Rivers, Mich. Widow of G. A. C. Stiles, she was a Grand Rapids (Mich.), Chicago, and St. Louis reporter and New York editor. Author of many romance novels and of three mysteries as Jeanne Judson (1958-68) and one under the pseudonym Frances Dean Hancock (1969).

**\*McCully, Ethel Walbridge.** Mrs. McCully recounted the building of her St. John, Virgin Islands home in *Grandma Raised the Roof* (1954).

**\*Popov, Dusko.** Born Dubrovnik, Yugoslavia.

**\*Rinehart, Frederick Roberts.** Born September 14, 1902, Allegheny, Pa.

**Salter, Elizabeth Fulton.** Died March 14, 1981. Born 1918, Anguston, Australia. Secretary to poetess-writer Dame Edith Sitwell from 1957 until her death in 1964 and writer of five mystery novels; author of biographies since 1965.

**Whelpton, George Eric.** Died Feb. 13, 1981; age 87. Born March 21, 1894, Le Havre, France. British educator and author of travel books. Around 1920, Eric Whelpton was a close friend of Dorothy L. Sayers; she helped him get his start in teaching in post-War I France.

As can be seen, some of the death notices and biographical notes are very sketchy. If any TAD reader has more detailed information or additional names, I hope he will communicate with TAD and share it with us.

I am busy compiling a 1982 necrology. □

# TODAY THE RABBI GETS LOOKED AT



By Libby Schlager

*Editor's Note: Solutions to several Rabbi Small novels are revealed in the following article.*

Harry Kemelman's Rabbi series is now complete, so perhaps this is the appropriate time to evaluate and assess his contributions to the accepted and important genre of social-cultural detective writing. Probably Kemelman's major accomplishment is in presenting to the general public (not only to the readers of detective fiction) a glimpse of a human being living in a society crammed full of the problems, weaknesses, emotions, and conflicts which constitute each man's microcosm of the universe which we call reality. This image of reality is different from the picture which had been stereotyped and typecast by all the arts, human prejudice, and sheer misunderstanding. Finding a religious detective as a central character is not an unusual phenomenon. G. K. Chesterton introduced the prototype, Father Brown, to the genre in 1911. Even today we have Ralph McInerney's parish priest, Father Roger Dowling of suburban Chicago; William X. Kienzle's Catholic priest, Father Robert Koesler of Detroit; and Charles Merrill Smith's Reverend Randolph of the Church of the Good Shepherd of San Francisco and Chicago. What is unusual is finding not only a Jew, but a rabbi, as the pivotal character in this somewhat Catholic-Protestant-dominated area of writing. Perhaps we had to wait for the liberalism of the sixties and seventies for the public to fully accept the role of the Jew in literature (and life) such as Roth, Malamud, Mailer, Bellow, Miller, Singer, Ginsburg, and Heller as well. As with any "culturally" oriented piece of work, one must not only examine the characters who form the basis of the work but also the social impact, and since, of course, the *raison d'être* is to tell a mystery story, the mystery element will be explored.

It is a tribute to Kemelman that he did not make Rabbi David Small sweetly endearing in order to win the public's acceptance of a Jewish hero. Rather he made him a bright, stubborn, idealistic, complex man. Although the rabbi is our next-door neighbor, he is an outsider as well. Rabbi Small is not a detective at all and often he is only peripherally involved in the murder; he is drawn into the murder scene because of circumstance in *Monday the Rabbi Took Off*, to prove himself innocent in *Friday the Rabbi Slept Late* or even to get the temple functioning again in *Saturday the Rabbi Went Hungry*. David Small is the Rabbi of the Conservative Temple of Barnard's Crossing (the only temple in the community), a suburb of Boston, Massachusetts. One must look at him from three angles: from the reader's point of view, the congregation's point of view, and the rabbi's point of view.

