

THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE®



**An interview
with Lilian
Jackson Braun**

John Jakes on
Johnny Havoc

■
Long Lost Carr
Radio Scripts

■
The First Comic
Detective

☉ The Saint on Target

■
FICTION BY...
Edward D. Hoch
Jonathan Valin

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WORLDWIDE MYSTERY—FOOD FOR CRIMINAL THOUGHT

THE ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE

Fall 1991 Volume 24 Number 4

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The Uneasy Chair

THERE were more than crabs in Maryland last April. The Malice Domestic convention held its third annual gathering in the high-rise suburban outpost known as Bethesda—just a short subway hop from the Nation's capital. Though our co-worker Sara Ann Freed has attended every year, this was our first. A more intimate version of Bouchercon, it boasted plenty of authors (feeling less frantic than they do at Bouchercon), plenty of editors and agents, lots of fans, and just more time to visit with everyone. I heartily recommend Malice to all TADians. (I myself look forward to the day when conventions think of some more interesting way to entertain the audience than panels. Those pass-the-mike sessions are less than fascinating.)

TAD will attend both the Bouchercon (sharing a table with Jim Huang of *Drood Review* in the dealers' room) and, in the spring, the Mid-West Mystery convention in Omaha. This convention was recommended to TAD by another co-worker, Bill Malloy, who took money right out of the mouth of Steve Stilwell's family at the infamous traveling poker game at this year's gathering. Organizer Chuck Leavitt of Little Professor Books has also kindly suggested that we celebrate TAD's twenty-fifth anniversary during the festivities and has asked that I sit on . . . that's right . . . a panel. Any attendees needing a quiet place to sleep should check this one out.

TAD has some happy news: Jerry Healy's story "Battered Spouse" has been nominated for a Shamus Award. Carolyn Wheat's story "Three-Time Loser" was chosen by Edward D. Hoch to be a part of his anthology *The Year's Best Mystery and Suspense Stories 1991*. And, last but definitely not least, the 1990 American Mystery Awards, sponsored by *Mystery Scene*, were announced at Omaha, and the best fan publication was . . . TAD. I guess Bob Randisi forgot to vote.

Have you ever heard of a *spoem*? Lilian Jackson Braun created the term to describe her early commercial writing, which consisted of sports poems. She graduated to copywriting, journalism, and (finally) the books for which we know and love her: "The Cat Who" series. No one does it better than Lilian, and in her interview you will meet the inspiration for Koko and Yum Yum. . . . Being a great fan of old-time radio shows, TAD was very excited to learn that some long-lost manuscripts of John Dickson Carr's series *Cabin B-13* had been found. "Suspense on the High Seas" offers a complete



overview of this cruise into danger, and an insider's look at Carr's radio career. . . . Many mainstream writers have cast their lines into the dark waters of detective fiction, but none has hooked a kookier fish than John Jakes. In the 1960s, he wrote four hilarious P.I. novels featuring the red-haired, 5'11" tough-guy Johnny Havoc. Jakes tells all—including some very funny publishing stories—in "Havoc Returns."

TAD is rarely timely, but—just in time to help celebrate Ed Hoch's status as guest of honor at this year's Bouchercon—we are pleased to publish his story "A Winter's Game." Ed is the undisputed master of the short story, and this offering takes us back to 1952 in New York City when a girl's first job lands her in a gem of a predicament. . . . Harry Stoner, the Cincinnati P.I. created by Jonathan Valin, is the star of the second fiction offering, "Loser Takes All." Harry must find his client's missing wife—though she seems better off without him.

The last installment of Walter Albert's update to his bibliography of secondary sources . . . Eugene Valmont, the first comic detective . . . The Saint's favorite guns . . . all this awaits you in our Fall issue.

Don't forget that 1992 is a special year for TAD. We hope that any TADian wishing to send in birthday greetings will do so. But we are just happy to be able to say that we will soon be celebrating our twenty-fifth birthday. *Honestly.*

—KATHY DANIEL

Locked Room Murders

Crossover Press announces its initial publication: the first U.S. edition of Robert Adey's *Locked Room Murders and Other Impossible Crimes: A Comprehensive Bibliography*. Published in England in 1979, the original edition has been out of print for over a decade. This edition will contain more than 700 titles *not* in the original edition.

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- Short-story appearances in anthologies and collections;
- Solutions in a separate section for each of the problems posed;
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- A brief bibliography of foreign-language books;
- The twenty different ways a locked room can be breached.

Locked Room Murders and Other Impossible Crimes: A Comprehensive Bibliography
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The Lady Who...

An Interview with Lilian Jackson Braun whose nine lives include poet, copywriter, journalist and author of the charming "The Cat Who" mysteries

by Catherine Nelson

PICTURE a charming, gracious lady seated behind a typewriter, sipping some hot cider as she contemplates a component of the plot while, sprawled across her desk, is a Sealpoint Siamese cat named Pitti-Sing. Another brown-masked, satin-coated sleuth, fleetingly identified as Koko, skitters down the hall carrying a large chunk of something light-colored.

If this were a scene taken from one of Lilian Jackson Braun's light-hearted mystery novels, Koko's actions would probably be an enigmatic clue to the identity of a murderer. But this was only a typical morning at Braun's home at Cat-and-Dogwood in the North Carolina mountains, and Koko was only stealing a chunk of whole-wheat French bread which his mistress had set out for lunch. Koko, it seems, is always hungry.

Such antics, however, have provided Braun with the inspiration for her phenomenally successful *The Cat Who...* novels, in which a fictional Koko and his companion Yum Yum help solve the mysteries. *The Cat Who Knew a Cardinal* and *The Cat Who Moved a Mountain* were published this year by J. P. Putnam and Sons. Braun is presently working on her fifteenth, *The Cat Who Wasn't There*.

Lilian Jackson Braun began her writing career at fifteen, selling poems about baseball (written in prose format and submitted under an assumed name) to

national magazines. After high school, she wanted to attend college to become a school teacher. But the Depression had hit Detroit, Michigan pretty hard, so instead she peddled sports poems—spoems, she called them—to the *Detroit Times*. At the age of sixteen, she had a daily byline and was paid the enormous sum of \$12 a week. At the end of the baseball season, she visited retail stores to see if they would buy advertising poems. Instead, one of the stores asked her to report to work as an advertising copywriter. She wrote advertising copy for fifteen years and then became an editor for the *Detroit Free Press* for thirty years.

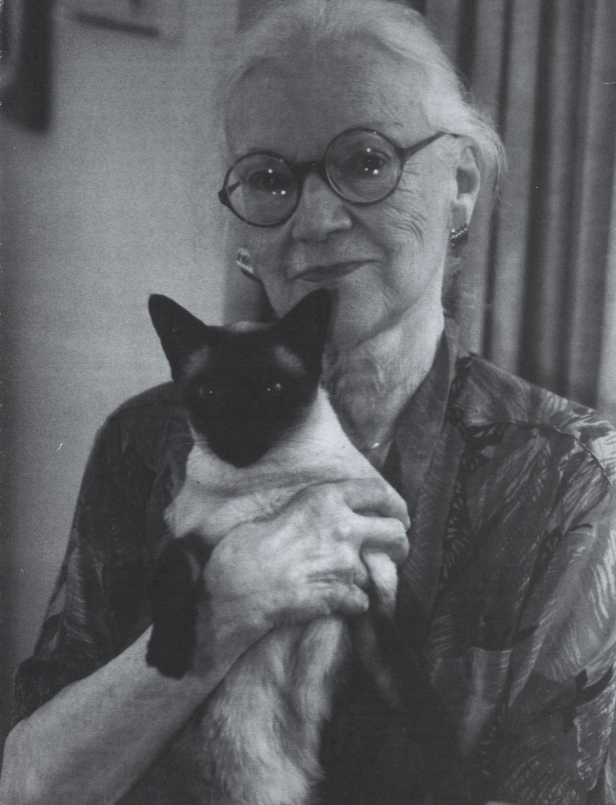
She had been born in Massachusetts and moved to Michigan in her early teens. Braun still considers herself a Michigander.

TAD: You've really moved away from the city now. Both your homes are in the country?

Braun: Yes. There are so many distractions in the city, so many things to do. If someone is going to write books, the country is better. Originally, this

Catherine Nelson has reviewed and interviewed for RAVE REVIEWS. She has also written young adult novels and a television series for NBC. She interviewed Sara Paretsky for TAD's summer issue, Vol. 24, No. 3.





place was our weekend getaway, when we lived in Detroit. It's just a log cabin. Now, we live here six months out of the year and in North Carolina in the winter. North Carolina has mild winters, but you still have a change in seasons. It's not tropical. In the Blue Ridge Mountains, when it's Christmas, you know it's Christmas.

TAD: You started writing at a very early age.

Braun: Yes. I attribute my writing to my mother. Let me tell you about my wonderful mother. She was a born storyteller. She didn't make up stories, she just reported the events of the day, but they were fascinating and descriptive. Every day at the dinner table, she would tell us what had happened to her, and we were encouraged to relate our experiences. And of course we tried to make our experiences exciting, too. The better the story we told, the more admiration we had at the dinner table. I really think I learned how to describe situations, events, people, and scenery through that early custom in our family.

TAD: As a child, was there any inkling that you might ever become the bestselling author that you are now?

Braun: Well, I wanted to learn to write when I was three years old. My mother taught me before I went to school. I wanted to be able to write letters to my

grandmother, who lived in another city. It's amusing now, when I realize she was only twenty miles away, but one had to go by train and it was a long distance. So we corresponded. She would write letters to me, and my mother would read them to me. Then I would dictate the answer. I wanted to write my own answers. So my mother taught me to write. I used to write my own little stories, too.

TAD: Your mother sounds like a terrific person who gave you lots of encouragement.

Braun: Oh, she did. She encouraged me all my life. My father was an influence, too. He was an inventor. Mechanical gadgets and machinery. I used to kid him that he used to invent complicated ways to do simple things. I realize now that I must have inherited some of his inventiveness, because even around the house I invent solutions to problems. I make something out of nothing. In writing fiction, you are making something out of nothing.

TAD: You definitely have a creative imagination.

Braun: I believe that the imagination is a muscle, and the more you use it the stronger it gets.

TAD: Do you wake up in the morning with an idea and have to write it down? Like for the cats or Quilleran?

Braun: Yes. I have always had the belief that, if you have some problems to solve and you think about it before you go to bed, your subconscious will work on it overnight. In the morning, you'll have the answer. So very often, I give myself an assignment before I go to bed. In the morning, my subconscious has done all the work. I have a pad and pen by my bedside if I wake up in the night with ideas. I'm smart enough to write it down, because in the morning, I might have forgotten it.

TAD: You mentioned that you had a younger brother and sister. Do either of them write?

Braun: No. One lives in California and one in Missouri, and both are scientists.

TAD: What do they think about your success?

Braun: They take my writing in their stride, but my husband is the one who's excited about it and very proud. Earl Bettinger is my second husband. My first husband died after 24 years of marriage, and then I was a widow for twelve years before I married Earl.

TAD: Was your first husband as excited about your writing as Earl?

Braun: Not quite, because he was an accountant. He was very phlegmatic, very stoic . . . you know how accountants are? And Earl is an actor by profession, so he is more expressive.

TAD: Is that why you dedicated your books to "Earl

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Bettinger, the husband who...?" I don't want anyone to miss that!

Braun: Well, you know he's a great help. One of the things he does is help me with my library research. In the book about Scotland, I wanted to mention the tune that the bagpipers always play. So he went to the library and sang it for them. He made phone calls all over town, and they found someone who knew the name of it.

TAD: What is the name of it?

Braun: *Scotland the Brave.*

TAD: Sometimes research work is frustrating when you can't find what you want to know.

Braun: Well, back when I was writing for a newspaper, you simply wrote it one day and forgot it the next. I thought I would like a project in which I had to delve into libraries for years and write three volumes. I thought that would be a real luxury.

TAD: Do you ever find that it's hard to find some material?

Braun: It depends on what you're looking for. In my case, it's apt to be turkey farming or bookbinding or motorcycling. I spent a whole day looking through motorcycle magazines. The character named Birch Tree in *The Cat Who Played Post Office* drove a motorcycle.

TAD: Tell us something about your various jobs you wrote advertising copy for a while, didn't you?

Braun: I was with Ernst Kern, an old department store in Detroit, Michigan, which is now defunct.

TAD: You must have been pretty spunky just to go apply for a job at the age of fifteen. Were times pretty hard then?

Braun: Well, that was during the Depression. Actually, I didn't approach the Ernst Kern Company. I approached the Crowley Knower Company with some of my little verses, advertising jingles. They said they couldn't use anything like that, but they could use a copywriter. I said, What's a copywriter? They said, You write the ads. Then I said I didn't know anything about that. They smiled and said, Everything you need to know you could learn in three days. So they took me on as a freelance copywriter, meaning one week I could work seventy hours and the next I could work five hours. So I had been there a year when the Ernst Kern Company, just down the street and a much nicer store, invited me to come to work for them, full time. I stayed there eighteen years. I worked my way up from copywriter to public relations director.

TAD: You knew what you wanted to do at that early age and just went after it?

Braun: I give my mother credit for that, because she was always coming up with ideas and giving me a little push in the right direction. She was a wonderful influence. Speaking of advertising, my experience there really contributed to my writing style, because one has to be concise and one has to give one's copy some sell, and you have to have clarity. All those things make for good writing style. Then you have to do it all in 25 words or less. (*Laughs*)


TAD: How did your first husband feel about your writing ad copy?

Braun: I was pretty well situated when I met him. He was proud of what I was doing.

TAD: You were working at the *Detroit Free Press* when you started writing *The Cat Who* series?

"I put the manuscript for my fourth book in a trunk and forgot all about it for sixteen years."

Braun: That's right. I started writing short stories. I always wrote short stories, but very few of them were published. Shortly after I went to the *Free Press*, there was a traumatic incident in my life that kicked off this whole cat story business. It all started when I fell in love with a Goldscheider porcelain figurine of a Siamese cat. I had never had a pet, nor was I interested in cats, but that half-life-size, blue-eyed, realistic figurine of a Siamese swept me off my feet. And it's interesting how I acquired one. I was forty years old when my first husband gave me a Siamese kitten for a birthday present. I really flipped over that cat. I named him Koko, after a character in Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado*. I adored him and he adored me. When he was two years old, he was killed in a fall from a tenth-floor window. Our neighbors seemed to think he was pushed. I was not only grief-stricken, but angry. I started having nightmares about friends and relatives falling out of tenth-story windows, so I knew I had to do something about it to get it off my mind. So I wrote a short story, "The Sin of Madame Phloi." It was not a re-enactment of the incident, but it was inspired by what happened. In it, the murdered cat was avenged—which seemed to help me cope with it. I sent it off to my agent, and she offered it to *Ellery*





Catherine Nelson

Lilian Jackson Braun and her husband Earl Bettinger.

Queen's Mystery Magazine. The magazine requested I write another cat mystery, so I sent them "Phut Phat Concentrates." EQMM asked for more mysteries with a cat, so for five years I wrote one a year and they published them. Then two were selected for the Best Detective Stories of the year volume, which was published by E. P. Dutton, and Dutton asked if I would try writing a book-length mystery with a cat in it. Well, I didn't like the idea of a novel. I was working full time and also had a busy social life. I didn't want to do anything *that* time- and thought-consuming, but one doesn't turn down an invitation from a publisher. So I wrote *The Cat Who Could Read Backwards* in the mid-1960s. It was Koko II (a.k.a. Koko the Great) who inspired that first novel. Then they asked me to write another one, so I wrote *The Cat Who Ate Danish Modern* and then *The Cat Who Could Turn On and Off*.

Then they had a change of policy or management or whatever, and they declined to publish a fourth book, which was already written and titled *The Cat Who Ordered Caviar*. I thought, I have an interesting and exciting job, who needs this? So I put the manuscript away in a trunk and forgot all about it for sixteen years. In 1978, I retired from the newspaper and a year later I married Earl Bettinger. On one rainy Sunday afternoon at our cabin near Caseville, Michigan—a town much like Mooseville in my novels—I said to Earl, You never read *The Cat Who*

Ordered Caviar, my fourth book. He said he'd love to, so I dredged it out of the trunk and he read it.

TAD: And he liked it?

Braun: Well, after he read it, he said, "I think you should resubmit this. The time has come for this book." He renamed it, gave it a better title—*The Cat Who Saw Red*. Incidentally, when Dutton declined to publish me any more, my agent had peddled it to every paperback and hardcover house in the country and nobody was interested. Anyway, I resubmitted it, and Berkley took it. Right now, I have a contract for ten. I'm trying to write two a year.

TAD: It's difficult keeping a series going, but when you've got a cat solving the case it must be twice as hard.

Braun: The most difficult part of any of my books is figuring out what a cat can do to alert Qwilleran to solve the mystery. That's the crux of the whole thing. When I know that, I'm all set.

TAD: Was *The Cat Who Talked to Ghosts* the easiest one to set up?

Braun: Every book has its own difficulties and its own assets. I have a different way of writing each book. I don't have any particular plan, so it's hard for me to say why I do what I do. I don't have Koko come to Qwilleran's rescue every time at the end of

every book. I try and keep variety in my books. Being a Gemini, I like variety.

TAD: "The Sins of Madame Phloi," the short story that started you in the series, is in the collection *The Cat Who Had Fourteen Tales*.

Braun: Yes, and also in about 25 anthologies and textbooks that have been reprinted almost every year since it was first published.

TAD: Cats are on an upswing, aren't they?

Braun: More families work, and cats are easier to take care of. A cat doesn't have to be taken out, doesn't have to be walked, and the family can still come home late at night and enjoy their cat's company. Then there are so many city people living in highrise apartment buildings who want pets, and cats are okay. I think everyone who works for Berkley must live with a cat.

TAD: You have two cats?

Braun: The first one lived alone, but when he was killed, we found out that a Siamese cat who is solitary is apt to be neurotic. He was chewing my clothing—no one else's clothing, just clothing of the one he loved. I found out Siamese cats that are alone often become wool eaters. In fact, I used it in one of my books, *The Cat Who Ate Danish Modern*. So we decided to get two cats. They were litter mates. The first pair of Siamese were called Koko and Yum Yum. Koko was actually Koko II, but I called him Koko the Great because he was a remarkable cat. His exploits really inspired *The Cat Who* series.

TAD: You named your cats from Gilbert and Sullivan's *Mikado*?


Braun: I used to sing with the Gilbert and Sullivan Club, and I just adored their operettas, so I was determined to name all my cats from the characters in the *Mikado*, since the cats are Siamese and the *Mikado* was Oriental, too. So I have Koko and Yum Yum, and presently I have Pitti-Sing and Pooh-Bah.

TAD: In *The Cat Who Talked to Ghosts*, you mention the opera *Othello* and I figured you to be an opera buff. Are you?

Braun: Not really. Operettas, not operas. I try to create different elements in my stories. I have close friends who are opera lovers, so I asked one of them, "If Qwilleran were to be introduced to opera, what would he consider the least painful?" And she said, "I think he would like *Othello*." She sent me the lyrics and a recording. I played it over and over and figured out how I could work it into the action. That's how that got into the book. I like musicals better.

TAD: Who did you pattern Qwilleran after?

Braun: He's a composite of several men that I've



known. But in the beginning, when I wrote my first book, I thought, "It's got to have a cat in it. Who's the protagonist?" Well, I was working for a newspaper, so it was logical to use a newsman or woman. I didn't want a woman reporter, because then people would say it was autobiographical. So I made the protagonist a man, but I wanted to make him different from the usual reporter. At that time, large mustaches were not as popular as they are now, so I gave him a large mustache. Then I wanted to give him a name that was a little different. I wanted something that begins with a "Q." It happened, I interviewed a Danish potter Quillan and he said that the name was quite common in Denmark. So I called him Qwilleran, spelled with a "w" and "er."

"When I found out Siamese cats that are left alone become wool eaters, I used it in one of my books—*The Cat Who Ate Danish Modern*."

TAD: Your titles are enchanting, especially *The Cat Who Knew a Cardinal*.

Braun: Well, I start with the title now. I always think of a good title, then think about a good story to go with it. When I was writing my first book, the publisher asked me to do a mystery novel. I had started the book, but I couldn't really get excited about it. Then I thought of the title. As soon as I knew it, *The Cat Who Could Read Backwards*, then I got excited about it. So now the title comes first.

TAD: How did you come up with *The Cat Who*?

Braun: Well, I don't know exactly how, but I know where I was. I was sitting at my kitchen table in my apartment in Detroit, Michigan. I don't know what I was doing, but all of a sudden I thought, *The Cat Who Could Read Backwards*.

TAD: It just came to you like that?

Braun: That's right. Out of the blue.

TAD: Don't you think it's the best thoughts that just strike you like that?

Braun: When you don't work too hard at it.

TAD: That's exactly it. It has to be natural. *The Cat Who* certainly was a winner.

Braun: Yes, there had been *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *The Man Who* did this or that, and I guess I was doing a take-off of that. *The Cat Who* instead of *The Man Who*.

TAD: Your husband has a lot to do with your work. He must find it exciting.

Braun: Oh, yes, he's very much interested in the whole process. He relieves me of a lot of the household chores, since I spend so many hours at the typewriter. He's a better cook than I am. He cooks perfectly marvelous Chinese.

TAD: *The Cat Who Knew a Cardinal* was out in April or May, then *The Cat Who Moved a Mountain*...

Braun: Every time I go somewhere, Qwilleran has to go, too. When I moved to the country, Qwilleran had to move to the country. And in *The Cat Who Moved a Mountain*, I put Qwilleran in the mountains. The poor guy has to go where I go. That book comes out in the fall.

TAD: Most authors say it's tough to get one out a year, but you say you do two a year.

Braun: It takes a lot of time away from other creative things I like to do. For example, I love to make my own clothing, but it takes time and I don't have as much time now.

TAD: That was the question I was getting to. Do you have much time for anything else?

Braun: I enjoy going places with my husband. Little excursions for a day or two. We love to go to movies or concerts, and we usually have to go out of town for those, since we live in a small town. In North Carolina, we love to go exploring the mountains and caves and the waterfalls, so that is probably my chief pleasure and relaxation.

Writing can be a very selfish and demanding occupation. Particularly if you have a deadline to meet. Some writers feel, "The editors will get it when I'm ready," but I don't feel that way. If I had to have something by the end of the month, I'd try everything I could to make it. It's the newspaper training, I guess. Of course, you know the old story about the editor who assigned the reporter to some story and the reporter said, "You want it quick or do you want it good?"

TAD: But you really don't have to rush.

Braun: No, there's not really a firm deadline. I just sort of set my own deadline. At first, since I was living in Michigan for six months and then North Carolina for six months, I thought it would be neat to do one book here and one book there. Have it all

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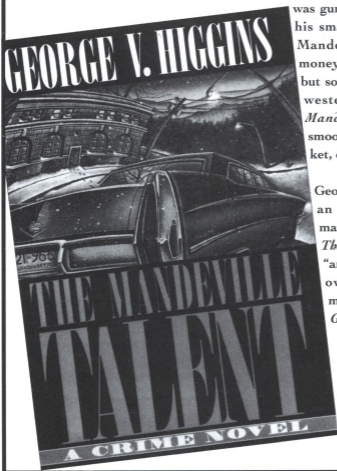
° Time

Two decades ago an assistant U. S. district attorney of Massachusetts burst upon the publishing world with a gritty best-seller (and National Book Award fiction finalist) entitled *The Friends of Eddie Coyle*. Sixteen novels later George V. Higgins returns with another mystery, *The Mandeville Talent*.

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Lillian often works accompanied by her cats—Koko III is pictured here.

wrapped up ready to mail to the publisher that way. I had eye surgery last summer, and that sort of set me back a couple of months. Just cataract surgery, but nevertheless it's time-consuming.

TAD: Did it make a difference in your eyesight?

Braun: I'll tell you this: everybody looks older. All my friends look twenty years older. I never saw their wrinkles before. I look twenty years older now when I look in the mirror.

TAD Do you have to go through the mountains when you travel to North Carolina and back?

Braun: Yes, we live in the mountains. On Chocolate Drop Mountain, in western North Carolina. What is officially the foot of the Blue Ridge.

TAD: It sounds very pretty.

Braun: Just going to the grocery store is a thrill, because of the scenery. You can't believe how beautiful it is.

TAD: How did they come up with the name Chocolate Drop?

Braun: Well, officially, it's called Little White Oak. There's White Oak Mountain, which is quite big, then there's Little Oak. Somehow it became affectionately known as Chocolate Drop, because it's shaped like a chocolate drop.

TAD: Do your cats have a problem with all this traveling?

Braun: No, we rehearse for the move a month in advance. We take them for rides, just to get them used to getting in and out of the carrier. At first, Koko threw up a lot in the mountains—you know, going up and down—but now he's no problem at all. We could drive up here in two days, but we take two and a half to make it a little easier on the cats. We stay in hotels a couple of nights, and they love hotels. There's so much to explore. As soon as they get up back here in Michigan, they're immediately at home and they remember from six months ago. And the same thing happens when they return to North Carolina. My husband has turned out to be a great mountain driver. It can be very tricky driving.

TAD: In *The Cat Who Talked to Ghosts*, you introduced Booties, Polly Duncan's kitten.

Braun: Yes, Booties's kittenhood was inspired by Koko III. When he was a kitten, he was incorrigible, and he still is a food maniac. When he was young, if he could he would grab food right off our forks. He would swoop in half-way between the plate and the mouth and the food would disappear off the fork.

TAD: You constantly have material for your books from your own cats, don't you?

Braun: Yes, but I have to keep a balance, because I

have many devoted readers who don't have cats and don't particularly like cats. They read my books for the mystery in spite of the fact that it's about cats. I don't want to overdo it. I don't want to have a cat in every scene. I don't want to report on the cat's every reaction to every event.

TAD: What I enjoyed most about *The Cat Who Knew a Cardinal* was the feel you have for the theatre group. I figured you got that from your husband. Does he do any theatre work now?

Braun: Not now. He's thinking of doing a small role in the community theatre. He works in the box office on a volunteer basis. He hasn't done any acting for a while.

TAD: But he did at one time?

Braun: He was a professional actor. Now, he's a bit fussy what role he plays.

TAD: While I was reading *The Cat Who Knew a Cardinal*, I kept thinking you must know about the setting from first-hand experience. You wrote about it so vividly.

Braun: The local theatre club was rehearsing at the time, and we went to some of the rehearsals to absorb the atmosphere. And whenever I wanted to know something about the theatre, I discussed it with Earl. I'm doing it again with the book I'm writing now. The theatre club is going to be presenting *Macbeth*.

TAD: And you're going to have another book in the series set around the stage?

Braun: That's right. Well, you know, my readers keep asking, when is Qwilleran going to Scotland? His mother is a MacIntosh, as everybody knows, and so Earl and I went to Scotland to do research and have a little vacation this past summer. So the question is: If Qwilleran goes to Scotland and foul play occurs, how is the cat going to solve the mystery? The title is going to be *The Cat Who Wasn't There!*

TAD: This is the next *Cat Who* coming up?

Braun: This is the next one after *The Cat Who Moved a Mountain*. I'm working on it now.

TAD: That sounds great! How was your trip to Scotland?

Braun: We did the usual things. What was exciting was trying to work it into a mystery. Because, after all, Koko was not there. Yet he's going to be called upon to solve the murder. I'm very enthusiastic about Scotland, I love the country and learned a lot about its history, and I had to use a lot of ingenuity to work it in. In a way that it really belonged in a cat mystery.

TAD: Tell us why Qwilleran goes to Scotland.

Braun: Well, in the early nineteenth century, many Scots were exiled to Canada, and they drifted across the border to the United States. So, knowing that, and having known a lot of Scots in that part of the



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country, I decided to use a lot of Scottish names in my books. His mother is Scottish, so it's logical for him to take a trip there. Then the people in Moose County form a group to go to Scotland, and Qwilleran is asked to go along.

TAD: But you didn't go with a group—you went by yourself?

Braun: Well, yes, I actually did go on a tour. When I used to go on trips to Europe, I would spend a whole year researching it before I went. I don't have the time now, so we signed up with a tourist group in London. We thought there might be thirty, forty people, but there were just four. Ordinarily, an agency would cancel the tour, but they just gave us a van and a driver/guide. It was very cozy.

TAD: Do you come from a Scottish background?

Braun: No, my parents were from the North of England, and in this country they were often asked if they were Scottish. I guess they sounded Scottish. I don't know why I have had this yearning for Scotland.

TAD: How much time do you put into your writing every day?



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Braun: Oh, no particular amount of time each day, no number of days each week. I'm very casual about the whole thing. If I really wanted to make a business out of this, I'd structure my time, but, since I'm officially retired from the workplace, I think when I get up in the morning I should do what I feel like doing. If my husband says, "Let's go and explore Black Mountain," or Chimney Rock, or whatever, I can just take off and go. I don't say, "I have to write four pages." I'm completely unstructured.

TAD: Some days, it's easy to sit down and write four or five pages, and then the next day it's just not right. Do you feel that way?

Braun: It depends on the scene I'm writing. Some scenes I enjoy more than others. If there is a lot of dialogue involved, I enjoy that immensely. I always wanted to write plays. So I enjoy dialogue. I do not enjoy the violent scenes, not that I have much violence. There are confrontations. I love having my characters go out to dinner.

TAD: You have other plans or ideas already?

Braun: I have three books rattling around in my head.

TAD: Since you have a ten-book contract, do you have to be constantly thinking up new book plots?

Braun: When I have an idea I don't think will work in the present one, well, maybe I'll be able to use it in number fifteen. So, I drop it in the fifteen file. So it's really rather efficient.

TAD: You also have a newsletter you put out.

Braun: I don't put it out. One of my devoted fans edits and publishes it for me out of love.

TAD: Can readers of your books receive a copy?

Braun: Helen McCarthy offers free subscriptions and is glad to accept postage.* She wrote me a fan letter a year and a half ago and asked, "Do you have a newsletter?" And I said no, but wouldn't it be fun. She replied, "Would you give me permission to try one?" and that's how it all started. She does a beautiful job. She sends me a proof before she sends it out. We discuss ideas and correspond quite often. If I have an idea, I throw it in, too.

TAD: You plan on going on forever with your series?

Braun: Psychologically I'm 39 and physically I'm about 50. I don't talk about it.

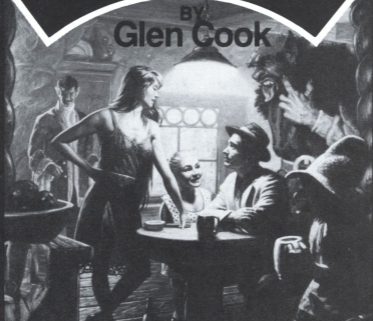
TAD: Thank goodness, Lilian and her publisher see no end to the mystery adventures involving Qwilleran and his Siamese cats, Koko and Yum Yum! □

* The Lilian Jackson Braun Newsletter is available free (donations welcomed) from Helen McCarthy, 4 Tamarack Road, Natick, MA 01760.

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Jonathan Valin is the creator of Harry Stoner, P.I., whose latest appearance is in *Second Chance*. When a friend asks Stoner to find the wife of her troublesome cousin, he reluctantly agrees. The more Stoner learns, however, the less he wants to succeed... until he discovers that, sometimes in this game called life, "Loser Takes All."

LOSER TAKES ALL

By Jonathan Valin

I was eating lunch at Arnold's when I first met Sammy Glossop. He was standing across from me, gazing with a stunned look into the dark mirror behind the bar, as if he were transfixed by some terrible darkness in his own reflection. It was late afternoon and we were the only two people in the tap room. Outside January snow fell slowly, filling the window with pearly grey light.

"You jerk," Sammy Glossop said aloud to his reflection in the mirror, and then started to sob.

I took a bite of my hot turkey sandwich and hoped he would go away. But he stood there making a racket until the bartender, a normally unflappable young woman named Felix, came over and held his hand. I should have learned a lesson from Felix about the peculiar Glossop charm, but at that moment I had no reason to think that Sammy would worm his way into my life—not even when Felix led him up to the booth where I was sitting.

"Harry," she said, "do you think you could spare a minute? A friend of mine needs some help." She ducked her head and added: "He's my second cousin, Harry. Could you just . . . talk to him?"

I stared at my sandwich and thought of Clifton Webb in *Laura*. Sammy was standing beside Felix, still clinging to her hand. I got my first good look at him in the window light—a pear-shaped man in his mid-thirties with a toucan bill of a nose, juicy green eyes, and a crescent of thickly knotted black hair.

"What's your trouble?" I said to him.

"Just about everything in my life's turned to shit," he said bitterly. "Is that good enough for you?"

Sammy Glossop slid into the seat across from me, just like I'd invited him.

"It's the wife," he said, hanging his head

between his hands. "O.K.?"

He acted as if I'd forced it out of him.

"I call her my wife," he went on in the same injured tone of voice, "even though we're not technically married."

"You're not 'technically' married?"

"So I used the wrong word," he said with a sullen look. "You don't have to point it out to me that my grammar stinks. I'm having a bad enough day as it is."

The man dug into his coat pocket suddenly and pulled out a tube of Tums. Prying one off the stack, he popped it in his mouth then offered the tube to me.

"No thanks."

"Tell him about Louellen," Felix coaxed.

"He don't want to hear about her." Sammy Glossop eyed my sandwich. "You gonna eat that?"

"For chrissake."

"Take it easy. It was an honest question. You don't snap a guy's head off for asking an honest question."

"Just tell me about your wife."

"She run away a couple days ago. The bitch."

"And . . . ?"

"And what?" he said, looking up at Felix incredulously. "I mean what more does he want? Blood?" Reaching across the table he grabbed the knife from the place setting. "I'll give you blood."

I slapped his hand and he dropped the knife. "Jesus, that hurt!" he said, rubbing his wrist.

Felix rolled her eyes. "He's not like this all the time, Harry."

"I don't see how he could be."

"Are you gonna act like a human being?" she said to Sammy.

He hung his head. "I miss her, Felix. I miss the bitch."

H'm an idea man," Glossup said as we drove out to his house in Mt. Washington. "That's why I never made it big. Too much brainpower."

"Uh-huh."

He hadn't stopped talking since we'd left the bar. Stuck in a car in a snowstorm for three-quarters of an hour with a guy like Sammy Glossup—I felt like driving into an embankment. I also felt like killing his cousin, Felix.

"You know why people screw-up?" He held up a bony finger. "Because they don't use their heads."

"You've got a point there, Sammy boy," I said with a sigh.

"Louellen, for instance," Glossup said obliviously. "She's got no brainpower at all. Me, I get ideas all the time. Good ideas, money-makers. But you think Louellen gives a damn?" He snorted with disgust. "I don't even know why I want her back. All she does is keep me down. Her and her damn family. That's probably where she run off to."

I glanced at him. "You're kidding me, aren't you?"

"Naw, she's probably with her folks."

"Then what the hell do you need me for?" I almost shouted.

"To get her back," Sammy Glossup said weakly.

Chez Glossup was just what you might expect it would be: a battered, vaguely haunted-looking frame house on a narrow Mt. Washington side street. The snowstorm had hit it a body blow that made it sag at the eaves. It didn't look safe for habitation, but Glossup eyed the place with pride.

"This is it," he said stepping out into the blowing snow, "the old homestead."

I followed Glossup up a flight of broken concrete stairs to the porch. "I should've invested in real estate when I wanted to. I could've owned the whole street. But Louellen . . ."

He slapped his thighs, raising a cloud of snow around him.

"Could we just go inside?" I said, shivering.

"Sure." He pulled a massive key chain from his pocket. There must have been a hundred keys on it.

"Louellen's the reason I never made it big," he said as if it had suddenly come to him. "When your

own wife doesn't believe in you . . ." He shook his head tragically.

I walked through the door into what was supposed to be a living room. I mean there was a black vinyl couch and a red vinyl chair and a nappy green rug. And a few decorative touches on the walls—a quilted motto, a paint-by-numbers clown, a weeping Jesus with eyes as heavy as mercury.

"Watch your step," Glossup said.

He wasn't kidding. The entire floor, from wall to wall, was littered with electronic junk. TV tubes, circuit boards, cables and wire of every description.

"It's a buy I made a couple years ago. I'm selling it off piece by piece."

"This shit has been sitting here for two years?"

"I'm selling it off," Glossup said crankily, as if I was the wife.

"Where'd you get it?"

"Norris. He got it for me."

"Who's Norris?"

"A friend," Glossup changed the subject. "You want something to drink? I got Kool-Aid in the fridge."

"I'll pass."

"I think I'll have one myself."

He made his way daintily through his little crap-garden and out to the kitchen. I stepped over a twenty-seven-inch Zenith and sat down on the couch. I heard a glass break and

Glossup curse: "Damn her! Why can't she put things where a man can get at them?"

I stared at the littered floor and wondered why in God's name I was sitting there. It was like one of those dreams in which you can't move no matter how hard you try. I'd done stupid things before out of misplaced loyalty to old friends, but Sammy Glossup topped the list. I figured his cousin Felix owed me her life.

And the funny thing was I didn't know the half of it.

A few minutes went by and Glossup came back into the room with a jelly glass of purple Kool-Aid in his hand. He'd donned a white Terry robe and changed his boots for slippers. I had the feeling that I was seeing him for the first time.

"I can make you a helluva deal on that Zenith," he said, dropping into the red vinyl chair. "I got RCA, too. Out in the kitchen."

"Where'd you say you got this stuff?"

"A friend."



Heidi Margolis

"Harry," she said, do you think you could spare a minute? A friend of mine needs help."

I stared at him.

"O.K. O.K. He's a guy named Norris Greene, the guy I got the stuff from. It's all honest merchandise. Motel sale." He gave it a beat, then added: "He and Louellen don't see eye to eye."

"Meaning what?"

Glossup shrugged. "Meaning, maybe that's why she got so pissed off and left."

"Because of your deals with this Norris Greene?"

"It's possible." He took a gulp of Kool-Aid. "She don't trust him. Can you feature it? A guy that makes money every time he turns around."

"Yeah, I can see where he's made you a fortune."

"This ain't the only deal I got cookin'," Glossup said defensively.

"What do you want from me, Sammy?" I said, getting it over with.

"Just go to her mom's and talk to Louellen, O.K.? Tell her . . . tell her I won't do any more deals with Norris. Tell her she comes back I'll turn over a new leaf."

He said this mechanically, as if he'd said it before.

"Why don't you tell her?"

"Her family hates me. If I call they hang up. If I go over there they won't let me in. They treat me like some kind of loser 'cause I got my own way of making money."

I took that to mean that he didn't have a job.

"Also they're Catholic and I'm not." He glanced bitterly at the weeping Jesus on the wall. "You tell them they don't have any right to get between me and my wife. Common-law still means something in court. They got no right to alienate her affections. What do they know about all me and Louellen been through?"

His bottom lip trembled violently. I got up and went to the door before he could break down again.

"I just want to make sure she's O.K."

Louellen's family—their name was Starks—lived on Newtown Road, in a solid-brick ranch house overlooking the Ohio River. The house was at least a couple of steps up from Glossup's shambles—the whole neighborhood was. Two children were playing in the snowy yard when I pulled into the driveway.

One of them asked me what I wanted. It was a damn good question.

"I'd like to talk to your mom."