Because of Rabbi Small's innate intelligence and exceptional ability to reason, he usually can figure out who the murderer is. The reader is always amazed and amused when the rabbi's careful reasoning coupled with his ability to interpret the clues, the same clues the reader has, exposes the murderer. No doubt this reasoning ability is honed by years of Talmudic studies which enable him to understand the overall situation and judge the concept of the principle involved. For example, in *Thursday the Rabbi Walked Out*, by chance (sometimes too chancey) he finds himself taking shots at targets in a shooting gallery; he removes his glasses, however, since he is afraid they might get broken from the rifle's recoil. He misses every single shot, therefore, since he cannot see a thing. Thus he reasons that if a woman were to take potshots at the victim with her eyes closed (the most plausible murder theory at the time), she could not possibly, haphazardly, hit the victim plus five small objects around the room. Of

course, Lawrence Gore, a marksman, could easily do that. But to see the connection between the two separate incidents demonstrates the rabbi's sense of reasoning and logic. These connections apparently do not come consciously to the rabbi, rather they are nurtured in his unconscious and then they all come together at one time, a process which Isaac Asimov proves in his article "The Eureka Phenomenon." Another indication of his ability to put seemingly isolated incidents together is found in *Saturday*. On his way to take Miriam to the hospital to give birth to their first child, the rabbi's car breaks down. Dr. Sykes comes along and offers the rabbi the use of his sports car. While in the car for just a few seconds, he spots a "lube sticker" that indicates the date the car was serviced, Friday, Yom Kippur Eve. Sykes could not possibly have picked up the car that particular evening from Morris Goldman's garage, or for that matter on the following Saturday either. It is this key clue that allows the rabbi to reason that Sykes had to have gotten a lift from Isaac Hirsh the night Hirsh died and therefore Sykes had to be Hirsh's murderer. Of course, confirmation by the police of a "missing fingerprint" assures the guilt of Sykes. A little luck, a little intelligence, a little logic and—eureka—case closed.

Another major personality trait that presents itself to the reader which even outshines his intelligence is David Small's stubbornness and idealism, at times almost naïve idealism. His idealism is established during the first few pages of the very first book, *Friday*, when the rabbi is barely thirty years old and threads its way through all seven books, the last after he has been a rabbi for twelve years. Two congregants have an argument over liability for damaging a car, and the rabbi is asked his opinion about settling their differences. Jacob Wasserman says:

"I was just saying to Ben here that the temple is a holy place and all Jews who come here should be at peace with each other. Here they should make up their differences. Maybe that's more important for the temple than just a place to pray. What do you think?"

The young rabbi looked from one to the other uncertainly. He reddened. "I'm afraid I can't agree, Mr. Wasserman," he said. "The temple is not really a holy place. The original one was, of course, but a community synagogue like ours is just a building. It's for prayer and study, and I suppose it is holy in the sense that anywhere a group of men gathers to pray is holy. But settling differences is not traditionally the function of the temple, but of the rabbi."

Schwarz said nothing. He did not consider it good form for the young rabbi to contradict the president of the temple so openly. Wasserman was really his boss, besides.

"... [W]hat would you suggest, rabbi?"

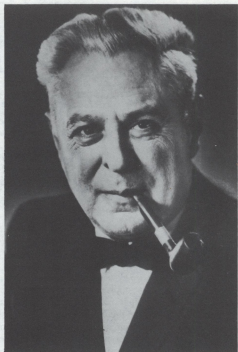
"... [A] Din Torah."

"What's that?" asked Schwarz.

"A hearing, a judgment [by the rabbi]. ..."

"How did [the rabbi] make his decisions?"

"Like any judge, he would hear the case. ... He would ask questions, examine witnesses if necessary, and then on the basis of the Talmud, he would give his verdict." (pp. 8-9)



Here then is the young idealistic rabbi. He absolutely accepts the Talmud as the guiding principle of his life. He believes that in it is found the wisdom to govern men forever. He is overwhelmed by its knowledge and wants only to be left alone so he could continue his Talmudic (and other) scholarship. Here too, the reader also senses the beginnings of his constant battles with the temple leadership. He openly contradicts Wasserman, the president and founder of the temple, his boss and advocate, because of Wasserman's erroneous thinking. Perhaps the rabbi could get the same point across tactfully or at least not so directly, thus assuring Wasserman and each succeeding president a means of saving face. But no, there is an error in what Wasserman says and it must be corrected straightforwardly and definitively. Why is the rabbi so positive and sure of himself? His faith in the veracity of the Talmud, which guides his life, gives him the confidence to be true to his beliefs in the face of any opposition. Unfortunately, this total belief in the absolute of a situation makes him appear to the reader to be stubborn and at times unyielding. Even after twelve years, when he should be giving in to the Board of Directors in order to preserve his job, his idealism still guides his life. Many times, the reader wants to yell at the rabbi—not again, enough, stop fighting, coast, compromise,

become mellow—but he always sticks to his guns, getting his energy from his basic belief in the rightness of what he is doing.

His idealism and stubbornness more often than not conflict with the congregants' rock-hard (and at times laughable) practicality; he acts out of a sense of the integrity of a situation and not because of the materialism of the outcome as most of the others do. In the aforementioned incident, it would be very easy to agree with his congregants, spout some platitudes, make everyone artificially shake hands and smile at each other. But would they learn anything from the situation or become better, more understanding people afterward? No. The simple solution is not the road the rabbi takes. This idealism manifests itself over and over again. In *Thursday*, the president of the temple, Henry Maltzman, wants to enroll a very rich, new member of the community, Ben Segal. But Segal is reluctant to join because he has never been Bar Mitzvahed, so Maltzman sees this as a chance to promote the temple and perhaps even enroll some more new members. Aside from conducting a pseudo-ceremony to get Segal Bar Mitzvahed, he wants to send out invitations to every Jew in the community, member and non-member, and complete this giant gala with a gag gift of many fountain pens. And if the Hadassah ladies could sponsor something similar, surely the Barnard's Crossing temple could too. The rabbi listens to this proposal aghast and then absolutely refuses to allow any of it. The rabbi understands Bar Mitzvah to mean that at age thirteen

one is old enough and mature to take responsibility for one's own actions and sins. . . . No special ceremony is required, no party, and no speeches. He is called up to read the Scroll before the Ark because now you are a new adult in the community and this courtesy is extended to any person in the community. And if Segal wants to rededicate himself to the religion, it would make more sense if he had himself circumcised again." (pp. 93-94)

No, the rabbi will permit no razzle-dazzle promotion, gimmickry, or public relations; he will only allow the most conservative, talmudically-oriented approach. He even refuses to allow women to participate in the services, and this of course stirs up the anger of the Women's Libbers of his congregation. When life intrudes, however, and he must do such mundane things as earn a living, his stubbornness—some may call it foolishness, naïveté, impracticality—may be a stumbling block. In *Monday*, Small and his family go off to live in Israel for a while. He refuses to argue for a continuation of his salary during this time (the congregation is only too happy to oblige), refuses to tell them when (or if) he will return, and refuses to pray at the Wall for some visiting congregants' business dealings. Who else but the rabbi would leave his precarious position in the hands of a substitute rabbi who is well dressed, sophisticated, a manipula-

tor of people, a politician, glib, and very "modern-thinking," with a wife to complement all these traits? He is all the things David is not. Never once while Small is in Israel does he concern himself with playing politics to assure his job or even write a postcard to keep in touch. Now one may argue that he needs a complete break with Barnard's Crossing, but practically speaking, should he not be actively protecting his job, if not for himself, then at least for Miriam and the family? Fortunately for Small, the substitute rabbi does not want the job, so Small has a pulpit to go home to. Even in the last book, *Thursday*, Small refuses to accept an offered lifetime contract with the temple in favor of yearly ones. He argues that a lifetime contract is meaningless, for any time the temple wants him to leave, all the Board has to do is vote in favor of something that violates his principles and he will be forced to leave anyhow. With a yearly contract, he is free to leave whenever he wants to. Small usually triumphs over the congregation, so perhaps there is something to be said for faith in one's self and one's beliefs. His inner strength to resist all the hocus-pocus comes from his steadfast faith in the logic and truth of his beliefs based on his Talmudic studies.

The rabbi, like most of us, is a mixture of traits, some incompatible with others. Small is an ordinary

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human being. We are drawn to the Small family as we would be drawn to any non-threatening, pleasant family on our block. We want to know if Miriam will have a baby, if it will be a boy or girl, what she will name it, if Miriam will ever get David to polish and groom himself, if he will ever be on time for the Sisterhood meeting, what he does on his leisure time, how he handles infringements upon his time, how he justifies doing unpleasant jobs, and on and on. This is the nitty-gritty of the vast machinery of living, and the reader knows that David does not function too well in this area of his life. Yet for all this, David is still an outsider. He is a newcomer in an old Yankee town; he is a Jew in a Gentile society; he is an idealist amidst the practicality of the congregation; he is a scholar in a business-oriented world; he is a non-aggressive in a "hype" society, and he has an average income in an affluent community. Small is in the classical tradition of the detective on the periphery of society, the outsider looking in at this twisted world of ours and trying to set it straight.