As I expected Mrs. Starks didn't want to talk to me. A raw-boned woman with a lean, proud Appalachian face she stood in the doorway, arms-

crossed, scowling at me as if she could scarcely believe that a respectable human being would run an errand for the likes of Sammy Glossup.

"I'm not working for Glossup, Mrs. Stark," I said uncomfortably. "I'm just doing a favor for his cousin—a girl I know."

"Mister," she said. "That don't make it right. That son-of-a-bitch has never worked a day in his life. He's taken every penny that Louellen ever made and sunk it into one dishonest scheme after another. He's got stolen goods in his house, he's got people comin' and goin' all hours of the night. My Louellen is a good girl. She works hard. It ain't close to right."

I'd sort of figured on all of it, but hearing it said by the girl's mother made me blush.

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Starks. Forget I came."

I turned to go back to the car.

"Mister?" the woman called out. "Why'd he send you here, anyway?"

"To talk to Louellen."

"Louellen?" the woman said. "What would she be doing here?"

"She isn't at your house?" I said with a sinking feeling.

"Hell, no." The woman stared at me piteously. "He's playing you a trick, mister. Just like he

does everybody else."

I was furious when I got back to Glossup's shambles of a house. I didn't know what I was going to do to the devious son-of-a-bitch but I was going to do something that would stick. As it turned out I'd been beaten to the punch.

Glossup didn't answer the first knock or the second. On the third the door opened and he peered out nervously. His right eye was swollen shut and his toucan nose looked like a mushmelon.

"Oh, shit," Glossup said and tried to shut the door on me.

I pushed it open. A suitcase was sitting on the Zenith, along with a couple of tennis rackets and a beat-up golf bag.

"You taking a vacation?" I said.

"As a matter of fact, yes." Glossup went over to the suitcase and shoved a few pairs of underwear into it.

"What happened, Sammy?"

"Nothing happened. I'm getting out of town is all."

"At whose suggestion?"

"Nobody's. It's my own idea."

I must have growled at him because he jumped away from the suitcase, his hands full of underwear.

"All right," he said, collapsing on the chair. "You wanna know the truth, I'll tell you the truth."

Glossup opened the door and peered out nervously. His right eye was swollen shut and his toucan nose looked like a mush melon

He dropped the underwear at his sides. "I've got a little trouble here. Nothing I can't handle. I just need to blow town for awhile is all."

"What kind of trouble?"

Glossop looked desperately around the room as if he was searching for an answer.

"What kind of trouble?" I said again in a voice that made him start.

Sammy's lower lip began to tremble. It was a cute trick but I'd seen it before.

I came at him.

"All right, all right," he said throwing up his hands. "Just give me a second, O.K. I gotta collect my thoughts. I mean this wasn't how it was supposed to work. I mean if she'd given me the money this wouldn't have happened."

I'd been enjoying the scene up until then. The mention of the girl changed things. "What are you talking about? What money? And where's Louellen?"

"She wasn't at her mom's?"

"You already know she wasn't at her mom's, you son-of-a-bitch."

Sammy ducked his head. "No, I didn't. Honest. I was hoping that's where she was. But Norris come by after you left and . . ." Glossop swallowed hard. "And it looks like he kind of took her."

"Took her?"

"Kind of like a hostage, you know?" he said weakly.

Sammy took one look at my face and started talking very fast: "Norris and me had this deal set up. I only borrowed a couple of hundred dollars for chrissake. I would've gotten ten times that on the street. Twenty times. But Louellen . . ." His lip curled. "She's too good to make easy money."

I felt like punching him. "Where is your pal Norris?"

"Around. Here and there." Glossop touched his broken nose and winced. "He won't hurt Louellen. He's just trying to scare me is all."

I stared at the open suitcase, the tennis rackets, the golf bag. Grabbing him by the arm I pulled him to his feet.

"Don't hit me!" Glossop said with horror.

I dragged him out the door and down to the car.

"Where are you taking me?"

"To find your pal, Norris."

"He don't have a house," Sammy said. "He's got a beeper."

At one o'clock that morning Sammy Glossop and I were sitting in the parking lot of a Terrace Park White Castle, waiting for Norris Greene and Louellen Starks. At that time of night it was just me, a couple of lazy-ass cops in a

Terrace Park police cruiser, and the second-shift from the Ford transmission plant. It had taken a couple of hours to get in touch with Greene. And once we'd worked out an exchange, he wouldn't meet with me anyplace but the White Castle's parking lot.

"It's like his office," Glossop explained.

A black man with a soft, lilting voice, Greene had been straightforward on the phone.

"Sammy took some money from me and I want it back. I ain't a hardhearted man but I want my money back."

"He took money from you?" I said, wondering why I was surprised.

"Hell, yes he did. Two hundred and forty dollars out of the glove compartment of my car. It's been over a year since he took it and I want the bread back."

"What about Louellen?"

**"Norris came by
and...it looks like
he kind of took
Louellen. Kind of
like a hostage,
you know?"**

"Louellen's just fine. I didn't hurt Louellen. Hell, I never messed with anybody's woman before in my life. I wouldn't've taken Louellen if Sammy had done like he said he'd do. That's one lying bastard you're working for. I figured the only way I was ever gonna see my bread was to pull something he just couldn't lie his way out of. If Louellen don't do the trick then I guess nothing will."

I didn't tell Norris Green, but Louellen wasn't the answer to his problem. The way it was beginning to shape up, I was.

"What'll it take to square things?"

"Two-hundred and forty dollars and Sammy and me are quits. And I mean long-time quits. Forever quits. Judgment Day quits."

"And Louellen?"

"I'll let her go soon as I get my money. And I hope and trust she'll find a better ride than Sammy G." Greene laughed. "You know that bitch still thinks the world of him? All the shit he puts her through, and she still digs him. How do you figure something like that?"

So I arranged a swap. Two-hundred-and-forty dollars of my money for Louellen Starks. I told myself I was doing it for the girl, but it rankled me that Sammy Glossop was getting off the hook, too.

And he knew he was getting off the hook. It put a smile on his face that just about broke his jaw. I could even see it in the dark as we sat in the car waiting for Norris Greene—a big, broad, shit-eating grin.

"I'll get the money back to you. You know that, don't you, Harry? I'll get it from Felix first thing in the morning."

"Leave Felix out of it," I said. "Keep away from Felix."

Painting by John Banek, 1976



At one o'clock that morning Sammy and I were sitting in the parking lot of a Terrace Park White Castle.

"Sure, Harry. Sure. I'll sell a TV then. Matter of fact I got a sale lined up already. Some old cocker up the block. Christ, she's so old she don't even know when the color's on. Which is a break for me, if you get the picture."

"Don't sell a TV." I turned to face him. "Don't do anything. Just . . . shut up."

But he couldn't even do that for more than a couple of minutes. He started humming "Strangers in the Night" around a quarter past twelve. He'd worked his way through most of the Tony Bennett songbook by the time Norris Greene pulled up at one sharp.

Greene was a short, natty-looking fellow in a plaid sport coat and a checked tam. There was something white squirming in the back seat of his Buick. Greene got out of his car and walked over to where I was standing.

"God-damn, I'll be glad to get this over with," he said, glancing back at the Buick. "That bitch is nuts."

I handed him the money and he counted it in the fluorescent glow of the White Castle menu board.

"F- -- me if I ever do business with a white man again."

He stared through the windshield at Sammy Glossup, who was pretending not to notice him.

"That is one crooked son-of-a-bitch."

Greene handed me the keys to his car. "Go let her out, will ya? She about scratched my eyes out on the way over here."

I went over to the Buick and unlocked the back door. Louellen Starks leaped out. She was a thin

red-head with a sharp little face. "Rape!" she shrieked at the top of her lungs. "Rape!"

The two dead-beat cops who had been drinking coffee in their cruiser turned on their flashers.

"For chrissake be quiet," I said to the girl.

"Who the hell are you?" she asked. "And where's Sammy?"

Sammy was out of the car by then. So were the cops. Norris Greene slunk over to the Buick and tried to slip into the front seat.

Louellen shrieked, "You're not going anywhere!"

The cops broke into a trot just as Sammy got to us.

"Hello, babe," he said, smiling at the girl.

Louellen threw herself into his arms. "Oh, honey," she said passionately, "I knew you'd come get me. I just knew you would."

Norris Greene laughed a sick laugh. The cops were almost on top of us by then, and one of them had drawn his gun. The other one was holding a cup of coffee.

"I'll handle this," Sammy Glossup said. "Don't say anything, honey."

"What's the trouble here," the cop with the coffee cup said.

"I can explain it all, officer," Sammy Glossup said cheerfully. He turned to Norris Greene who was staring at the cops with genuine dread. "My friend Mr. Greene has owed my wife money for some time. Two hundred . . . no three hundred and forty dollars to be exact. When he refused to pay her she got . . . a little worked up." Sammy stared directly at Norris. "But I'm sure Mr. Greene wants to

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pay his debt. I mean we don't want to go pressing charges, do we?"

"I want to press charges," Louellen said angrily. "Do you know what that bastard did to me?"

"Now, honey," Sammy smoothed her hair. "We don't want to go into that unless we have to."

Norris Greene stared slack-jawed at Sammy. He looked from him to me and then at the two cops, who were eyeing him viciously. The cop with the coffee cup reached for the walkie-talkie pinned to his jacket. The other cop raised his gun.

"All right," Norris said in a defeated voice. "All right. All right. All right. No problem, officer. Just a little misunderstanding. I'll pay."

He took a wad out of his coat and peeled off three-hundred-and-forty dollars.

"Here you are, Louellen." He handed her the money and smiled at the cops, even though it was killing him. "Now we're all even."

"I don't know about this," the cops with the gun said.

But they were Terrace Park cops, and Norris didn't have a chance. After Sammy worked on them for about ten minutes they went away. So did Norris Greene. But it looked to me as if he was planning to pay Sammy a visit real soon.

And Sammy knew it.

"You mind dropping us at the bus station, Harry?" he said once we'd gotten back on the road.

"Bus station?" Louellen said.

"After all you been through, honey, I think you're owed a nice vacation."

"But my clothes, my job . . ."

"Would you just trust me, Louellen?" Sammy Glossup said irritably. "Would you just for once trust me? Did I just get you out of a jam or what?"

Louellen probably knew better. She probably knew the whole story. But she was one of those women who lived on hope—and always would. She really didn't have much brainpower. Or maybe that's what love does to you.

At the bus station Sammy dropped Louellen at the loading dock and wandered over to where I was standing.

"Here's the two-forty I borrowed," he said, holding out the money.

"Keep it."

"Yeah? How come?"

"Let's just say it's been an interesting experience."

Sammy dropped the money in his trousers and grinned. "Be seein' you."

"I hope not."

He skipped over to Louellen, grabbed her arm and guided her to the bus.

And that was the last time I saw Sammy Glossup, boarding the Greyhound with his ladylove, heading for parts unknown.

© Jonathan Valin

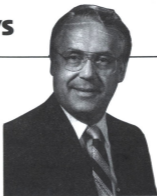
AJH Reviews

by Allen J. Hubin

Cold Comfort (Avon, \$3.50) is the second tale of campus policewoman Peggy O'Neill by "M. D. Lake." The setting is a disguised University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. The time is a snowy winter. Peggy is a young single woman with no discernible sexual morals who is sometimes willing to poke about when official answers fail to satisfy. In this case, it is the death of the brother to Peggy's friend Carol Parrish. The policy verdict is suicide, which sits unwell with Carol. So Peggy, reluctantly and at professional risk, starts turning over rocks. From under which pop several varied professors, a Swedish sextop, a porno bookstore manager, even the CIA yet. One can imagine that O'Neill will figure it out one step ahead of death. Lightweight, and pleasant enough.

Andrew Broom is a lawyer in the Indiana town of Wyler. He turns up in a series of novels by Ralph McNerny, the third of which is *Savings and Loam* (Atheneum, \$17.95). The Krueger farm outside Wyler stood empty for a long time, but now has acquired murderous attention. Gunther Kunz learns that old man Krueger buried a fortune in his farmyard before disappearing during World War II. Kunz really doesn't need the money, but he'll kill for it anyway. His plan is well laid, but he hasn't reckoned on Leroy White. A middle-aged runaway who lives by thievery, White happens to see Kunz kill his first victim. Complications... A readable tale, though undemanding, with paper-thin characters.

Edward Mathis left a fair pile of manuscripts when he died in 1988, and so books keep coming. The latest, and sixth about Texas P.I. Dan Roman, is *Out of the Shadows* (Scribner's, \$17.95). The story here is very well told, but what lingers



Consulting Editor

longest in the memory is the progressive gloominess of mood, impressively black at the end. Phillip of the wealthy Arganian family hires Dan to find his sister, who disappeared twelve years ago. This is no simple matter: the Arganian family runs deep in undercurrents. And the trail, after all these years, is frigid. But not entirely untraceable. As Roman explores it, he comes to some sense of knowing Loretta Arganian, understanding the brooding family better. But clouds gather darkly, and Dan himself will not escape the destruction.

The Suspense is Killing Me (Mysterious Press, \$19.95) is the fourth crime novel by "Thomas Maxwell," whom I strongly suspect is Thomas Gifford. This is fresh of plot and intriguing of premise, and surprised me nicely at the end. J. C. Tripper, the rock star, died twenty years ago in Tangier. Now suspicions and modest evidence have arisen that perhaps he isn't dead after all. It might not matter, except that thriller novelist Allan Bechtol (built along Ludlum lines) wants to construct a novel around Tripper and it would be inconvenient if J.C. were alive. So interested parties circle around Lee Tripper, J.C.'s brother. Lee was present in Tangier at the critical time, though besodden with alcohol and drugs. His

insistence that J.C. is dead doesn't convince, and Bechtol offers Lee \$500,000 to ferret out the truth, providing his brilliant researcher Heidi assist. Seems innocent enough, but who are people dying violently?

The Mystery Train Disappears by Kyotaro Nishimura (Dembner, \$16.95) is one of those relatively rare Japanese imports. Nishimura is an award winner in Japan, and this is one of a series of train mysteries. To bolster ridership, Japanese National Railways has been arranging mystery trips, which involve 400 passengers boarding a train with destination and experiences *en route* unknown. The latest of these proves unexpectedly mysterious. It disappears with all passengers, and a ransom note (demanding one billion yen) turns up shortly. Police and railway officials mount rather haphazard investigations (no one tries directly to trace the train), the odd body turns up (the kidnapers mean business), and the scarce clues are tracked down. Detection and much of the plot are good enough, but the stilted dialogue takes some adjusting to.

In-Laws and Outlaws by Barbara Paul (Scribner's, \$17.95) starts out with promise but disintegrates in the end into a churning of uniformly repulsive characters. The Deckers are "beautiful people," covered in money, who live on Martha's Vineyard. Well, fewer of them so live, because they've been dying in recent years. The latest is Raymond Decker, and it's his death that brings back into the bosom of the family Gillian Clifford Decker. When Gillian's husband died ten years ago, she severed all connections with the family, determined to make it on her own in the theatrical world. Now she returns and finds that



Raymond is the fourth Decker to die—three teenagers went earlier—and at least one member of the family thinks that the apparent accidents were murders. In the beginning, I cared; in the end, there was no one worth a moment's caring.

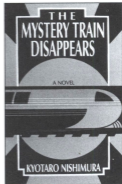
M. Scott Peck is a psychiatrist famed for his spiritually oriented writings, most notably "The Road Less Traveled," so it is a bit of a surprise to find him in our field. *A Bed by the Window* (Bantam, \$18.95) was not quite what I anticipated—the spiritual content is plentiful though disconcertingly unfocused—but in the end it is quite a rewarding read. We come to C-Wing of Willow Glen Nursing Home, somewhere in the Midwest. Here we have nurses, one sensitive and caring, one indifferent, one antagonistic. And the patients: Stephen Solaris, with a brilliant mind in an immobile, spastic body; Georgia Bates, who is incontinent only when staying in her son's home; Hank Martin, over-sexed; Marion Grochowski, whose body, deadened by multiple sclerosis, contains a lively and inquiring mind; Rachel Stimson, a double amputee from diabetes who is consumed with hatred to the fullness of her remaining body. Other superbly limned characters are here (the nursing home owner, its administrator, a psychiatrist, a policeman), and the intriguing story of murder and healing revolves around these fascinating people. Most impressive.

The second of three (so far) tales

about the 67¼" L.A. private eye V (for Victor) Daniel is *Hear the Wind Blow, Dear* (Penguin, \$4.95) by David M. Pierce. This is, irrelevant title notwithstanding, a considerable and variegated pleasure. Daniel, assisted by the outrageous ultrapunk Sara Silvetti, has several matters under way: an investigation into missing sheep, which leads to more serious matters in a state forest; a jeweler's troubles with a hoodlum of the Italian persuasion; a housewife whose husband has found a new use for his golf clubs; a neighborhood watch program. All very nicely woven into the sprightly narrative.

Pierce's third novel about Daniel is *Roses Love Sunshine* (Penguin, \$4.95). Again we have a pleasurable abundance of clever ideas and creative schemes. For example, how can Victor persuade Mr. William J. Summers to stop harassing the winsome wife from whom William J. is separated? Or how to figure out why someone trashed a photographer's garage and killed his blameless dog? These are the larger bits and pieces of a week or so in Daniel's life, and I hope that he and his array of friends and associates stick around for another twenty books or so.

Peeping Thomas (Crown, \$18.95) represents my first sampling of the work of Robert Reeves, though this is the second adventure for Professor Thomas Theron. Theron is a nonconformist academic who is here invited into the fight against pornography (and for Proposition 6) by feminist historian Emma Pierce. Action centers on Boston's notorious Combat Zone, where, besides the normal purveying of filth, it may also (behind the scenes) be in creation. It quickly proves dangerous to inquire into these matters—good thing, perhaps, that Theron is compensated by reconnecting (recoupling) with his former wife and by finding a publisher for his offbeat novel after untold rejections. All this emphasis on sex is not, I'm afraid, edifying or entertaining, nor for that matter is



Theron very engaging. I only just finished the book.

Some would say that we never have enough fictional private eyes, so Alan Russell, in his debut *No Sign of Murder* (Walker, \$17.95), gives us another. Stuart Winter operates out of San Francisco, and here agrees to look for Tammy Walters's daughter. Anita is nineteen, beautiful, deaf, and missing for six months. Winter follows a rather cold trail—to Anita's school, her likewise deaf school roommate, her job at a gorilla research facility, her father, her artistic playmates. Anita proves not to be an altogether nice person, and Stuart rather comes to think she's dead. But if so, by whose hand? *No Sign of Murder* is well written, but there is much of vileness and of grotesque images here, and Winter is not interesting enough as a character to overcome these handicaps, so on balance I would pass.

Eschewing her "Alice Storey" *nom de plume*, Sarah Shankman offers her third Samantha Adams tale, *Now Let's Talk of Graves* (Pocket Books, \$18.95), under her own name. Sam is a reporter for a failing Atlanta publication and is ten years dry after nearly killing herself with alcohol and drunken sex. She has a friend named Kitty Lee, who is wedged tight into highest New Orleans society, the folks who run the real Mardi Gras behind locked doors. Innocent revelry is not all that transpires behind those doors, and Kitty wants

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help with one or two oddments. Matters like drugs and sex and commercial religion and, in short order, death. Some interesting characters wander about in this affair, but for me Sam Adams is not one, and at the end I found myself not feeling enriched, except for the nasty insights into the allegedly beautiful people.

Forced Entry (Putnam, \$19.95) by Stephen Solomita brings back Stanley Moodrow for a third time, this time as a private investigator on the same Manhattan streets he strode as a cop for thirty years. A slumlord and a drug distributor, each as foul in his own way as the other, scheme to turn an apartment building into a financial bonanza. All that has to be done is to force the existing tenants out of the building. Any method will do, including fatal ones, and the matter comes to the attention of Moodrow and his girlfriend, public defender Betty Haluka. Moodrow has always had his own sources and methods, not all officially approved, and, with mounting rage as the toll rises, he carves a swath toward the schemers. A colorful, intense, vivid narrative.

Julian Symons, one of the superior practitioners in the criminous craft, resists the temptation to repeat himself. He so resists again in **Death's Darkest Face** (Viking, \$17.95). This is presented as a Symons-edited account by a middle-aged actor of the 1930s disappearance of poet Hugo Headley.

Geoffrey Elder was there, as a sixteen-year-old, when Hugo vanished, never to be seen again. Thirty years later, Elder is induced to disinter family skeletons, to relive the past, to remember relationships, and to understand people and events as never before. A memorable tale, admirably cast.

Twilight at Mac's Place (Mysterious Press, \$19.95) is another magnificent achievement by Ross Thomas, with well-met characters, tricky plotting, and a beautifully smooth and suspenseful narrative. Thomas began in our genre with a tale of intrigue featuring Michael Padillo and Mac McCorkle (*The Cold War Swap*, 1966) and followed it shortly with two more. Now this pair is retired to running a Washington bar and restaurant of considerable notoriety and success, Mac's Place, but they are by no means inactive when Thomas takes them up again here. Steadfast Haynes, who did nasty things for various clients (most notably if unofficially the CIA) over the years has suddenly died. But, before so doing, he apparently penned his memoirs, which several folks would pay—or do—almost anything to suppress. Rights to this literary effort fall to Granville Haynes, L.A. homicide cop turned actor and Steadfast's son, who becomes the focus of the narrative. He comes to Washington, renews a few acquaintances, and invites bids on the memoirs (it does not seem to matter hugely whether they actually exist). The killing begins with a friend of Granville's, which is a strategic error on someone's part...

The fourth of Ruth Rendell's novels as Barbara Vine is *Gallowglass* (Harmony, \$19.95), another unconventional affair. Joe, one of society's castoffs, is saved from suicide by Sandor, one of society's spongers. Sandor is planning the kidnapping of Nora, who is now the wife of a British industrialist and living in his secure and guarded estate in the countryside. It's a re-kidnapping, actually, since several husbands back she was married to

an Italian, and Sandor and some Italian colleagues took her for ransom in Rome. But somehow the money is now gone, and, aside from an American Express card for which his mother pays, Sandor hasn't much to live on. So, existing on plastic, Sandor and Joe lurk in the vicinity of Nora's home. Meanwhile, Nora's bodyguard, a former teacher named Paul Garnet with a seven-year-old daughter, finds his role becoming far more complex and dangerous than expected. This is a perceptive and probing tale of weak and twisted personalities (none with much appeal), and Vine has a couple of good surprises awaiting at the end.

I have been very pleased with Ted Wood's series about Reid Bennett, but the seventh, *On the Inside* (Scribner's, \$18.95), struck for me a false note through much of the telling—I felt a loss of the former naturalness, a sense of characters consciously speaking lines. Curious. In any event, Bennett is now married to actress Frede and on leave from his police chief job in Murphy's Harbour. He's supposed to be honeymooning, but actually he's working undercover, hiring on to the police force in the mining town of Elliott to investigate persistent rumors of police corruption. Nasty fun and games begin almost immediately on his arrival. Corruption is evident, but how high does it rise and will Bennett live long enough to find out? □

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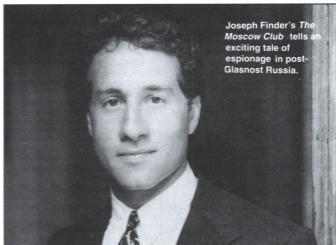
Original Sins

BY MARVIN LACHMAN

There has been much speculation about the effect of the end of the Cold War on espionage fiction. Who will replace the Soviets with their 45 years' seniority in double dealing? Some have suggested Colombian drug chieftains and Middle Eastern terrorists, but I think that the report of the death of the Russians as villains is premature. As evidence, I point to news reports about Russian hardliners, especially in the Red Army, who think Gorbachev went too far. I can also point to Joseph Finder's *The Moscow Club* (1991; Viking hardcover, \$19.95). If today's Russian news is confusing, so is Finder's book, but it is far more exciting and readable. There are moles placed in both the CIA and the Kremlin, assassinations, and chases in at least five cities (including the sewers of Paris and the subways of Boston). It is long (too long at 548 pages), and there are too many characters, though most get killed along the way. Finder's hero is Charlie Stone, an expert on the Soviets for a U.S. intelligence agency, who not only finds that people around him are being killed, but that he has become a target himself. Why that is happening and what he does about it made me stay with this book in one of the more compulsive reading experiences I've had recently. It all leads to a Moscow summit in which an unnamed U.S. President is due to go to Moscow and review the Revolution Day ceremonies, with Gorbachev, on top of Lenin's tomb.

Cold War espionage was an important part of Aaron Elkins's first mystery, *Fellowship of Fear* (1982; reprinted by Popular Library, \$3.95). Because of some typically inefficient spies (remember the Bay of Pigs?), almost as soon as Gideon Oliver arrives in Heidelberg to teach, he is subject to harassment, ranging from the serious (assault and battery) to the trivial (stealing his clean socks and a cheap radio). If the espionage is not very convincing, the rest of the debut is properly promising, displaying the potential Elkins has since realized. Even when he is not on a "dig," Oliver's anthropology permits him to make deductions other detectives cannot. He is also an enormously human and likable hero.

There is so much abuse of children in real life that I do not generally want young victims in my escape reading. Carlene Thompson's well-written first novel, *Black for Remembrance* (1991; Little, Brown hardcover, \$18.95), proves a worthwhile exception. It starts twenty years in the past with the disappearance, apparently a kidnapping and murder, of Caroline Webb's five-year-old daughter, Hayley. In the present, Caroline, who now has a new family, including two children, gets messages which could only come from Hayley. Hayley's messages are tied to a series of murders in a small town. There is nothing supernatural here, and the horror comes from a believable situation and



Joseph Finder's *The Moscow Club* tells an exciting tale of espionage in post-Glasnost Russia.

Jerry Beazer

realistic characters penned by an author with an awfully good ear for dialogue. One applauds as Thompson resolves a seemingly impossible situation. She leaves some dangling threads but for the most part provides a satisfactory ending with real suspects, clues, nice misdirection, and, finally, a real surprise at the end.

When Harper's Perennial Library reprinted Philip Clark's two mysteries in 1985, re-reading Barzun and Taylor showed that it was the second, *The Dark River*, which drew their raves. Despite its flaws, however, the first book from this forgotten writer, *Flight into Darkness* (1948), is also worth looking for, and reading, in spite of its many coincidences. In South Carolina, lawyer Hallam Clay sees a Nazi collaborator he interrogated in Europe during his World War

II Intelligence duty. Why does this man have access to Henry Sturdevant, who is due to announce his candidacy for the Presidency? The roots of the mystery are in the war, and there is also the flavor of immediate post-war idealism, especially in Clay's viewpoint that murder is everyone's business. By the 1950s, cynicism was the rule, not the exception. Clark's mystery is far better than its resolution, especially since it is solved by *auditory* clues, though this is a book, not a cassette.

One of the most unusual sports mysteries, Sean Hanlon's *The Cold Front* (1989; Pocket Books, \$3.50), is about the Super Bowl of Alaska, the Iditarod, a trans-Alaska sled-dog race, covering over a thousand miles from Anchorage to Nome. This is the first in Hanlon's series about newspaper reporter

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Prester John Riordan. In it, Riordan's investigation of two murders leads him to an entrepreneur who sounds, in my mind's ear, like Orson Welles playing Charles Foster Kane. Hugh Smalley promises an agricultural miracle for Alaska, but he is more likely to deliver an ecological disaster worse than the *Exxon Valdez*. Once Riordan realizes that Smalley is on to him, and he knows his life is in great danger, he looks for an escape route. His participation in the Iditarod is part of one of the great chases in recent mystery fiction. Hanlon's descriptions of Alaska capture a climate and way of life different from all other states. There are many quotable lines in the book, as when Riordan describes "the

sticky toxins which Smalley had dumped into their river. If the earth could get syphilis, the open shores would look like this—dark, full of pus, immoral and corrupted."

I have heard little good about Margaret Truman's mysteries, even seeing questions as to whether she, indeed, writes them. I finally read her first book, *Murder in the White House* (1980; reprinted by Popular Library, \$4.95), and confess to being pleased. She starts with an attention-getter of a premise, the murder of the U.S. Secretary of State in the White House. Then comes a very logical investigation, though in the plot a bit of the sex, bribery, and terrorism is extraneous. Truman's President is quite human, and her own experience as "First Daughter" from 1945 to 1948 permits insight into the life of his daughter, Lynne Webster, and why the Secret Service makes her nervous. There are two big suspects for a truly satisfactory whodunit, but Truman has saved a real surprise for the end of a very fast-moving debut.

In 1930, Fulton Oursler, using the pseudonym Anthony Abbot, launched a successful mystery career about Thatcher Colt, a New York City police commissioner who functions more like a brilliant amateur detective. He gave it up when he turned to bestselling works of popular religion such as *The Greatest Story Ever Told*. Abbot's mysteries have been out of print for over forty years; I had to borrow his first, *About the Murder of Geraldine Foster*, from my colleague in columny, Charles Shibus. They are dated now, but part of their charm (in addition to the author's imaginative puzzles and narrative skill) is a picture of a simpler New York, though there was air pollution and drug-related crime even then. If someone were to reprint them now, I wonder what readers would make of Abbot's overheated language, as when his "Watson," upon being told the motive for the murder, feels "a cold chill crawling like a living creature through my veins. The single statement of Thatcher Colt was horrible beyond credence."

Though I do not mean to deprecate an entire sub-genre of the mystery, I must characterize Susan Kenney's *Garden of Malice* (1983; reprinted by Ballantine, \$2.95) as a Modern Gothic, albeit an *intelligent* one. Roz Howard, in her first appearance, has the opportunity of a professional lifetime for a young assistant professor, to work on the papers of famous author Lady Viola Montfort-Snow. She finds that the Master of Montfort Abbey acts as strangely as Bromie's Mr. Rochester. Furthermore, there is a secret in the papers on which she is working, one which has many people frightened. I cannot recall a mystery in which a maze and a garden are used as well. There is a murder, with a disappearing body, in the garden. Then even the garden is "murdered." That is an event, because it is so unusual, which, strangely, carries more impact than the murder of a person.

If Maurice Procter were still alive and writing, he would surely provide something as good as *You'd Better Believe It*. Procter has been dead almost twenty years, but we

are fortunate now to have Bill James, who wrote that tough 1985 police procedural, which is reprinted by Foul Play Press, \$4.95. It is well known that, in the real world, a large percentage of police successes depend upon their use of informers. Much of James's story is about "narks" and the information they provide regarding an impending bank robbery in a small British city. Police detective Colin Harpur is a tough man, and, if he occasionally becomes "Dirty Harryish," as his idealistic wife complains, it is not mindless behavior on his part. He genuinely believes that his methods are necessary in order to "fashion a land fit for those with consciences to live in." James has a knack for well-turned phrases. Regarding Harpur's cowardly superior, James says, "Cop-outs had been named after this cop." Although Harpur is really a man of taste, James conveys that subtly, putting him down a bit. When Harpur is confronted with stolen Jackson Pollock paintings, James writes, "Harpur knew little about art, not even what he liked." Along with realism and unusually insightful characterization, there is also a superb action sequence in the bank robbery.

While Perennial Library is now Harper/Perennial, one thing has not changed: their knack for reaching back in time for reprints. **Tenants for Death** (1937; reprinted, \$5.95) is the first of a small number of books (ten, including a short-story collection) by Cyril Hare, a believer in quality, not quantity. A deceptively simple story from the Golden Age between the world wars, *Tenant* has much to recommend it, including a detective, Inspector Mallett, with whom we can identify, and whose intelligence we can respect. Hare had a good ear for language and provided humorous touches as he verbally skewered the pompous. There is a great deal of dialogue here, but almost all of it is very readable and very efficient in establishing character. There is not a great deal of description, just enough so the reader can supply his own imagination. Even the plot is deceptively simple—the disappearance of a mysterious tenant, with the body of another man, a fraudulent financier, left behind.

When Charles Merrill Smith published his first mystery, **Reverend Randolph and the Wages of Sin**, in 1974, his son, Terence Lore Smith, had already published a first mystery, *The Thief Who Came to Dinner*. The father had had a successful career, first as a Protestant minister and then as a writer of humorous books about religion. His mystery, introducing C. P. Randolph, was the first of six about the Chicago United Methodist minister. Don't expect religious sermons from Smith, the elder. He was a master of humor, and he was not afraid to poke fun at religion. The plot concerns financial hanky-panky among the trustees of a wealthy church. There is also a dollop of sex, with the murder of a choir singer, found naked in the church. It is truly a lively, enjoyable debut. When Charles Smith died in 1985, Terence was supposed to continue the series. Tragically, he never did. While driving a van for his local library in Colorado, he died in an auto accident on an icy road. □

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J'Accuse!

BY WILLIAM L. DeANDREA

Jove Nods Twice

When a stranger says something perniciously stupid, it's irritating. When somebody you respect does it, it's embarrassing. When two of your idols say the same stupid thing, it breaks your heart.

I yield to no one in my admiration of Ed McBain or Isaac Asimov. I believe McBain to be the writer of urban America in the second half of this century. And I have learned more useful things from the essays of Isaac Asimov than I did in four years of high school and four years of college.

But, as the saying goes, even Jove nods. In each of these cases, actually, Jove has gone out of his way to tromp on a banana peel and fall flat on his ass.

It concerns the public relations anti-drug advertising campaign characterized by the slogan, "Just say no." McBain, in an 87th Precinct novel, and Asimov, in an essay published in *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*, have sneered at that campaign, implying that it is ill-conceived, unworkable, and, in its simplicity, insulting to the young people it is supposed to help.

I am here to tell them they are wrong. The fact that I am here proves they are wrong. I realize that the two gentlemen in question had urban upbringing, but they had them in the days when marijuana was some mysterious substance jazz musicians used.

I am in my thirties. I spent most of my youth in what was a poor, predominantly black neighborhood. I was a kid in a time and place when highs could be picked off trees like apples from an orchard (it's worse today). I have held a friend's head as he puked his guts out going cold turkey, only to see him back on the stuff in a week. I have seen people smoke, snort, and shoot up. I have had friends die. I have seen lives, brains, and talent wasted. Even today, I can go home and see old friends jerking aimlessly along the street. ("Hey, Neil," I asked one day, "whatcha doin'?" "Downs," he said, and shuffled on.)

At thirteen, I was, I suspect, a witness to one of the first PCP transactions in this country.

RICKY: You guys, you want to buy some of this shit?

ME: No.

BOBBY (my best friend at the time): What you got?

RICKY: Grass, man, but it's treated with PCP.

BOBBY: What's that?

RICKY: Tranquillizer for animals. Great kick, man.

BOBBY: O-kay... I'll give it a try. A nickel?

RICKY: Cool. I get a joint rolled.

ME: Bob, let's get out of here.

RICKY: Don't worry, man, you can hit on it, too.

Mr. A: A tranquilizer for animals? No, thanks.

BOBBY (lights up, tokes): Wow. You say this has been dipped in PCP?

RICKY: Treated with it, man. Not just dipped. Treated with it.

Ms (leaving): Jesus Christ, you guys are nuts.

Which remains my attitude to this very day. See, not everybody did drugs. A lot, yeah. But not everybody. A lot of us, black and white, had enough brains and enough self-respect to know that everything we were and everything we ever could be was *inside our brains*, and we could mess with that only at our own peril. We said, simply, no.

Not easy. I had every drug in the world offered to me for free. I was called everything from a tight-ass to a narc. I had friends beg me to take it so they "wouldn't have to do it alone." The idea of staying straight together was apparently not enough.

But I, and the kids like me, made a promise to ourselves, which we kept. It must be so much harder for kids out there today. That's why when I saw the "Just Say No" ads, I rejoiced. Because that's exactly what a kid needs—encouragement to be brave and responsible.

He sure doesn't need sneering from a couple of literary giants.

Both the authors take the opportunity to get snide at the expense of Nancy Reagan, who popularized the slogan. Asimov goes so far as to say, "I doubt Nancy Reagan ever said no to a new dress."

No, Doctor. Nor do I think Nancy Reagan ever held up a grocery store with a gun or beat an old lady to the sidewalk to get money in order to go out and get a fix from the dress pusher. I doubt the new dress screwed over her body and her mind to make her a drooling, burnt-out wreck huddling in abandoned buildings (which, by the way, was the fate of our pal Ricky of the PCP deal). You may not like Mrs. Reagan, and maybe she's not too likable, but on this topic she's all right and you're all wrong.

Asimov is also wrong when he asserts that "people are driven to drugs by desperation." If he really believes that, then there are a lot of desperate blue-eyed kids out there in the universities and the private high schools and the stock brokerages, and the movie companies.

People choose to take drugs, from arrogance, weakness, or stupidity. I sincerely hope that these gentlemen are not telling us that in a country wherein the process of law has determined that a child must be solely responsible for the decision to carry or destroy a fetus, that it is somehow insulting that children take some responsibility for their own lives and sanity.

I sincerely hope that Mr. McBain and Dr. Asimov are not trying to imply that certain people are simply too damned stupid to help themselves to avoid the black hole of despair that is drugs.

"Just say no" works. It is the only thing that will ever work. If my son learns nothing else from me, I'm going to make sure he knows that. The rest, much as I will ache to fight it out for him, will be up to him.

I know. I've been there.

And Speaking of Effort . . .

I am still trying to make sure I have all deserving authors, publications, stores, and other mystery-related stuff in the mystery encyclopedia I'm doing for Prentice-Hall. If you've published a mystery book (especially since 1980), I would like to see a bio of you, a list of your publications with dates, and a bio of your series character(s) if any, along with anything else you'd like to tell me that's relevant and interesting to the Mystery Fan. A picture would be nice, too, if you've got one, but *don't refrain from sending me stuff if you don't have a picture*. They're not going to let me use nearly enough photos, anyway.

By the time this column appears, the effort will be in the home stretch, so please, get in it, for your sake and mine. The address is 41 Roberts Street, Watertown, CT 06795. □

Just a Bunch of Poe Folk

This year's Mystery Writers of America Edgar Allan Poe Awards ceremony, held April 25 at New York's Sheraton Center Hotel, was a mixed experience. I have no arguments with the awards themselves; I think the committees did a good job. Of course, I would have preferred to see *Nor a Creature Was Stirring* by Jane Haddam (who is known around our place as Orania Papazoglou) win for best paperback original, but Ms. Haddam took it all in good part, maybe because the series of which that book was the first volume is selling so darned well. I was delighted when my good pal Julie Smith won best novel for *New Orleans Mourning*. Julie is a terrific writer and a better person, and she has paid her dues in this business.

The awards *dinner*, though, was a bit of a bust. I know I have complained in the past about how these things are organized, but that was because I wanted them bigger, flashier, better paced. I wanted them more like the Oscars. Instead, we wound up with something quite a bit like the Watertown, Connecticut Rotary Club's High School Students of the Year pageant.

First of all, there was the band. It's not that they were bad. When they stuck to standards,

they were fine, assuming there should have been a band there in the first place, which there should'n't. If I wanted to dance, I would join Up With People. From the annual gathering of the Mystery Writers of America, I want a chance to confer, converse, and otherwise hobnob with my brother and sister *mystery writers*. I no want to have to scream in somebody's ear from four inches away in order to converse.