Although the reader sees David painted on a broad canvas, the congregation perceives him from a limited angle. Many times, they are annoyed with him because of his seeming indifference to their needs, his impracticality, and his stubbornness. Yet they do keep him on for twelve years, despite the never-ending pressure from the various factions to fire him. The congregation as a whole could be any group such as the Masons, any organization such as the P.T.A., any corporation such as Exxon, or any governing body such as the Senate. Individually, they are nice and rotten, understanding and opinionated, pleasant and dangerous. They are all of us. When Jacob Wasserman wanted to establish a temple in Barnard's Crossing, he organized fifty Jewish families, built the temple, became the first president of the congregation, and personally hired David Small to be its rabbi. Since that time, there have been many other presidents with many new and at times ludicrous ideas. There has been a faction who wanted to build its own temple and start a new congregation, one who wanted to enlarge the present one, one who wanted to make him a co-rabbi, one who wanted women to participate in the services, one who wanted new seating arrangements and on and on. Needless to say, this constant clashing uses up much of Small's time and energy, and at times he does get disgusted by it all, but the board members seem to thrive on it. Each member justifies his own actions and ideas as being for the good of the entire temple; they in turn see the rabbi's actions and ideas as provincial and in his own self interest. In reality, each congregant is economically motivated, frightened of what other people will think of him, and is anxious to be liked and well thought of both by the congregation and the

rest of Barnard's Crossing, the Gentile section in particular. But why are they involved with the temple in the first place? The answer is found in *Sunday the Rabbi Stayed Home*. Ben Gorfinkle says:

"Every man wants to be something, to be somebody. He wants a sense of achievement, of accomplishment. He's gone to school, and he's gone to college, and he dreamed of being somebody, of being important. Then he got himself a job or established a small business of some kind and thought at last he was on the road. And now at the age of thirty-five he realizes that he's not going to become President of the United States or lead an army; he's not going to win a Nobel Prize; his wife is not a movie actress and his children are not geniuses. He begins to realize that the business of getting up in the morning and going to work and coming home to go to sleep in order to get up in the morning to go to work—that is not going to change in any dramatic fashion. His whole life is going to be pretty much like that until he dies. And when he dies, his family will remember him and that's all. . . .

"... So these people throw themselves into organizational work so they can be somebody. . . .

"[If you become successful] you do things that prove to other people that you're successful. . . . Others . . . give their money to worthwhile institutions." (pp. 89-90)

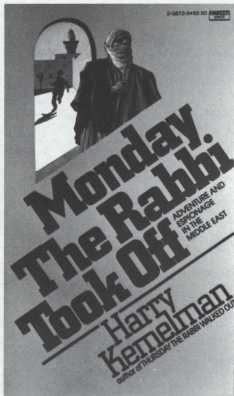
Jacob Wasserman, the fatherly founder of the congregation, hired Small because he felt David had the courage of his convictions, was friendly and showed a great deal of common sense. Wasserman understands the rabbi and realizes that emotionally he is just a boy and can be hurt by all the manipulating of the temple members. In *Saturday*, however, after the rabbi has been with the temple for a while, Wasserman and Becker, the second president and also a friend of the rabbi's, assess the rabbi's emotional state. Becker says:

"You know, the rabbi has changed in the few years he's been here. I remember when he first came, he was so shy you could hardly hear him when he spoke. Now he lays it on the line like he's in complete control of the situation."

"That's because he's grown; he's matured," Wasserman said. "When he came here he was fresh out of the seminary, a boy. He had ideas and was firm about them, but he said them so quietly no one really paid attention. But in these few years he's got confidence, and he doesn't mind asserting himself. I tell you, Becker, he's got like a radar beam in his head." (p. 106)

On the other hand, the rabbi confuses some of his constituents who are in the habit of saying one thing but really meaning something else. He says exactly what he means, and the comment is made by Becker in *Friday*:

"... You know, Al, maybe you're too smart to understand a man like the rabbi. You're used to reading between the lines and guessing what people really mean. Has it occurred to you that the rabbi might not talk between the lines, that he says pretty much exactly what he means?" (p. 129)



Aside from his few staunch champions in the congregation, the group which he relates to best is the college-aged group. Unfortunately, they cannot vote on temple matters; the best they can do is slightly influence their parents. They relate to him because, as is pointed out in *Monday*, he doesn't play up to them and he doesn't talk down to them (p. 28). In *Sunday*, the college students who are home on vacation go over to the rabbi's house for an open house. It is informal, and they just sort of drop in and talk about how things are going at school. Ben Gorfinkle asks his daughter Didi about the rabbi.

"And he's popular with you kids? You all like him?" She considered. The question struck her as requiring thought, not because she was unsure of her feelings, but because they were hard to frame in words. "He's not fun, exactly," she said tentatively, "and he doesn't try to be even friendly. He doesn't try to be anything, I don't think. . ."

"When you're with him you don't feel like a kid." (p. 53)

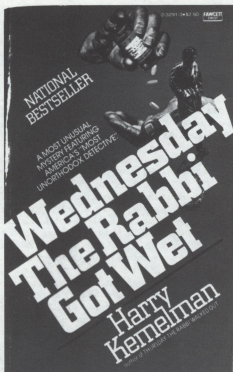
The summary comment, however, of how the congregation and the rabbi manage to live together is

made in *Tuesday the Rabbi Saw Red* by someone totally outside the temple, Hugh Lanigan. He says:

"... [F]or all he's so mild mannered, David Small's as tough as nails. And he's going to stay here as long as he wants to. There ain't no one going to push him out." (p. 212)

Now, if only the members would realize this.

Then with all these understanding attitudes, why is it that the rabbi is constantly fighting with the majority of the board year after year? Very simply, it's because the rabbi cannot and does not want to play the game. The congregation and the rabbi are at odds because the congregation has a double standard. They want him to be true to the principles of Judaism and live the "religious life" the way a rabbi should, but when these principles conflict with their practical business decisions, they want him to lay them aside and abide by their decisions. He cannot do this, but he does not know how to let himself out of these confrontations tactfully and gracefully. He does not doublespeak; he is totally direct; he doesn't look to protect himself; and he doesn't have anyone else fight his battles. It is probably this direct assault more than anything else which abrades the congregation most. For example, a member requested a non-kosher wedding to be held in the temple. The protocol required that the decision be made by the house committee. They would probably deny the request and in this way bear the brunt of the criticism for it, but instead the rabbi himself denies the request, thus assuring himself of still another enemy. He does not want the temple to buy a piece of New Hampshire property for a religious retreat; a retreat to the rabbi's way of thinking is non-Jewish since Judaism preaches involvement in life. He does not want to add a chapel to the temple, even though the congregation wants it; he thinks it is useless. He does not pray at the Wall the way his congregation thinks he should, for he says prayers are for thanks, not for asking favors. He does not allow a road built around a supposed suicide already buried in the cemetery, which would assure a large donation from an orthodox member of the congregation; this circular road is an untenable compromise for the rabbi to make. He does not fund-raise, and he definitely does not play politics. In fact, one temple member sums up the Board of Directors' view of the rabbi when he says in *Saturday*, "Our temple is a completely autonomous body and the rabbi is just an employee. . ." (p. 90) One of the congregants, Marty Drexler, says in *Monday*, "I make the decisions in my house, but my wife tells me what to decide" (p. 254). Well, the congregation would like to be the wife and the rabbi the one to make the "decisions." And yet with all this opposition and friction, somehow the rabbi wins, sometimes by luck and chance, sometimes by reasoning, and sometimes by circumstance,



he manages to maintain his job and in addition keep his congregation true to the principles of conservative Judaism and himself inviolate.

David Small sees himself differently from everyone else. First and foremost, he is not a man of the cloth; he sees himself as a man whose major job is to be a judge, scholar and teacher. In *Friday*, he establishes this principle when he says:

"We are no different from ordinary men. We are not even men of the cloth as you call it. I have no duties or privileges that any member of my congregation does not have. I am only presumed to be learned in the Law by which we are enjoined to live." (pp. 58-59)