And this band was so *white*. It was the kind of outfit my father used to refer to as Guy Lumbago and his Ruptured Canadians. Hearing them do James Brown's "I Got You" or Richie Valens's arrangement of "La Bamba" led the rock fans among us to the creation of a new dance—"The Cringe."

The food, as food goes for this sort of gathering, was okay. I did notice, however, that nobody on the payroll of Bantam Books, whose guests Orania and I were, ate so much as a mouthful. Editors must subsist on the love of literature.

Then came the awards, where the most ill-conceived notion of all was put into effect. Usually, the chairperson of the appropriate committee presents the awards. Yes, it may be a bit of an ego trip, but what the hell, it's a lot of work to head up one of those things, and presenting the award is the only payment you get. In addition, it's one more way to spread recognition of each other among a growing membership.

Instead, incoming President John Lutz and Awards Chairman Stuart Kaminsky handled the whole thing themselves, Stu reading the nominees and John announcing the winners with only a little less verve than a conductor reading off the stops between Grand Central and Stamford on the New Haven Railroad. No history, no perspective, not the slightest hint why anyone but the nominees should give a squishy banana about who won the award, or why anyone was bothering to give one in the first place.

DeAndrea the Revisionist

One of the major advantages of becoming a mystery fan at an early age (in my case, about eleven) is that it gives you the chance to have read a lot of the classics before anyone (a college professor, for instance), can tell you what you're supposed to think about them.

This is especially true, of course, in the area of our genre with the most grubby academic fingerprints on it, the private eye novel. I had already read and loved Dashiell Hammett, and been irritated beyond endurance by Raymond Chandler years before I ran into anybody trying to deliver the authoritative word on things. I had, for instance, read and enjoyed *Red Harvest* several times as a rip-roaring adventure story before I learned it was supposed to be, and this is an actual quote, "Hammett's scathing indictment of capitalism." It was, according to this guy, whose name I would give you if I could remember it (it doesn't really matter—I've heard his sentiments echoed by plenty, since), the truest reflection of Hammett's commitment to the cause of Communism.

Now, to tell you the truth, I read and loved Hammett's books even before I knew anything about him. If any outside force steered me toward his novels, it was the fact that, as an even younger kid, I had had an enormous crush on Phyllis Kirk as Nora Charles in *The Thin Man* TV series.

(A digression. Myrna Loy in the movies, Phyllis Kirk on TV. Imagine my disappointment when I finally got a load of Lillian Hellman.)

Still, it cannot be denied that, in private life, Hammett was, if not a card-carrying Communist, as near one as could be. When it came to the bail-fund business, I can only admire the courage and loyalty he showed a cause that never came close to deserving it. Sort of like a left-wing G. Gordon Liddy.

But no matter how much of a Communist Hammett was, there was nothing Communist about his work. It would be a tough thing to do, in any case, because to a Communist, Property Is Theft (Jane Fonda once looked me right in the eye and told me that as if she had just that second thought of it, but that's another story), whereas to a detective story, *Theft Is Theft*.

So let's look at Hammett's "scathing indictment of Capitalism."

The first thing I want to say is that *Red Harvest* contains not only the worst sentence Hammett ever wrote, but possibly the worst sentence anybody ever wrote: "A bullet kissed a hole in the door frame, close to my noodle." Am I the only one who has noticed this? I keep telling Bill Pronzini about it, but I don't think he believes me. He didn't include it in *Gun In Cheek* or its sequel.

Anyway, what actually happens in this book? A mine owner with strike troubles brings in gangsters to bust up the union. This in itself is inimical to Capitalism, which is based on trade and negotiation. As any good capitalist would have predicted, the thugs take over the company and the town, including the police. This is also inimical to capitalism. It is Fascism, sometimes known as National Socialism when practiced on a large enough scale.

With the corrupt government part of the problem, the collective power of the few innocent townspeople thwarted, who comes to clean up the mess?

The Continental Op, that's who. The *paid* agent of a *profit-making* organization, the Continental Detective Agency. A rugged individual who sets his own agenda, and, relying on his own brains, brawn, and guts, cleans up the town and paves the way for virtue to return.

An indictment of Capitalism? This book is Capitalism virtually *defied*. *Ayn Rand* could have written *Red Harvest* (but not nearly so well).

So let us look past an author's rep when we're judging a book, and try to go by what's in the pages, okay? I know it'll be hard for some, but it's worth the effort.

The person who got the biggest play from the hosts that night was film director Don Siegel, a terrific filmmaker and a personal friend of Kaminsky's, but not, I think, an

MWA member.

The winners themselves sank to the occasion. With the exception of Donald E. Westlake, who won best screenplay for *The Grifters*, and Tony Hillerman, who was named Grand Master, nobody said anything witty, charming, touching, or memorable. "I want to thank-my-editor-and-my-agent," they all said, then sat down. Then the *hand* got going again.

I only came over from the next state for this, and I felt gypped. A lot of people spent a lot of bucks to haul in from the West Coast. If I'd been one of them, I would have been mightily cheesed-off. □

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Havoc Returns

The author tells all about Johnny Havoc—his red-haired, 5'1" tough guy P.I.—who burned bright in the 1960s in four hilarious novels.

.....
BY JOHN JAKES



MY FOUR NOVELS about Johnny Havoc, originally published by Belmont Books in the 1960s, a long-vanished paperback house, are four of my favorite offspring.

Writers often speak of their works as children, with reason. All are part of the writer's flesh, to be loved cherished, and examined with growing curiosity, amazement—and occasionally horror—as they grow older. Like children, sometimes their earlier promise, or the enthusiasm the writer felt for them, doesn't hold up. But the love of the parent usually persists.

So it is with the quartet of novels about a 5'1" private eye with a fondness for Brooks Brothers clothes and (talk about dated) pork-pie hats.

Memory refuses to tell me how I first conceived of the character and the series. For years, I could never get beyond three or four books with series characters because the books began to sound the same to me, and writing boredom set in; it happened with Havoc, and also with a nice little cycle of related science-fiction novels that I undertook for my friend the late Don Wollheim; I avoided the problem with *The Kent Family Chronicles* and *The North and South Trilogy* by shifting each succeeding novel into a new, intrinsically different historical period, each with its own interesting research challenge.

I do remember that, from the start, Havoc was short, thus unable to deal physically with novelistic menaces and goons, hence had to live by his wits and his lip. He quickly evolved into my Champion of All the Short People Everywhere, because he always out-talked, out-thought, and outwitted the larger baddies. I am 6'1", but I liked that. Maybe that's why I still like the character.

My agent at the time, Scott Meredith, didn't have much luck marketing this first Havoc novel. Perhaps it was too offbeat. Perhaps it was too slapstick (there was always to be one chase sequence in the book *à la* the Keystone Kops). Or perhaps it was just too imperfect. But Meredith was always dogged, and he found a couple of editors at newly organized Belmont Books who liked the character and the story. Belmont changed my original title, *Here Comes Havoc*, to *Johnny Havoc*, but otherwise presented the work exactly as I'd written it, without editorial changes.

Over the years, in letters and personal conversations, quite a few readers and colleagues have told me that they remember Havoc and the canon with a

Bestselling author John Jakes' last historical novel was CALIFORNIA GOLD; a new novel will be published next year by Doubleday. His Johnny Havoc novels have lately all been reprinted by TADLibrary.

Jeff Ansborg



good deal of fondness. Imagine my feelings, then, when my friend and fellow member of MWA, Otto Penzler, phoned one sunny afternoon in the fall of 1989 to tell me of his plan to reprint the early crime novels of a number of writers, including yours truly, provided I'd be willing to see J. Havoc's adventures in print once again. Hardcover editions of all four novels, under the banner of Otto's Armchair Detective Library, are the result of my enthusiastic response.

If you read any or all of the four novels, I hope you'll like my kid. J.H. is thirty years older than he was when he first popped into the world. He isn't perfect; but as noted above, I still have a lot of affection for him.

Without good editors, it's hard to have unusual books, or happy authors.

Oh, books can be published, all right. Authors can receive and cash checks. But what happens if an author bangs off a manuscript without being absolutely sure whether he's got something worth anything? And what if it's sort of unconventional—not exactly what they're publishing these days?



Without a good editor to go to bat for a manuscript like that—persuade the editorial committee, or the boss, or whomever, that here is something quirky but maybe worth doing—you as a reader will be stuck with what my late Mother used to call (heaven knows why) “the same old seventy-six.” Books from the factory; books like little sausages, one after another, never varying.

I had a couple of stalwart editors who took a chance on me back in the 1960s, when I first came up with the pint-sized Johnny Havoc, and wrote about him in four none-too-serious novels.

As already stated, Scott Meredith, my agent in those days, showed the first Havoc novel a few times, but nobody bit. Just a little too off-trail, Scott concluded. But he and his staff believed in marketing a script until the paper almost literally fell apart. Why not? If an old publishing house wouldn't say yes, there was always a new one coming along, or new people at editorial desks who weren't around when the script was submitted last month.

Hence the first Havoc novel arrived at a small, relatively new paperback house called Belmont. And the miracle happened. The first editor who read it, Gail Morrison (then Gail Wendroff) recommended it to the editorial director, Sam Post, and *he* liked it enough to say they should take a chance on it.

A year or so later, I was in New York and had an opportunity to meet Sam and Gail and express my thanks. I remember Sam smiling in a vague way and saying he couldn't exactly say *why* he liked Johnny Havoc, but he did. Through three more books, before Belmont fell on hard times and faded away, that was good enough for him, and for Gail.

In the summer of 1990, I tracked Gail down and asked her if she had any recollections about the circumstances of that first sale. She replied, very generously:

“There are a few advantages to being an editor at a small publishing house, and the most exciting is the discovery of new or young talent. To find an author whose writing is exciting, bright, and fresh, to be

among the first to read the words of a writer that you feel is one among thousands who truly deserves to be published—this is what makes an outstanding event in an editor's life.

“When Scott Meredith brought in the first of John Jakes's slightly wacky Johnny Havoc novels, I knew Jakes fulfilled all the criteria and then some. As I watched John's career skyrocket later, I always smiled and said, ‘I knew it.’”

Whew. Kind words; and not a penny paid for the endorsement, I assure you.

It reinforces my point that, without a sudden synergistic bond between a writer and his or her editor, not much happens. Not much that's unconventional and new, anyway. With Sam and Gail, I was lucky. Actually, I've been lucky throughout most of my career, working with a large number of talented, quite different, but uniformly fine editors.

In my science-fiction days, I was encouraged and brought along by Donald A. Wollheim and Kathy Malley. Don bought my first paperback historical novels, too. He was a gentleman, a wit, an innovator—and a friend of many, many writers; his death in 1990 was a significant loss to publishing.

In my *Kent Family Chronicles* days, Marla Ray, Ann Kearns, and Beverly Lewis honed the manuscripts and figuratively cooled my fevered brow when the marketplace kept demanding the next Kent novel faster than I could in conscience produce it.

In my HBJ days, Willa Perlman and Rubin Pfeffer helped me conceive and write a children's book of which I've been inordinately proud ever since. And on the three *North and South* novels, I had the great good fortune to be edited by one of the finest in the profession—one of its peerless gentlemen, Julian Muller. He became, in short order, my trusted adviser, my beloved friend—very nearly a second father.

On the other hand, an editor can be a disaster. I've had some experience of that, too. This is not always the best of all possible worlds.

But even the worst experience validates my con-

tention that good editors make all the difference. Editors made the difference with Johnny Havoc at Belmont—and the same holds true today. TAD Library's associate editor, Ed Strosser, has seen the books through their new versions in exemplary style.

So you see, I've been lucky again. I thank all of my good editors, right down to the newest, for having faith in me through the years. It's truly the engine that has kept me going.

Let me not suggest, however, that all is always wonderful with publishers, no matter how highly they regard the writer, or the work.

Once upon a time, my quartet of novels about J.H. had what I thought were some pretty good titles. Then the publisher got into the act . . . with, presumably, a better sense of what the market wanted.

Or was it a sense that the books had to be tarted up with misleading titles and cover art because they were too off-the-wall to sell very well on their own? (If that was the conclusion reached by the editors at the long-gone Belmont Books, I'm glad they didn't tell me. No, actually, I'm grateful: I wanted the books published, crummy titles or not.)

Publishers aren't entirely to blame for all the trouble over titles. Almost any writer will tell you that a potent title is hard to come by. Such a title should be catchy, and inviting, and suggest the nature and content of the book without giving away one iota of the story. Luckily, I've always had a facility for titles, able to find—most of the time—a pedigreed performer among the dogs. Maybe it's all the hours I spent hunting for the right two or three words in an ad headline for some product or service I was hyping in my suit-and-tie days.

I will say that good titles never come quickly for me, or easily. But the wait, and the struggle, are worth it.

I stood by silently when the first novel, *Here Comes Havoc*, was transformed into *Johnny Havoc*. No great gain, I thought, but I comforted myself by murmuring endlessly, "New York Knows Best."

But I reacted with predictable pique when the second of the four appeared under the just godawful title *Johnny Havoc Meets Zelda*. I'd sold the manuscript as *Havoc for Sale*, a title I thought ideal because it led me into a format for future titles.

But it wasn't sexy. And in those days (1962), sex was selling paperbacks. Or trying. Thus, inching steadily toward the titillating, the third *Havoc* novel, *Holiday for Havoc*, came out the very next year re-titled *Johnny Havoc and the Doll Who Had "It"*. The fourth and last (*Johnny Havoc and the Siren in Red*) came out as the leeringly salacious *Making It Big*, which I suppose you could interpret as having something to do with success; but I didn't and I expect Belmont didn't either.

There was not so much as a by-your-leave regarding these little modifications. Back then I was lumping along as a journeyman paperback writer, and the standard boilerplate contract reserved to the publisher the right to edit or change a title without permission or consultation. Now I've got it in my contracts that my title is my title, period, and if anyone is going to commit another *Making It Big*, it'll be me.

"Johnny Havoc and the Siren in Red was renamed *Making It Big*, which I suppose you could interpret as having something to do with success, but I didn't."

Like almost every other writer, I have often played a certain game. It's called "Cast the Movie."

After the book's out, you settle back and spin a pleasant daydream about a ringing telephone (nowadays a beeping fax machine) and an unexpected message saying this or that well-known producer or network out in the sunny Land of Oz wants—no, *lusts*—to put your work on the screen, and will pay almost any price for the rights.

Whereupon you engage high-powered legal help to begin haggling on your behalf. And then, to the point of distraction—of others as well as yourself—you start to play the game.

I've played it many a time, with many a book. Never was the game over so fast as when I played it in connection with the four novels about my 5'1" P.I.

Because I knew, from the first, exactly how *Havoc* should be brought to the screen (a weekly TV series, one hour per episode), and who should play him.

I began writing the *Havoc* books (a real miniseries, at four volumes only, if ever there were one) while I worked by daylight in the advertising business in Rochester, New York. I finished the quartet while I was slaving away in the same game in Dayton, Ohio.

. . . Where the star I had in mind waltzed into town one summer, to do a turn in a stock season mounted at the downtown performance hall under the banner "Kenley Players." Kenley being an ex-Broadway hooper who wisely decided there was more money in a short season of stock in Ohio than a year-long season of making the rounds in Manhattan.

I wasn't quite smart enough, or brassy enough, to carry the book down to the stage door and try to press it into the hand of the star, but I did *send* it to him, via the semi-dependable Postal Service. I



Mickey Rooney, Jeanne Cagney and Barbara Bates in *Quicksand*, 1950.

Who else could portray a zany/fiesty 5'1" P.I. but...?

presume it was delivered to Memorial Hall in Dayton, where the star was appearing in some vehicle I've forgotten. As to any response—the silence was, as they say, deafening.

Unfortunately the star I chose—absolutely perfect; maybe I even concocted the first novel with him in

mind—never picked up one of the paperbacks and shouted to his agent, "This part I gotta play." Given the fairly limited distribution of original paperback mysteries back in the 1960s, I'm not exactly surprised that the Havoc novels failed to leap to his attention.

So the star missed a big opportunity (in my opinion). His career was none too glorious right at that time. And I missed a big opportunity to see the first Hollywood realization of one of my creations. Later, I had that opportunity several times over. But I'd have liked it with Havoc, too.

Realistically, I was little short of an idiot to think it could happen. In the 1960s—even now, actually—producers do not exactly snatch up paperback originals for film. Three novels of *The Kent Family Chronicles* were spectacular exceptions to that statement. Yet the old class distinction between hard and soft covers prevails.

On the other hand, I think my casting, and the Keystone Kops action central to the Havoc series, would have made for some great TV fare.


You may not recognize the name Fred Clark. Fred Clark was an exemplary, basset-faced character actor, long-jawed and bald, who could deliver a model slow burn whenever the director called for it. He typically played frustrated floorwalker types. I had him in mind for Havoc's nemesis, Detective Goodpasture. Fred Clark would have been a standout.

As for the star . . . surely I needn't tell you. Surely you've guessed. Who *else* could play Havoc?

No one else. Only one short, knockabout, enormously talented gamin of an actor.

Only Mickey Rooney. □

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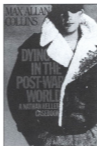
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SUSPENSE ON THE HIGH SEAS

It's high time for a retrospective of John Dickson Carr's legendary radio series "Cabin B-13" now that long lost scripts have been found.

by **Tony Medawar and James Keirans**



IN a seminal essay on the radio work of John Dickson Carr, Francis M. Nevins described, among other things, Carr's last major radio series, *Cabin B-13*, which was broadcast by CBS in the late 1940s and took its title from one of the many scripts Carr wrote for the long-running CBS show *Suspense*. Nevins was able to name fifteen titles for *Cabin B-13* (though two were, in fact, incorrect) and suggested that there might be two other episodes—titles unknown—producing a total of seventeen. At that time, however, it was assumed that the scripts were lost, and Nevins lamented:

That I have heard none of these plays and that no radio buff of my acquaintance has a tape-recording of any in his collection are matters I deeply regret. From the titles alone they sound fascinating.¹

Subsequently, a handful of recordings of shows from the series came to light, but, by 1983, Douglas G. Greene, who is currently working on what will prove to be the definitive study of Carr's life and works, was still only able to comment:

Unfortunately not much is known about *Cabin B-13*. Sound recordings of only three broadcasts have so far been discovered . . . [w]e wish that we could publish the scripts . . . but until they show up in some archive, we have to be satisfied—or frustrated—with their intriguing titles.²

Both these eminent gentlemen and the formidable army of Carr's admirers should be delighted then to learn that the scripts of the *Cabin B-13* series have at last been discovered in the Library of Congress. There is a total of, not seventeen, but 23 superb half-hour plays, all written by John Dickson Carr, who is matched only by Anthony Boucher and Ellery Queen as a master of the radio mystery.

The single series of *Cabin B-13* was broadcast in two parts, between July 5 and September 14, 1948 and between October 3, 1948 and January 2, 1949. Carr later summarized the format of the series in a letter to writer Val Gielgud, then Director of Features and Drama at the BBC:

[*Cabin B-13* was] no relation to the original show [but] a round-the-world cruise of the liner and, at each port or city of which I could remember enough, the ship's surgeon . . . tells a story of that city.³

Tony Medawar is employed by the British Civil Service and has written much about the long-forgotten giants of detective fiction for CADS and THE SHERLOCK HOLMES REVIEW. James Keirans is a Research Professor of Acarology and Curator of the U.S. National Tick Collection at Georgia Southern University. He wrote about Carr's career as a reviewer at EQMM in TAD's summer issue, Vol. 24, No. 3.

The ocean liner in the "original show," first broadcast on March 16, 1943 on *Suspense*,⁴ and for the whole of the *Cabin B-13* series, was the S. S. *Maurevania*, and, whereas the eponymous cabin had never even existed in the *Suspense* radio show, in the series it belonged to Dr. Fabian, the ship's surgeon, played for most of the series by the late Arnold Moss,⁵ a CBS stalwart who had appeared in several *Suspense* shows by Carr. *Cabin B-13* was directed throughout by John Dietz and edited by Charles S. Monroe, with incidental music by Merle Kendrick. The stories were presented in a variation on the format of *Suspense*, with Dr. Fabian acting always as narrator and usually as detective. Each program began with a ship's horn sounding three times, followed by a burst of suitably atmospheric music, over which the announcer intoned the series' title and introduced the story:

From his notebooks of the strange and sinister, Dr. Fabian brings you tonight's tale of [title], another great tale of mystery and murder written by the world-famous bestseller mystery author John Dickson Carr.

This was followed by another musical flourish, and then the play itself commenced. When the first tale in the series was broadcast, it was preceded by a brief announcement:

These Dr. Fabian stories are all newly written for you by Mr. Carr, and have not appeared before on the air or in printed form.

But that was untrue, for, as will be seen, many of the plays had their origins in earlier radio plays and short stories by Carr. Some, in fact, were adapted from scripts of shows already broadcast on *Suspense* and on the BBC in the celebrated *Appointment with Fear* series which Carr had created in 1943.

Cabin B-13 began at 8:30 P.M. on July 5, 1948 with "A Razor in Fleet Street." Like the next eight plays in the series, this was an original mystery, though it is strongly reminiscent of "The Vanishing of Vaudrey," a Father Brown story by G. K. Chesterton, whose work was, of course, a major influence on Carr—to the extent that his principal detective, the gargantuan Dr. Gideon Fell, is based on Chesterton himself. "A Razor in Fleet Street" is set shortly before the Second World War in London, where Bill Leslie, an American diplomat *en route* to a new posting in Lisbon, and his wife Brenda are staying. Chief Inspector Radford of the CID calls on the couple and shows them a photograph of Bill, taken as he disembarked from the *Maurevania* at Southampton. It seems that Bill looks like "Flash" Morgan, a notorious bank robber renowned for his expertise with a razor. Radford advises the American not to leave the hotel for his own safety, but, needless to say, he does . . . with fatal results. Carr later revised the script into "an entertainment in four



The Carr family lived in this house on Beach Avenue in Mamaroneck, New York, from 1958-1960.

tableaux," and, as "Flight from Fleet Street," it was published in Issue 14 of the *London Mystery Magazine* dated February-March 1952.

The second play, broadcast on July 12, was "The Man Who Couldn't Be Photographed," an original variation on a classic mystery theme.⁶ The principal feature of Carr's play is a curious and little-known medical phenomenon gleaned from the pages of Dr. Hans Gross's invaluable *System der Kriminalistik* (1904)—"the most complete textbook on crime ever compiled" as Carr called it,⁷ and which, in its English translation, was a rich source of ideas for him and his contemporaries. The port of call this time is Cherbourg, though the story itself is set in Paris. It is Summer 1933, and handsome movie star Bruce Ransom⁸ arrives in Paris, accompanied by Nita Ross, his secretary and lover. But the lovers quarrel, and Nita stabs Ransom in the arm with a dart, screaming that he will never face a camera again and then shooting herself. The tragedy has predictably little effect on the actor, who continues with his schedule as planned and, the next day, goes to a photographer. But something goes wrong with the developing, and the photographer refuses to make a second attempt. It is the same story at every photographer he visits. Finally, an old friend agrees to take his picture, and the drama moves into its horrifying final phase. Carr slightly adapted the script for the BBC, and, under

the same title, it was broadcast on July 26, 1955 as the first play in what would be the last series of *Appointment with Fear*.⁹

"Death Has Four Faces," broadcast on July 19, 1948, has nothing in common with Carr's earlier radio play of the same title.¹⁰ The *Maurevania* is cruising in the Bay of Biscay, but the story is set in the Midlands city of Birchespool. Stephen West, a celebrated Canadian playwright and a former RAF pilot, arrives at Birchespool, where he is almost immediately arrested by a local police superintendent who mistakes him for a wanted criminal. West is taken to a local hotel which, coincidentally, his actress fiancée Diana Borden is visiting; and, when he apparently ignores her, she decides to throw him over for another long-time admirer, Hubert Lodge, a famous Harley Street psychologist. The course of true love never runs smoothly, but is everything what it seems or is someone directing the action behind the scenes?

According to the script of "Death Has Four Faces," it was to have been followed by "The Witch of the Low Tide," which would be set in Lisbon. In fact, the next play, broadcast on July 26, was set in Lisbon but was entitled "The Blindfolded Knife-thrower."¹¹ The story takes place in 1929 and begins when Dr. Fabian discovers pretty Madeleine Lane rifling his medical supplies in search of morphine.



Carr wrote for Cabin B-13 from July 1948 to January 1949.

The girl protests that the drug is for her mother, but, to his astonishment, Fabian later learns that her mother has in fact committed suicide by drinking acid some ten years earlier. The mystery deepens when Madeleine later claims that the ghost of her dead mother has suddenly "appeared" within her hotel room, the only entrance to which was guarded by her fiancé. Is the girl mad or simply deceitful—or are there such things as ghosts? The eponymous knife-thrower has a comparatively minor role in the play, and it is interesting to note that a knife-thrower also appears—for much the same, largely allegorical, purpose—in another of Carr's radio plays, "He Who Whispers," broadcast on *Appointment with Fear* on November 2, 1944.¹²

The means by which the ghost of Madeleine Lane's mother appears and disappears within the guarded room in "The Blindfolded Knife-thrower" later featured in the Sir Henry Merrivale novel *Night at the Mocking Widow* (1950). Carr was extraordinarily adept at taking a particular device and, by changing the setting and completely restructuring the mystery, managing repeatedly to deceive an audience who simply ought to have been alert to such duplicity. In recycling plot devices, Carr was adopting one of the oldest rules of magic—that the secret of a successful trick is not in the trick itself but in its presentation. Carr was deeply interested in all aspects of the world

of magic and was fascinated by the way in which magicians managed to bring about apparent impossibilities by comparatively simple means:

Would you believe that a dismembered body could put itself together and walk off the stage? Or a lady could disappear in full lights and in full sight of the audience? Or a severed hand could play dominoes? Such things could be done and were done.¹³

Many of Carr's mysteries incorporate elements of magic, in particular several of the stories in the collection *The Department of Queer Complaints* (1940):

"The New Invisible Man" wherein a mystery is created on the basis of Stodare's Sphinx illusion. Another story ["Error at Daybreak"] in the same book divulges the technique for stopping the pulse.¹⁴

In *The Gilded Man* (1942), incidentally based on an idea first used in the Gideon Fell short story "A Guest in the House,"¹⁵ Sir Henry Merrivale impersonates a magician—and magicians of one kind or another also appear in *The Three Coffins* (1935), *The Red Widow Murders* (1935), *Below Suspicion* (1949), and *He Wouldn't Kill Patience* (1944).¹⁶ Magic is also featured in *A Graveyard to Let* (1949), which, while not one of Carr's most ingenious locked-room problems, is nevertheless interesting for its setting, the fictitious town of Maralarch. This name was



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devised by merging the names of two real towns in Westchester County, N.Y., Larchmont and its neighbor Mamaroneck, where the Carrs had settled in 1948, near to fellow writers Fred Dannay, one half of Ellery Queen, and Clayton Rawson, to whom *A Graveyard to Let* is dedicated, "in honour of those two fine arts: Friendship and Magic."

"No Useless Coffin," broadcast on August 2, 1948, is set on Gibraltar. It is a September day in 1938, and Cynthia Drew¹⁷ and her fiancé Captain Jim Bartlett relate to Dr. Fabian the peculiar story of Victoria Fraser, who, one night some years before, disappeared from within a cottage whose doors and windows were locked. Later that day, Dr. Fabian accompanies Victoria and the couple to the same cottage, and, astonishingly, history repeats itself as Victoria Fraser inexplicably vanishes once again. The Carr enthusiast will already have realized that "No Useless Coffin" was adapted from one of his most

Carr was adept at taking a particular device and, by changing the setting and restructuring the mystery, managing repeatedly to deceive his audience.



famous short stories, the Sir Henry Merrivale mystery "The House in Goblin Wood," first published simultaneously in November 1947 in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* and *The Strand*.

The next episode, "The Nine Black Reasons," broadcast on August 9, is set in 1936. The story begins in the steambath of the Hotel of the Grand Monarch in Marseilles, where Frank Bentley, suffering from a hangover, is talking with another man. Suddenly they discover that there is a third man in the bath—a dead man! The only clue to his identity, attached by a chain to his wrist, is a small, empty leather pouch. But, when Bentley's back is turned, the other man vanishes, leaving Bentley to report the murder. Several days later, he meets an old friend, Helen Parker, and learns that her father was recently killed by a man from whom he had simply asked directions. M'sieu Bo, the local *jugé d'instruction*, finds himself with two bodies and one common factor—Frank Bentley. Fortunately, Dr. Fabian is on hand to deduce the true solution.

In "The Count of Monte Carlo,"¹⁸ broadcast on August 16, the *Maurevania* has docked at Nice,

where Barton Stevens and his fiancée Janet unexpectedly find themselves staying in the same part of the world as Dolores, one of Bart's old flames, who is now engaged to Jean Ravelle, a wealthy cosmetics magnate. Ravelle learns that Barton and his former love intend to meet up at Dolores's cliff-top villa, and so he secretly arranges for Janet to learn of her fiancé's infidelity. Janet later goes to the villa and threatens to kill her rival unless she leaves Bart alone. Dolores openly challenges Janet to push her over the balustrade on the balcony, but Bart is spying on the women and, when Janet says that she *is* going to kill Dolores, he suddenly appears as, at almost the same moment, Dolores plummets backward down to the rocks below. Who pushed her? Janet thinks she did; Ravelle thinks it was Bart; and Bart does not know who did. He flees back to Nice, where he meets Dr. Fabian, who deduces an utterly unexpected solution. The cause of Dolores's death also featured in the Dr. Fell novel *In Spite of Thunder* (1960).

"Below Suspicion," broadcast on August 23, is set in the summer of 1928. Two passengers on the *Maurevania*, stage star Ralph Garrett and his new wife Valerie Blake, leave the ship in a launch and sail to their small house on the Italian coast. But, within a year, the marriage is effectively over, for Ralph has fallen in love with his secretary. Valerie writes to a number of her oldest friends, among them Bob Trevor, the South African captain of the *Maurevania*, asking them to take her away from her boorish husband. Not long after Trevor and the others arrive at the Garretts' house, they are threatened with a gun by Ralph. The following day, Valerie is found strangled, her body lying on a huge rock shaped like an armchair. The tide is out, and there are no footprints other than her own anywhere near the rock. Surprisingly, Valerie's murder is not solved by Fabian but by Trevor, whose memories of his homeland help him to arrive at the crime's solution. Carr later reused the central features of the play in "King Arthur's Chair," a Gideon Fell short story first published in the British magazine *Lilliput* in August 1957.

Other than its title, "Below Suspicion" has nothing in common with the 1949 Dr. Fell novel, which incorporates elements of the late-nineteenth-century Bravo murder case. In addition to Dr. Fell, the novel features another of Carr's minor sleuths, the arrogant but brilliant Irish barrister, Patrick Butler, K.C. who later appeared alone in *Patrick Butler for the Defense* (1956). In fact, Butler was lifted straight out of one of G. K. Chesterton's Father Brown stories, "The Man in the Passage":

The prisoner was defended by Mr. Patrick Butler, K.C., who was mistaken for a mere *flâneur* by those who misunderstood the Irish character—and those who had not been examined by him.

The next play in *Cabin-13* was broadcast at a new



Each program began with a ship's horn sounding three times, followed by atmospheric music as the announcer spoke these lines: "From his notebooks of the strange and sinister, Dr. Fabian brings you tonight's tale..."

time, 10:00 P.M., and with a new actor playing Dr. Fabian. Alan Hewitt, another CBS regular, took Arnold Moss's place for this and the following two broadcasts while Moss worked on a film role. In "The Power of Darkness,"¹⁹ broadcast on August 31, 1948, Carr took one of the most challenging locked-room gambits—the vanishing house—and, as Douglas Greene has already observed, turned it inside out by making the house the only thing that didn't vanish!

It is 1937, and the *Maurevania* has called at Naples. Further inland at Rome, Alan, a rich young historian, is invited to the villa of Bianca di Carpi, Alan is eager to go, as the villa is said to be haunted by the ghost of the cruel Duke Nicolo Orsini, who was murdered by his own servants. Ruth, Alan's fiancée, suspects a romantic liaison with the exotic Signora di Carpi and so she agrees to accompany him. Not long after they arrive at the villa, the Signora leads them from the lounge to her study and shows them the Duke's talisman, a gold coin, which held some mysterious significance for him—so much so that, though mortally wounded, he slithered back to the house through the fields to retrieve it, only to die scurrying at the window. When the party returns to the lounge, the view from the windows has completely altered: where there were suburbs are now fields, and someone or something is crawling toward

the window. As the window shatters, Ruth faints, and, when she comes to, she finds that everyone else has disappeared! Panic-stricken, she flees from the villa and goes straight to Dr. Fabian. Carr later adapted the script for *Appointment with Fear*, and it was broadcast on August 23, 1955 as "The Villa of the Damned."²⁰

"The Footprint in the Sky," broadcast on September 7, 1948, was adapted from "The Gong Cried Murder," an *Appointment with Fear* play of December 14, 1944. The *Maurevania* is three days out of Southampton, and Marcia Tate, the passenger in Cabin C-24, is suffering from amnesia; she thinks it is twelve months earlier, and she wants to know why she has not been hanged for murder! Dr. Fabian injects her with a truth serum, and, as Marcia sinks into delirium, she remembers the previous Christmas when she was staying in Brent, a village near Richmond, about ten miles from London. Her promising romance with Ted Benson was imperiled by her former lover Barry Stoner, who threatened to show Ted a series of letters written to him by Marcia. One evening, while the snow was falling, she had an angry and unproductive exchange with Barry, and, on the next morning, she awoke to find her shoes beside the bed, their soles wet from having been worn outside. She soon learned that Ted had been attacked in the coach house and that there was only one set of

footprints in the snow leading to the coach house—hers. Interestingly, in the second Sir Henry Merrivale novel, *The White Priory Murders* (1934), another Marcia Tait [sic] is found dead in a folly which is surrounded on all sides either by ice or unmarked snow; but the explanation of that apparent miracle is completely different to that in "The Footprint in the Sky."

In fact, the source of both "The Footprint in the Sky" and "The Gong Cried Murder" is Carr's "Clue in the Snow," first published in *The Strand* in January 1940. This is one of only nine stories about the work of the Department of Queer Complaints, a little-known part of Scotland Yard and a possible near-relative to G. K. Chesterton's *Club of Queer Trades*. Carr once acknowledged that another of his detectives, Colonel Marquis of the novella "The Third Bullet," (1937), was "probably a mental fore-runner of Colonel March."²¹ It is possible, therefore, that March's name may have been inspired by Melville Davison Post's Sir Henry Marquis, also of Scotland Yard. Carr was a great admirer of Post's carefully structured mysteries,²² and he may also have had Post's detective in mind when he created Sir Henry Merrivale.

Carr devised a new plot for the next play in the series, "The Man with the Iron Chest," broadcast on September 14. Joyce Allison has sailed out to Athens to meet her new husband Don. During a romantic carriage-ride, they witness a robbery—uncut

gemstones stolen by a thief who carries away his booty in a heavy iron chest. The police know nothing about the criminal other than that he must be incredibly strong given the weight of one of the chests which he had left behind him at the scene of an earlier robbery. Joyce believes she could identify the man and describes him to the police. She and Don think no more of the matter, but, the next day, when Joyce goes to view an apartment, she is amazed to discover the thief calmly counting out cut stones from the chest, which is lying in front of him on a velvet-covered desk. The police are summoned and apprehend the man, but, despite a thorough search of the flat, they are unable to find any trace of the mysterious chest. As in "Below Suspicion," the mystery is not solved by Dr. Fabian, and, on this occasion, it is the Athens police who deduce the criminal's secret. This story formed the basis of the Sir Henry Merrivale novel *Behind the Crimson Blind* (1952), which is set in Tangier.

At the end of "The Man with the Iron Chest," it was announced that *Cabin B-13* would be off the air for two weeks and resume with "The Curse of the Bronze Lamp." When the series returned on October 3, 1948 at its old time of 8:30 P.M., however, it was with "The Street of Seven Daggers"—an alliterative title which recalls one of Carr's earliest short stories, "The Inn of the Seven Swords," published in April 1927 in *The Haverfordian*, Carr's college magazine. Nonetheless, the plot of the radio play originated in another Colonel March short story, "The Silver Curtain," first published in *The Strand* in August 1939—and this story had already been used by Carr as the basis for an *Appointment with Fear* script, "Death Has Four Faces." The central device also featured in the Gideon Fell novel *Panic in Box C* (1966).

"The Street of Seven Daggers" is set in Cairo in 1934. Aboard the *Maurevania* when it docks at Alexandria is the American shipping tycoon Edmund G. Parrish, his daughter Betty, and his younger brother Gerald. Betty Parrish believes, without knowing why, that her father's life is in mortal danger. That evening, there is a masquerade with fireworks at the hotel where the Parrishes are staying. Edmund Parrish, dressed as a clown, boasts to Fabian, now played once more by Arnold Moss, that his hobby is debunking the supernatural and that he intends to disprove the legend that no one can walk alone through the Street of Daggers after midnight and live. And so, at midnight, Fabian and Betty Parrish watch her father walk into the darkened street—and before he has traveled twenty yards, the girl's nightmare has become reality. Her father is found dead, with a knife in his back. No one has come near him; no one could have thrown the knife at him; no one could have killed him . . . yet somebody did.

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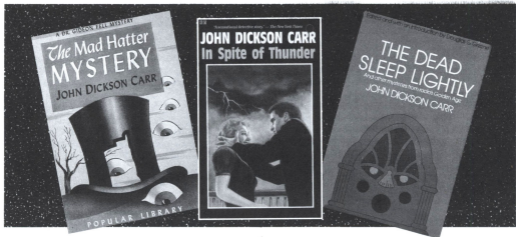
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In the works of John Dickson Carr, the impossible is always possible. In *The Three Coffins* (1935) and elsewhere, the murderer must be able to fly; in *The Reader Is Warned* (1939) and *The Demoniacs* (1962), he created methods of murder which, at least initially, appear to leave no trace; in *My Late Wives* (1946) must be deduced a means of disposing of bodies, again seemingly without a trace; and in several books, most brilliantly in *It Walks By Night* (1930), the murderer is apparently invisible. Carr later cheerfully confessed:

That I, of all people, should complain of improbable solutions would be like Satan rebuking sin or St. Vitus objecting to the twist.²³

But only on two occasions did he put forward solutions that stepped over the boundaries of possibility, and even then, brilliantly so. James Kingman has convincingly shown that Carr's "real" solution in *The Crooked Hinge* (1938) is physically impossible;²⁴ and in *The Burning Court* (1937), Carr first offered a practical solution and then, with consummate artistry, turned that on its head by proffering a hint, sufficient to chill the blood, that the reality was darker still. . .

The next three plays were all original mysteries. The first, broadcast on October 10, 1948, was "The Dancer from Stamboul," set in 1923 in Port Said. The story begins with a chance encounter between Dr. Fabian and Jim Canfield, a New York policeman on the track of Lydia White, a woman wanted in America on a triple charge of cyanide poisoning. Unfortunately, Canfield has no reliable description of the woman save for the fact that she has a small scar above one of her eyebrows. At a nightclub, they meet Almah, an exotic dancer who, Dr. Fabian notes, has a scar in the correct place. At the club,

they also meet the dancer's maid and her suitors, Baron Carlo da Scali and Rene Moreau, a fencing master, who have a bitter confrontation in front of Canfield and Fabian. A duel is arranged for the following day at Moreau's fencing salon, where there will be a further death before Fabian unmasks the murderous Lydia White.²⁵ Carr apparently intended that the next play in the series would be called "Four Ways to Danger," but, on the only surviving copy of the script, the title has been changed to "Death in the Desert," perhaps because of the former's similarity to "Death Has Four Faces."

"Death in the Desert," broadcast on October 17, was a thriller rather than a mystery, though knowledgeable Carr enthusiasts will detect a connection with the plot of his historical novel *Papa La-bas* (1969). On board the *Maurevania*, Dr. Fabian tells a story about the *Joy-bringer*, a paddle-wheel cruise ship sailing up the Nile between Asouan and Wadi Halfa in the winter of 1895. Aboard the ship are a British couple, Colonel William Legget and his wife Constance; Professor Bauer, a German; Emily Conroy and her niece Louise; and Denis Brent, an ex-major who has been court-martialed and cashiered from the Indian Army for cowardice. A romance blossoms between Denis and Louis Conroy, but it soon transpires that there is a spy on board attempting to steal a new version of the Maxim gun that Brent has perfected. Denis and Louise leave the ship and meet up with Comus, a Nubian who was at school with Denis. Comus leads them to an abandoned church in a deserted army camp, where there is a deadly confrontation with the spy.²⁶

"The Island of Coffins," broadcast on October 24, is not, as Carr enthusiasts might suspect from the title, a re-working of the central device of the Gideon Fell novel *The Sleeping Sphinx* (1947) but a completely original mystery, set in the second half of 1945. The *Maurevania* receives an SOS signal from

the mysterious Hadar Island, off the coast of Abyssinia. Fabian goes to the island and is met by a young girl called Janice, who leads Fabian to the solitary homestead, where there are three coffins on the porch—a possibly inconspicuous reference to his most celebrated novel. Incredibly, everyone on the island believes that the date is November 12, 1920. The matriarch of the family, Henrietta Almak, confides to Fabian that she shot herself in the arm to prevent her grandson Harry from leaving the island, but, when Fabian meets Harry, he notes with some surprise that he has a nasty powder burn on the back of his hand, implying that it is he who has fired the pistol. Fabian realizes that everything is not what it seems and eventually uncovers the truth.

The most curious feature of the play—the time slip suffered by the inhabitants of the island—is one of the earliest occasions on which Carr based an idea upon temporal disorientation. In three later novels, *The Devil in Velvet* (1951), *Fear Is the Same* (1956), and *Fire, Burn!* (1957), the hero is bodily transported out of the present and backward in time—in one case by the devil himself. Perhaps in this way, Carr showed his personal dissatisfaction with the present and his wish, shared by so many, for all to be as it had been in the halcyon years between the wars, when Hitler had yet to cast his shadow on the world. So far as Carr was concerned, post-war British politics were intolerable, and he was equally uncomfortable with life in the United States. Thus, dismissing the “damnation of progress,”²⁷ he turned his back, almost completely, on the contemporary detective story and set the majority of his post-war novels in earlier, more congenial times.

The sole surviving copy of the script of “The Island of Coffins” states that the next play in the series was to have been “The Man Eaters.” In fact, the next play, broadcast on October 31 at a new time, 10:30 P.M., was a repeat broadcast of “The Man Who Couldn’t Be Photographed,” first heard on July 12. The next new story was broadcast on November 7, 1948, and, with it, the *Maurevania* ceased to be an integral part of the program and the strict round-the-world cruise format was abandoned. “The Most Respectable Murder” is set in Paris, where Dr. Fabian is attending a production of *Pagliacci* accompanied by Professor Michel Vautrelle, the Professor’s wife Ninette, and Charles d’Arville, Ninette’s admirer. After the opera, Ninette tells her husband that she wants a divorce so she can marry Charles. Michel counters this by declaring that he wishes to marry a singer, Claudine Duclos. The next day, Vautrelle and Fabian decide to visit Claudine, but they arrive to find that all the doors and windows of the villa are locked from the inside. When they eventually gain entry, they discover that the young singer has been killed, apparently by a murderer who can walk through walls. The locked room device in this play

later featured in the Gideon Fell novel *The Dead Man’s Knock* (1958), a title taken from the Reverend Richard Harris Barham’s excellent *The Ingoldsby Legends* (1840–47). Carr specialists will also detect a nominal connection between “The Most Respectable Murder” and Carr’s first novel *It Walks by Night* (1930), written—incredibly—when Carr was only 23 years old.

The next play, broadcast on November 14, was “The Curse of the Bronze Lamp,” adapted from another radio play of the same title, which had been aired on *Appointment with Fear* on December 7, 1944. The story begins in Cairo, where a small group of British archaeologists have begun excavations at the site of an important tomb. But, as one among the party, Lady Helen Loring, prepares to return to England, taking with her a bronze lamp recovered from the tomb, a sinister Egyptian, Alim Bey, warns that, if she insists on “stealing” the lamp, she will be blown to dust as if she had never existed. When Lady Helen subsequently disappears after taking only a few steps into her ancestral home, it seems as if the mysterious curse has indeed come true. “The Curse of the Bronze Lamp” is, of course, basically a reworking of a device used in “The Blast of the Book,” one of G. K. Chesterton’s most famous Father Brown short stories, and there is also some similarity with Carr’s original *Cabin B-13* radio play. Carr later expanded “The Curse of the Bronze Lamp,” keeping that title for the American edition only, into a Sir Henry Merrivale novel, published in 1945. H.M., or “the Old Man” as he prefers to be called, is Carr’s other great detective, in every way the equal of Dr. Gideon Fell. In his first case, *The Plague Court Murders* (1934), he is plainly based on Mycroft Holmes, Sherlock’s elder brother, but, by the later books, he has taken on some of the attributes of Sir Winston Churchill—a characterization taken to extremes in *The Cavalier’s Cup* (1953), wherein it is revealed that Lady Merrivale’s first name is Clemmie.

According to the script of “The Curse of the Bronze Lamp,” the next in the series was to have been “The Dead Man’s Knock,” but, in fact, the next play, broadcast on November 21, was “Lair of the Devil Fish,” originally written for the BBC and broadcast on *Appointment with Fear* on December 21, 1944. The story is set aboard a salvage vessel off the south-eastern coast of Cuba. On board the vessel is “Doc” Trencher, a diver, his employer Edmund Stanley, and Stanley’s daughter Sally and her husband Dick Lawrence. The stationary vessel inevitably attracts the attention of the owner of the bay, Señor Leon Romero, who rows out to the vessel. Stanley explains that he has official sanction from the Cuban government to dive in the hope of locating the last resting place of one Gonzales, a sadistic plantation owner known as the “Red Devil,” who amassed a fortune in silver dollars at the end of the last century. Shortly

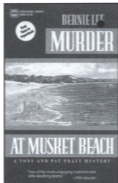
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Murder checks into the luxurious Hotel Beaumont, leaving the mutilated body of a teenage boy as a deposit. Somewhere on the celebrated suspect list—which includes a pop idol, a centerfold model and a soft-porn king—is the name of the killer. Manager Pierre Chambrun will need all his legendary tact and brilliance to solve the latest mystery from Mystery Writers of America Grand Master Hugh Pentecost.

"Having death invade the well-oiled workings of a luxury hotel is grisly and effective."
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**NOVEMBER 1991
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Writing murder mysteries in your spare time is one thing—stumbling across one on the beach is quite another. Tony Pratt is determined to put his money where his imagination is by trapping the killer of Musket Beach's mayor—using wife Pat as bait. . . . An engaging new husband-and-wife sleuthing team make their debut in Portland copywriter Bernie Lee's first novel.

"The Pratts are likeable, believable and will certainly return."
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**DECEMBER 1991
DEADLY PROMISE**
by Mignon F. Ballard

It's Christmas in Harmony, Georgia, but not everyone is feeling festive. Someone is poisoning the fruitcake and terrorizing the woods with a shotgun. Molly Stonehouse is in town to find out who murdered her husband—if the killer doesn't find her first. . . . Southern Gothic overtones and a hint of the supernatural flavor South Carolina author Mignon F. Ballard's third mystery.

"Ballard is a superb storyteller."
—Charlotte Observer



WORLDWIDE MYSTERY—CRIMES WORTH INVESTIGATING



CBS stalwart Arnold Moss—later in his career in an episode from *Star Trek*—played Dr. Fabian on *Cabin B-13*.

after the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Gonzales was drowned, along with his henchman Pedro, whom he tried to double-cross, as the boat in which he was trying to escape was pulled under by a giant squid. When the dive begins, the wreck of Gonzales's boat is not the only thing to be discovered in the black waters of the bay.

For the next play, "The Dead Man's Knock," broadcast on November 28, the setting was changed to Switzerland. The play is not, as understandably suggested by Francis Nevins, the original of the 1958 Gideon Fell novel of that title, nor does it have anything in common with the *Appointment with Fear* play of this title first broadcast on August 9, 1955. In fact, it was adapted from another *Appointment with Fear* play, "The Room of the Suicides," broadcast on January 20, 1944. It is winter 1946, and Mary Hayes, a writer of books on actual crimes, is staying at the Inn of the Snowman, a hotel on a mountainside not far from San Moritz. On several occasions, she hears a curious tapping against the wall of her room—and another guest, Jeff Randall, tells her that a man was murdered in her room and suggests that, as a result, it might be haunted. Randall has his own reason for being at the inn: he is guarding an ailing atomic-energy scientist who is believed to be the intended target of a Nazi agent, Baron Carmer. Unfortunately, Randall has no idea what Carmer looks like; he might be one of the guests at the hotel or possibly one of the staff. As will be expected, the explanation of

the ghostly noises in Mary Hayes's room and the quest for the assassin are not exactly unconnected.

The principal features of "The Dead Man's Knock" are vaguely reminiscent of *Number 13*, one of the all too few ghost stories by that master of the genre, M. R. James, whose "sophisticated" horrors were greatly admired by Carr:

Dr. James never "cracks the whip or goads the adjective," but terror comes as lightly as a face suddenly poked round a corner. The face made of crumpled linen in *Oh Whistle and I'll Come to You My Lad*; the hopping thing dodging through the woods in *Casting the Runes*; the court room scene in *Martin's Close*; all these belong to a twilight land where something may be lurking just outside your own door at this moment.²⁷

Carr himself also wrote several supernatural stories, perhaps the most successful being the excellent "Blind Man's Hood," a "tour-de-force of tremendous power, worthy of M. R. James himself,"²⁸ first published in the Christmas 1937 issue of *The Sketch*. It is a simple but utterly terrifying ghost story constructed around an ingenious explanation of the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the gruesome death of Rose Harsent at Peasanhall in 1902.¹⁶

The next play in the *Cabin B-13* series, "The Man with Two Heads," broadcast on December 5, is also a supernatural mystery. Carr again adapted an *Appointment with Fear* script, one that had been aired under the same title on November 6, 1945. The central idea, of a man who returns from a journey overseas to discover that his death has been reported in the newspapers, is borrowed from a plot first used by Carr over twenty years earlier in the short story "The Legend of the Cane in the Dark," published in *The Haverfordian* in 1927. In the intervening years, he had used the plot as the basis of two short stories: "The Man Who Was Dead," published in *Dime Mystery* (May 1935), and "New Murders for Old," published in the Christmas 1939 issue of the prestigious *Illustrated London News*. The setting for the *Cabin B-13* play, as in *Appointment with Fear*, is London, and most of the story takes place on the top deck of a number eight bus going to Elgin Road, Maida Vale. Dr. Fabian finds himself in conversation with Leonard Wade, the well-known thriller writer—a somewhat surprising encounter, as Fabian's newspaper carries a report of Wade's suicide earlier that day. Evidently, Wade has spent the last twelve months in America, recuperating from overwork, and only returned to London the previous evening. When he arrived at his house in Maida Vale and walked up the path to the door, he saw, through the window of his study, the body of a man sprawled across a desk—a man who looked uncomfortably like himself. Fabian persuades the bewildered writer to tell him everything that has happened over the last year, and gradually a sinister explanation of the facts becomes clear.

The final three plays were all adapted from earlier *Suspense* scripts. The first was "The Bride Vanishes," broadcast on December 12 and adapted from a play first aired on December 1, 1945. Carr had also adapted the play for the BBC as an *Appointment with Fear* of September 21, 1943 and September 11, 1945, as "Into Thin Air." The story re-works a device first used by G. K. Chesterton in the Father Brown story "The Miracle of Moon Crescent." Tom and Lucy Courtenay disembark from the *Maurevania* at Naples and take a villa for only \$25 monthly. On the journey, however, Lucy notices that everyone appears to be looking at her strangely, even fellow American Harry Granger, who lives on the isle. A boatman tells the Courtenays that Lucy looks exactly like Josephine Adams, a woman who, two or three years earlier, stepped out onto the balcony of her villa on Capri and simply disappeared, never to be seen again. The door to the balcony was under constant surveillance, and she could not have jumped, as there was no sound of a splash. Needless to say, the Courtenays have rented the same villa, which is now reputed to be haunted, accounting for the extraordinarily low

**Carr was immensely
fascinated by true crime
and throughout his novels
there are many references
to real murderers—even
Jack the Ripper.**



rent. An Englishman on the island warns that he believes Josephine Adams was murdered by a paranoiac who probably still lives on the island. Granger too warns Lucy not to go out onto the balcony, but both men are ignored, and, soon after the Courtenays arrive at the villa, Lucy too disappears after stepping out onto the balcony. A fatal balcony also features in the Gideon Fell novel *In Spite of Thunder* (1960), though the eventual explanation of the circumstances is quite different.

The next play, broadcast on December 19, was "Till Death Do Us Part." This was not adapted from the 1944 Gideon Fell novel of the same title³¹ but from an old *Suspense* script of the same name, first presented on December 15, 1942, and in which the central character had been memorably portrayed by Peter Lorre. The setting is England and a snug, book-lined room in the isolated Sussex cottage of Erwin Krafft, a stout, middle-aged math professor reminiscent of Dr. Fell. As Krafft prepares drinks for

himself and his young wife Cynthia, he berates her about the village gossip that has linked her name with that of Dr. James Craig, a young American. Cynthia protests that there is no substance to these rumors, and, in a flashback sequence, the audience learns that, though strongly attracted to the American, she has resisted his advances and stayed loyal to her husband. Despite her protests and the fact that Craig is in any case due to return to the United States the next day, Krafft declares that he has poisoned both their drinks: "If I can't have you . . . nobody will!"³² But the poison appears to take more rapid effect on the professor than his wife, and, choking, he falls to the floor. Cynthia flees from the cottage, her one chance to reach the village infirmary before she succumbs. Carr had also already adapted the original script for *Appointment with Fear*, and it was broadcast on November 11, 1943 and December 25, 1945 under the revelatory title "The Man Who Died Twice."

"The Sleep of Death," aired on December 26, 1948, was adapted from "The Devil's Saint," first presented on *Suspense* on January 19, 1943, again with Peter Lorre in the leading role. Carr also adapted the story for *Appointment with Fear*, and, under the *Suspense* title, it was broadcast by the BBC on October 21, 1943. Ned Whiteford, attached to the American Embassy in Paris, meets a beautiful girl, Ileana Kohary, at the French president's costume ball. Although he has only known her for a matter of weeks, Whiteford is set on marriage, and, when the girl's sinister uncle, Count Stephen Kohary, states that such a union would be impossible, Ned refuses to take no for an answer. The Count then invites the young American to his chateau in Touraine and promises that he will allow the marriage if Ned will stay one night in the Tapestry Room, a circular room high in a tower of the chateau that, some centuries ago, witnessed the torture and death of one of the Count's ancestors on a charge of witchcraft. More recently, the Bishop of Tours spent a night in the room but was found dead on the following morning with nothing to show how he had died. Perhaps unwisely, Ned Whiteford accepts the challenge. The method by which the Bishop was murdered without leaving a trace also featured in "The Adventure of the Gold Hunter," a Sherlock Holmes pastiche co-written with Adrian Conan Doyle and first published in *Collier's* on May 30, 1953. It has also been proposed as a possible explanation of the mysterious, factual death of Edwin Bartlett, of whose murder his wife Adelaide was acquitted in 1886.³³

John Dickson Carr was immensely knowledgeable on the history of crime and owned an extensive collection of books on the subject. Throughout his novels, there are many references to murderers, among them Constance Kent, Courvoisier, Dr. Neill Cream, and even Jack the Ripper. Roger Bewlay, the

multiple uxoricide unmasked by Sir Henry Merrivale in *My Late Wives* (1946), was inspired by Landru, the French Bluebeard. *The Problem of the Green Capsule* (1939) incorporates some of the facts in the case of the poisoner Christina Edmunds, and the name of H. H. Longwood, the architect of Longwood House in *The Man Who Could Not Shudder* (1940), is clearly, given certain key features of the plot, a wry pun on that of the psychopathic mass murderer H. H. Holmes. Carr wrote only one full-length study of a real-life murder, *The Murder of Sir Edmund Godfrey* (1936), a seventeenth-century killing which G. K. Chesterton once described as "my favorite murder in real life."³⁴ Carr's only other venture into the study of actual crimes is "Mystery of the Florodora Girl," a short, uncollected item published in *The Star* on July 30, 1937, wherein he suggested a possible solution to the death of "Caesar" Young, a racecourse gambler shot dead in a hansom cab in 1902.

Eventually, the strain of being tied to a regular commitment for *Cabin B-13* became too much for Carr, and, as he later told Val Gielgud:

What happened was what always happens. I overestimated my stamina in keeping going indefinitely . . . and I did pretty well, keeping up a new story a week for well over six

months [sic], squarely to the two week ahead deadline. But I was down for the count. This did not particularly please CBS who had a sponsor on the hook. There were a number of "conferences," which means that people tear their hair and bang the table. I pointed out that I was willing to go on, but the story-quality would drop, the rating follow it, and the sponsor follow that.³⁵

CBS reluctantly accepted Carr's decision, and so, on January 2, 1949, *Cabin B-13* concluded with a re-broadcast of an earlier episode, "The Dancer from Stamboul." At the end of the show, an announcer stated:

Next week at this time, over many of these same CBS stations, you will hear the program, *It Pays To Be Ignorant*.



Thereafter, *Cabin B-13* disappeared from the airwaves and passed into radio legend, but John Dickson Carr was far from finished with the scripts and the concept behind *Cabin B-13*. In 1949, he approached the BBC with a proposal that he revise some of the scripts into the old *Appointment with Fear* format by identifying the Man in Black as Dr. Fabian. In Carr's words: "He's got to have some kind of background and that may be as good as any."³⁶ Gielgud was initially very optimistic and suggested that Carr submit some sample scripts to Martyn C. Webster, who, jointly with Carr, had produced all of the old *Appointment with Fear* episodes. Carr duly submitted "A Razor in Fleet Street," "The Man Who Couldn't Be Photographed," "The Count of Monte Carlo," "The Power of Darkness," "Death Has Four Faces," "Below Suspicion," "The Nine Black Reasons," "The Street of the [sic] Seven Daggers," "The Blindfolded Knife-thrower," "The Dancer from Stamboul," "No Useless Coffin," and "The Man with the Iron Chest." But Webster was far from pleased and scathingly dismissed the scripts as "crude and . . . well below standard,"³⁷ and the proposed new series was abandoned. On reading the scripts, the depth of Webster's criticism is very hard to fathom.

Five years later, in December 1954, Carr contacted

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the BBC again and once more suggested a revival of *Appointment with Fear*. He visited Gielgud, and they discussed several plot outlines, some of which were based on *Cabin B-13* originals. Gielgud disliked two almost immediately, one of which was adapted from "Death in the Desert," which Carr agreed "didn't fit the pattern."³⁸ Gielgud also rejected the idea of a radio version of *The House in Goblin Wood*—which Carr told him, notwithstanding "No Useless Coffin," had never been done for radio—because it would be "just a little too much on the gruesome side even for an *Appointment with Fear*."³⁹ Encouraged that this time the idea had not fallen at the first fence, Carr called in at the BBC in the hope of showing Gielgud some draft scripts. Gielgud was out, but Carr fortuitously bumped into Martyn Webster, who, in Carr's words, was "as doubtful about success as at times I myself have been . . . [W]e agreed that it couldn't be done unless the new shows were knockouts. And nobody was more conscious than your obedient servant that these new scripts . . . were anything but a necklace of masterpieces."⁴⁰ After this encounter, Carr went away and substantially re-wrote and re-structured the scripts, with the result that the BBC was only too pleased to accept them. The six plays were: "The Man Who Couldn't Be Photographed"; "White Tiger Passage"; "The Dead Man's Knock"; "The Sleuth of Seven Dials," which was extended into *Patrick Butler for the Defense* (1956); "The Villa of the Damned"; and finally "Till the Great Armadas Come." The series of *Appointment with Fear*, which would be the last,⁴¹ was produced by David Godfrey and broadcast weekly between July 26 and August 30, 1955.

But, a little under ten years later, in November 1964, Carr's agents submitted to the BBC an outline for a possible new series of plays, to be called *M.V. Suspense*. As Carr's outline confirms, this would have been very much on the old *Cabin B-13* lines and, as it therefore constitutes a good description of what Carr must have been thinking when he created *Cabin B-13*, it is worth quoting:

The actual name of the liner is M.V. (Motor Vessel) *Illyria*,⁴² presumably a Cunarder, very much like the actual *Sylvania* in which I so often travel. She is on a cruise (round the world?) whose details I must work out with the Cunard line so as not to set her on a course which would be illogical or plain crazy . . . [T]he principal character, who can also act as narrator, shall be the ship's purser . . . [L]et's call him Adam Benson—a man in his late forties or early fifties: suave, highly educated, with high good nature and a sense of humour . . . As the liner enters a given port, Benson tells a story which has occurred either in that port or a large city associated with the country. . . . [E]ach will be a suspense story, usually a mystery, always with a surprise-twist ending but with every clue given so that the alert listener can solve the mystery for himself . . . [S]uch a show should be good fun for the listener; assuredly it will be so for the writer.⁴³

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On this occasion, Richard Imison, Sound Script Editor at the BBC, was not taken with the idea, and, as Carr returned to America shortly after providing his agents with the outline and before the BBC had had a chance to reply, the idea was simply shelved, never to appear again.

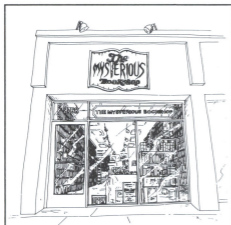
Today, more than forty years after *Cabin B-13* was first broadcast, most enthusiasts of Carr's work can only hope for an uncharacteristic display of enterprise on the part of a publisher by printing some of the 23 scripts in the series, several of which are unique to *Cabin B-13*. Of course, many are available already, having been recycled into other stories, plays, and novels; and others were adapted from earlier work. Several, however, have not previously been noted in Carr's already extensive bibliography and are probably the final major addenda now that his wartime stage work⁴⁴ and juvenile writings, to be detailed in Douglas G. Greene's forthcoming and eagerly awaited biography, have been discovered.

It is hoped that this essay has thrown a little more light on this previously little-known aspect of Carr's work and on the way in which one of the greatest exponents of the detective mystery conjured with his plots and titles, all merely playing-cards in the "grandest game in the world,"⁴⁵ a game at which there was surely no finer player than John Dickson Carr.

We gratefully acknowledge our debt to Miss JillElyn Riley of the New York Museum of Broadcasting and Samuel Brylawski of the Library of Congress for helping us to locate the scripts of the CABIN B-13 series. Others to whom our thanks are due include: Jennifer Keirans for helping with research; the BBC for allowing access to their Written and Recorded Sound Archives; the British National Sound Archive; and Ray Stanich for information on the actors who portrayed Dr. Fabian. Finally, it would have been impossible to write this essay without frequent recourse to the bibliography included in *THE DOOR TO DOOM* (1980), a posthumous miscellany of previously uncollected work by Carr, edited by Douglas G. Greene.

Notes

- Francis M. Nevins, "The Sound of Suspense: John Dickson Carr as a Radio Writer," *The Armchair Detective*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (October 1978), pp. 334-38.
- Douglas G. Greene, "John Dickson Carr and the Radio Mystery," Introduction to *The Dead Sleep Slightly* (New York: Doubleday Crime Club, 1983), a posthumous collection edited by Professor Greene.
- Letter, John Dickson Carr to Val Gielgud, September 15, 1949 (BBC Archives).
- "Cabin B-13" was subsequently rebroadcast on *Suspense* on November 9, 1943. In the interim, Carr revised the script slightly for *Appointment with Fear*, on which it was one of the most popular shows, being broadcast on September 11, 1943, October 9, 1945, and December 24, 1952. The plot was also the basis of *Dangerous Crossing*, a 1953 feature film starring Michael Rennie and Jeanne Crain, and a television play, adapted from Carr's radio original, was broadcast on June 26, 1958 as part of the CBS television series *Climax*. The plot is a brilliant variation on a simple principle established by G. K. Chesterton in the Father Brown story "The Invisible Man" and adapted by many writers besides Carr, for example Agatha Christie.
- Moss died of cancer at his Manhattan home on December 15, 1989.
- Perhaps the most celebrated version is "The Mysterious Card" by Cleveland Moffet, first published in *The Black Cat*, February 1896.
- In his novel *The Crooked Hinge* (1938), Gross's authoritative volume is also referred to in, among others, *Death Turns the Tables* (1941), *The Three Coffins* (1935), and *The Eight of Swords* (1934).
- Assumed to be no relation of another Bruce Ransom, also an actor, who was one of the key protagonists in the Sir Henry Merrivale novel *My Late Wives* (1946).
- An excerpt from the *Appointment with Fear* script was broadcast on May 14, 1966 as part of the BBC television program *Plunder*.
- Broadcast by the BBC on *Appointment with Fear*, October 19, 1944.
- The Witch of the Low Tide* eventually appeared in 1961, as "the third and last of three detective-novels designed to have their background at Scotland Yard," as Carr wrote in his "Notes for the Curious" at the end of the volume.
- That play was later adapted into "Ministry of Miracles," a Sir Henry Merrivale short story first published as a magazine serial in *Housewife* over the first three months of 1955. Neither the story, nor the play on which it is based, has



... not the same thing!

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- anything in common with the Dr. Fell novel *He Who Whispers* (1946).
13. John Dickson Carr, "Magicians' Progress," an uncollected essay on famous magicians, first published in *Radio Times*, July 14, 1944. Carr's essay was a companion to a radio program of the same title (which he had initially planned to call *Cavalcade of Magic*) broadcast on July 21, 1944.
 14. Edwin Dawes, "John Dickson Carr: Putting Magic into the Mystery," *The Magic Circular*, April 1988 (Vol. 82). Carr enthusiasts are strongly recommended to read Dr. Dawes's other carefully researched essays: "The Magic Master of the Mystery Novel; John Dickson Carr" (*The Magic Circular*, March 1988 [Vol. 82]) and "John Dickson Carr: History, Time-travel and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" (*The Magic Circular*, May/June 1988 [Vol. 82]).
 15. First published in the *Strand Magazine*, October 1940.
 16. First published as a monthly magazine serial, under the title "Magicians Dine Out," in *Woman's Journal* between December 1943 and February 1944.
 17. Another Cynthia Drew is one of the main characters in the Gideon Fell novel *Till Death Do Us Part* (1944), in which, curiously enough, there is also a Goblin Wood.
 18. *The Count of Monte Carlo* is the title of a novel, "allegedly based on real-life intrigue and spying . . . under the surface of European democracy," written in 1911 by Jim Blake, the hero of Carr's novel *The Ghosts' High Noon* (1969). In the same book, there are several references to a transatlantic liner called the *Mauretania* [sic], possibly the same *Mauretania* on which Sir Henry Merivale sails to America in *A Graveyard to Let* (1949).
 19. This was also Carr's original title for the historical detective novel *The Bridge of Newgate* (1950), first published as a monthly magazine serial in *Woman's Journal* between June and September 1950.
 20. Carr had planned to entitle the revised script "The Dark of the Moon" but was unable to use that title because there was already a stage play of that name. The abandoned title re-surfaced, without the definite article, for the final Gideon Fell novel, published in 1967.
 21. Letter, John Dickson Carr to Frederic Dannay (Ellery Queen), September 17, 1946.
 22. Carr adapted the Monsieur Jonquelle story "The Great Cypher" into a radio play for *Appointment with Fear*, broadcast on November 16, 1944; and the Gideon Fell novel *The Man Who Could Not Shudder* (1940) features an original variation on a situation described by Post in an Uncle Abner story, "The Doomsdorf Mystery."
 23. John Dickson Carr, "Murder-fancier Recommends," a book review column published in *Harper's Magazine*, July 1965.
 24. James Kingman, "John Dickson Carr and the Aura of Genius," *The Armchair Detective*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (Spring 1981), pp. 166-67.
 25. There is a very slight connection between this play and the G. K. Chesterton story "The Quick One."
 26. There are echoes in this story of *The Tragedy of the Korosko* (1898), an adventure novel by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, whose biography Carr was researching at this time.
 27. Quoting the view of Gordon West, the semi-autobiographical hero of the Sir Henry Merivale *Night at the Mocking Widow* (1950).
 28. John Dickson Carr, "...And Things That Go Bump in the Night," an uncollected essay on ghosts in fact and fiction published in *Woman's Journal*, December 1937.
 29. Richard Dalby and Rosemary Pardee, Introduction to "Blind Man's Hood," included in a splendid anthology of ghost stories, *Ghosts and Scholars* (London: Crucible Books, 1987).
 30. It should be noted, however, that the explanation of the true-life Peasehall murder was not Carr's and had already been put forward by, among others, R. Austin Freeman, creator of the omniscient Dr. John Thorndyke, in "The Fate of the Girl with Several Lovers," published in *The Evening Standard*, November 1, 1934.
 31. The British critic Nick Kimber has noted interesting points of similarity between Carr's novel and "Accident," a short story by Agatha Christie.
 32. Coincidentally, the murder method in the radio play "Till Death Do Us Part" is similar to that in "Will You Walk into My Parlor?" a Suspense radio play first broadcast on February 23, 1943, which provided the setting for the novel *Till Death Do Us Part* (1944). The central device of this novel in turn had featured in the very first Gideon Fell short story, "The Proverbial Murder"; in the Sherlock Holmes pastiche "The Adventure of the Sealed Room," first published in *Collier's* on June 13, 1953; and in Carr's last novel, *The Hungry Goblin* (1972). The murder method in "Will You Walk into My Parlor?" was used several times by Carr: he adapted the script for the BBC, and, as "Vampire Tower," it was broadcast on May 11, 1944 as an *Appointment with Fear* (this title, however, is surprisingly inapposite and would have better suited the Dr. Fell novel *He Who Whispers*, published in 1946); Carr also featured the method in "The Riddle of the Poisoned Cocktail," a ten-minute radio play broadcast by the BBC on December 16, 1943 as a competition in the popular series *A Corner in Crime*; but he first used it in the Sir Henry Merivale novel *Death in Five Boxes* (1938), originally published as a weekly magazine serial, under the title "The Man with Five Secrets," in *Woman's Journal* between August 20 and September 17, 1938.
 33. After her acquittal, Sir James Paget, consulting surgeon at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, is alleged to have remarked: "Now that it is all over, she should tell us, in the interests of science, how she did it."
 34. G. K. Chesterton, "The Case of Sir Edmund Godfrey," *Strand Magazine*, February 1927.
 35. Letter, Carr to Gielgud (September 15, 1949).
 36. *Ibid.*
 37. Internal memorandum, Mariyn C. Webster to Val Gielgud, October 19, 1949 (BBC Archives).
 38. Letter, John Dickson Carr to Val Gielgud, undated but in December 1954 (BBC Archives).
 39. Letter, Val Gielgud to John Dickson Carr, January 17, 1955 (BBC Archives).
 40. Letter, Carr to Gielgud (December 1954).
 41. The BBC recently revived the Man in Black for two series of *Fear on Four* (Four being a reference to the radio channel). The shows were vastly inferior to those written and co-produced by Carr, and, other than in the publicity surrounding the start of the first series, no acknowledgement was made to *Appointment with Fear* or its creator. Carr's shade must be smiling at the fact that this pale descendant failed to approach the quality and popularity of the original series.
 42. In the Gideon Fell novel *The House at Satan's Elbow* (1965), Nicholas Barclay and his family travel on the *Ilyria* to New York from Southampton; and, at the beginning of another novel, *Panic in Box C* (1966), Dr. Fell is crossing the Atlantic in the *Ilyria*, described as "sister-ship to *Sylvania* except that *Ilyria's* home port was Southampton instead of Liverpool."
 43. Enclosed with a letter from Jean Leroy, of Carr's agents in Britain, to Val Gielgud, October 5, 1949 (BBC Archives).
 44. Tony Medawar, "The Pursuit of Silence," *Crime and Detective Stories*, No. 10 (January 1989), pp. 3-7.
 45. John Dickson Carr, "The Grandest Game in the World," an essay on detective fiction, collected in *The Door to Doom* ed. Douglas G. Greene (New York: Harper & Row, 1980), pp. 308-25. □

Collecting Mystery Fiction

Collecting Sue Grafton
BY OTTO PENZLER

It is shocking to know that a collector's copy of Sue Grafton's "A" is as expensive as a collector's copy of Doyle.



Carter Blackman

Perhaps the favorite question of newspaper and magazine interviewers, when discussing mystery fiction, is about what trends the interviewees foresee for the genre. The related (and obvious) path of intellectual exploration is some profound analysis of what changes have occurred during the past (decade, year, hour—you fill in the blank).

The answer to all of the above questions and caverns of uncertainty is a variation on a theme, which is the emergence of the female private eye.

There have been, of course, female private eyes before the 1980s. Dwight Babcock wrote about Hannah Van Doren, the first hard-boiled femme. Honey West was a paperback staple of the 1960s, and G. S. Fickling's sexy heroine enjoyed a brief vogue as a television series starring Anne Francis. Perhaps the most successful was Modesty Blaise, who functioned as a thief, an espionage agent, and a private investigator, depending upon the needs of Peter O'Donnell's plot.

One can even go back to the Victorian era for such stalwarts as Violet Strange, Dorcas Dene, Loveday Brooke, and Clarice Dyke, but they generally shared the affliction of would-be heroines of the time, which required a strong male figure to bail them out of their bouillabaisse.

Modesty was virtually unique in crime fiction annals for having a male companion who needed to be saved by a woman as often as he was able to pull her chestnuts out of the broiler. Billed as the female James Bond, the vigorous British adventuress did not have a

profound literary influence because her adventures were too pulpy, too comic-book in tone, to be taken seriously as art. Furthermore, the author merely set out to tell an exciting story, without thinking about larger social issues, though in fact he did create one of the strongest, most independent women in the fiction of the 1960s and '70s. Hence, while the Modesty Blaise books remain fun to this day, there appeared no groundswell to fill the shelves with clones.

It remained for the 1980s to introduce the female private eye who was tough (though vulnerable), sassy (though sensitive), independent (though socially concerned), fond of the company of other women (though definitely heterosexual) and written by a woman.

Probably the first of any significance in what has become a crowded arena is Marcia Muller's Sharon McCone, whose debut book appearance was *Edwin of the Iron Shoes* in 1977. Muller and McCone had the dual misfortune of having their premiere a few years before the world was ready and with a small publisher named McKay-Washburn, which folded its mystery publishing program a short time later. Today, the doors having been thrown wide open by two fellow practitioners, both Muller and McCone are enjoying wide popularity.

The door-openers, of course, have been Sara Paretsky and Sue Grafton.

Paretsky has been one step ahead of Grafton most of the way. The first book about V.I. Warshawski, *Indemnity Only*, appeared just before Grafton's first book

about Kinsey Milhone, "*A Is for Alibi*." Paretsky appeared on the bestseller list with *Burn Marks* a few months before Grafton hit it with "*G Is for Gumshoe*." And the first movie also goes to Paretsky with *Warshawski*, starring Kathleen Turner as the hardboiled Chicago private investigator.

It is entirely likely, however, that it is Grafton who has been mainly responsible for the enormous success of the smart Alexis school of female P.I.s written by women. Her long, multi-city tours and hundreds of personal appearances at bookshops, mystery conventions, and radio and television studios have made her a familiar figure indeed during the past nine years. More important, perhaps, is that her personal charm and ebullience have endeared her to male and female readers alike, thereby pulling along with her dozens of other authors who have attempted similar series.

After reading a Grafton book, readers have beaten a path to their local booksellers with a single question: What else is there like the series with the alphabet?

Just as it is difficult to mention Hammett without thinking of Chandler, it has been nearly impossible to speak of Grafton without also making a reference to Paretsky. And vice-versa. But success does not come just because one's name is lumped with another. While a dozen practitioners of the recently adored female private eye category have enjoyed growth in sales and review attention, none has approached the stardom accorded Paretsky and Grafton.

Maybe it's just as well. It is probably time for the next trend in mystery fiction.

To long-time collectors, Sue Grafton has been a puzzle. Never has the time-honored dictum of supply-and-demand as a price-setter been so clearly in evidence as with the Kinsey Milhone series.

The first book, "*A Is for Alibi*," is a reasonably scarce book. As the first mystery by a relatively unknown author, published by a house not known for its excessive print-runs, there was a small quantity of "A" printed. As the series became heavily collected—almost immediately, by the way—available copies quickly disappeared onto collectors' shelves and prices escalated dramatically.

Lately, however, prices have soared (relatively speaking) for "*B Is for Burglar*" and "*C Is for Corpse*," and they have even gone up for "*D Is for Deadbeat*" and "*E Is for Evidence*," neither of which is uncommon, both of which had substantial print runs, and both of which were published after the author was already being actively collected.

The only explanation, of course, is that, as great as is the available supply of books, even greater is the number of collectors.

It is shocking to know that a collector's

copy of "A" is as expensive as a collector's copy of a good book by Mark Twain, Arthur Conan Doyle, James M. Cain, or Dorothy L. Sayers. What greater testimony could one offer to illustrate the popularity of one of the major figures in contemporary mystery fiction?

One general comment about collecting the Kinsey Milhone series. Since all the books are relatively new, it should be unnecessary to accept less than fine copies of any book, with the possible exception of "A" if the budget does not permit it. It makes for quite a small collection, of course, so it may be expanded somewhat by adding first editions of the very scarce ndu-mystery novels, *Keziah Dane* and *The Lolly-Madonna War*.

Also worth pursuing are the advance proof copies of the eight books published to date. "A" and "B" are genuinely scarce, though "C" may still be had for a modest price, as it was produced as an advance reading copy in slick covers in far larger quantities than the first two titles.

Related to any collection of Sue Grafton is a number of screenplays, written solo or in tandem with her husband, Steve Humphrey. As a successful writing team in Hollywood, they have quite a few produced (and some unproduced) scripts which turn up from time to time.

"A" Is for Alibi

First Edition: New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, (1982). Gray boards, spine stamped with red foil, front and rear covers blank, with publisher's logo blind-stamped on rear. Issued in a mainly black pictorial dust wrapper.

Note: Published April 30, 1982.

The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page, together with a number sequence of 13579108642.

A second printing of "A" was published eight years after the first. The words "First Edition" have been removed from the copyright page, and the number sequence is 3579108642.