He views himself as an ordinary man, his only distinction being his knowledge of the Law; that is why he almost never asserts himself in secular matters but does stand his ground on religious matters about which he knows more than the other people around him. Because of his knowledge of the Law, he maintains that the pulpit belongs totally to the rabbi; he has absolute control over it; that is where he belongs. He wants to keep the entire Jewish

community, both the members who pay his salary and the non-members also, emotionally and spiritually healthy. He conceives of himself in the role of a teacher more often than not, not from the pulpit but in the secular world around him. He is constantly explaining Jewish principles and theology to the Jewish and, most often, to the non-Jewish community, setting prejudice in its proper perspective, correcting misunderstanding, and analyzing the concepts of the Jewish tradition. He says in *Tuesday* that, after thousands of years, "our way" (Judaism) is at last coming into style (p. 201). As he understands the Judaism which he lives, it is a this-world, people-oriented religion, facing reality, solving problems, having equality for all people, respecting all living creatures, and putting a great deal of emphasis on education. Judaism opposes evil but has enough elasticity in it to allow people to enjoy all the good things, spiritual as well as material without guilt, and it also allows people to adjust to the practical realities of the world around them. The religion and the practice of it is one of work and rest, of life and death, of marriage and children—their training and education—of the joys of living and the necessity to make a living. He regards his life as one of practical ethics rather than one of absolute idealism. In fact, in *Sunday*, Miriam even begins to get annoyed at his obstinacy and dogmatism and says, "Oh, David, you're so inflexible. Can't you bend a little?" He looks at her in surprise. "I bend when I have to and I can. But I've got to be careful not to bend so far that I fall over" (p. 173). David is very sure in his own mind what his role is in relationship to the congregation. He is definitely not their employee as they perceive him to be. He says in *Saturday*:

"Of course [I want to stay] but I can't ask. Don't you see I can't ask. The relationship between the rabbi and the Board of Directors requires maintaining a delicate balance. If I have to beg them to let me stay when I'm only doing my job, how can I have any influence on them? How can I guide them? I would be just a rubber stamp for anything they wanted to do. Once they realized they made me knuckle under while exercising my official function as a rabbi what could I do? And what could they not do?" (p. 156)

He is less sure of himself as he realizes that he is growing, changing, maturing, re-evaluating his life and questioning his job, but never his beliefs. When in Israel he strongly feels the meaning of religion, particularly on the Sabbath, but without all the ceremony and ritual; he starts to wonder if his function as a rabbi and leader of ceremony is somewhat useless. Yet something inside him makes him come back to Barnard's Crossing and assume his place as the leader of the Jewish community. Indeed, the rabbi feels that what he is doing is of value to the

community and vital to the continuity of the practice of traditional Judaism as well. He is a person very much caught in a real world and muddling through as we all do, meeting each day and each crisis one at a time.

The other people who are consistent in David's life are his wife Miriam and the Irish-Catholic Chief of Police of Barnard's Crossing, Hugh Lanigan. Miriam is described by the fatherly, old-world, and astute Jacob Wasserman as a very shrewd and forceful young woman. She knows her David and all his shortcomings, but, as she says in *Friday*, David will change the world before the world will change David (p. 50). It is because of Miriam's firm but tactful manipulation of her husband that she does manage to convert some of his intolerable, almost childish, habits to a more socially accepted way of life. She has the capability to pick up and move to Israel, take on a volunteer job, arrange day care for her son (with the help of Aunt Gittel), become pregnant with her second child, and still have the energy to be a concerned and supportive wife. As she says in *Monday* to David, "You're in charge of grand strategy. But you're not so good on tactics" (p. 12). Miriam is the one in charge of the tactics and does a very good job handling them. As someone commented to this writer recently, the Jewish women living in our town (which is similar to Barnard's Crossing) have the ability, drive, intelligence, and chutzpa to do anything they set their minds to. In so doing, they make their men look good. This is Miriam Small. She too has her problems, however. She really does not fit in with the ladies of the Sisterhood of the temple, nor the Hadassah. She, like the rabbi, cannot pretend approval of things she does not like. Miriam's values do not necessarily coincide with those of the other ladies who look at the superficialities of the correct serving of tea, the friendliness brought about by mutual gossip, or the manner in which a person dresses as the criteria by which the good life is measured. In addition, she cannot understand their self-indulgences and their rather vapid lifestyles. She too is an outsider, although she is a little more willing to play the game in order to preserve David's job. This is another view of suburbia, that of the woman surviving in it, and one that is probably correct.

Hugh Lanigan is the Chief of Police, and he, like Small, is part of the establishment yet outside the community because he is Irish-Catholic. Yet he lives and works in Barnard's Crossing and has learned to accommodate. Despite the difference in religion, Small and Lanigan become close friends, and there is a deep respect for each other's way of life and beliefs. Lanigan comments in *Friday*:

"... Ah, rabbi, we do these things so much better in our church. With us, what the priest says, goes."