At first glance, the dust jackets on the first and second printings look alike, but on closer examination there are numerous differences. The most obvious are a price increase from \$12.95 to \$16.95; an ISBN at the top of the front flap on the first printing, with none on the second; the numerals 0482 at the bottom

of the front flap on the first printing, lacking on the second; and two large keys on the back panel of the first printing, with one on the second. There are other differences, but, for purposes of identification, these are more than adequate.

Uncorrected page proofs, bound in blue wrappers with black lettering, were issued some months prior to book publication.

Estimated

retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
Good	\$ 75.00	\$15.00
Fine	\$350.00	\$25.00
Very fine	\$500.00	\$30.00

The proof, in fine condition, is worth about \$500.00.

"B" Is for Burglar

First Edition: New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, (1985). Gray boards, red cloth spine, which is stamped with silver foil, front and rear covers blank, with publisher's logo blind-stamped on rear. Issued in a mainly gray pictorial dust wrapper.

Note: Published May 20, 1985.

The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page, together with a number sequence of 13579108642.

A second printing of "B" was published, with the words "First Edition" being removed from the copyright page and the number sequence being 3579108642. Subsequent printings drop additional numbers sequentially.

As with "A," the dust jackets of the first and subsequent printings look alike, but closer examination reveals numerous differences. The most obvious are a price increase from \$14.95 to \$16.95; an ISBN at the top of the front flap on the first printing, with none on the second; the numerals 0585 at the bottom of the front flap of the first printing, lacking on subsequent printings; and the phrase "A Rinehart Suspense Novel" running parallel to both keys on the back panel, with no such phrases on subsequent printings. There are other differences, but, for purposes of identification, these are more than adequate.

A small bookmark, printed in black with a red "B" on gray card stock, was produced as a promotional item.

Uncorrected page proofs, bound in blue wrappers, were issued some months prior to book publication.

Estimated

retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
Good	\$ 35.00	\$10.00
Fine	\$150.00	\$15.00
Very fine	\$200.00	\$20.00

The proof, in fine condition, is worth about \$200.00

"C" Is for Corpse

First Edition: New York, Henry Holt & Company, (1986). Gray boards, spine stamped with silver foil, front and rear covers blank. Issued in a mainly white pictorial dust wrapper.

Note: Published May 12, 1986.

Unlike the first two books in the series, the words "First Edition" do not appear on the copyright page, but the familiar number sequence is present: 13579108642.

The second printing drops the number "1" from the sequence, and subsequent printings drop additional numbers sequentially.

Unlike "A" and "B," the dust jackets for the first and second printings of "C" are identical. As the series remains popular and Holt continues to reprint in hardcover, it is impossible to know if all subsequent printings of the dust wrapper will remain identical to the first.

Advance proof copies, bound in white wrappers, were issued some months prior to book publication. Unlike the uncorrected proofs for "A" and "B," which were produced in very modest quantities for the convenience of reviewers, "C" was an advance reading copy produced in relatively large numbers and sent to booksellers and others. Holt announced on the front cover of the proof that it was the first time it had given this treatment to a mystery.

Estimated

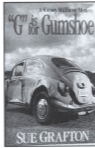
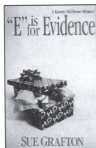
retail value:	with d/w	without d/w
Good	\$ 15.00	\$ 7.50
Fine	\$ 75.00	\$12.50
Very fine	\$100.00	\$15.00

The proof, in fine condition, is worth about \$50.00.

"D" Is for Deadbeat

First Edition: New York, Henry Holt and Company, (1987). Black boards, spine stamped with gold foil, front and rear covers blank, with publisher's logo blind-stamped





on rear. Issued in a mainly black photographic dust wrapper.

Note: published May 22, 1987.

The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page, together with a number sequence of 13579108642.

The second printing drops the words "First Edition" from the copyright page and the number sequence drops the number "1"; subsequent printings drop additional numbers sequentially.

The dust jackets for the first and second printings are identical. All later printings (as of June 1991) are also identical.

Advance reading copies, in pictorial wrappers, were issued some months prior to book publication.

Estimated retail value:

	with d/w	without d/w
Good	\$10.00	\$ 5.00
Fine	\$35.00	\$ 7.50
Very fine	\$45.00	\$10.00

The proof, in fine condition, is worth about \$50.00.

"E" Is for Evidence

First Edition: New York, Henry Holt and Company, (1988). Gray boards, black cloth spine, which is stamped with silver foil, front and rear covers blank with publisher's logo blind-stamped on rear. Issued in a mainly off-white pictorial dust wrapper.

Note: Published May 1988.

The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page, together with a number sequence of 13579108642.

The second printing drops the words "First Edition" from the copyright page and the number sequence drops the number "1"; subsequent printings drop additional numbers sequentially.

The dust jackets for the first and all subsequent printings (as of June 1991) are identical.

Advance reading copies in pictorial wrappers were issued some months prior to book publication.

Estimated retail value:

	with d/w	without d/w
Good	\$10.00	\$ 5.00
Fine	\$25.00	\$ 7.50
Very fine	\$35.00	\$10.00

The proof, in fine condition, is worth about \$40.00.

"F" Is for Fugitive

First Edition: New York, Henry Holt and Company, (1989). Brown boards, black cloth spine, which is stamped with copper foil, front cover blank, rear cover stamped with publisher's logo in copper foil. Issued in a full-color photographic dust wrapper.

Note: Published May 1989.

The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page, together with a number sequence of 13579108642.

Unlike previous books, the words "First Edition" are not dropped in the second or subsequent printings. The number "1" is

dropped from the second printing; subsequent printings drop additional numbers sequentially.

The dust jackets for the first and all subsequent printings (as of June 1991) are identical.

Advance reading copies in pictorial wrappers were issued some months prior to book publication.

Estimated retail value:

	with d/w	without d/w
Good	\$10.00	\$5.00
Fine	\$20.00	\$7.50
Very fine	\$25.00	\$8.50

The proof, in fine condition, is worth about \$30.00.

"G" Is for Gumshoe

First Edition: New York, Henry Holt and Company, (1990). Gray boards, black cloth spine which is stamped with red foil, front cover blank, rear cover stamped with publisher's logo in red foil. Issued in a full-color photographic dust wrapper.

Note: Published May 1990.

The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page, together with a number sequence of 13579108642.

Advance reading copies in pictorial wrappers were issued some months prior to book publication. A fine copy is worth about \$25.00.

As-new copies of "G" may still be had with some small effort at the original published price (\$16.95).

"H" Is for Homicide

First Edition: New York, Henry Holt and Company, (1991). Dark gray boards, black cloth spine which is stamped with green foil, front cover blank, rear cover stamped with publisher's logo in green foil. Issued in a full-color photographic dust wrapper.

Note: Published May 1991.

The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page, together with a number sequence of 13579108642.

Advance reading copies in pictorial wrappers were issued some months prior to book publication. A fine copy is worth about \$25.00.

As-new copies of "H" may still be had with small effort at the original published price (\$17.95). □



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Let the cat out of the bag!



Report from 221B Baker Street

BY SHERRY ROSE-BOND & SCOTT BOND

Breathes there a mystery fan who has not, after first encountering the adventures of Sherlock Holmes, longed to visit that gaslit chamber of Victorian London located at number 221a Baker Street? Here is the very heart of the detective's world—the sitting-room with its tantalus and gasogene, its mantle cluttered with pipes and unanswered correspondence, its patriotic VR done in bullet-pocks on the wall. This room is the spiritual home of any true Sherlockian and the stage upon which much of what we love best in the Canon is acted out. Here we encounter Holmes and Watson at the breakfast table, hear the excited step of a new client at the door, marvel as some small miracle of deduction is unraveled.

A visit to this fabled place, or something very like it, first came a real possibility forty years ago and is connected with both the 1951 Festival of Britain and the second coming of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London. In a previous column, we outlined the birth of the Baker Street Irregulars in New York in 1934. Similar activities were under way in London, spearheaded by Scottish novelist Archibald Gordon MacDonnell. The London society made its appearance just two months after the initial BSI meeting. The two groups sprang up simultaneously and, as far as we know, were completely without connection. The London group initially met twice a year, but its activities had come to a complete halt by the outbreak of World War II. In England, the post-war period was one of rebuilding, the rationing of just about everything, and general depression.

Inevitably, though, the 1950s arrived, and Britain slowly began to get back to normal. One of the key players in the drama that was to unfold was our friend Anthony Howlett, now a retired barrister but still very active in the realm of things Sherlockian. During The Final Problem Tour in 1987, we met with Tony and asked him about the events which led to the rebirth of the Society and the first re-creation of the sitting-room.

"In 1951," Howlett began, "there was the idea of having a Festival of Britain, which was really the idea of showing what the country could do and to try to inspire a kind of renaissance of England. And this was right across the country. Now, at that time, the Marylebone Borough Council (as it then was) had the idea of showing how they'd improved housing, redone war damage, that sort of thing. Now, I was one of the young chaps in those days. I'd just qualified at the bar; I was a barrister. Like most barristers immediately after the war, you don't earn very much. In fact, you have only too much ample spare time, and [the Festival] caught my eye and I went along and said, 'Can I help?' I'd been a Holmes enthusiast since the age of fourteen.



The Sherlock Holmes Pub and Restaurant in London

And I wasn't alone. A group of us started with the idea of reconstructing the rooms of Holmes and Watson in Baker Street."

Tony's collaborators on the project included Marylebone borough librarian C. T. Thorne, stage designer Michael Weight, scientific advisor Professor W. T. Williams, and Winifred Paget, daughter of renowned Holmes illustrator Sidney Paget.

Soon, work on the project was in full swing. One evening, after a long day on the job, Howlett and some friends retired to a local pub for a bit of refreshment.

"There were four of us," recalled Howlett, "of which Colin Prestige and I are the only survivors now. One of us said, 'All this enthusiasm. Why don't we form a Sherlock Holmes Society?' And we called it The Sherlock Holmes Society of London to distinguish it from the other one [the BSI], wrote to a few people we knew, and started with twenty-five members."

Soon both the Society and the 221a re-creation were duly unveiled, with the sitting-room proving one of the great popular successes of the Festival. All of the detective's beloved bric-a-brac was carefully assembled with an eye for absolute period authenticity. At the celebration's end, the amazing exhibit was packed off to America for an extensive tour and was prominently featured in *Life* magazine early in 1952.

Fortunately for all of us, a portion of this exhibit was preserved and may still be seen at the Sherlock Holmes Pub on Northumberland Street in London. It occupies a small section of the dining room on the second floor (the "first floor" in Britain), while other items relating to Holmes and to Conan Doyle are to be found decorating the walls both

upstairs and down. The building itself was once the Northumberland Hotel, scene of Sir Henry Baskerville's London stay, so even the location has Canonical associations.

In the years since the Festival of Britain, further Sherlockian sitting-rooms have sprung up on both sides of the Atlantic, and we will be visiting a number of these in future columns.

Sherlockians everywhere were recently gladdened by the news that a major Victorian landmark of the Master's city, the Langham Hotel, is once again in operation and doing the sort of business for which it was originally designed. It was in this very building that a young Arthur Conan Doyle dined with Oscar Wilde and the editor of *Lippincott's Monthly*, Joseph Marshall Stoddart, and received a commission from the latter to write his second long Sherlock Holmes story, *The Sign of Four*. After the Langham closed its doors as a hotel, it was used for many years as the headquarters of the BBC, amid persisting rumors that it would be torn down. Happily, it is once again welcoming travelers from all points on the globe, and the dining-room features a menu the like of which both doctor and detective would heartily approve.

Would you like to have tea at the Langham? How about lunch in view of the 221a sitting-room at the Sherlock Holmes Pub? Your columnists will be hosting "On the Road with Sherlock Holmes," our third Sherlockian tour, in May of 1992. (This tour was originally to have run in May of this year but had to be rescheduled because of the outbreak of the Gulf War.) We will be visiting these and many other Sherlockian sites in London and Devon, as well as the Granada TV studios. Drop us a line here at TAD and we will see that you get full details. □

Murderous Affairs

BY JANET A. RUDOLPH

I thought I would take the opportunity in this column to give you a potpourri of mystery-related events, clubs, bookstores, and other mystery tidbits. Don't forget that I depend on you to update me on any activities, clubs, societies, and stores. Send your information to me, Janet A. Rudolph, Mystery Readers International, P.O. Box 8116, Berkeley, CA 94707-8116.

WASHINGTON, D.C. AREA

I just returned from Malice Domestic, where I had a terrific time. Malice Domestic is a mystery conference which is devoted to "comfortable crime." Malice Domestic IV will be held the last weekend in April 1992 in Bethesda, Md. (near Washington, D.C.). For more information, write to P.O. Box 701, Herndon, VA 22010-0701. Guest of Honor is Aaron Elkins, Fan Guest of Honor is Bill Deek. Don't miss this one.

AUSTIN, TEXAS

Mystery Readers International has a new chapter in Austin. The group meets at Jan Grape's Mysteries and More, the Austin mystery bookstore, the first Sunday of the month. Call Jan at (512) 837-6768 to find out the topic of the next discussion or drop by. At their May meeting they hosted John Conquest, winner of the Edgar Award for Best Biographical/Critical book for 1990. Mysteries and More, 11139 N. IH35, #176, Austin, TX 78753.

SCOTTSDALE, ARIZ.

The Mystery Readers' Discussion Club meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at The Poisoned Pen, 7100B East Main Street, Scottsdale, AZ 95251. Call the store to find out what book they will be discussing. Everyone welcome.

LONDON, ENGLAND

Members of the Dorothy L. Sayers Society are invited by the Wine Lovers Activities Club to a tasting of wines based on those in *A Matter of Taste*, hosted by Geoffrey Noble and followed by dinner. It will begin at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 18, 1991. Contact the Dorothy L. Sayers Society at Rose Cottage, Malthouse Lane, Hurstpierpoint, West Sussex, England BN6 9JY, for information on this and other society activities and publications.

SEATTLE, WASH.

Seattle Mystery Readers is a chapter of MRI, and they have lots of activities open to everyone. In addition, Sandy Goodrick edits their newsletter, which is full of Seattle's mystery news. Write to Seattle Mystery Readers at 13211 Frazier Place NW, Seattle, WA 98177.

Fall 1991 will see a Second Annual MWA Workshop. All we know at this time is that the price will be \$50. Very reasonable. Contact MWA Northwest for more details.

P.O. Box 1201, Port Townsend, WA 98368 (The MWA Northwest newsletter's editor is Harriet Stay of Mystery News).

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA

Left Coast Crime II, the Western regional mystery conference, will meet in San Francisco, President's Weekend, February 1992. Guests of Honor are J. A. Jance and Earl Emerson. Toastmaster is James Lee Burke. \$35 through October 1991. \$45 through February 13, 1992. \$50 at the door. To register, send a check to Left Coast Crime, P.O. Box 1367, Martinez, CA 94553. Chair: Donna Rankin. Donna did a terrific job on a shoestring for the first convention; it will be even better next year with a whole year of planning.

Oakland: Check with me (Janet Rudolph) about classes on various topics of mystery fiction (Tuesday evenings) and "at homes." There is a monthly meeting with traveling or local mystery writers, dinners, and more. Call for dates, address, and time: (415) 339-2800.

July 19-21: The Society of Phantom Friends will be holding its fifth annual reunion July 19-21 at the Days Inn Motel. The conference will feature Margaret Sutton (author of the Judy Bolton books), presentations by several contemporary writers of juvenile detective novels, a speech by Frank Thomas (who portrayed Ned Nickerson in the Nancy Drew movies starring Bonita Granville), games, and a banquet. Contact Nancy Roberts at (415) 521-7729 for more information.

Menlo Park: Third Wednesday of each month, 7:30 p.m., no meeting July and August. Great topics and discussions. Room 116, Menlo Park Recreation Building, 700 Alma Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025. For more information, contact Jackie Drew at (415) 325-4048.

NEW YORK, N.Y.

Plans are underway to start a Mystery Readers chapter here. Lola Troy Fiar is interested. Send names and numbers if you are interested in participating to MRI, P.O. Box 8116, Berkeley, CA 94707. I will pass everything on to the New York people. Let Lola know what you would like to see.

October 11-12: Third Annual World Collectable Paperback Expo. Renaissance Room, Mezzanine Level, 440 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. For further information, contact Gary Lovisi at Paperback Parade Magazine, P.O. Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228 or call him at (718) 646-6126 (6-10 p.m. EST, please).

EAST LANSING, MICH.

Maryell Cleary would like to start a chapter in this area. It's a good-sized metropolis with Michigan State University (and it's the state capital). If you are interested, call Maryell at (517) 332-9419.

LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

October 10, 1991: The Sisters in Crime Guide to Hollywood. The Los Angeles chapter of Sisters in Crime is sponsoring a Bouchercon Eve dinner following an afternoon of programming at the Pasadena Hilton, the location of the Bouchercon Conference. \$45 (space available) to SIC/LA to Carol Russell Law at 2508 Meadow Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90041.

Sisters in Crime meetings are held at the Beverly Hills Library, 5-7 p.m.: July 7, August 4, September 15, October 6, November 3, December 8.

October 11-13, 1991: Bouchercon XXII will be held in Pasadena. Guest of Honor is Ed Hoch; visual media guest of honor: William Lind; fan guest of honor: Bruce Pelz; Lifetime Achievement Honor to William Campbell Gault. Bouchercon XXII, c/o SCIFI, P.O. Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409. \$50 until June 15, then \$65 until September 14; \$75 thereafter. Don't miss it.

TORONTO, CANADA

Bouchercon XXIII will be held in Toronto, October 8-11, 1992. Four days of programming. Thursday will be "Special Interest Day." Morning wake-up walks, a Friday evening murder, as well as the Anthony Awards dinner are some of the things planned. For information, write to Bouchercon XXIII, P.O. Box 23, Station S, Toronto, Ontario M5M 4L6, Canada. Al Navis is Chairman. Don't miss this one.

PORTLAND, ORE.

Bloody Thursdays VI continues. These events are put on by Friends of Mystery, P.O. Box 8251, Portland, OR 97027 (503) 241-0759. All meetings begin at 7:30 in the Community Room of the Northwest Service Center, 1819 N.W. Everett in Portland. To join Friends of Mystery, send \$15 (tax-deductible).

CUBA

José Latour tells us that, in October, Cuba will be the site of the Second Three Frontiers Meeting to which several Mexican, American, and Cuban crime fiction writers have been invited. The first was held in Merida, Mexico last December. This is a meeting of AIEP. We have also heard from Rodolfo Perez Valero, vice-president for Latin America, that *Enigma*, AIEP's magazine in Spanish, has had to discontinue publication because of economic difficulties in Cuba.

Mystery Bookstores

MysteryBooks at 1715 Connecticut Avenue S.W., Washington, DC 20009 produces a 70-page catalogue of books. In addition, they offer something quite unique—Crime and Nourishment Gift Baskets™. The



Mystery Lovers Bookshop in Oakmont, PA, is owned by Mary Alice Gorman and Richard Goldman.

Edgar basket offers a sampler of four mysteries, all winners of the coveted Edgar Award given by the MWA. Along with this comes the best of the best, vegetable pâté, water crackers, sparkling cider, hard candies, and butter cookies. I especially liked the Classic Crime basket, which contains five favorite whodunits from Britain's most famous mystery writers along with shortbread, jam, toffee, and hard candies. For more information, write or call (202) 483-1600 or 1-800-955-2279.

HaveN't Got a Clue, the Albany, N.Y. mystery bookstore run by Betsy Blaustein, has moved to a new location at 1823 Western Avenue, Albany, NY 12203. (518) 464-1135. This is a larger location in a very convenient spot with parking.

The Green Door Mystery Bookstore, 31781 Camino Capistrano, Suite 105, San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675, (714) 248-8404, is new to me. I read about it in Harriet and Larry Stay's terrific *Mystery News*. San Juan Capistrano is in Orange County. The owner of The Green Door is Dick Hart.

Many of you know that Carol Brenner sold **Murder Ink** in New York. The new owner is Jay Pearsall. The latest catalog (No. 2) contains a question-and-answer interview with Gold Dagger Award winner Peter Dickinson and has lists of rare and signed first editions. For a catalogue, write to Murder Ink, 271 West 87th Street, New York, NY 10024-2704 or call 1-800-488-8123.

Crime-Busters has a terrific P.I. & Security Mail Order Catalogue. For a free copy write to Crime-Busters, P.O. Box 887, Station B, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5P9, Canada.

Mystery Lovers Bookshop is located at 514 Allegheny River Boulevard, Oakmont, PA 15139. (412) 828-4877. Everyone who's been there says it's terrific. Be sure to drop by. Hours are Monday through Friday 11-7; Saturday 10-5; Sunday 12-5. And the store is

available for meetings or events. Mary Alice Gorman, the force behind the establishment (and the owner), did a wonderful job of getting publicity, which has made it very popular in Pittsburgh. This may be home to a new chapter of Mystery Readers International. In April, they started a Sunday afternoon tea at 3:00 (reservations, please).

Sharon and Richard Blakley run **Nevermore Books** with wonderful catalogues, 1224 Asbury Avenue, Winnetka, IL 60093. (708) 446-7187.

Death at Your Door is a new mail order catalogue. Run by four women, Barbara Adams, Jo Davies, Joyce Morden, and Linda Paulson, they bring a mixture of books new and fairly new, and some classics. Their focus is on women authors and protagonists. They also include mysteries by Pacific Coast writers, both men and women. P.O. Box 2452, Sequim, WA 98382-2452.

Marion Richmond tells me that **Ming Books** is back in the mainstream after Bouchercon "of what should be the main business of buying and selling the books that people want. The new bookroom at Wembley, a cross between a bookshop and a warehouse, has even larger stocks than ever before with new and used hardcovers and paperbacks." They are open every Saturday 10-6 and at other times by appointment. All correspondence to 1 Penrose Avenue, Carpenders Park, Watford WD1 5AE, England.

Patricia Johnson of Medford Lakes, N.J. tells me that **Mystery Books** at 42 Rittenhouse Place, Ardmore, PA 19003, (215) 642-3565, is "quite good, well stocked—books in good condition—and the staff that I have met is very knowledgeable."

Mystery Loves Company is another Chicago area mystery bookstore about which Nancy L. Laird just told me. It is located at 3338 North Southport, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 935-1000. She had not been there as of

this writing. Check it out, and let me know about it.

William L. Simmons has started a mail order business as **I Love a Mystery**. His first catalogue of collectibles is available from him at 1621 New Scotland Road, Slingerlands, NY 12159.

Don't forget that Phyllis Brown's **Grounds for Murder** mystery bookstore has moved to 3287 Adams Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116. She has a lot of events scheduled for the year.

Awards

Howard Engel has won the **Canon/OE Award**. It is given by the Canon copier company to "a Canadian writer in mid-career who has made a significant contribution to Canadian literature and the Canadian literary community through his or her efforts on behalf of other writers." It is a cash award of \$7,500, plus the company's fax machine, photocopier, and other office equipment "to enhance a writer's working environment." Howard Engel is the first mystery novelist to win.

Edgar Allan Poe Awards

Best Novel: *New Orleans Mourning* by Julie Smith

Best First American Novel: *Postmortem* by Patricia Cornwell

Best Paperback Original: *The Man Who Would Be F.* Scott Fitzgerald by David Handler

Best Short Story: "Elvis Lives" by Lynne Barrett

Best Young Adult: *Mote* by Chip Reaver

Best Juvenile: "Stonewords" by Pam Conrad
Best Fact Crime: *In a Child's Name* by Peter Meas

Best Biographical/Critical: *Trouble Is Their Business: Private Eyes in Fiction, Film & Television, 1927-1988* by John Conquest

Mystery Guild Book of the Year Awards

First: "F" Is for Fugitive by Sue Grafton.
Second: *The Cat Who Went Underground* by Lilian Jackson Braun.
Third: *The Old Silent* by Martha Grimes.

Agatha Awards

Best Novel: *Bum Steer* by Nancy Pickard.
Best First: *The Body in the Belfry* by Katherine Hall Page.
Best Short Story: "Too Much to Bare" by Joan Hess.

St. Martin's Press / "Malice Domestic"

Contest

Best First Traditional Mystery Novel was won by Charlene Weir (Kensington, Calif.) for *A Killing Frost*. The prize took her back to Malice Domestic III in April for a presentation. Included are publication and a \$10,000 advance.

Prix du Roman d'Aventures

This is the oldest French award for crime fiction, and Stuart M. Kaminsky won it for his Edgar-winning *A Cold Red Sunrise*.

Trophée 813

John Lutz won this French crime-writing award for *Better Mousetraps*.

The Drood Review 1990

Editors Choice Selections

Murder Misread by P. M. Carlson. *Bones*

and *Silence* by Reginald Hill. *Still Among the Living* by Zachary Klein. *C.A.T. Caper* by Margaret Logan. *If Ever I Return Pretty Peggy-O* by Sharyn McCrumb. *Devil in a Blue Dress* by Walter Mosley. *Dead in the Scrub* by B. J. Oliphant. *Burn Marks* by Sara Paretsky. *The Scarred Man* by Keith Peterson. *Forced Entry* by Stephen Solomita.

1990 Crime Writers Association Awards (Great Britain)

Gold Dagger: Reginald Hill for *Bones and Silence* (Collins)
Silver Dagger: Mike Phillips for *The Late Candidate* (Michael Joseph)
John Creasey Memorial Award: Patricia Daniels Cornwell for *Postmortem* (Macdonald)
Gold Dagger for Non-Fiction: Jonathan Goodman for *The Passing of Starr Faithful* (Platkus)
Last Laugh Award: Simon Shaw for *Killer Cinderella* (Gollancz)
CWA '92 Award: Michael Dibdin for *Vendetta* (Faber)
Rumpole Award: Frances Fryfield for *Trial of Fire* (Heinemann)
CWA Sunday Times Short Story Winner: Colin Gray for "Nina"

Periodicals, Newsletters, Organizations and More

New Mystery is now out. The New Mystery Group has announced the names of writers and illustrators who will appear in the first three issues of *New Mystery Magazine*. The first issue contains stories by Shizuko Natsuko, Bill Crider, Ronnie Klaskin, Motme Crook & Jack Dolphin, Billie Sue Mosiman, Paco Taibo, and new author David Zeltzman. In addition, there are several features—letters, reviews, bookstores, and more. In addition, art is included in *New Mystery*. *New Mystery* is available at over 3,000 bookstores and major newsstands in the U.S. and at several hundred independent bookstores in England, France, Germany, Japan, and other parts of Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Or by subscription for \$27.77 a year. Charles Ralsch is Editor-in-Chief for the Group.

I haven't mentioned *The Criminal Record* recently in this column. Edited by Ann Williams (3131 East Seventh Avenue, Denver CO 80206), it is a short, interesting collection of reviews of mystery books. A sample issue is free and others are \$1 each.

The Linington Lineup, edited by Rinehart Potts, is another very interesting publication which I have not mentioned lately. It is published bi-monthly, and, although dedicated to the memory of Elizabeth Linington, who wrote as Anne Blaisdell, Lesley Egan, Egan O'Neill, Elizabeth Linington, and Dell Shannon, it contains all kinds of other esoteric information. Rinehart Potts tried to start a South Jersey chapter of Mystery Readers International without success (no fault of his). If anyone out there is interested, drop him a line at 1223 Glen Terrace, Glassboro, NJ 08028-1315. *The Linington Lineup* is \$12 a year.

The Crime File, published by Laurie Gore, is up and running and better than ever. Marv Lachman has a column in it called "The Short Stop," which deals with current short stories. George Easter does a column on "Future Investigations" (upcoming books). There are reviews and tidbits of information. Cost for an annual subscription (6 issues/year—hopefully) is \$12 U.S. and Canada, \$18 all other countries. P.O. Box 1321, Bonita, CA 91908-0890.

The Margery Allingham Society is a great organization to join if you're a fan. You will receive the *Journal* of the Society from Britain twice a year, and U.S. news sheets when American Editor Maryell Cleary has enough material (two or three times a year). You can exchange views with others through letters, articles, poems, and puzzles, meet other Allingham fans at mystery conventions, and learn more about this fine author, her life and work. Contributions for the *British Journal* should be sent to Pat Watt; letters for circulation in the U.S. should be sent to Maryell Cleary, 1183 Arbor Drive, Apt. B, East Lansing, MI 48823 or Pat Watt, 5 Corringham Road, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 9PX, United Kingdom.

The G. K. Chesterton Study Centre has been established at the home of Aidan Mackey, 15 Shaftesbury Avenue, Bedford MK40 3SA (United Kingdom). There are a lot of personal items from Top Meadow available for researchers, along with a large archive collection and many books belonging to GKC. Visitors welcome by appointment.

Sisters in Crime is beginning its best year ever. Coming up will be their eye-catching full-color 20x30 poster, "Sisters in Crime Puts Murder on the Map," showing their series characters and where they operate. Send \$8 to Sisters in Crime, P.O. Box 10111, Blacksburg, VA 24062. To join the organization and find out more about Shameless Promotion for Brazen Hussies, send \$20 in U.S. and Canada (\$25 outside) to Sisters in Crime—Membership, 6040 Six Forks Road, Suite 163, Raleigh NC 27609-8605. Sisters in Crime also has a new chapter in the Washington-Baltimore area. Meetings are the first Saturday of each month at Bish Thompson's restaurant, Bethesda, Md. Contact Sisters in Crime, Chesapeake Chapter, P.O. Box 2843, Kensington, MD 20891.

Mean Streets is the excellent new Australian magazine for people who like "a healthy dose of murder, mystery and crime in their lives." This is the first Australian publication devoted to crime fiction. Rates for four issues plus free books are U.S. \$22 for surface mail and U.S. \$28 for airmail. Write to *Mean Streets*, 3/10 Lamrock Avenue, Bondi Beach, 2026, Sydney, Australia. Stuart Coupe is the editor.

Harbourdell Detective No. 10 is out. This fanzine devoted to the harbourdell subgenre is edited by Gary Lovisi, and the latest issue has stories by Wayne Dundee, Andrew Vachas, and others. For samples, send \$4 per copy to Gryphon Publications, P.O. Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228-0209. Subscriptions are \$20/year for 6 issues.

Elizabeth Peters's newsletter is **MPM** (for Mertz/Peters/Michaels). MPM herself issues bulletins twice a year or more, with tidbits about herself and friends, including Charlotte MacLeod/Alisa Craig. Send stamps. MPM, P.O. Box 4262, Frederick, MD 21701.

(Barbara Peters—not to be confused with Elizabeth Peters/Barbara Michaels—is offering a reprint of a marvelous article about Amelia Peabody published in *KMT: A Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt*. Send 50¢ and SASE to *The Poisoned Pen*, 7100-B East Main Street, Scottsdale, AZ 95251.)

Million: The Magazine of Popular Fiction is a new magazine definitely worth looking at. The first issue (January-February 1991) has a lot of mystery-related information, with articles on Dick Francis, Colin Dexter (and a new short story by Dexter), Sue Grafton, British gangsters, history mysteries, and more. Subscription is \$24 U.S. Popular Fictions, 124 Osborne Road, Brighton BN1 6LU, U.K.

Lola Troy Flur, New York photographer extraordinaire, is now selling mystery photos. They are original photographs, matted and framed by the artist. Some of her titles are "Canary Murder Case," "Strong Poison," "Agatha Christie," "Movie Posters," "Carnegie Hall '30s." Price is \$30. Write to Lola at 360 East 65th Street, New York, NY 10021 to order. I purchased two of these wonderful photographs at Malice Domestic III. They now hang above my desk in a very prominent place. I think they're terrific.

Membership in Mystery Readers International includes a subscription to the **Mystery Readers Journal** for the calendar year. To join, send \$22.50 (\$35 overseas airmail) to MRI, P.O. Box 8116, Berkeley, CA 94707. Issues in 1991 (Volume 7) include "Murder on the Menu" (food), "Murder in the Plot" (gardening), "Murder during the Holidays," and "Murder on Screen." All issues contain reviews and articles which focus on the theme of the issue, a calendar, column, and other material. Membership is open to all readers, fans, critics, editors, publishers, and writers.

Murder Mystery Events

Karen and Bill Palmer of **Bogie's Mystery Tours** have closed the doors on Bogie's Restaurant, but they continue their wonderful mystery dinner events. These events will now be held at La Veranda, 163 West 47th Street, New York, (212) 362-7569.

Janet Rudolph writes and produces murder mystery events under the name **Murder on the Menu**. Most Murder on the Menu events are private, so if you'd like to do a fundraiser, a corporate party, or a private party, call (415) 339-2800 or write to Murder on the Menu, 166 Beau Forest Drive, Oakland, CA 94611. "We travel, but we're based in Northern California."

If you have any other mystery information you would like to share in this column, please drop me a line at Mystery Readers International, P.O. Box 8116, Berkeley, CA 94707. □

MURDER AND INTRIGUE

from Walker and Company

The Deadly Side of the Square

by Lee Jordan

In Sebastopol Square, the last survivors of a group of wartime refugees are dying mysteriously. Sophie Mendel becomes the final target for murder after the death of her housemate. Determined to remain in her home, Sophie battles the intruders with the help of her doctor and her housemate's American son.

*"...the pervasive atmosphere of menacing urban blight is as quietly, unnerveingly effective as the melodrama of last year's **The Toy Cupboard**."*
—The Kirkus Reviews

September, 192 pages, 0-8027-5794-4, \$18.95

Count the Days

by Lin Summerfield

Blond, blue-eyed Margie Jane Thoroughgood gets into an unidentified man's car and is never seen alive again. In a time of transition and upheaval, eleven year old Cassie Wade finds her life turned upside down when her father comes under police scrutiny for Margie's disappearance and her friendship with the distraught Mrs. Thoroughgood is troubled. Tension mounts as weeks become months until Cassie ultimately uncovers the killer.

"The contrast of naivety with danger gives this well-thought-out mystery a powerful menace."
—The Sunday Times (London)

October, 208 pages, 0-8027-5796-0, \$18.95

The Year's Best Mystery and Suspense Stories 1991

Compiled by Edward D. Hoch

In its sixteenth year, Hoch's distinguished collection of short mystery stories features all five Edgar nominated tales. The series detective makes a strong showing in the stories that complete this volume. The anthology includes Hoch's choice for the year's best mystery and suspense novels, an extensive bibliography, a list of the year's award winners, a necrology and an honor roll.

"A rewarding must for fans."
—Publishers Weekly

November, 256 pages, 0-8027-3200-3, \$19.95

Exception to Murder

by Anne Wingate

In the fourth novel in this acclaimed series, Councilwoman Margaret Ruskin is found dead and half eaten in ArkPark, a zoo and religious theme park to which she had been opposed. Reverend Hobby, its televangelist owner, believes someone means to discredit his ministry. With time running out and reputations on the line, Shigata and Quinn team with academic-turned-detective Steve Hansen to discover the murderer's identity.

"One hopes to see more of Shigata and the warm and human Quinn."
—Publishers Weekly

January, 192 pages, 0-8027-3203-8, \$18.95

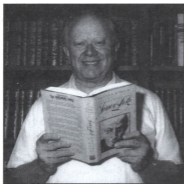


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John Kovatski



Having written more than six hundred tales of suspense, Edward D. Hoch is the undisputed master of the mystery short story. "A Winter's Game" takes us back to 1952, when a young girl's first job in the Big Apple lands her in a gem of a predicament.

A WINTER'S GAME

by Edward D. Hoch

Sunny York spent the entire Christmas season of 1952 alone in New York City, searching for a job when nobody wanted to hire her. Trudging up Fifth Avenue from the employment agency for one more fruitless interview, she'd never felt quite so lonely in her entire life. Three days before Christmas she'd almost given up the whole thing and headed home to Elkhart, Indiana, but that would have been an admission of defeat.

Sunny was twenty-three years old that winter, and she'd come to Manhattan to find herself. Back home she'd tried college for two years, and then worked for a local piano factory as a combination secretary-bookkeeper. She could imagine herself spending the rest of her life there, maybe even marrying a piano tuner and settling down in a little white clapboard house out near the airport. She imagined it so well that one evening she told her family she was moving to New York. Sunny's mother cried and her kid sister asked for some of her dresses and her father looked glum for an entire weekend. When the day finally came for her departure he gave her a hundred dollars and told her the room would be there if she ever wanted to come back. She hugged him and cried a little herself.

Christmas was on a Thursday that year, and when she went for a Tuesday interview at a publishing company she discovered the office Christmas party was in full swing. "Come back after New Year's," the receptionist told her.

She spent Christmas Day at Radio City Music Hall, sitting through two shows before she went off

to dinner at Howard Johnson's.

The following Monday was more of the same, and she stopped going to the employment agency on 42nd Street. Everyone said to come back after New Year's, but that didn't help to pay for her room at the YWCA. Even at a mere seven dollars a week, the money was almost gone. A Christmas check from her parents helped to keep her afloat, but she knew she couldn't last very far into January without giving up.

On Monday, the 5th, there was an ad in the paper that sounded promising: *Sec'y, some book-keeping. \$50/week.* It wasn't much money but maybe she could talk them into a little more. It was a Fifth Avenue address, down in the 20s. Sunny put on her best dress and took the bus downtown. The address she sought proved to be an old loft building on the side street, though part of it fronted on Fifth Avenue. Riding up in the dingy elevator just about convinced her in advance that she didn't want the job, and her opinion didn't change when she stepped out on the fourth floor and found herself in a large high-ceilinged loft that seemed to run the length of the building without partitions.

A small sign on a desk by the elevator gave the company's name: Allied Endeavors. A hand-drawn arrow pointed to the right. She followed it down an aisle between stacks of cardboard boxes, finally seeing some desks arranged in three little cubicles. The sound of typing came from the mid-

die cubicle, but it stopped as she approached. A genial-looking bald man stuck his head out and saw her.

"I thought I heard high heels. Are you here about the job?"

"Yes, I am, Mr.—?"

"Jennings. Michael Jennings. Sit down, please. The others should be in soon. I'm always the first one. What's your name?" "Sunny York."

He jotted it down on a yellow legal pad. "What's your experience, Sunny?"

"I was a secretary and part-time bookkeeper for the Epic Piano Works in Elkhart, Indiana. Before that I had two years of college at Indiana U." She glanced around the loft. "What sort of business is Allied Endeavors?"

"Actually there are three of us who share office space here. Since we each only need a part-time secretary, you'd be working for all of us."

"Three different bosses?" Sunny asked a bit uncertainly. "I don't know how that would work out. What business are you all in, Mr. Jennings?"

"I'm an accountant, Lane is a bail bondsman and Frazier handles private investigations."

Her eyes widened. "Like a detective?"

Jennings chuckled. "On a very small scale. Oh, here's Lane now. Vincent Lane, meet Sunny York. She's here about the job."

Lane was younger than Michael Jennings by ten years or so. His face would-have been considered handsome except for the tired eyes that were the first thing she noticed. He looked as if he hadn't been to bed in a week. "Hi," he greeted her, managing a weak smile. "Has Mike been filling you in?"

"He's told me a little about what you do. Excellent what is a bail bondsman?"

"When a defendant in a criminal case is released on bail, I put up the bond that becomes surety for his appearance. Few defendants have the cash in hand, so they might put up ten percent and pledge securities or property for the rest. They lose that if they fail to appear."

Mike Jennings smirked a bit, running a hand over his bald head. "Vince doesn't have the most law-abiding customers in the city. But on the other hand they rarely come in the office to bother him. Most of his business is conducted down at the jail."

"What about you?" Vincent Lane asked. "Can you type, take shorthand?"

"Sure. I can answer the phone and do book-keeping too." She quickly ran through some of her duties at the piano works.

"Why'd you leave Elkhart?" Lane asked. He really was handsome, she decided, with a little grin that was always playing around his lips. She glanced at

his left hand. There was no wedding ring but that didn't prove anything.

"I decided it was time to see the world, or at least New York City."

"Boyfriend back home?"

Sunny felt herself blushing. "No, not really. No one I couldn't leave behind."

"You're a pretty girl. They all must be blind out in Elkhart."

"Does that mean I've got the job?"

Both men laughed. "She's a perky one!" Jennings decided. "That's what we need around here to keep us on our toes."

But Lane wasn't so certain. "You'll have to wait till Pete Frazier gets in. We all have to agree."

"Oh."

"This would be your desk if you do get the job. You can sit at it and wait for him if you'd like. He's usually in by ten."

The two of them held a whispered consultation and then went into their own cubicles.

Sunny sat down behind the big office typewriter, feeling awkward. She hadn't even had an opportunity to tell them she'd need more than fifty dollars a week. It was already ten o'clock and there was no sign of Frazier.

Then, about ten minutes later, she heard the clank and hum of the elevator. But it wasn't Frazier. It was another girl like herself, clutching a copy of the morning *Times* and following the hand-printed sign. She stopped in her tracks when she saw Sunny and the odd arrangement of cubicles. "—I came about the job," she said, addressing no one in particular.

"So did I," Sunny told her.

The girl, who looked straight out of high school, peered in at Jennings and Lane. "Which one would I be working for?"

"All of them. The third one isn't here yet."

"I see." She glanced around as if looking for a chair, then changed her mind. "I'll come back later," she said, and retreated quickly toward the elevator.

Sunny York sat there in silence for another moment, then announced to the two men, "Perhaps I'd better come back later too."

Mike Jennings came out of his cubicle. "Nonsense! We've been running that ad since before Christmas and you're the first one who didn't bolt and run when they saw the place. Pete should be—"

They heard the sound of the elevator again, and this time a man emerged. Sunny guessed him to be about forty, almost as old as Jennings, and as he came down the aisle between the rows of boxes she was reminded of Mr. March at the piano works, a grouchy efficiency expert who'd been brought in

Sunny spent Christmas Day at Radio City Music Hall and then ate dinner alone.

to improve the firm's profit picture. During her entire final year on the job she'd never seen Mr. March smile. Now, as Jennings introduced her to Pete Frazier, she wondered if he ever smiled.

"What did he say your name was?" Frazier asked, motioning her toward a chair in his cubicle.

"Sunny York."

"What kind of a name is Sunny?"

"Well, it's a nickname, really. My name is Sandra."

"Why don't they call you Sandy?" he asked, settling into his chair as he flipped quickly through the mail on his desk.

"I guess my hair's the wrong color."

His eyes went to her shoulder-length brown hair but he didn't smile. "Tell me about your background. Do you have any references?"

She opened her purse and extracted a letter from the manager of the piano works. Frazier was the first one who'd ever asked to see it. He asked a few more questions and then gave her something to type. When she'd finished he went out to talk with the others. Then he returned and said, "Let's try it for a couple of weeks. We'll see how you like us and we like you."

"Well," she began, hesitating a bit. "There's just one thing—"

"What's that?"

"I'd need sixty dollars a week. I couldn't do it for fifty."

He sighed and went out to speak with the others. He hadn't immediately rejected her plea, and she took that as a good sign. This time he was gone about five minutes but when he returned he told her, "All right, sixty a week. The check will come from me every Friday, but you'll be working for all three of us."

"I understand."

"One other thing."

"Yes?"

"I don't like Sunny. In my office you'll be Sandra."

During the weeks that followed Sunny York adjusted quickly to the new job. Often she found herself working alone, with all three of her bosses out of their tiny offices for one reason or another. Frazier did mainly divorce investigations, along with some corporate security work. Toward the end of January, as the nation turned its eyes toward Washington and the inauguration of Dwight D. Eisenhower as president, Michael Jennings's tax business started to increase.

"March 15th isn't that far away," he told Sunny. "I may have you working a few nights typing up tax forms."

One day during the first week in February,

Jennings invited her to have lunch with him. Vince Lane had been down at the courthouse all morning and Frazier was trailing a philandering husband to Florida. Jennings was the only one with work for her that day, and if he wanted to take her to lunch that was fine with her. "Nothing fancy," he said. "Just the place across the street."

It was a relatively small place called the March Hare, with a bar up front and tables and booths in the rear. During her short stay in New York, Sunny had noticed dozens of side-street restaurants just like this one, and she wondered how they all managed to stay in business. It was crowded at lunch hour but deserted on most evenings. She knew that her three employers liked the March Hare, though, and wasn't surprised when Mike Jennings suggested it.

Their waitress was a bleached blond named Thelma who patted Mike's bald head and joked with him as she took their order. "Watch out for him," she warned Sunny. "He's got more hands than an octopus."

"An octopus doesn't have hands," Mike retorted.

"Well, arms. It's the same thing. What'll you have, honey?"

"A chicken sandwich on toast," Sunny told her.

"A martini for me first," Jennings said. "How about you, Sunny?"

"I'd better not, if I'm going to be typing tax forms all afternoon. Just a Coke for me, please."

When they were alone he asked her, "How do you like the job after your first month?"

"I like it. Working for all three of you gives me variety. There's no dull routine of doing the same thing every day."

"We like you, too. Vince says you're the best secretary he's ever had."

"Tell me about Vince. He's probably in the office less than any of you. Is he married?" She kept her voice casual.

Jennings shook his head. "He never took the plunge, but he's had plenty of girlfriends. Hell, with the money we make in this business none of us could support a wife and family. Pete and I have tried it, but nothing worked out. I've been divorced ten years. Pete has a wife somewhere that he doesn't talk about."

"Does Pete ever smile or joke? He seems awfully serious."

"He's got a lot on his mind. Doing that sort of work in New York isn't like figuring income taxes."

The sandwiches arrived and Sunny took a bite of hers. "How did you three get together?" she asked after a moment.

"The loft was owned by one of Vince's clients, out on bail after killing his wife. The guy took off for Brazil with his girlfriend and the loft he'd put up for collateral was forfeited to the court. Vince managed

to buy it at a good price, and he moved his office there. He knew Pete and me so he offered us cheap rent to move in too. Cheap rent and free typewriter paper till the year 2000."

"All those boxes?"

Jennings nodded. "The guy had a stationery business."

When the check came he paid for it, then told Sunny he'd be back to the office in about an hour. She lingered over coffee, knowing the others would still be out, and then took a slow walk around the block before returning to work. It was a sunny afternoon with the temperature in the low forties, and she stopped to buy a tabloid at the corner newsstand. The headline was something about Eisenhower unleashing Chiang Kai-shek to raid the China mainland, but she didn't pay much attention to it. There was always war in that part of the world, though at least things were looking better in Korea. She wondered how Vincent Lane had avoided the draft, but maybe they weren't taking men in their thirties. She knew most of her school friends had either enlisted or been drafted.

Sunny took the elevator up to the fourth floor and stepped out. Suddenly a man stepped from behind the pile of boxes and she almost screamed. "Who are you?" she managed to ask, trying to hide her fright. "What are you doing here?"

"I am sorry if I scare you." She saw now that he was a short man with oriental features, probably Chinese, and she was reminded of the newspaper headline. "My name is Ho Chen."

Sunny relaxed a bit. This little Chinese man hardly seemed threatening to her. "What can I do for you, Mr. Chen?"

"I wish to see the problem solver."

"That would be Mr. Frazier. He's out of town today, but I expect him back tomorrow. May I take down your name and address?"

He stared at Sunny a bit uncertainly, but decided it would be all right. She led the way down the boxed-in corridor to her desk and handed him one of Pete Frazier's business cards. He studied it for a moment and slipped it into his pocket. "I come back later," he decided.

"But your address—"

He smiled and gave a little bow. "Goodbye."

Sunny shrugged and wrote *Ho Chen* on the notepad for Frazier's calls. She heard him enter the

elevator and go down. Then she went in and left the note on Frazier's desk. They didn't get many drop-in clients like that. Maybe he'd call next time for an appointment.

An hour later she was still alone. Neither Jennings nor Vince Lane had returned, and her work was pretty well caught up. She was wondering what to tackle next when the elevator clanked and started to rise. It would be one of them, she knew, and that would be someone to talk to, even if there was no work to be done. Secretly she hoped it was Vince, and that she'd have some time alone with him, but she knew that wasn't fair to Mike Jennings who'd just bought her lunch.

When the elevator door opened and the man appeared between the rows of boxes, it wasn't either of them. It was a tall slender man Sunny had never seen before. He walked with a measured stride, and didn't acknowledge her presence until he was right up to the desk.

"I'm looking for Mr. Ho Chen," he said quietly. "Where is he?"

"I'm all alone here. You can see that. If you want Mr. Frazier, he's out of town till tomorrow. Mr. Lane and Mr. Jennings will be back shortly."

"Ho Chen, the Chinese fellow. I saw him come in here, and he didn't come out."

"You're mistaken," she said sweetly. "Mr. Chen left an hour ago."

"Is Frazier in?"

"I just said he was out of town," she told him, growing annoyed at the man's attitude. "May I give him your name?"

"Kevin O'Key."

"Okie?"

"O'Key." He spelled it for her. "Tell him I'll call tomorrow."

As the slender man was leaving, Jennings returned. "Who was that?" he asked Sunny.

"Someone for Pete Frazier, I guess. Strange man."

"Most of Frazier's clients are a bit strange."

"Thanks again for lunch."

"It was my pleasure." Vince Lane phoned in to say he wouldn't be back till morning. He was down at the courthouse trying to arrange bail for a client. Sunny got to work on some of the tax forms and chatted with Jennings for the rest of the afternoon.

Sunny took the elevator up to the fourth floor and stepped out. Suddenly a man stepped from behind the pile of boxes and she almost screamed. "Who are you?" she managed to ask.

In the morning Vince was already at his desk when she arrived, and the sight of him perked up her spirits at once. She stowed her purse in the bottom drawer, hung up her coat, and asked if he'd like some coffee from the percolator they kept in the office. "Sure, Sunny. That would be great."

He was busy making notes for some of the bail bond forms when she brought in the coffee. He saw that she'd brought one for herself and motioned her to a chair. "Busy day yesterday?" she asked.

"Pretty busy. I'll have some forms for you to type up soon. Here's a tax bill from the city too, for this loft. Make out a check from my personal account."

She jotted a note to herself. "Do you own this whole building?"

"No, each floor has a separate owner, like a condominium."

"What's on the other floors? I've never looked."

"Just storage space. The first two floors are owned by an importing company and the third floor is empty right now." He finished his paperwork and passed a pile of folders across the desk.

"That should keep you busy."

She glanced inside the first one. "Assault with a deadly weapon!"

"He went after his girlfriend with a tack hammer. He's a mean bastard. I hope he doesn't skip out on me."

"What would you do then?"

"Find him, if I could. Sometimes I even hire a bounty hunter."

"There are people who do that for a living?"

Vince Lane laughed. "In New York there are people who'll do anything for a living. Mostly I give the work to someone I know. Pete's done a few for me when business was slow. He doesn't like it, though. Doesn't like being shot at."

As if on cue the elevator door opened and they saw Frazier go into his cubicle, waving a greeting as he passed. "I'd better get at this," Sunny decided. "He'll probably have work for me too."

She'd been typing about fifteen minutes when Pete Frazier called to her. "Sandra, come in and bring your book, please."

She settled into the chair opposite his desk and crossed her legs to support the steno pad. "How are you today, Mr. Frazier?"

He glanced up. "My, aren't we formal today!"

"I thought maybe you didn't like me to call you Pete."

"I'll let you know when I don't like something." He picked up the business card on his desk. "Who's this Ho Chen?"

"He came in yesterday. Said he had a puzzle to be solved. I told him you'd be back today."

"All right." He put the card aside. "I wound up the Florida matter. I'll dictate my report and you can

type up a rough draft. I'll want to go over it again before you do the final version."

"This is for Mrs. Matthews?"

"Right."

He'd trailed her husband to Miami and caught him in a compromising situation with a Cuban chorus girl. There was nothing new or unusual about the case, and Frazier gave his report in a droning voice as if his mind was already on something else. He was about halfway through the account of his Florida trip when the visitors arrived. Sunny glanced up to see them standing in the entrance to the cubicle, and immediately decided they were clients. Silently she resolved to speak with her three bosses about closing off this area and creating real private offices.

She half rose from her chair, facing the taller of the men.

He was slipping out of his beige trench coat as if he intended to stay awhile. "Would you like an appointment to see Mr. Frazier?"

The man smiled sardonically. "I'm seeing him right now. How are you, Pete?"

Frazier got to his feet. "Sandra, this is Sergeant Avril from Homicide. The man with him is Detective Ritter. They're old friends."

"I'm sorry. I didn't know. I'll get another chair." She closed her steno pad and hurried out to do just that.

"We found a dead man this morning with one of your business cards in his pocket," Sergeant Avril began, not waiting for the chair. "What can you tell us about him?"

"I have no idea who you're talking about."

"An Oriental named Ho Chen, probably Chinese. His passport shows he arrived here from Hong Kong a week ago."

Sandra returned with the extra chair and both detectives sat down. "That's the man who came to see you yesterday," she reminded Frazier.

"Did you give him one of my cards?"

"Yes, I did."

Pete Frazier spread his hands. "There you are, gentlemen. I never laid eyes on the man. I was in Miami winding up a case yesterday."

"What business did he have with you?" Detective Ritter asked. Sunny noticed that he hadn't removed his coat like the sergeant. He was a younger man, not bad looking, but she thought his haircut was too short for the shape of his face.

"I don't know his business because I never spoke to him," Frazier explained patiently.

"Did he write you?"

"No. Suppose you give me some information. With you two on the case it must be a homicide."

Sergeant Avril took over the conversation. "A cab driver found his body around five this morning, at the edge of a vacant lot in the South Bronx. He'd been shot once at close range, through the back of the head."

"A gang hit?" Frazier asked.

"Nothing to indicate it. Nothing to indicate it was robbery, either. He had over two hundred dollars in his wallet."

"How'd the driver happen to notice the body?"

"He stopped the cab and went into the lot to relieve himself. It was still dark and he tripped over it."

"Any idea where he was staying in the city?"

"He had a hotel key from the Astor in Times Square. We checked it out."

"Find anything?"

"Clothes, a fairly new suitcase. Also a business ledger full of figures. We're trying to get the Chinese parts translated."

"Sorry I can't help you," Pete Frazier told them. "Sandra—Miss York—is the only one who saw him."

Sergeant Avril took a photo from his pocket and showed it to her. "Is this the man who called here yesterday, Miss York?"

Too late, Sunny realized it was a morgue shot. Her stomach heaved as she gazed at the dead face of Ho Chen. "That's him," she managed to whisper.

Avril got to his feet. "If you remember anything more, give me a call. Both of you."

Frazier headed them toward the elevator as Avril slipped into his coat. "What do you think the Chinaman was doing in the Bronx?" Frazier asked.

"He wasn't killed there. He was dumped. Not even blood."

"It still sounds like a gang killing to me."

The detectives got on the elevator. "Keep in touch, Pete."

Sunny went back and settled down with her steno pad. Vince poked his head around the partition. "What's this? A murder?"

Pete Frazier stared at him. "You been eavesdropping on my business again?"

"Hell, Pete, I couldn't help hearing—"

Frazier waved him away and returned to his dictation. After a moment Sunny interrupted him. "I just remembered something!" she blurted out.

"What?" he asked, a bit irritably, seeming to question the interruption rather than her memory.

"A man named Kevin O'Key! He came up here after Ho Chen left, looking for him. He said he'd been watching the door and didn't see him leave."

"Kevin O'Key. Are you certain?"

"That's the name he gave me. A tall, slender man who walked slow."

"Yeah, that's O'Key."

"Who is he?"

Frazier took out a cigar and lit it before answering. "A gambler. Mostly sports gambling. Horses, baseball, football. In February the big money's on

basketball."

"Do people bet on basketball?"

"Sandra, people will bet on anything." He put down his notes and glanced at his watch. "Come on, I'm taking you to lunch at the Astor Bar."

"Wha—what for?"

"Because it's lunch time, and I need to make it look like I'm there socially. You'll be my cover."

"But why the Astor?"

"Ho Chen was staying at the Astor, and Kevin O'Key hangs out there."

"Ho Chen wasn't a client."

"No, but he wanted to be. That's almost as good."

The Astor Bar was a large, dark-paneled room in Times Square at the corner of 44th Street. It adjoined the hotel lobby and also had an entrance from the street, which was the one Frazier and Sunny used. The bar itself was a large oval in the middle of the room, with tables set around the sides. Frazier chose a table near the door and they sat down. "Lunch?" the waiter asked. "Just sandwiches and a beer." He glanced at Sunny. "You want a beer?"

"Just a Coke." She glanced around the big room, noting that the occupants of the bar were all males. "Do you come here often?"

"Not too much. A lot of show business and entertainment people hang out here. Sports people, too. That's the attraction for a gambler like O'Key."

"I don't see him."

"It might be a bit early in the day, but we'll see. There are games tonight and he'll be busy."

"What could be his connection with Ho Chen?"

"You're the only connection right now."

Later, over sandwiches, she worked up her courage to ask, "Why don't you ever smile, Pete?"

His gaze shot up to meet hers, and for an instant she feared he was angry. "You smile enough for both of us."

"I guess that's why my folks started calling me Sunny. When I was young—" She broke off, staring at a man who'd just entered the bar from the lobby. "There he is! That's him."

Pete Frazier went on eating for a moment, then managed a sideways glance toward the slender man at the bar. "It's O'Key, all right."

The gambler immediately engaged in a quiet but intense conversation with a man who'd been standing at the bar, nursing a drink. "What are you going to do?" Sunny asked.

"Let's finish up here and we'll stop to say hello."

Kevin O'Key—the sports gambler—was also looking for Ho Chen

Sunny drank the last of her Coke and Frazier laid a few bills on top of the check. As they circled the bar toward the lobby exit, passing O'Key and the other man, Frazier greeted him. "Hello, Kevin. How's it been going?"

"Oh, Frazier! Fine, going fine." He turned back toward the other man, but Frazier wasn't about to let him off the hook that easily.

"This is my secretary, Sandra York, but I understand you two have already met."

O'Key turned toward Sunny as if seeing her for the first time. "I don't—"

"You were looking for Mr. Ho Chen," she reminded him.

"And he's been found," Frazier added.

O'Key turned back to his companion. "Pardon us a minute, will you." Then, to Frazier, "OK, where can we talk?"

"In the lobby."

They went out together and found a secluded nook at the far side of the lobby, near the Astor Pharmacy. "Now what do you want?" the tall man asked.

"Ho Chen has been murdered. They found his body this morning. What do you know about it, Kevin?"

"Murdered? I don't know a thing."

"You were following him yesterday. You followed him to my office."

"And I lost him there. I never saw him after that."

"Why were you following him?"

"Hell, he wanted to make a big bet on a college basketball game tonight. I was trying to protect my investment."

"A man just arrived from Hong Kong wanting to bet on American basketball? You'd better come up with a better story than that."

"You'd better talk to Lotus," he decided. "She can tell you more than I can."

"Who is she?"

"Lotus White, the hostess at the Golden Dragon Restaurant. It's over on Eighth Avenue. She got us together, and then it turned out he didn't have the cash on him. That's why I was following him. It was a big bet—ten thousand dollars—and I didn't want to lay it off till I had the cash in hand. After all, I didn't really know the guy. He could have been on the next plane back to Hong Kong and I'd have been stuck for ten grand."

"Where was he planning to get the money?" Frazier asked. "There must have been some reason you trusted him."

"Well, yeah. He showed me the diamonds."

Frazier and Sunny exchanged glances. "What diamonds would those be, Kevin?"

"He brought some diamonds from Hong Kong to close some sort of business deal, but he hadn't fig-

ured out how much it was going to cost him so he couldn't actually give me any diamonds to hold. He just showed 'em to me. God, I must have been light-headed to let him walk outta here without giving me anything to back up his bet. That's when I decided I'd better follow him. I was pretty surprised to see him going into your place, Frazier."

"What did you do about the bet?"

"I couldn't lay it off and I didn't want to hold it myself, not after he gave me the slip. So I just canceled it when he didn't show last night. Good thing I did!"

"Where can I find Lotus White?"

"I don't know where she lives, probably Chinatown. She'll be at the restaurant when it gets near dinner time."

Frazier got to his feet. "Thanks, Kevin. See you around."

After he left, Sunny asked, "Where to now?"

"Back to the office. I'll check out Lotus White at dinner time."

"Can I go with you?" "I guess I won't need you, Sandra."

She tried to hide her disappointment.

"OK. Thanks for lunch."

It had turned colder by the time they returned to the loft, and there were even a few snow flurries in the air. Pete Frazier took the elevator upstairs, but Sunny remembered they were out of coffee and decided to shop for some. As she passed the March Hare she spotted Mike Jennings and Vince finishing lunch at one of the window tables.

When she joined them, Vince asked, "Where've you been?"

"Pete took me uptown for lunch. He had some business at the Astor Bar."

"Fancy!" Jennings said.

"Not really. This place has better chicken sandwiches. I think Pete feels bad about that Chinese man who was killed. He came to the office and Pete wasn't there to help him. That's what we were doing uptown. Pete wanted to see a man named Kevin O'Key."

"The gambler?" Vince Lane snorted. "I put up a bail bond for him last year. It was a gambling arrest and the D.A. finally dropped the charges."

Jennings scratched his bald head. "Is Frazier working for free on this? I've never known him to waste time that somebody wasn't paying for."

"There's no client," she assured him. "He's just doing it."

They went back to the office together and Sunny

Ho Chen brought diamonds from Hong Kong—they were the collateral for his gambling

refilled the percolator with her newly purchased coffee. Mike Jennings came out to hand her another batch of tax forms. "You think it's bad now, wait till the first two weeks in March," he warned her.

She was working on the tax return for Gould Electric at five o'clock when Frazier passed her desk. "Time to go home," he said.

"One more line and I'm quitting for the night. Are you going up to that Chinese restaurant?"

"I thought I'd stop there on my way home, just to talk to this Lotus. I don't go much for Chinese food." He walked on toward the elevator, then turned and said, "Come along if you want. It won't be very exciting."

Her face brightened into a smile. "Thanks, I will!"

They took the Eighth Avenue subway up to 42nd Street, then walked a few blocks north to the Golden Dragon. It was a moderately priced place, and the paint was beginning to chip off the dragon just inside the door. A handsome Chinese woman wearing a skirt slit up her thigh came to greet them. They had no doubt that she was Lotus.

"Miss White?" Frazier asked.

"Yes?" The menus she carried went up in front of her like a shield. "Do you wish a table?"

"No, I just have one or two questions about a man named Ho Chen."

Her smile disappeared. "Ho Chen is dead. Are you police?"

"Private," Frazier told her. "He wanted to hire me for something and he died before he could do it."

"Who sent you here?"

"Kevin O'Key. He told us—"

She glanced around, moistening her lips nervously. "Sit down here. There'll be no other customers until after six. Now what is this all about?"

"How did you meet Ho Chen, and why did you introduce him to O'Key?"

Lotus sighed. "He was just over from Hong Kong and he came here for a good Chinese meal. He was a wealthy businessman who liked to gamble, and he was disappointed there was no legal gambling in New York. We got friendly and he asked for the address of some illegal club. I couldn't help him. I didn't know of any. I told him

that around the Times Square area sports gambling was big. I mentioned Kevin O'Key's name because I knew he handled a lot of sports betting. The trouble was, this is February. With no big fights scheduled, the only thing he could bet on was a basketball game. He didn't care. He just wanted to bet."

"Tell me about the diamonds."

Her eyes widened. "You know about those?"

"O'Key mentioned them."

"Well, that was the problem. I helped him decide which team to bet on—I liked Indiana over Kansas for tonight's game—and he wanted to bet ten thousand. But he didn't have the cash. He just had the diamonds. A jeweler on 47th Street had appraised

them at fifty thousand, but before he converted them to cash he needed to know how much the business deal would cost him."

"He was gambling with his company's money?"

"I don't know. I didn't get into that, but maybe he was." She evened the pile of menus in front of her, glancing around at the sea of white tablecloths. "Anyway, he said he had a problem trying to figure the complicated financial arrangements he was involved in. He had to pay this other company a percentage of sales, but he didn't know if he could deduct expenses first, or how much that would come to. I suppose it came down to not understanding the American way of doing business. I asked my boss if he could help, and he set up an appointment with someone he uses. Ho Chen

seemed pleased, but he was more pleased to meet Kevin O'Key and place his bet on the basketball game. You know, I don't think he had any idea of what the game was all about. He'd never seen one in his life."

"O'Key didn't place the bet," Frazier told her. "The Chinaman never gave him the cash."

"I don't suppose it makes much difference now."

"Who were these business associates with this other company?"

"Somebody out near Idlewild Airport. The name will come to me." Her face twisted in concentration. "Suntax Imports!—That was it Suntax Imports."



The hostess at the Golden Dragon restaurant held a clue to the identity of the murderer.

"Thanks a lot, Miss White. You've been a big help."

Sunny cleared her throat. "I—I have just one question, if I could ask it."

"Go ahead."

"Where did he keep these diamonds—back in his hotel room?"

"Heavens, no! He carried them in a little velvet pouch around his neck."

It was still cold in the morning, with fat white flakes floating down from a steely February sky. Pete Frazier had phoned Sunny at her apartment to say he was going directly out to Suintax Imports before coming to the office. She took the subway downtown and rode the clanky elevator up to the fourth floor. There was a light on in Vince's cubicle and he was sitting with his feet up on the desk, reading a paperback mystery by Steve Fisher.

"No business today?" she asked as she hung up her coat.

"Nothing that I know of. The first court sessions are at ten. I'll go down pretty soon and see what's doing."

"I got all your typing done."

"Thanks. I found it on my desk."

She uncovered her typewriter and went back to typing the tax return for Gould Electric. By the time she'd finished it, Vince had departed for the courthouse and Mike Jennings had arrived to start his day. "Where's Pete this morning?" he asked.

"Still following up on that Chinese killing."

"For free?" He shook his head. "Pete'll never learn."

"Here's the Gould Electric tax return."

"Thanks, Sunny." She went back and sat down at her desk, then got up and wandered into Pete Frazier's cubicle. What was bothering her? She stared at Pete's desk, trying to conjure up a forgotten memory. Then she shrugged and went back to her desk. She opened the *Herald-Tribune* to the sports page and checked the basketball scores. Indiana had beaten Kansas, 88 to 76. Ho Chen would have won his bet.

"You can put the Gould folder back in the file," Jennings said. She took it from his desk and went over to the bank of metal filing cabinets against the wall:

G

Gloverton

Goddon

Golden Dragon

Gould Electric

"Golden Dragon?"

"It's a restaurant on Eighth Avenue. I'm their accountant."

Sunny felt the blood drain from her face. Golden Dragon. Problem, not puzzle. The note on the desk. It was all there. She turned impulsively from the filing cabinet and said, "Mike, you killed that Chinaman! You killed Ho Chen!"

Jennings started to rise from his desk. "Chinaman? What in hell are you talking about, Sunny?"

"Ho Chen never came here to see Pete. He came because he had an appointment with you! I misunderstood the whole thing when he said he was here to see the problem solver. I immediately thought he wanted a detective. But to Ho Chen there was another sort of problem—a financial and bookkeeping one. He needed an accountant to solve his problem, and the owners of the Golden Dragon made an appointment for him with

their accountant. That was you. He talked to you on the phone and you learned about the diamonds he was carrying, the diamonds that weren't found on his body. You met him downstairs as he was leaving here, and lured him onto one of the deserted floors. That's why Kevin O'Key never saw him leave, even though he was watching the door. You killed him there and stole the pouch full of diamonds. That night you carried the body

out to your car and dumped it in the Bronx."

"Sunny, be reasonable—"

"By the next day I'd forgotten exactly who Ho Chen had asked for. I thought he'd wanted a puzzle solver, not a problem solver. My memory was faulty in another way. After he left I wrote his name on one of Pete's message slips and left it on his desk. Ho Chen's English wasn't good enough to tell me I had the wrong person. He just decided to go away and come back later. But in the morning when Pete asked me about him, he wasn't holding a message slip. He was holding Ho Chen's business card. When I remembered that I had to ask myself how it got there, in place of the message slip, Ho Chin never returned. I was here all afternoon. If Ho Chin didn't change them, someone else did. It had to be someone who saw him after he left, and was given the business card. Someone Ho Chin came here to see, someone with access to these offices after I went home. Ho Chin's killer was one of you three."

Mike Jennings had stopped arguing and was listening with a calm silence.

"Pete Frazier was in Florida, and even if he got back early he'd have no reason to make the substitution. The name was on his desk. He could have done what he wanted with it. But suppose either

you or Vince had killed Ho Chen for the diamonds and then came up here at night to remove any traces of him. You saw the name on Pete's message slip and immediately destroyed it—ripped it up or burned it without thinking. But then you realized your error. I knew he'd come here. More important, I'd obviously thought he came to see Pete. It was to your advantage to have the name back on Pete's desk, but you'd already destroyed it. You couldn't risk trying to forge my handwriting on another message slip, so you took out the calling card Ho Chen had given you when you met him downstairs, and substituted that. There was a good chance I'd never see it, and if I did I might forget he hadn't left it. Which is exactly what I did, at first."

"How did I know the man downstairs was Ho Chen?"

"My God, Mike—he was Chinese! You were expecting a Chinaman and there he was. It had to be Ho Chen. I suppose he even told you of the confusion with me. You knew at once you could kill him and probably get away with it. Maybe you'd hidden the gun on a downstairs floor for just such an opportunity."

"Why me? Why couldn't it have been Vince?"

"Ho Chen needed an accountant, not a bail bondsman."

He smiled and opened the desk drawer. "The gun's right here now, Sunny. You should

have stayed in Elkhart."

he turned and ran at the first glimpse of it, heading for the elevator, knowing she couldn't outrun a bullet but having no other choice.

"Sunny!" He was after her in a flash.

She tumbled over a stack of boxes, then changed direction and headed away from the elevator toward the darker side of the loft.

"Sunny, stop! Don't make me do this!"

Then her heels tripped her up and she fell forward, her face breaking through unseen cobwebs. He was right behind her and she rolled over, screaming. She could see him raise the pistol.

There was something else, some other noise. She heard Pete Frazier shouting, and saw Jennings turn, confused at the interruption.

"Drop the gun!"

"Stay out of this, Pete—"

Jennings fired first and then there was an echoing shot, and he fell backwards into a stack of boxes. Frazier was there, and Vince Lane too, kneeling to brush the cobwebs from her face.

She started crying then, but somehow she knew it would be all right.

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PART III Murder ONCE REMOVED

A continuing supplement to *Detective and Mystery Fiction*

by Walter Albert

INNES, HAMMOND
Int: PW, 2 Dec 1988, pp. 37-38 [photo]

INNES, MICHAEL
[pseud. of J. I. M. Stewart]
C131. Stewart, J. I. M. *Myself and Michael Innes: A Memoir*. London: Gollancz, 1987; New York: Norton, 1988. 206pp. Both Innes and his publisher appear to consider his detective fiction output as something apart from his other, more serious work: the publisher does not list any of the Michael Innes byline novels facing the title page, and Innes, working like a surgeon neatly separating the extraneous tissue from the essential organs, speaks engagingly but by casually, Michael Innes in five chapters. Also included is an essay, "Excursion on the Detective Story," pp. 175-83. Rev: TLS, No. 1045 (25 Sept-1 Oct 1987), p. 1045.

JAMES, P. D.
Ref: BMC 37 (April 87), pp. 14-20; *L.A. Times*, View Section, 21 Jan 1987, pp. 1, 4 [photo]; A61, A77, A78, A144
Int: NYTBR, 9 Oct 1988, pp. 1, 18-20 [photo]; *Everywoman* (Britain), No. 40, July 1988, pp. 10-11 [photo]; *Reader's Digest* (Canada), Oct 1987, pp. 131-34 [photo]

C132. Maxfield, James F. "The Unfinished Detective: The Work of P. D. James." *Critique* (Washington, D.C.) 28 (1987) 211-23. A study of the psychological development of "developing" Cordelia Gray in *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*.

C133. Porter, Dennis. "Detection and Ethics: The Case of P. D. James." In A143, pp. 11-18. A discussion of the "morally ambivalent" role of the detective in James (and in detective fiction) and of the sense of "guilt" with which her novels are "haunted." Porter ultimately sees James as a moralist with a nostalgia for a "nobler age of belief."

C134. Richardson, Betty. "Sweet Thames, Run Softly: P. D. James's *Waste Land in A Taste for Death*." *Clues* 9:2 (Fall-

Winter 88) 105-18. A reading of James's novel as drawing on T. S. Eliot's "lore, images and symbols" in a work of "unusual richness and complexity."

JOHNSON, DIANE
C135. Henley, Joan. "Re-Forming the Detective Story: Diane Johnson's *The Shadow Knows*." *Clues* 9:1 (Spring/Summer 88) 87-93. Henley concentrates on the female narrator/protagonist to support her claim that Johnson, in this novel, transforms the traditional detective story into a "vehicle for new assumptions... founded in a female intelligence."

JOHNSON, E. RICHARD
Ref: E. Richard Johnson, "Introduction," in his *Silver Street* (reissued by IPL, 1988)
C136. Feder, Sue. "E. Richard Johnson: The Inside Man." MS 17 (Sept/Oct 88) 15-16. Discussion of his novels, with interview material.

JOHNSON, RYERSON
C137. "Special Ryerson Johnson Issue." *Pulp Vault* 2 (1988). In addition to a pulp story by Johnson, there are the following non-fiction features: Ryerson Johnson, "This Is the Way It Was," pp. 5-8 (Johnson remembers his days as a pulp writer; illus.); Will Murray, "Here's Johnny!" pp. 9-19 (Murray describes how he came to know Johnson and quotes exclusively from Johnson's correspondence with him; illus.); R. Johnson, "The American Fiction Guild," pp. 21-23 (on freelance writing in New York in the 1930s and Johnson's contacts with other pulp writers and the American Fiction Guild); Dickson Thorpe, "Len Siringo: Freedom's Gunhawk," pp. 24-29 (on the *Star Western* pulp series; illus.).

KAMINSKY, STUART
Ref: A160

KARIG, WALTER
Ref: B63

KEATING, H. R. F.
Ref: A8, A81
Int: MS 13 (1987) 36 [photo]; *Los Angeles*

Times, Calendar Section, 5 Dec 1987, pp. 1, 8, 10 [photo]

KELLERMAN, JONATHAN
Ref: A110
Int: PW, 19 Feb 1988, pp. 63-64 [photo]

KEMMELMAN, HARRY
Ref: A30

KIENZLE, WILLIAM
Ref: A30

KIEER, DOUGLAS
Int: MS 7 (Jan 87) 38 [photo]

KIPLING, RUDYARD
C138. Bedell, Jeanne F. "The Great Game." TAD 21 (1988) 380-87. Photos. Bedell analyzes *Kim*, a "critically neglected" work, to find in it a realistic portrayal of espionage, in contrast to the upper-class, imperialist approach of Le Queux and Oppenheim. Bedell sees Kipling's novels as closer in outlook to Le Carré and Deighton than to his contemporaries.

KITTREDGE, MARY
Int: MS 9 (1987) 22-23

KNOX, BILL
C139. Sarjeant, William A. S., and John Sutherland. "A Tale of One City." TAD 20 (1987) 366-72, 374-79. Illus. The authors analyze the urban social setting of Glasgow, in which Knox's "Thane and Moss" procedural series is set, as well as the major protagonists. Sarjeant grew up in a city undergoing the social changes that have produced the modern Glasgow, and

Walter Albert is best known for his Edgar Award-winning MYSTERY AND DETECTIVE FICTION: AN INTERNATIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES (*Brownstone Books*, 1985). In other lives, he is associate Professor of French at the University of Pittsburgh, husband, and father of two children and one Golden Retriever.

AHMM	<i>Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine</i>
BAE	<i>Books Are Everything</i> (A122)
BMC	<i>Book & Magazine Collector</i>
CADS	<i>Crime & Detective Stories</i> (A125)
CBG	<i>Comic Buyer's Guide</i>
DAI	<i>Dissertations Abstracts International</i>
DMF	<i>Detective and Mystery Fiction</i> (Brownstone, 1985)
DNR	<i>Dime Novel Roundup</i>
DRM	<i>Dread Review of Mystery</i> (A130)
EMD	<i>Encyclopedia of Mystery & Detection</i> (McGraw-Hill, 1976)
EQMM	<i>Elery Queen's Mystery Magazine</i>
GG	Greg Goode
GP	<i>Golden Perils</i> (B21)
Int	Interview(s)
IPL	International Polygons Ltd.
JDM	John D. MacDonald
JLA	John L. Apostolou
JPC	<i>Journal of Popular Culture</i>
MASR	<i>Mystery & Adventure Series Review</i> (B22)
MFS	<i>Motion Fiction Studies</i>
MRAJ	<i>Mystery Readers of America Journal</i> (A135)
MR/RM	<i>Monographic Review/Revista Monografica</i> (Odessa, Texas)
MS	<i>Mystery Scene</i>
NBM	<i>New Black Mask</i> (Name changed to <i>A Matter of Crime</i> in 1987)
NI	<i>Nemesis Incorporated</i> (B23)
NYT	<i>New York Times</i>
NYTBR	<i>New York Times Book Review</i>
pb	paperback
Popular Press	Bowling Green State University Popular Press
PP	<i>Paperback Parade</i> (A136)
PW	<i>Publishers Weekly</i>
REB	Robert E. Briney
Ref	Reference(s)
Rev	Review(s)
TCCMW	<i>Twentieth Century Crime and Mystery Writers</i> (St. Martin's, 1980; 1985)
TLS	<i>The Times</i> (London) <i>Literary Supplement</i>
TMF	<i>The Mystery Fancier</i> (A134)
TPC	<i>The Pulp Collector</i> (B24)
TPP	<i>The Poisoned Pen</i>
WA	Walter Albert
WD	<i>Writer's Digest</i>
WLB	<i>Wilson Library Bulletin</i>
YL	<i>Yellowback Library</i> (B26)

Sutherland served for eleven years in a Glasgow police unit.

KNOR, DONALD
Ref: A152, C55

KOONTZ, DEAN
Int: *People*, 13 April 1987, pp. 77-78
[two photos]; C158

LACY, ED
Ref: A22, A133

LAKIN, DEEDRE S.
Ref: A175

LAND, JON
Int: MS 16 (1987) 42-43 [photo]

LATHEN, EMMA
C140. Sarjeant, William A. S. "Crime on Wall Street." TAD 21 (1988) 128-30, 132, 134-45. Photos of Wall Street district and reproductions of cover art. Profiles of banker-sleuth John Putman Thatcher and his associates in the long-running series.