"Is he so much a better man than the rest of you?" asked the rabbi.

"He's a good man usually," said Lanigan, "because the process of selection screens out most of the incompetents. Of course, we have some damn fools in the clergy, but that's not the point. The point is that if you're going to have discipline you have to have someone whose authority is not subject to question."

"I suppose that's the difference between the two systems," said the rabbi. "We encourage the questioning of everything." (p. 10)

Yet their mutual friendship is warm and deep because their intelligence allows for each other's different beliefs. They also have a mutual goal, that of protecting the community, one the religious and one the social. They take their respective jobs and responsibilities seriously and are truly troubled by crime and the human shortcomings they each must tackle. Small does not go against the grain of the organized police; rather, they both work together for the mutual good of the town. On occasion, Small says, aha, I've figured this out by myself. But never is it because of police bungling, ineffectiveness, or corruption but simply, at times too simply (even though Judaism believes in luck and chance), because Small happens to be in the right place at the right time. Lanigan also adds to the feeling of small-town

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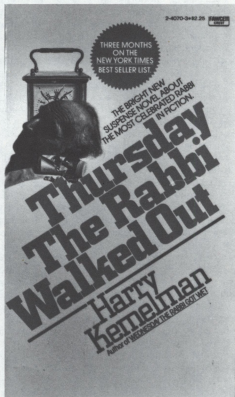
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homey-ness Kemelman is depicting. Lanigan is very aware of the nature of small-town crime with which he is dealing. He knows everyone, their habits and routines (perhaps this may be a little too idealistic), as do most of his officers. They know the gossip and secrets, and it is mainly on these premises that Lanigan and his police department function and survive. Altogether a very nice man, doing a very good job.

But the rabbi does not only stay home in Barnard's Crossing; he ventures out to a college in Boston, to Israel, and to neighboring towns. It is through the rabbi's connecting with other people and their lifestyles that we get a picture of the social milieu of the sixties and seventies, a time of turbulence and upheaval. Compared to our current, super-paced world, however, in which the average TV show explicitly talks about and depicts the most intimate details of our lives and culture, some of Kemelman's observations seem somewhat tame if not altogether quaint. We are a people who seem obsessed with the public's examining and picking at the scabs of our culture's wounds from every conceivable angle. Kemelman simply cannot offer in-depth, multi-faceted approaches to our social problems and still do all the other things he set out to do—it is too big a job. Some of the areas that Kemelman explores, some in more detail than others, include: the generation gap, the "hippy" movement, college unrest and the causes of it, terrorism, Israeli life, black-Jewish relationships, drugs, cults, parent-child relationships, divorce, inter-relationship of the political-legal system, women's lib, the changing medical profession, business problems, anti-semitism, life in suburbia, and others. These subjects alone could fill volumes. To illustrate this point, let us look at *Tuesday*, which finds the rabbi on a college campus confronting the students on one hand and the faculty on the other. The time is just slightly after the major college upheavals have occurred. Professor Hendryx represents the faculty, but one hopes not everyone thinks as he does, for he is cynical and unfeeling. Hendryx sees the academic world as a place where one can be comfortable and secure and do irrelevant research to justify one's existence. The students, according to Hendryx, are only secondary, in attendance simply to put in time which will enable them to get a meaningless degree so they can eventually take their places in society with a good-paying job. One portion of the student body (and a small portion at that) is shown to be radical simply because it is the thing to do, weary with the need to go to college to satisfy society's image of them, and just "putting in their time." The rabbi seems to feel that many of the problems have been created because of the loosening of academic standards because of people like Hendryx. "You've relaxed your standards because

you no longer think it's your function to teach, just to upgrade socially and you don't care how it's done," he says. "Any way the student gets his pass mark will do just as long as he gets by" (p. 236). Hendryx's, the students' and the rabbi's views are all probably valid reasons for the trouble we have experienced on our campuses, but the college unrest does not boil down to only these few elements. There are any number of other factors which must be taken into account, not just empathy vs. idealism, which is what Kemelman's conflict ultimately breaks down to. Because of his



"either/or" presentation of problems, many of his social observations fall short of the sharp focus and timeliness of his other contributions to the field of the social-cultural detective novel. At least Kemelman made the general reading public aware of some of the facets of society's changing life and its accompanying problems, all couched in the palatable form of the murder mystery; sometimes these problems are indirectly related to the murder and sometimes they are a direct cause of the murder.