LATIMER, JONATHAN
C141. DeAndrea, William L. "Introduction." In *Solomon's Vineyard* by Jonathan Latimer (New York: IPL, 1988), pp. [i]-[v]. Originally published in England in 1941 and first brought out in this country—abridged and in paperback—as *The Fifth Grave*. DeAndrea finds that Latimer here "strongly anticipates" Mickey Spillane and speculates on what course Latimer's career might have taken if this novel had been published in the United States in its original form in 1941.

C142. Ruelhmann, William. "Introduction." In *The Lady in the Morgue* by Jonathan Latimer (New York: IPL, 1988; originally published 1936), pp. [i]-[v]. A tribute to Latimer, novelist and screenwriter, "whose tongue," comments Ruelhmann, "remained at once tough-tart and poked firmly in his cheek."

LEBLANC, MAURICE
C143. Law, Graham. "Il s'agissait peut-être d'un roman policier": Leblanc, Macdonald, and Robbe-Grillet." *Comparative Literature* 40 (1988) 335-57. Law takes issue with some basic critical assumptions about Modernism and Postmodernist fiction, as he analyzes three texts: Leblanc's *Les Dents du tigre*, Ross Macdonald's *The Three Roads*, and Robbe-Grillet's *Les Gommies*. With numerous notes—in which

Law expands on theoretical issues—and a bibliography of secondary sources.

LE CARRÉ, JOHN
Ref: BMC, No. 51 (June 88), pp. 4-11;
A27, A138, A157, A171

C144. Geoghegan, Jack. "Introduction." In *The Spy Who Came In from the Cold* (facsimile first edition, Book-of-the-Month Club, 1988). Excerpted as "The Spy Who Saved Me—A Thriller Starring John le Carré," NYTBR, 4 Dec 1988, p. 16. Geoghegan, who published le Carré's first spy thriller, reminisces about his successful attempts to obtain the book for his firm.

C145. Silver, Brenda R. "Woman as Agent: The Case of le Carré's *Little Drummer Girl*." *Contemporary Literature* 28 (1987) 15-40. On the role of "Charlie" in *The Little Drummer Girl*, a female agent who appears to threaten gender distinctions in le Carré's novel.

C146. Walling, William. "John le Carré: The Doublebless of Class." *Columbia Library Columns* 37:2 (Feb 88) 23-32. Two photos and one movie still. On the implications of the pseudonym that David Cornwell chose for his writing career and class distinctions in his fiction.

LE FANU, SHERIDAN
C147. Melada, Ivan. *Sheridan Le Fanu*. New York: Twayne, 1987. 142pp. Index of names and titles. See Chapter 5 (pp. 63-89) for a discussion of Le Fanu's "Novels of Suspense." Standard Twayne academic author guide, with an annotated bibliography of secondary sources. Rev: *Choice*, Oct 1987, p. 312.

LEONARD, ELMORE

Ref: See also A10, A116, A160
Int: *U.S. News & World Report*, 9 March 1987, p. 64 [photo]; *City Limits* (London), 5 March-12 March 1987, pp. 15-17; *Time Out* (London), 4 March-11 March 1987, pp. 20-21 [three photos]; *Los Angeles Times*, View Section, 18 Feb 1987, pp. 1, 2 [photo]

C148. Most, Glenn W. "Elmore Leonard: Splitting Images." In A143, p. 101-10. Most's discussion of the role of shifting perspective and of chance in the "organization" of Leonard's novels is good. The concluding discussion of a mirror/glass metaphor is ingenious although not very convincing.

LEQUEUX, WILLIAM
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 191-98; A138

LEROUX, GASTON

Ref: BMC 38 (May 87) 14-22
C149. Lai, Rick. "The Mask of Erik." GP (March 87) 25-31. For the most part, Lai bases his description of the Phantom's travels before he came to Paris on information furnished by Leroux in the novel. There is, however, some speculation on incidents that may have taken place during his wanderings.

LEVIN, IRA
Ref: A175

Editor's Note: Entries in this Supplement to *Detective and Mystery Fiction: An International Bibliography of Secondary Sources* (Brownstone Books, 1985) are numbered consecutively within the three sections, with an uppercase A, B or C designating the section and Arabic numerals designating the entries. Entries in this Supplement are limited to material originally published in the English language. The Foreign Language entries will be included in a revised edition of *Detective and Mystery Fiction* being prepared for publication.

John L. Apostolou, Neil Barron, Robert E. Briney, J. Randolph Cox, William F. Deeck, Greg Goode, Douglas G. Greene, Richard Moore, Ellen Nehr, Charles Shibuk, and Jean and Walter Shine contributed to this Supplement.

LEWIS, NORMAN
Ref: A116

LITTELL, ROBERT
Int: PW, 17 June 1988, pp. 50-51 [photo]

LLOSA, MARIO VARGAS
Ref: *World Press Review*, Aug 1987, p. 61
[photo; a review with some interview material]

LOCHTE, DOCK
Ref: A110

LORAC, E. C.
C150. Sarjeant, William A. S. "A Scot at Scotland Yard: The Career of Robert Macdonald." TMC 10:2 (Spring 88) 3-23. A profile of E. C. Lorac's Inspector Macdonald, with brief portraits of other characters in the series.

LOVESEY, PETER
Ref: *The Writer*, Jan 1988, pp. 11-13, 46
[on writing and his career as a mystery writer]; BMC, No. 57 (Dec 88), pp. 26-33; A61, A64, A163

LOWNDES, MARY BELLOC
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 199-204

LUDLUM, ROBERT
Int: WD, July 1987, pp. 11-13 [photos and photocopy of page from Ludlum manuscript]

LUTZ, JOHN
Ref: *The Writer*, Dec 1987, pp. 11-13
[on writing short stories]

LYALL, GAVIN
C151. Tate, J. O. "The Right Stuff." TAD 21 (1988) 160-62, 164-66, 168-74, 176-79, 182-83. Photo of Lyall and reproductions of cover art. A lengthy survey of Lyall's novels. In a final summation, Tate allies him to the tradition of Conrad, Buchan, Ambler, and the "early" Graham Greene, with some elements of hardboiled fiction.

MCBAIN, ED
Ref: A179

MCCARRY, CHARLES
Int: *Washington Post*, 15 May 1988, pp. F1, F10-F11 [photo]

C152. McCarty, Charles. "How to Write a Spy Novel." *Washington Post*, 19 June 1988, pp. C1, C2. Illus. Article adapted from a speech given at a Smithsonian Institution symposium on the spy novel. Somewhat tongue-in-cheek, but interesting for the comments of a writer of spy fiction on his work and on the genre.

MCCONNELL, FRANK
Int: MS 10 (1987) 22 [photo]; concluded in MS 11 (1987) 20, 22

MCCOY, HORACE
C153. Culppepper, Charles. "Horace McCoy: Neither Fish Nor Fowl." PP 8 (June 88) 6-11. Illus. On McCoy's popularity in France and relative obscurity in the United States.

MCDONALD, GREGORY
C154. McAleer, John. "The Ways of the Fletcher." TAD 21 (1988) 16-19, 22-24,

26-34, 36. Photos of McDonald and of Chevy Chase (as the films' Fletcher) and reproductions of cover art. A passionate and detailed portrait of Fletcher as one of that small band of detectives who feel an obligation to "shoulder the obligations of humanity." McAleer observes the achronological publishing history to create a kaleidoscopic portrait of a modern Byronic hero.

MCDONALD, JOHN D.
Ref: TPP 7:1 (1987) 27-28 [tribute by Hal Charles]; A39, A108, A160
Int: MS 16 (1987) 21-22; *Mystery Scene Reader* (A158), pp. 114-29 [with Richard Lupoff on April 15, 1981]
Obit: MS 8 (1987) 1, 2 [photo]

C155. Gunnison, Dana. "A Remembrance of John D. MacDonald." TPC 2:3 (Winter 87) 37-41. A brief tribute, nicely illustrated with reproductions of pages from pulps featuring illustrations for stories by JDM.

C156. [PERIODICAL] *John D. MacDonald Bibliophile* (JDMB). Edited by Ed Hirschberg, Department of English, University of South Florida, Tampa, FL 33620. Published biannually. Includes biographical and bibliographical material, with regular contributions by long-time JDM fans and researchers, June and Len Moffatt and Jean and Walter Shine. Issue 39 (Jan 87) is a memorial issue with tributes by regular contributors and readers.

C157. MacDonald, John D. *Reading for Survival*. Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 1987. Wraps. In the last year of his life, MacDonald wrote this essay on reading and the plight of the non-reader in the modern world. The essay is couched in the form of a conversation between Travis McGee and his friend Meyer, and was commissioned by the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. A moving tribute to man's collective memory, the written word, and MacDonald's unflinching commitment to it.

C158. "A Special Tribute to John D. MacDonald." *Mystery Scene Reader* [No. 1]. Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Fedora Press, 1981. On pp. 6-55, there are 27 short tributes to JDM. The *Reader* also includes some original fiction by other writers, an autobiographical essay on the pulps by Todhunter Ballard (pp. 156-66), and interviews with the following writers: George Baxt (pp. 98-102), Dean R. Koontz (pp. 103-13), William F. Nolan (pp. 130-35), Elizabeth Peters (pp. 142-49), and Jimmy Sangster (pp. 150-55). The Sangster interview also includes a list of producing and writing credits for American television, novels and screenplays, and other film credits.

C159. Shine, Walter and Jean. *A MacDonald Potpourri*. Gainesville, Fla.: University of Florida Libraries, 1988. xii + 219pp. This potpourri is, like all of the Shines' work on MacDonald, a richly detailed labor of love, offering information for "collectors, bibliographers, lexicographers, statisticians, publishers and researchers." The bibliographic heart of the book (pp. 133-214) is an alphabetical listing by titles, with infor-

mation on such matters as number of printings, cover artist or cover photo, and date of issue. There are also sections on foreign and U.S. editions, collections of short stories, bestseller listings, statistics on copies printed or sold, as well as sections listing typographical errors, epigraphs used in JDM books, dedications, photos and photographers of JDM (with four pages of photographs of MacDonald), and a chapter on artists, designers, and covers, including (pp. 97-130) reproductions of the covers of paperbacks in their original and successive incarnations. An invaluable addition to the MacDonald bibliography.

C160. ———. *Special Confidential Report*. Subject: Travis McGee. Florida Center for the Book, The Library Landmarks Association, and Bahia Mar Resort, 1987. Wraps. 32pp. A dossier on McGee (curriculum vitae; data on his boats, *The Busted Flush* and the *Munquitar*; on "Miss Agnes," his Rolls Royce; a personality portrait, travel record, involvement in homicides), with a mini-portrait of McGee's closest friend, Meyer. A detailed record based on a comprehensive review of the fictional world of Travis McGee. The booklet was published on the occasion (Feb 21, 1987) of the renaming of one of the boat slips at Bahia Mar Resort and Yachting Center in honor of MacDonald, with a brass plaque designating it as a "literary landmark."

C161. Vassallo, George. "Getting To Know MacDonald." MS 17 (Sept/Oct 88) 7. Describes a meeting with JDM in 1981.

MCDONALD, ROSS

Ref: See also A108, A151, A163, C143

C162. Andrews, Angela. "Before Archer: Kenneth Millar's Early Fiction." PP 9 (Oct 1988) 35-39. Illus. A bibliographic essay on early pb editions of Kenneth Millar's fiction.

C163. Engel, Leonard W. "Locked Up: A Close Look at Ross MacDonald's *The Underground Man*." TAD 20 (1987) 183-85. On the use of the enclosure in *The Underground Man* (1971) as a central metaphor for the book's development. See also a letter from Bill Delaney [TAD 21 (1988) 99-100] for an extensive criticism in which he sees the use of this metaphor as typical of the "highly contrived and artificial" style of MacDonald. Delaney's letter is a long

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diatribe in the manner of his article on Macdonald published in TAD 19 (1986).

C164. Mahan, Jeffrey. "Investigations of Low Archer." *Cues* 8:2 (Fall/Winter 87) 1-40. A survey of critical evaluations of Macdonald's work. Mahan concludes his extensive survey with a brief summary of what he sees as the "portrait" of Low Archer that is emerging from the criticism. With 168 end-notes.

C165. Sipper, Ralph B., ed. *Ross Macdonald's Inward Journey*. New York: The Mysterious Press, 1987. Material by and about Macdonald. Rev: TAD 21 (1988) 96. Not seen.

MACDONELL, GORDON
Ref: A153

McFARLANE, LESLIE
Ref: B58

MACGREGOR, T[RISH] J[ANESHUTZ]
Int: PW, 7 Oct 1988, pp. 74-75 [photo];
T. J. MacGregor also writes as
Trish Janeshutz and Alison Drake

McKENNEY, RALPH
Ref: A22, A30
Int: MS 13 (1987) 27

McINTOSH, J. T.
C166. Covell, Ian, ed. and compiler. *J. T. McIntosh: Memoir and Bibliography*. Polk City, Iowa: Chris Drumm, 1987. Drumm Booklet No. 25. Wraps. 32pp. Alphabetical checklist of published work by J. T. McIntosh, with a separate chronological checklist and list of books. The checklist includes McIntosh's private eye novels and thrillers. These are not mentioned in the "Memoir," in which McIntosh recounts his career in science fiction. (REB)

MACISAAC, FRED
C167. Lybeck, Alvin H. "The Private Eye of Fred MacIsaac." *TMF* 10:2 (Spring 88) 29-42. Lybeck profiles Richard Hadden, a private investigator whose exploits were chronicled in *Detective Fiction Weekly* in the 1930s. With a bibliography of magazine and book publications.

MACLEAN, ALISTAIR
Obit: MS 8 (1987) 2; *The Times* (London),
3 Feb 1987 [photo]; *Daily Telegraph*
(London), 3 Feb 1987 [photo]

MACLEOD, CHARLOTTE

Int: MS 18 (1988) 34 [photo]; *Boston Globe*,
28 Oct 1988, pp. 33, 36 [photo];
Chicago Tribune, 11 Feb 1988 [photo]
C168. MacLeod, Charlotte. "On the Road."
MS 12 (1987) 22-23, 26. Photo. MacLeod
talks about the hazards of traveling to
promote her books.

MADRID, JUAN
Ref: A58

MAKIN, ANDREU
Ref: A58

MALINO, ARTHUR
Int: MS 15 (1987) 14, 19 [photo]

MARON, MARGARET
Int: MS 16 (1987) 38-39 [photo]

MARSÉ, JUAN
Ref: A58

MARSH, NOAJO
C169. Jones, Gwenyth. "Ngaio Marsh's
Scenes of the Crime." *NYT*, 18 Sept 1988,
Travel Section, p. 15. Illus. Jones traces
scenes from some of Marsh's novels to
their New Zealand sources.

MARTIN, A. E.
C170. Deek, William F. "A. E. Martin's Pell
Pelham, Spruiker Detective." *TMF* 9:4
(Sept/Oct 87) 3-6. Martin wrote two
mysteries featuring an Australian "spruiker"
(pitchman). Deek discusses the two novels
and appends contemporary reviews and a
checklist of Martin's fiction (five novels are
listed).

MARTIN, ROBERT
Ref: Pronzini, "Forgotten Writers 2,"
MS 14 (1987) 38-39

MASON, A. E. W.
Ref: *BMW* (A13), pp. 205-11

MATHIS, EDWARD
C171. Thorman, Linda. "Legacy of a Mystery
Writer." *Texas (Houston Chronicle map-*
zine), 2 Oct 1988, pp. 4-5. Photo. A
biographical portrait of the Houston
mystery writer based on interviews.

MATSUMOTO, SEICHO
C172. Apostolou, John L. "A Yen for
Murder: A Look at Japan's Ichiban
Mystery Writer, Seicho Matsumoto." TAD

20 (1987) 322-25. With a checklist of
Matsumoto's work available in English. An
overview of the writer's work and its relation-
ship to Japanese and Western mystery
fiction.

MAYORAL, MARINA
C173. Zatlín, Phyllis. "Detective Fiction and
the Novels of Mayoral." *MR/RM* 3:1-2
(1987) 279-87. Marina Mayoral is an
academic who is also a reader of detective
fiction and has written four novels that
have elements relating them to detective
fiction. Zatlín shows how Mayoral draws
on both puzzle and hardboiled detective
fiction in her work.

MELVILLE, JAMES
Ref: A6, A163

MENDOZA, EDUARDO
Ref: A31

MICHAELS, BARBARA
Ref: *The Writer*, Feb 1988, pp. 13-16 [on
writing the supernatural novel of suspense]
Int: PW, 23 Oct 1987, pp. 39-40 [photo];
Baltimore Sun, 26 June 1988 [photos];
C158 (as Elizabeth Peters)

MILLAR, MARGARET
Ref: A63, A92, A165

Int: *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto),
21 May 1988, "The Arts" Section, n.p.
[photo]

MONAGHAN, HÉLÈNE DE
Int: TTP 7:1 (1987) 39-40
[French writer; English-language interview]

MONTGOMERY, YVONNE
Int: MS 10 (1987) 22-23 [photo]

MORSON, B. J.
Int: MS 15 (1987) 26-27 [photo]

MORRELL, DAVID
Int: MS 10 (1987) 6-7 [photo]

MORRISON, ARTHUR
Ref: *BWW* (A13), p. 212-18

MORTIMER, JOHN
Ref: A61
Int: TAD 20 (1987) 340-44, 346-49
[photos and cover art reproductions]

MOYES, PATRICIA
Ref: A165

MULLER, MARCIA
Ref: *The Writer*, June 1987, pp. 12-15, 46
[on plotting the realistic detective novel];
A144
Int: MS 16 (1987) 37 [photo]

MURPHY, WARREN
C174. Murphy, Warren. "Curmudgeon's
Corner." MS 10 (1987) 5-6; 11 (1987) 9-10;
16 (1988) 22-23; 18 (1988) 29-30. A column
in which Murphy speaks his mind on a
variety of topics.

MURRAY, WILL
Int: CBG, 8 April 1988, pp. 47, 48
[on the pb series "The Destroyer,"
ghostwritten by Murray since mid-1986]

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Warren Murphy, here with his wife Molly Cochran, has a regular column in *Mystery Scene*.

Echoes 37 (June 88) 40-41, 39

MWANGI, MEJA

Ref: A170

NABOKOV, VLADIMIR

Ref: A31, A45

NATHAN, ROBERT STUART

Int/Profile: *Los Angeles Times*, View Section, 23 Oct 1987, p. 34

NATSUKI, SHIZUKO

Int: TAD 20 (1987) 54-57 [photos]

NEWMAN, ROBERT

Obit: NYT, 9 Dec 1988, p. 29

NGUGI WA THIONG'O

Ref: A170

C175. Carter, Steven R. "Decolonization and Detective Fiction: Ngugi wa Thiong'o's *Petals of Blood*." *Clues* 8:1 (Spring/Summer 87) 101-26. On Ngugi's *Petals of Blood* (1977) as an "anti-detective novel" with a radical social vision. With a bibliography of primary and secondary sources.

N'OWENO, HILARY

Ref: A170

NIXON, JOAN LOWERY

Ref: *The Writer*, Oct 1987, pp. 19-21, 46

[on creating suspense in the Young Adult mystery]

NOLAN, WILLIAM F.

Ref: C158

O'DONNELL, PETER

C176. Drew, Bernard A. "He Nails 'Em with Modesty." TAD 20 (1987) 26-30. Illus. With a checklist of British and American editions of the Modesty Blaise books. On the comic-strip and book versions of Modesty Blaise, with quotes by O'Donnell cited from an unattributed interview.

O'FARRELL, WILLIAM

Ref: George Baxt, "Introduction." In *Repeat Performance* (reissued by IPL, 1987) by William O'Farrell

OLIVER, ANTHONY

Ref: AHMM, May 1988, pp. 148-51

O'MAREE, [SISTER] CAROL ANNE

Ref: *The Writer*, April 1988, pp. 9-12 [on writing dialogue and on creating her fictional sleuth, Sister Mary Helen]; A30 Int/Profile: *New York Times Magazine*, 30 Aug 1987, pp. 34-35 [photo] Int: *Chicago Tribune*, 4 Oct 1987, "Tempo" Section, p. 2 [photo]

OPPENHEIM, E. PHILLIPS
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 219-28; A138

ORCZY, BARONESS
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 229-34

ORTIZ, LOURDES
Ref: A58

PADROLO, MANUEL DE
Ref: A58

PAPAZOGLU, ORANIA
C177. Papazoglou, Orania. "Notes from Midstream." MS 14 (1988) 23; 15 (1988) 21-22; 17 (Sept/Oct 88) 26-28; 18 (Oct 88) 9-10. On writing and writers.

PARETSKY, SARA
Ref: AHMM, Dec 1988, pp. 133-35; A84, A108, A144, A160
Int: *Los Angeles Times*, View Section, 14 Dec 1988, p. 11 [photo]; Ms., Jan 1988, pp. 66-67, 92-93 [photo]; DRM 7:5 (May 87) 1, 8; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 18 Aug 1987, pp. 1-D, 4-D [photo]

C178. Shapiro, Laura. "The Lady is a Gumshoe." *Newsweek*, 13 July 1987, p. 64. Photo. Brief article about Paretzky's books featuring female private detective V.I. Warshawski, with some background on Paretzky, the difficulties of getting her first book published, and her efforts to improve the image of women in mystery fiction and gain more recognition for women mystery writers. (REB)

PARKER, ROBERT B.

Ref: A108, A160, C39

Int: PW, 8 July 1988, pp. 36-37 [photo]; *The Boston Globe Magazine*, 27 Nov 1988, pp. 18-19, 35-40, 42-43 [three photos]; *People*, 26 Sept 1988, pp. 103-4, 106 [photos]; a joint profile/interview of Joan and Robert B. Parker; *Vogue*, Dec 1987, pp. 176, 178 [photo; profile based on interview(s)]; *Los Angeles Times*, 16 Nov 1988, Section III, p. 26 [on Parker's completing Chandler's "The Poodle Springs Story"]

PATTERSON, JIM

Int: *New York Times*, 28 April 1988 [photo]; *Back Stage*, 28 Oct 1988, pp. 5, 25 [photo]

PAUL, BARBARA

Int: MS 7 (Jan 87) 13-14

PAVÓN, GARCÍA

C179. King, Charles L. "Poetic Realism in García Pavón's Detective Novels." MR/RM 3:1-2 (1987) 238-46. King discusses the setting in Pavón's detective series featuring Police Chief Plinio, concluding with a brief summary of the debt of the Spanish writer to Georges Simenon's Maigret series.

PAYNE, LAURENCE

C180. Sarjeant, William A. S. "Birkeitt and Saunders in Action: The Police Novels of Laurence Payne." TMF 10:1 (Winter 88) 17-38. A profile of Payne's police team, with extensive quotes from the novels. With a bibliography.



Orania Papazoglou, wife of Bill DeAndrea, also has a column in *Mystery Scene*.

FEMBERTON, SIR MAX
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 235-41

FENDLETON, DON
Ref: A104

FERDUE, LEWIS
Int: MS 18 (Oct 88) 19-21 [photo]

FERRY, ANN
Ref: AHMM, Feb 1988, pp. 148-49; A165

PETERS, ELLIS
Ref: A177

C181. Boyd, Mary K. "Brother Caedfel: Renaissance Man of the Twelfth Century." *Clues* 9:1 (Spring/Summer 88) 39-48. Boyd discusses the situation of the Benedictine monk in England during the twelfth-century renaissance to show that Peter's sleuth,

Brother Caedfel, is not an anachronism but that the character's actions are consistent with the historical period.

C182. Cooke, Catherine. "The Chronicles of Brother Caedfel: A Pilgrim's Testament." *CADS* 9 (July 88) 3-12. Cooke visits and reports on the locations of the Caedfel novels. With a map of medieval Shrewsbury and the Abbey, a bibliography, list of characters, and other information.

PETEVICH, GERALD
Ref: A110

PHILIPS, JUDSON
Ref: A22

PHILPOTTS, EDEN
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 242-52

PICKARD, NANCY

Ref: A64
Int: MS 7 (Jan 87) 5, 7 [photo]

POE, EDGAR ALLAN
Ref: See also A28, A56, A100, A179, C8, C11, C163

C183. Derrick, Scott S. "Masculine Ease: Men and the Scene of Writing in Nineteenth-Century American Literature." *DAI* 48/08-A, p. 2061. Unpublished dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1987. Includes a discussion of Poe's detective stories that "aggressively masculinize literature." Not seen.

C184. Conger, Sandy M. "Another Secret of the Rue Morgue: Poe's Transformation of the Geistesheer Motif." *Studies in Short Fiction* 24 (Winter 87) 9-14. On the role of the necromancer and the "affinity between early Gothic and detective stories." The points of reference are Schiller's late-eighteenth-century narrative *Geistesheer* and Poe's "Murders in the Rue Morgue."

C185. Giddings, Robert. "Was the Chevalier Left-handed? Poe's Dupin Stories." In *Edgar Allan Poe: The Design of Order* (Vision and Barnes & Noble, 1987), pp. 88-111. Giddings takes issue with T. S. Eliot's disclaimer of Poe's importance, linking him to significant philosophical and literary currents.

C186. Grella, George. "Poe's Tangled Web." *TAD* 21 (1988) 268-70, 272-75. Production still from *Murders in the Rue Morgue* and two illustrations (Frank M. McSherry, Jr. and an unidentified artist). A delightful piece of ironic playfulness in which Grella "demonstrates" that Dupin is the detective, narrator, and murderer/thief in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "The Purloined Letter." Grella begins his essay with a discussion of how critics are unable to separate the "blumery" from the writing genius in Poe's works, and his essay provides another challenge to the unwary reader/detective/critic. There is, in addition, an ingenious reading of "purloined" as a pun that might be seen as providing the ultimate clue to support Grella's hypothesis.

C187. Muller, John P., and William J. Richardson, eds. *The Purloined Poe: Lacan, Derrida, and Psychoanalytic Reading*. Baltimore & London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988. xiv+394pp. A collection of essays, many of them previously published. The collection reprints in an English translation French critic Jacques Lacan's "seminar" on Poe's "The Purloined Letter" and critical responses to Lacan's reading. The text also widens the enquiry to a multi-faceted look at psychoanalytic readings of Poe.

C188. Rollason, Christopher. "The Detective Myth in Edgar Allan Poe's Dupin Trilogy." In *A46*, pp. 4-22. A critically well-supported essay (there are 70 notes) which fragments the tales into a maze of critical discourses. Rollason concludes with the theory that Poe wrote no more detective stories because the "genre had come to disintegrate under his own pen."

POHL, FREDERIK

C189. Stephenson-Payne, Phil, and Gordon

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Ruth Rendell wrote a piece for *The Writer*.

Benson, Jr. *Frederik Pohl: Merchant of Excellence — A Working Bibliography*. Leeds, England and Albuquerque, N.M.: Galactic Central, 1989. 104pp. Same format as other Galactic Central "Bibliographies for the Collector": separate lists of Pohl's stories, fiction books, poems, articles, nonfiction books, and miscellany, plus lists of secondary materials and reviews. Pohl wrote some detective fiction (alone and in collaboration with C. M. Kornbluth, under several bylines) for the pulps and digest magazines. Novels such as *Edge of the City* and *Chernobyl* might also qualify as crime or thriller fiction. (REB)

PRICE, E. HOFFMAN

Obit: *CBG*, 29 July 1988, pp. 16, 18

PRIESTLY, J. B.

Ref: *BMC*, No. 52 (July 88), pp. 18-24

PRONZINI, BELL

Ref: See also A21

Int: *MS* 11 (1987) 23, 26; *MS* 15 (1987) 4-5 [photo]

C190. Lachman, Marvin. "The Mystery Fan's Detective." *DRM* 7:2 (Feb 87) 1, 3-5; 7:4 (April 87) 4-5; 7:6 (June 87) 4-5; 7:9 (Sept 87) 4-5. Lachman profiles the "Nameless" series.

PULVER, MARY MONICA

Int: *MS* 15 (1987) 60-61 [photo]

PYNCHON, THOMAS

Ref: A94

QUEEN, ELLERY

Ref: See also A92, A140, A178

C191. Christopher, Joe R. "Ellery Queen, Sports Fan." *TMF* 10:3 (Summer 88) 3-24. An analysis of sports references and motifs in four sports-mystery stories collected in *The "New" Adventures of Ellery Queen*. In his conclusion, Christopher cites their historical importance and the interest of their content as popular literature and as popular art.

C192. Mitgang, Herbert. "Ellery Queen's 'Double Lives'." *NYT*, 5 March 1988, p. 9. Photo. Report on an exhibition of documents (manuscripts, books, letters, magazines) held at Butler Library, Columbia University, relating to the Dannay/Lee career as writers and editors.

C193. Strom, Ola. "Abandoned Queens, and Some Notes on Unintentional Plagiarism." *TMF* 8:1 (Jan/Feb 87) 10-16. Very little on abandoned Queen projects. Most of the article deals with unintentional use of similar plot devices by one or more authors. Numerous examples are given.

QUENTIN, PATRICK

Ref: *AHMM*, Nov 1987, pp. 150-51

RABE, PETER

C194. Tuttle, George. "Peter Rabe's Daniel Port." *TMF* 9:5 (Sept/Oct 87) 20-22. Tuttle discusses the five novels of the Daniel Port series and sums them up, with some show of enthusiasm, as a "good series that reflects Rabe's skill as a writer."

RADLEY, SHEILA

Ref: A165

RAINOV, BOGOMOR

Ref: A157

RANDISI, ROBERT

C195. Randisi, Robert. "Gat Heat." *MS* 10 (1987) 17-18; 11 (1987) 16, 18; 12 (1987) 10; 13 (1987) 7; 16 (1988) 11-12; 17 (Sept/Oct 88) 6; 18 (Oct 88) 30-31. An informal column in which mystery writer Randisi talks about conventions, writers' organizations, and other subjects.

REACH, ANGUS

Ref: *BMW* (A13), pp. 253-57

REASONER, JAMES

C196. Johnson, Tom. "The Black Lotus." *Echoes* 32 (Aug 87) 4-7. Illus. Notes on three stories written for *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine* by James Reasoner as "Brett Halliday."

C197. Reasoner, James. "Bullets, Babes, and the Big Redhead: My Years with Michael Shayne." *Echoes* 32 (Aug 87) 9-11. Reasoner talks about the Mike Shayne series and his involvement as "Brett Halliday." With a Reasoner/Shayne Bibliography, p. 11.

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ROBSTER, SEELY

C198. Rahn, B. J. "Seely Regester: America's First Detective Novelist." In A143, pp. 47-61. Regester published *The Dead Letter* in 1867, nine years before the publication of Anna Katherine Green's *The Leavenworth Case*, often cited as the first detective novel written by a woman and the first American detective novel. Rahn finds in *The Dead Letter* the major features of the genre's basic formula and makes a further claim for it as the first detective novel in English, dismissing works of Dickens and Wilkie Collins for generic deficiencies.

REIGOSA, CARLOS G.

C199. March, Kathleen N. "Galician Crime Literature." MR/RM 3:1-2 (1987) 202-11. March discusses what she sees as the relatively few virtues and numerous defects of Carlos G. Reigosa's Galician crime novel *Crime en Compostela* (1984). Its principal virtue, according to March, is that it is a "step in the right direction," which would seem to be the creation of a modern Galician national literature.

RENDLELL, RUTH

Ref: *The Writer*, Nov 1987, pp. 7-10 [on writing and on "learning" to write]
Int: *TV Times* (London), 21 June 1988, p. 15 [photo]

C200. Lehman, David, with Donna Foote. "A Gift of Reasonable Terror." *Newsweek*, 21 Sept 1987, p. 77. Photo. Review of recent works (by Rendell and as by "Barbara Vine"), with introductory comments by Lehman on Rendell's policeman character, Chief Inspector Wexford, and comments by Rendell on her work, and the hated title "queen of crime," and the "terribly vulgar" notion that is rivalry between her and P. D. James. (REB)

C201. Medawar, Tony. "The Nightingale and the Raven." CADS 6 (July 87) 27-30. Medawar reports on an interview with Rendell conducted by P. D. James on 26 March 1987.

REMNICOW, IREB

Ref: A145

REVERELL, WILLIAM

Ref: A35

REVERETE, JORGE MARTÍNEZ

Ref: A58

RICHARDS, FRANK

Ref: B104

RITCHIE, JACK

C202. Nevins, Francis M., Jr. "Introduction" and "A Henry Turnbuckle Checklist." In *The Adventures of Henry Turnbuckle: Detective Comedies by Jack Ritchie* (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), pp. vii-xii and 373-74. Biographical sketch and career summary, plus a discussion of Ritchie's remarkable accomplishment in the Turnbuckle stories: "tweaking the noses of the hoary old whodunit clichés while staying squarely within the great tradition's confines." (REB)

ROBBE-GRILLET, ALAIN

Ref: A31, C143

ROBERTS, LES

Profile: *Los Angeles*, May 1987, p. 22 [photo]

ROHMER, SAX

Ref: *BMW* (A13), pp. 258-68; A10, A44, A190, B81, B112, C5

C203. Lai, Rick. "Fu Manchu and American Politics." *Echoes* 35 (Feb 88) 12-15. On *President Fu Manchu* (1935) and American politics in the 1930s.

C204. ———. "Fu Manchu, Shiwan Khan and Adolf Hitler." *Pulp Vault* 3 (1988) 45-48. Illus. Shiwan Khan was a master villain in the Fu Manchu mold in the "Shadow" series. Lai postulates a situation in which—if the two master criminals inhabited the same fictional universe—Shiwan Khan "could once have triumphed over Fu Manchu." Included in Lai's fictioneering is an attempt by Fu Manchu to kill Hitler and Goering.

C205. ———. "Hell's Madonna and the Voodoo Priestess." *NI* 24, pp. 38-45. Illus. On the struggle between Sumuru and Melisande, the female arch criminals in the Rohmer Sumuru cycle.

ROSS, JONATHAN

Ref: A178

SANGSTER, JIMMY

Ref: C158

SAVATER, FERNANDO

Ref: A58

SAYERS, DOROTHY L.

Ref: See also A77, A88, C55

C206. Hahn, Stephen. "Where Do Plots Come From? Dorothy L. Sayers on Literary Invention." *Columbia Library Columns* 37:2 (Feb 88) 3-12. Photo. Hahn draws on Sayers's notes in the Aaron Berg Collection at Columbia on the subject of plots to discuss her literary craftsmanship. Sayers used *Unnatural Death* as an example, and Hahn uses other works to support his discussion, concluding with remarks on the high quality of her novelistic imagination.

C207. McFarland, Trudy. "Lord Peter, Bibliophile." *TAD* 21 (1988) 396-400, 402-4. A librarian extracts citations of rare books from the Wimsey saga and furnishes bibliographic descriptions based on the information given by Sayers. McFarland fails to identify only one edition and speculates that Sayers either knew of the existence of the manuscript or created it for the novel in which it appears. An entertaining piece of bibliographic sleuthing.

SCHORR, MARK

C208. Godden, Ian H. "Mark Schorr's 'Red Diamond P.I.' Novels." *CADS* 9 (July 88) 35-38. Godden surveys the three books about Red Diamond, New York cab driver and private eye.

SCHULKERS, ROBERT F.

Ref: B91

SCIASCIA, LEONARDO

C209. Lazzaro-Weis, Carol. "The Metaphysical Detective Novel and Sciascia's *Il Contato*: Parody or Tyranny of a Borrowed Form?" *Quaderni D'Italianistica* 8:1 (1987) 42-52. On the Postmodernist predilection for the detective novel and Sciascia's *Todo Modo* (1974) as his break with the tyranny of the genre's formal constraints.

SCOTT, DAN

See BARKER, OMAR S.

SCOTT, JACK S.

Ref: *The Writer*, March 1988, pp. 14-16 [on writing and on series detective Alfred Stanley Rosher]

SCOTT, JUSTIN

Ref: A61

SCOTT, LESLIE

Ref: B109

SEMYONOV, JULIAN

Ref: A157

Int: *New York Times*, 9 Sept 1987 [photo]; *New York Times*, 17 Sept 1987, p. 21; *New York Times*, 11 Oct 1987, Section 1, p. 20 [photo]; *PW*, 16 Oct 1987, pp. 34-35 [two photos]

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SERAO, MATELDE
Ref: A56

SHEARING, JOSEPH
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 269-76

SHERIFF, R. C.
Ref: A153

SHERMAN, STEVE
Ref: MS 15 (1988) 62 [a "first-born"
statement]

SILBER, VICTORIA
Ref: A144

SIMENON, GEORGES
Ref: A157, A178, C179

C210. Eskin, Stanley G. *Simenon: A Critical Biography*. Jefferson, N.C. and London: McFarland, 1987. xiii+304pp. Photos. Bibliography. Index. Eskin's study is a very detailed look at Simenon's life and writing that demonstrates impressive familiarity with his voluminous output, which Eskin estimates as comprising more than 400 novels. Eskin draws substantially on Simenon's numerous autobiographical books and refers to the novelist's co-operation in the form of correspondence and interviews. The biography of primary sources is based on Claude Menguy's work; the bibliography of secondary sources is quite limited and excludes reviews and journalistic articles and interviews, although these are used as sources for the text. There are no notes in the text, but chapter notes give sources by page and it is up to the reader to collate them. All French citations are given in Eskin's English translations. In the course of the study, Eskin provides a detailed examination of the Maigret series. Rev: MFS 34:2 (Summer 88) 302-3; *Choice*, Nov 1987, p. 483.

C211. Foord, Peter. *Georges Simenon: A Bibliography of the British First Editions in Hardback and Paperback and of the Principal French and American Editions with a Guide to Their Value*. London: Dragonby, 1988. Wraps. Not seen.

SIMON, ROGER L.
Ref: A61, A157

SIMPSON, DOROTHY
Ref: A163

SIMS, GEORGE R.
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 277-82

SMITH, CHARLES MERRILL
Ref: A30

SMITH, CLARK
C212. Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 34: Clark Smith." *TPP* 7:1 (Fall/Winter 87) 38. Profile of detective Nicky Mahoun, an investigating accountant. The author was born in Glasgow in 1919, and the bibliography lists three books, all published in the 1950s.

SMITH, JULIE
Int: MS 13 (1987) 26-27 [photo]

SMITH, TERENCE L.
Obit: *New York Times*, 9 Dec 88, pp. 29

SOHMER, STEVE
C213. "Steve Sohmer, Man of Many Talents." *Bookcase* (Britain), No. 18 (1988), pp. 6-7. Photo. Profile of the author of the political thriller *Favourite Son*. (REB)

SPEAR, RAYMOND
Ref: A59

SPILLANE, MICKY
Ref: See also A39, A98, A133, A162, A166
C214. Evan, Odette L'Henry. "Towards a Semiotic Reading of Mickey Spillane." In A46, pp. 100-14. A pluralistic reading of the codes of Spillane's texts. With charts and mathematical formulations. This may be a reading that only another semiotician will appreciate.

C215. Sandels, Robert L. "The Battle of the Sexes." *TAD* 20 (1987) 350-58. Illus. While acknowledging that some of the critics' views of Spillane's Neanderthal-like sexual makeup and attitudes are justified, Sandels argues that they are based on a reading of the work of the 1950s. A comprehensive review of Spillane's writings would show that the Spillane hero finally accepted the weakness of men in the post-war society and the "humanity of its threatening women."