His major contribution, other than his characters, the threads that weave their way throughout his seven



books, is the explanation of Judaic theology and practice, and the knot that ties it all together, what is the place of organized religion in today's world. Indeed, the most striking social feature of the series is the presentation of Judaic ethics and morality as interpreted by Kemelman but lived and spoken by the rabbi. Here too, he simplifies concepts, but these seem neither dated nor superficial but still relevant to us today. Through the rabbi's discussions, the public (both the Jewish and non-Jewish) is treated to insights into the customs, traditions, holidays, rituals, celebrations, and theology inherent in the Jewish religion. He also explains the basic differences between the Christian and Jewish religions. Many of these ideas have been previously discussed. Kemelman realizes that there are forces which are weakening the Jewish religion from within, as well as outside forces which are compromising it. In *Wednesday the Rabbi Got Wet*, one alternate view is presented. Rabbi Mezzik says:

"...And what's religion all about? Any religion? It's about God, about the effort of people since the beginning of time, to make contact with God. That's religion. What's not religion is gathering together in a special place, a synagogue, or church, or mosque, to say certain words in an old-fashioned archaic language. That's socializing. . . .

"...The need to make contact with God is there, but we're not getting through. And what's the result? . . . Our people, especially our young people are going elsewhere in an effort to make contact. They go to Zen Buddhism, to Meher Baba, to Krishnamurti; some go to Chabad, and some try to do it with drugs. . . ." (p. 116)

Kemelman raises more questions than he can answer, and it is perhaps this element, subtle and understated, the questioning of the place of organized religion in our lives and in society in general, that gives his books importance. He asks such timely and perhaps unanswerable questions as: what is religion; is religion God-oriented or is it ethical living; can religion be practiced and accommodated in our self-destructive world today; what is the role of the temple and church—is it a place to be with God or has it become just another social structure; how much longer can people like the rabbi hold on to and fight for true religious principles in our society; is intermarriage a personal decision alone, even though it is undermining the very structure of religion; why are we losing young people to various cults—is it because they fill a need in their lives which religion cannot, or will the young people be attracted to organized religion because that is where faith and contentment lie, or will they take the third alternative and ignore religion altogether; and most important—are we losing respect for the very symbol of religion, that of its leader, and see him as merely another business associate to be manipulated and bossed around? We just don't know.

But what of Kemelman as a mystery writer? He is good. He creates suspense on many levels. The reader wants to find out about the rabbi because the murder is in some way connected with him, even if at times only tenuously. The murder victim and suspects are usually characters about whom we know something, not just objects, so this too adds interest. The murder, one to a book, seems straightforward, and there are plenty of red herrings and convolutions to the plot to sustain the suspense. For the most part, the methodology is interesting, ranging from choking, asphyxiation, suffocation, drug poisoning and bludgeoning to, of course, gunshot. The most delicious of all, however, is when the good Dean Hanbury pushes her knitting needle through a hole in the wall, dislodges a statue of Homer perched on a high shelf, and it tumbles down and kills the person underneath, our cynical Professor Hendryx. Marvelous! The motivations too are strong, touching the basic human drives such as scorned love, preserving one's job, revenge, and, needless to say, money. The reader knows that, for the most part, Kemelman plays fair, so that the clues and the solution to the mystery are there if he is astute enough to ferret them out. For the most part, the resolutions are logical, plausible, and interesting, and so the reader wants to forge ahead to the next book. The only problem is that sometimes Kemelman is so interested in the rabbi, in the congregation, and in the presentation of Jewish views that he forgets that he is writing a mystery—at times the mystery element seems to take second place. Unfortunately, we have run out of days of the week!

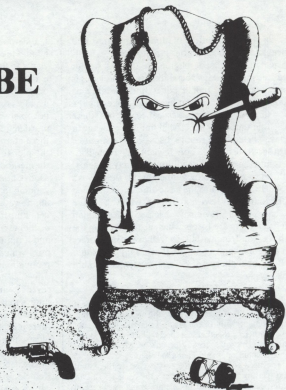
When Kemelman gives equal time to the mystery element, the detective process, the sociology of the times and specific community, the myriad characters, the temple problems and Judaic tradition, his books are a delight to read and a sheer joy to savor. Quite a task, but Kemelman does manage to do it. Now, if only the rabbi approves.

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