ST. JOHN SPRIGG, CHRISTOPHER
C216. Giffuni, Cathy. "Christopher St. John Sprigg: A Bibliography." *CADS* 7 (Dec 87) 27-30. The bibliography is arranged by date of publication, and each entry contains a list of secondary sources.

STARKE, RICHARD
See WESTLAKE, DONALD E.

STERANKO, JIM
Ref: A160

STERN, RICHARD MARTIN
Ref: *The Writer*, June 1987, pp. 9-11 [on characterization; not genre specific]; *The Writer*, July 1988, pp. 9-11 [on use of words and phrases in foreign languages]

STEVENSON, ROBERT LOUIS
C217. Hirsch, Gordon. "*Frankenstein*, Detective Fiction, and *Jekyll and Hyde*." In *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde After One Hundred Years* ed. William Bereder and Gordon Hirsch (University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 223-46. After a discussion of detective fiction formulas in Stevenson's novel, Hirsch concludes with the hypothesis that the novel, in fact, "explodes" the genre by challenging its "rationalist assumptions" with the "Romantic gothic attitudes . . . inscribed in its origins." A well-argued addition to the small body of secondary literature addressed to the role of Gothic elements in detective fiction.

STEWART, J. I. M.
See INNES, MICHAEL

STEWART, VERGEL
Ref: A166

STOKER, BRAM
Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 283-89


STOUT, REY
Ref: BMC 34 (Jan 87) 57-64; A140
C218. Gruber, Ruth. "Nero Wolfe's Montenegro." *The Philadelphia Enquirer*, "Traveller" Section, 15 March 1987, pp. 10-11. Illus. With a copy of Stout's *The Black Mountain* in her bag, reporter Gruber retraces Wolfe's itinerary in the 1954 novel, ending her task on the Albanian border, not far from the detective's birthplace.

C219. McAleer, John. *Queen's Counsel: Conversations with Ruth Stout on Her Brother Rex Stout*. Ashton, Md.: Pontes Press, 1987. ii+89pp. Edition limited to 500 numbered copies and 26 lettered presentation copies. Paperbound. The conversations occurred while the author was writing his biography of Stout and throughout the following decade, until Ruth Stout's death at the age of 97. They cover various family memories, Ruth Stout's opinions of her brother's work, information about friends, and some of her own concerns: gardening, writing, and a run-in with the FBI. Nothing of major importance, but an engaging portrait of an interesting and individualistic woman. (REB)

STRIKER, FRANK
Ref: B67, B68

SIMONS, JULIAN
Ref: A61

C220. Reynolds, William. "Text and Sub-Text: Julian Symons's *The Immaterial Murder Case*." *CADS* 8 (May 88) 15-16. A note on Symons's first novel, a "timetable" mystery set in the London art world of the 1930s. "Immaterialist" art parodies Surrealist art, and the use of a "painting which was not there at all" is reminiscent of Willeford's *The Burnt Orange Heresy*.



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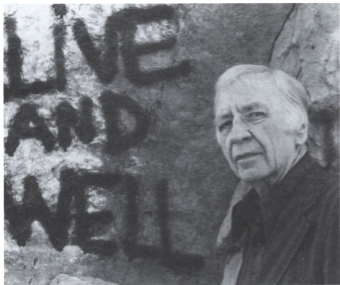
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The Thompson Family

Jim Thompson was the subject of an article in CADS.

TAPPLY, WILLIAM G.
Ref: A178

TATHAM, JULIE CAMPBELL
Ref: B106

Int: YL 43 (Jan 88) 5-8, 18 [photo];
writer of juveniles, including the
Vicki Barr series]

TAYLOR, PHOEBE ATWOOD
C221. Nehr, Ellen. "Afterword." In *Beginning with a Bash* (Foul Play Press, 1987) by Phoebe Atwood Taylor, pp. [285]-[288]. The first Leonidas Witherall mystery, published in England in 1937 but not brought out in this country until 1972. Nehr recounts the publishing history and the reluctance of W. W. Norton to publish the work, citing from correspondence between Taylor and Norton.

C222. _____. "Afterword." In *Murder at the New York World's Fair* (Foul Play Press, 1987) by Phoebe Atwood Taylor writing as Freeman Dana, pp. [267]-[275]. A fine bibliographic essay in which Nehr draws on correspondence with Random House which, as she correctly notes, provides "valuable insights into Taylor's working habits." There is also a short, uninformative introduction by Delys Winn.

TEDESCHI, FRANK
See BYFIELD, BARBARA

TELUSHKIN, JOSEPH
Ref: A30

TEY, JOSEPHINE
Ref: BMC, No. 55, Oct 1988, pp. 17-25;
A177

C223. Light, Alison. "Writing Fictions: Femininity and the 1950s." In *The Progress of Romance: The Politics of Popular Fiction* ed. Jean Radford (London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), pp. 139-66. Light sees Tey's *The Franchise Affair* (1948) as betraying by narrative "shifts and jolts" the difficulty it has in sustaining "the definitions of class and gender difference." A deft reading of the text, which exhibits an uncommon sensitivity to narrative disjunctures in an author not usually thought of as feminist.

THOMAS, ROSS
Ref: *Newsweek*, 19 Oct 1987, p. 89 [photo];
biographical and career information) (REB)
Int/Profile: *People*, 30 Nov 1987,
pp. 109-10 [two photos];
Los Angeles Times Magazine, 8 Nov 1987,
pp. 10-14, 16 [three photos]

THOMPSON, JIM
C224. Kleinert, R. A. "Jim Thompson: The Function of Madness." CADS 7 (Dec 87) 11-13. Kleinert sees Thompson and his protagonists as sharing the same Existentialist worldview of the "meaningless universe." With a selective bibliography of primary and secondary sources.

C225. Thompson, Jim. *Fireworks: The Lost Writings of Jim Thompson*. Edited and introduced by Robert Pollio and Michael McCauley. New York: Donald I. Fine, 1987. xv + 394pp. In their introduction, the editors talk briefly about Thompson's style and his place in the hardboiled canon, and describe the organization of the volume. The selections include examples of his

work from the 1920s to the 1970s. They are collected from a variety of sources ranging from *Master Detective*, *Texas Monthly*, *AHMM*, *EQMM*, and *True Detective* to *Prairie Schooner* and *Collier's* and include both fiction and nonfiction, as well as some late, unpublished material. For an interview with the editors on the compilation of the writings, see the *Boston Globe*, 18 Aug 1987, pp. 55-56.

THOMSON, D. C.
Ref: BMC, No. 46, pp. 57-64 [on juvenile series, with a mention of series detective character Dixon Hawke]

THOMPSON, JUNE
C226. McAleer, John. "The Social-Domestic World of June Thomson's Detective Chief Inspector Jack Finch/Rudd." In A143, pp. 31-44. McAleer cites numerous examples to show that Thomson is creating a "detailed, scrutinizing, sociologist appraisal" of the location of her Finch/Rudd novels that shows the reason for its decline.

TIDYMAN, ERNEST
Ref: A160

TINSLEY, TED
Ref: B96

TOWNSEND, GUY M.
C227. Allen, David. "Richard III—Trail by Fiction." TAD 20 (1987) 403-11. Illus. Allen is the publisher of *Hyster's Myster's Magazine*, specializing in a "new" genre, in which historical scholarship takes precedence over fictional invention. The occasion for the article is the publication of Guy Townsend's *To Prove a Villain* (Perseverance Press), which is both a mystery and a "hyster's myster's," since it refutes Josephine Tey's vindication of Richard III in *The Daughter of Time* (1951). Allen, basing his decision on historical scholarship, sides with Townsend's view of Richard III as the scheming, murderous villain that "traditional" scholarship has always painted him to be. In addition, Allen points out (as did Townsend) that Tey withheld recent scholarship which would have proved her solution of the historical mystery incorrect.

TROLLOPE, ANTHONY
Ref: A107

TUCKER, WILSON
Int: MS 17 (Sept/Oct 88) 46 [photo]

TUROW, SCOTT
Ref: A59
Int: *Boston Globe*, 12 Aug 1987, pp. 25, 30 [two photos];

PW, 10 July 1987, pp. 52-53 [photo]
C228. Meier, Robert H. "Getting Away with Murder." TAD 21 (1988) 150-52. Meier, a criminal defense lawyer, and a former law professor and co-author of eighteen legal texts, tries Turow's *Presumed Innocent* for plot as well as legal improbabilities and inaccuracies.

TUTTLE, W. C.
C229. Sampson, Robert D. "The Wild, Wild

West." TAD 21 (1988) 242-51, 254-59. Sampson traces patiently, and with good humor, the three-decade career of Hash-knife Hartley, Tuttle's cowboy-detective, and his sidekick-Watson, Sleepy Stevens. Nicely illustrated with covers from the pulp magazines and a photograph of Tuttle. Also includes a checklist of the magazine stories (compiled with the assistance of Walker Martin) and a checklist of book appearances (compiled from Hubin with additional details added by Sampson).

TWAIN, MARK

- C230. Whitley, John S. "Pudd'nhead Wilson: Mark Twain and the Limits of Detection." *Journal of American Studies* (Britain) 21 (1987) 55-70. On *Pudd'nhead Wilson* as a "tragic parody" of the detective story. In addition to this novel, Whitley also discusses Twain's use of detectives and detection in other works.

UHNAK, DOROTHY

Ref: *The Writer*, Sept 1988, pp. 20-22 [authenticity in police novels; includes a selective list of reference books for mystery writers]

UPFIELD, ARTHUR W.

Ref: See also A22

- C231. Browne, Ray B. *The Spirit of Australia: The Crime Fiction of Arthur W. Upfield*. Bowling Green, Ohio: Popular Press, 1988. 266pp. Browne considers Upfield to be one of the "leaders" of crime fiction and his aborigine investigator Napoleon Bonaparte to be one of the "half dozen most memorable of all crime fighters." In analyzing Upfield's fiction from a number of perspectives, he recognizes the writer's debt to genre conventions but also sees him as working against their limitations, characterizing the books as works in "cultural and physical anthropology." A wide-ranging and thoughtful study. With a glossary of Australian and Aboriginal terms, a checklist of primary and secondary sources, and a list identifying the various settings in the novels.

VACHES, ANDREW

Int: *Los Angeles Times*, View Section, 9 Oct 1988, pp. 1, 17 [photo]; *A Matter of Crime*, Vol. 4 (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988), pp. 1-17; *People*, 19 Sept 1988, pp. 78-80 [photos]

VALIN, JONATHAN

Ref: A22, A164

Int: TAD 20 (1987) 228-38

VAN DE WETERING, JANWILLEM

Ref: A6, C234

VAN DINE, S. S.

[pseudonym of

Willard Huntington Wright]

- C232. Loughery, John. "The Rise and Fall of Philo Vance: Time and Hollywood Eroded the Essence of This Erudite Sleuth." TAD 20 (1987) 64-68, 70-71. Illus. An evaluation of Wright's writing career, finding the cause for the decline in the popularity of the Philo Vance novels not only in the increasing decline in quality of the fiction

but also in the lack of a genuine "belief" in detective fiction. As Loughery points out in a letter (TAD 20:3-329), the order of three paragraphs is reversed in the published version of the article. Loughery corrects the error and provides a revised chronology of Wright's career.

VAN GULIK, ROBERT

- C233. Lachman, Charles. "A Portrait of Judge Dee: Mystery and History in 18th Century China." *Clives* 8:1 (Spring/Summer 87) 1-10. Illus. Lachman tentatively identifies a contemporary woodblock portrait of Judge Dee to be by the noted painter Yen Lee-Ben.

- C234. Van de Wetering, Janwillem. *Robert van Gulik: His Life, His Work*. Miami Beach, Fla.: Dennis MacMillan Publications, 1987. 147pp. Illus. First edition limited to 350 copies. An engaging, unacademic study of van Gulik by a fellow Dutch mystery writer. Basing his study on van Gulik's fictional and non-fictional writings, and on interviews and correspondence with people who know van Gulik, van de Wetering creates a convincing composite portrait of a most unusual scholar, diplomat, and writer. With a bibliography of primary sources and "Biographical Notes." Rev: TAD 20 (1987) 98.

VANCE, JACK

Ref: A102

VÁSQUEZ MONTALBÁN, MANUEL

Ref: See also A31, A58

- C235. Puvogel, Sandra Jean. "The Detective Fiction of Manuel Vásquez Montalbán."

DAI 48/12A, p. 3123. Unpublished dissertation, Michigan State University, 1987. Not seen.

- C236. ———. "Pepe Carvalho and Spain: A Look at the Detective Fiction of Manuel Vásquez Montalbán." *MR/RM* 3:1-2 (1987) 261-67. A portrait of the private detective Pepe Carvalho in Vásquez Montalbán's detective fiction.

VERNE, JULES

Ref: B94

VINE, BARBARA

See RENDELL, RUTH

WADE, ROBERT

- C237. Wade, Robert. "Murder by the Book." *San Diego Magazine*, Dec 1988, pp. 132, 134, 220, 222, 224, 228, 230, 232. Mystery author Wade was awarded a Life Achievement Award by Private Eyes of America at the 1988 Bouchercon. He writes about the event but also provides an uncommonly full account of the convention, including dialogue "overheard" during the weekend, as seen by a first-time attendee. He describes many of the panels and includes statements from other writers.

WAINER, ARKADI and GEORGI

Ref: A179

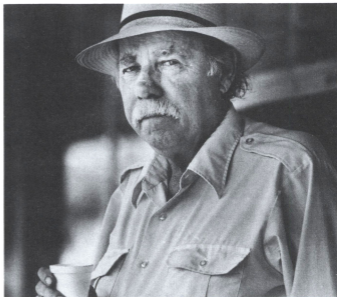
WALLACE, EDGAR

Ref: BMC, No. 56 (Nov 1988), pp. 4-11; *BMW* (A13), pp. 209-302; B32

WALLING, R. A. J.

- C238. Pike, Barry. "Pen Profile 33: R. A. J. Walling." *TTP* 7:1 (Fall/Winter 87) 31-34. Profiles of P.I. Philip Tolefree and Chief

An obit for and essay by Charles Willeford appeared in *Mystery Scene*.



David Pinner

Inspector Garstang, with a bibliography.

WALTON, BRYCE

Ref: Bill Pronzini, "Forgotten Writers 3," MS 16 (1988) 52-54

WAMBAUGH, JOSEPH

Ref: A179
C239. Wambaugh, Joseph. "The Night He Dined with a Murder Suspect." *TV Guide*, Oct 24-30, 1987, pp. 32-33. Wambaugh discusses the research for his bestselling book *Echoes in the Darkness*, the subject of a TV dramatization presented on Nov 1 and 2, 1987.

WEBB, MARTHA

Ref: A22

WELLS, H. G.

Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 303-16

WELLS, JULIE

Ref: B106

WELLS, LEE

Int: MS 13 (1987) 36-38 [photo]

WESTLAKE, DONALD E.

Ref: WD, April 1987, pp. 26, 28 [comments on the writing of his non-mystery, *A Likely Story* (1984), serving to introduce an excerpt]; A8 (pp. 168-80), A61, A64, A117, A160, A175

Int: TAD 21 (1988) 340-44, 346, 348-50, 352-53, 356-60 [photo]

WHEATLEY, DENNIS

Ref: BMC, No. 54 (Sept 1988), pp. 4-11 [principally on occult movies but covers also the "crime dossiers" and nonfiction] (REB); A90

WHITECHURCH, VICTOR L.

Ref: BMW (A13), pp. 317-21

WHITNEY, PHYLLIS A.

Ref: *The Writer*, July 1987, pp. 7-9, 46 [on introducing a "problem" and developing it]; *The Writer*, Aug 1988, pp. 9-11, 44 [on plot resolution]

WILLEFORD, CHARLES

Ref: See also C220

Int: PW, 6 Feb 1987, pp. 78-79 [photo]
Obit: MS 15 (1987) 3, 5-7 [includes tributes,

bibliography, and an essay by Willeford on "Writing as an Art"]

C240. Holland, R. C. "Charles Ray Willeford: 1919-1988." BAE 1:5 (Sept 88) 25-27. Illus. Bibliography of pb editions of Willeford's works.

C241. Willeford, Charles. *New Forms of Ugly*. Miami Beach, Fla.: Denis MacMillan Publications, 1987. Nonfiction. Not seen. Rev: DRM 7:11 (Nov 87) 9-10.

WILSON, BARBARA

Ref: A144

WINSOR, ROY

Obit: *Philadelphia Inquirer*, June 3, 1987

WITTEN, BARBARA

Ref: MS 10 (1987) 26-28
[photo; "first-born" biography]

WODERHOUSE, P. G.

C242. Sarjeant, W. A. S. "P. G. Wodehouse as Reader of Crime Stories." TMF 9:5 (Sept/Oct 87) 8-19. Sarjeant quotes from Wodehouse's fiction and nonfiction writings to show his fondness for mystery stories.

WOODRELL, DANIEL

Ref: A164

WOODS, SARA

C243. Sarjeant, W. A. S. "The Household in Kempfenfeldt Square: Antony Maitland and the Writings of Sara Woods." TMF 10:4 (Fall 88) 3-42. Profiles of Maitland and other characters in Woods's novels. With a bibliography.

C244. _____. "Sara Woods (1922-1985) and the Classic English Detective Story." TTP 7:1 (Fall/Winter 87) 3-6. A biocritical article.

WOOLRICH, CORNELL

Ref: See also A117

C245. Avallone, Michael. "Cornell Woolrich, A Memoir: In Defense of the Master of Dark Suspense." MS 14 (1988) 6-8. A tribute with some personal anecdotes on Avallone's meetings with Woolrich.

C246. Bassett, Mark T. "Cornell Woolrich: Dance and the Detective." *Journal of Popular Literature* 3:1 (Spring/Summer 87) 22-34. An essay on dance motifs in Woolrich's novels and stories. (F. M. Nevins, Jr.)

C247. Lacassin, Francis. "Cornell Woolrich: Psychologist, Poet, Painter, Moralizer." *Clues* 8:2 (Fall/Winter 87) 41-78. Translation by Mark Bassett of a bibliographic essay originally published in French in *Mythologie du roman policier* (10/18, 1974; reprinted 1987), Vol. II, pp. 114-53 (1974), pp. 116-62 (1987). With translator's notes and a bibliography of works cited, pp. 72-78.

C248. Lovisi, Gary. "The Paperback Books of Cornell Woolrich." PP 3 (May 87) 6-27. Photo and reproductions of pb covers. A bibliographic essay on pb titles by Woolrich, Hopley, and Irish, arranged alphabetically.

C249. Nevins, Francis M., Jr. *Cornell Woolrich: First You Dream, Then You Die*. New York: Mysterious Press, 1988. ix + 613pp. A detailed account of Wool-

rich's life and work, weaving the two into a continuous narrative, Parts One-Three. In Part Four, Nevins talks about radio-film-TV adaptations of Woolrich's work. With a checklist of his magazine and book fiction, and adaptations of his work for film, radio, and TV. Also, a bibliography of secondary sources and an index of names and titles. The book won the 1989 Edgar for best critical work.

C250. _____. "Cornell Woolrich: The Last Years." TMF 9:1 (Jan/Feb 87) 17-22; 9:4 (July/Aug 87) 25-31; 9:6 (Nov/Dec 87) 5-30. Combination of biography and commentary on publications of the last years. Excerpted from C249.

C251. _____. "Fade to Black: I, Cornell Woolrich on the Silver Screen; II, Cornell Woolrich in the Movies from 1947 to the Present." TAD 20 (1987) 39-42, 44-51; 160-68, 170-75. Illus. On the fate of Woolrich fiction adapted for films.

C252. Nielsen, Bjarne. *Bibliography in Black: The Works of Cornell Woolrich*. Copenhagen: Antikvariat Pinkerton, 1988. 40pp. Wraps. In English. Not seen. Cited as described in CADS 9 (July 88) 17.

C253. Yates, Donald A. "Fantasy on Familiar Themes." CADS 5 (Feb 87) 3-5. Yates describes some of his meetings with Woolrich toward the end of the writer's life.

WORKS, GEORGE F.

Ref: See also B81

C254. Lybeck, Alvin H. "The Rise and Fall of Gillian Hazeltine." TMF 9:4 (July/Aug 87) 3-16. Lybeck describes the career of Gillian Hazeltine, a lawyer-detective whose adventures were chronicled in *Argosy* 1926-36. With a bibliography of magazine and book publications.

WREN, M. K.

Int: MS 15 (1988) 23-24 [photo]

WRIGHT, ERIC

Ref: A35

WRIGHT, L. R.

Ref: *The Writer*, Oct 1988, pp. 9-11 [on creating characters and writing a novel] [C255. Maynard, Rona. "Canada's Queen of Crime Fiction." *Chateleine*, April 1987, pp. 108-9. Profile of the winner of a 1986 Edgar for Best First Mystery. Includes some statements by Wright from an interview.]

WYLLIE, JOHN

C256. Schleh, Eugene P. A. "John Wyllie's West Africa: The Quarshie Novels." *Clues* 8:1 (Spring/Summer 87) 51-57. An introduction to the Quarshie novels, set in West Africa. With a checklist of the novels.

YORKE, MARGARET

Ref: A61

YOUNG, EDWARD PRESTON

Ref: A153

YOUNG, ERNEST A.

Ref: B69

ZAGAT, ARTHUR LEO

Ref: B79

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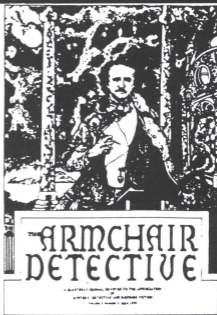
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Eugene Valmont, a pompous yet lovable French Detective, starred in eight turn-of-the-century tales by Robert Barr.

 BY JAMES STANFORD BRADSHAW 

IN an era of proliferating fictional detective heroes, "Eugene Valmont" has little echo. The name of the pompous turn-of-the-century former chief detective of France no longer evokes chuckles and modified admiration among the reading public. His popularity, unlike that of his contemporary, Sherlock Holmes, has faded, as has the reputation of his creator, Robert Barr, a then well-known British-Canadian-American novelist, editor, short-story writer, playwright, travel writer, and publisher.

If at all, Valmont is remembered now as the possible model for Agatha Christie's infinitely more popular Hercule Poirot, a Belgian and therefore also Gallic. But Miss Christie, who admitted having read Valmont's adventures when she was just starting her own writing career, probably was uninfluenced by him, as her biographers (Haycroft and Bargainnier among them) have indicated.

While the superficial similarities diminish Valmont's (and Barr's) present literary standing, it unfortunately also obscures both the substantial merits of Barr's creation and Valmont's place in the history of popular mystery fiction. He was the first of a considerable number of faintly comic detectives, of which Poirot is the best known.

Happily, there are some signs that a spotty re-assessment of Barr's work is taking place. A study by John Parr (*Selected Stories of Robert Barr*) has been made of his short stories; a few of his novels have been praised in contemporary criticism for their insights on social life (for example, by Otto Penzler

in *Detectionary*); and selections from his mystery stories continue to appear in an occasional anthology. Most studies of Victorian and Edwardian literature mention him, at least in passing. He will never, of course, rank with his many contemporaries and friends—A. Conan Doyle, Stephen Crane, William James, Joseph Conrad, Harold Frederic, Rudyard Kipling, and a host of others. But he was, nonetheless, a significant literary figure in all three of "his" countries from roughly 1890 until his death in 1912.

A native of Glasgow, where he was born in 1850, he moved when young with his parents to Canada. He received a brief education at the Toronto Normal School (now the University of Toronto) and taught school in Windsor. In the early 1870s, he joined the staff of the Detroit *Free Press* and lived in the United States until 1882. He then went to London, established a very successful European edition of the *Free Press*, and, in 1892, brought out an innovative literary monthly, *The Idler*. He had wanted Kipling for its editor, but finally took on Jerome K. Jerome.

James Stanford Bradshaw, whose article is published posthumously, was a reporter for The Associate Press in Michigan, Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and Washington, D.C.; a press aide and field officer in Chile for the U.S. Agency for International Development; and Professor of Journalism at Central Michigan University. A lifelong mystery fan, he concentrated on 19th-century authors and journalists, like Robert Barr.

The magazine, from which he later withdrew, and later still reacquired, was notable in that it published the early works of a whole series of new writers who later attained fame. These included Kipling, Doyle, Crane, Israel Zangwill, and Barr himself. But it also published the work of more established figures.

Barr had, perhaps, an unusual sense of the English-speaking literary market of his time, in Britain, Canada, and America. His own short stories appeared in newspapers and magazines in all three countries. He collected the stories and sold them in book form, again in all three. And his novels—he wrote about thirty—also appeared, through various publishers, and in various editions. His chief publisher was F. A. Stokes of New York. But his work also was published by D. Appleton and the International Association of Newspapers and Authors. In England, Methuen, Chatto and Windus, Mills and Boon, Isbister, Hoddard and Stoughton, and Ward, Lock published various of his books. Other editions appeared in Philadelphia, Toronto, Chicago and Glasgow. His short stories appeared, particularly, in *McClure's*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Everybody's*, *Harper's Weekly*, *Canadian Magazine*, *The Strand*, and *The Idler*. The *Detroit Free Press*, especially, used other short stories in its Sunday magazine supplement, the turn-of-the-century era, of course, being the heyday of story syndication.

Eugene Valmont was created relatively late in Barr's career, in 1904. But he became popular, and the stories about him sold well. Barr placed some with the Curtis Publishing Company in Philadelphia and others in England. (He was very careful about geographic rights.) So, in 1906, the stories about the detective were published in book form by D. Appleton as *The Triumphs of Eugene Valmont*.

It is probable that Barr was influenced by the continuing success of his friend Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. He had spoofed Holmes as early as 1892 in an *Idler* story, "The Adventures of Sherlaw Kombs," as by "Luke Sharp," Barr's early Canadian and American pseudonym. The piece was subtitled, "with apologies to Dr. Conan Doyle and his excellent book, 'A Study in Scarlet.'" Doyle and Barr, however, were good friends; Doyle had praised Barr's own early stories, and Barr in *The Idler* was consistently complimentary to Doyle.

That he was interested in detective or mystery writing is shown in random comments he made in his column as *The Idler*. "The writing of a successful detective story requires a sort of special genius of ingenuity," he wrote. "But an unsuccessful mystery yarn is ever the most dismal of failures." Particularly, he deplored French mystery writers, such as Émile Gaboriau, as "too long winded for the extreme thinness of their plots . . . I am always oppressed by the idea that they are struggling, not to tell the story,



Robert Barr, creator of Eugene Valmont, was also an editor, playwright, travel writer and publisher.

but to write the proper number of words that will fill a volume."

Among the detective stories which he liked, besides his friend Doyle's, he also remarked, were those of Edgar Allan Poe. And, more recently than Poe, *The Leavenworth Case* by Anna Katherine Green was "supreme." Richard Harding Davis also had an excellent work, *In the Fog*. The worst of his contemporaries in detective writing, he wrote, was Gaston Leroux, whose *The Mystery of the Yellow Room* was "a book of the most irredeemable rot that ever was palmed off on a credulous, ignorant, stupid public."

Barr does not, however, explain why he created Valmont, or the circumstances which led him to Valmont's particular characteristics—those which make him stand out, even today. But he made him a Frenchman, a pompous Frenchman, at whom the English and North Americans might laugh. To this task, Barr brought his talent for humor and his understanding, through his frequent voyages as a travel writer, of both England and the Continent.

Howard Haycraft, in *Murder for Pleasure*, a history of the detective story, says, however, that Valmont's creation "was inevitable, as a reaction against the 'master mind' school of sleuthing," made popular by Doyle. Valmont, Haycraft adds, has significance "as the first humorous detective of any standing."

In the eight stories which are included—some divided into three or more chapters—in *The Triumphs of Eugene Valmont*, the hero is observant and deductive; vain and confident in his powers, even when he fails; excellent in disguises; a fancy dresser; attentive to ladies (particularly those with French looks, wit, and style); fond of fine wines (exclusively

French) and fine food (again French); and, altogether, is fully convinced of the superiority of French civilization. He is a French stereotype and, thereby, comic to an English-reading public. (There is no record of French publication.)

A continuing strain in his work, however—and this also unquestionably was intentional on Barr's part—is the contrast between the French and British styles of justice—to the prejudice of the British, especially Scotland Yard. Barr, as Valmont, remarks frequently on the oddities of the English, their ignorance of the affairs of other nations (notably France and America), and the fact that they are incomprehensible to other nationalities.

Particularly, Valmont laments that, in English law, a man is presumed innocent until found guilty, the reverse of the situation in France. He also grouses over the fact that, in England, a warrant is needed to arrest, or to search, with all the difficulties that implies for an officer seeking truth. He prefers "direct" methods, and even installs in his London apartment a "solitary-confinement" room in which he can pressure recalcitrant suspects or witnesses.

A further characteristic of the Valmont stories—at least as they appeared in book form—is their discursive nature. Barr, as Valmont, usually first discusses some philosophical points before launching into the thread of his story. He talks (and frequently

there are echoes of other Barr works) of Thomas A. Edison; of the fogs of London; of "Bedalia Herodsfoot," a little-known story by Kipling; of Charles Dickens; and of British respect for the law. Yet such is the ease of his narrative style that the discursive sections—almost asides—flow into the story, and into the character.

Of the eight stories in the *Triumphs*, the best-known, perhaps, is "The Absent Minded Coterie"—a case in which Valmont fails. In seeking to expose a silver-counterfeiting ring in London, he finds that the miscreants are preying upon absent-minded individuals who buy on the installment plan and keep paying after the debt is discharged. But Valmont cannot bring them to justice because he has obtained evidence through an illegal search. British and American audiences must have approved.

Another, "The Picric Bomb," has Valmont,



VALMONT WAS A
DUMPOUS FRENCHMAN,
FOND OF FINE FOOD
AND WINES, AND FULLY
CONVINCED OF THE
SUPERIORITY OF
FRENCH CIVILIZATION.



disguised as an anarchist, frustrating a bomb plot against a British delegation in Paris. The proposed bomb thrower, he finds, is one of his former aides, sunk into an addiction for absinthe. Valmont substitutes the bomb for one which, when tossed, explodes into a vari-colored *fleur-de-lis*, to the delight of spectators and the target delegation. The former aide is saved and cured through internment in Valmont's solitary-confinement room.

A third concerns the theft of a famous necklace, once destined for Marie Antoinette. It features a cowboy who delays an elite auction audience long enough to allow the thief to escape; the substitution of the necklace for an imitation; a night-barge chase along the Seine river, and a final revelation that the



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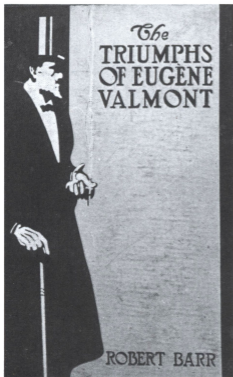
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necklace has been mailed. The episode results in Valmont's discharge—but he accepts that.

Still another tale concerns "The Fascinating Lady Alicia," whose heirloom emeralds, her sole inheritance, have been stolen. Valmont, much entranced with the lady, arranges a deal with her solemn uncle to the effect that, if the necklace is returned, no questions will be asked. The lady cajoles Valmont into witnessing a "fake" marriage ceremony with her handsome and suspect young lover—her uncle has promised her to an elderly businessman—and immediately produces the emeralds. The wedding has not, after all, been a fake; she has her husband and the emeralds. The inventive twist—like the *fleur-de-lis* bomb—is typical of Barr.

Still a fifth story, "The Secret of a Noble House," provides Barr with the opportunity to poke fun at both the British nobility and Americans. The scion of the noble house, while traveling in America, and known there as 'Wyoming Ed,' is caught in an attempted train robbery and imprisoned. A third man promises the anguished father to free him, for a fee. But the man freed is not 'Wyoming Ed,' who was killed in the robbery, but an accomplice. The third man, who actually killed the youth, has been black mailing the father. Valmont gets revenge: disguised as the youth, he approaches the blackmailer, calls his

name, and exhibits his mortal wound—and the blackmailer dies of a heart attack.

In June 1906, *The Critic*, then a popular literary journal in London, had this to say of *The Triumphs of Eugene Valmont*:

The ex-chief of the detective force of Paris is supposed to be the narrator of these tales. Not all of them are records of complicated adventures. One of them, for example, relates the manner in which a man was reclaimed from the clutches of absinthe and anarchy by the resolute action of the ubiquitous Valmont. One of the best of the tales is the first which takes the famous "Queen's Necklace" as the basis of its plot. The stories are readable but not absorbing.

The stories, despite the discursive beginnings, have a strong narrative drive—another Barr characteristic—and reproduce the stilted fictional language of the period: "I permitted myself the happiness of calling upon you"; "How flatteringly you introduce yourself, Monsieur"; and "Hist, hist," she whispered." There also are aphorisms—Valmontisms?—such as, "The present moment is ever the critical time; the future is for intelligent speculation." The tales also exhibit Barr's reading of history and his name-dropping acquaintance with the streets and sights of the principal cities.

So, although the style is ornate, and characterizations mainly satiric stereotypes, the inventive touches and twisty plots of the Valmont stories make them, even as the twenty-first century nears, still readable—in a campy kind of way. Melodramatic they certainly are. But that's a part of their charm. □



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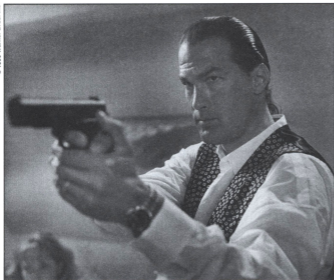
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TAD at the Movies

BY RIC MEYERS



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No-one shoots 'em up (or slicks it back) like martial-arts master Steven Seagal.

I hate the Spring. It's the worst time to be in a cinema. A young man's fancy turns to . . . well, not to movies, anyway. The folks in Hollywood save all their loss leaders for the Spring—sour nasty junk—waiting to unleash what they hope will be their big hits starting on May 25. All the really interesting, quirky films are reserved for the Autumn season.

So here it is, May 15, and I've got my second column due a mere ten days before the big boys come out to play. Oh, well. It's a hard way to make a living, especially when you've got to see schizo stuff like **The Hard Way** (Universal). Initially, this appeared to be a promising "buddy cop" picture, given spice by its premise and casting.

Perennial juvenile Michael J. Fox, of *Family Ties* and *Back to the Future* fame, plays a spoiled actor who wants to be taken seriously by the film community. So he researches a tough cop part by tagging along after an apparently demented, and certainly obsessed, New York street cop played by James Woods—who, in turn, is tracking a certifiable psycho who kills perverts and pushers exclusively in hot nightspots. Thus the stage is set for a fast, funny action comedy about the nature of the Big Apple versus Tinseltown; on reality versus fantasy.

Forget about it. It doesn't happen. After

such promising efforts as *WarGames*, *Blue Thunder*, and even *Short Circuit*, director John Badham seemingly lost all ability to distinguish between true and false with his previous picture, *Bird on a Wire*. To put it mildly, *The Hard Way* becomes exactly the sort of film it is supposed to be satirizing. In fact, it is so aggressive in its unremitting stupidity and illogic that it defies understanding.

It's confusing from the get-go. Fox would have been perfect as a brat-packer trying for more adult roles, but Badham portrays his previous film vehicles as "Indiana Jones"-type adventures, although they are advertised on an integral Times Square billboard as hardboiled detective movies. The only explanation for this is that Badham kept changing his mind as the production continued, and no one had the time, money, or inclination to make things consistent.

The lapses in logic, common sense, and taste are too numerous to mention, but the first and worst comes twenty minutes into the film, as Fox's character is hurled through a plate-glass window and crashes to the sidewalk nine feet below. He rolls to his haunches hardly winded, with nary a scratch. Adding insult, but no injury, he continues to suffer fistfights, shootouts, and major car wrecks without so much as mussing his hair as the

story becomes increasingly nonsensical.

It doesn't help that Badham's guidance to the actors is to emote as if they are guesting on *The Carol Burnett Show*. Fox is a mass of mannerisms, and if Woods were to twitch any more, his head would tear itself from his neck. My greatest sympathy rests with the female lead, Annabelle Sciorra. She came from a fine little independent film, *True Love*, and this was supposed to be her break into the "big time." Yet not only does the script (by Daniel Pyne and Lem Dobbs) make her remarkably stupid, but Badham dresses her in the most casually sexist outfits this side of *Victoria's Secret*.

For her breakup scene with Woods, Badham has her in a skin-tight, firehouse-red, V-necked outfit that laces up the back! I've got news for you: nobody breaks up with anybody in an outfit like that. What's worse, Badham keeps her in it during her obligatory abduction by the villain and in the cringingly embarrassing, seemingly interminable finale all over the aforementioned billboard.

The only one to emerge from this dross relatively unscathed is Stephen Lang, a veteran of the cult TV series *Crime Story*, who plays the Aryan bad guy dedicated to ridding Manhattan of scum. He's just a reminder how much meat there was in the original idea by *Hill Street Blues* producer Michael Kozoll, and how good the film could have been had Badham only played it straight. But his idea of humor and how human beings act is strictly from nowhere-ville.

After this major studio mess, it is nice to come back to pure, unapologetic exploitation. After the giddy, semi-racist garbage of *Marked for Death* (20th Century-Fox), martial-arts master Steven Seagal runs right back into the theaters with **Out for Justice** (Warner Bros.). Right from the outset, co-producer, ghost-scripter, and even co-composer Seagal wants you to know that this is not just your usual, raw, run-of-the-mill, hyper-violent action picture (after all, he originally titled the project "The Price of Our Blood"). The first thing on the screen is a quote from Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Arthur Miller about the nature of New York neighborhoods.

No fear: Miller did not write this screenplay. If he had, it might have been called "Death of a Psycho" or "An Exceptionally Bad Night in Brooklyn." Instead, David Lee Henry is credited as screenwriter, and he has fashioned a compact, workable drama about lethal loyalties in an Italian neighborhood. It starts loony, then doesn't let up.

Seagal is a cop named Gino, who ruins a drug stakeout by throwing an abusive pimp through the windshield of his own Cadillac. The image freeze-frames on a view of Seagal's satanic expression through the big round hole



Chow Yun Fat, an Asian superstar, stars in John Woo's *The Killer*, a beautiful blending of cinematic skill and bloody overkill.

in the auto glass as the music throbs to life and the title comes up. Meanwhile, a low-grade, low-life nutcase named Richie pumps a bunch of bullets into Gino's partner—in broad daylight, in front of the man's wife and kids. This is a no-no, especially for low-level hitters from the Cosa Nostra. He then murders a female motorist who is foolish enough to comment on his getaway technique. This, assumedly, is a no-no-no.

William Forsythe comes out from behind his Dick Tracy "Flattop" makeup to play the sort of sicko he should have been in the useless Warren Beatty movie. Richie is clearly the porcine outcast who grew up with a really bad attitude. His bitterness multiplied by a serious crack habit, Richie is working on homicidal whim, indulging himself in a bloody adventure he already knows is terminal.

Everyone else in the film understands this as well, including Gino's superfluous superior, played by Jerry Orbach, who simply gives Seagal a car, a shotgun, and lots of room. Then it's a race between Gino and the local mob to find Richie and rub him out before he kills everyone he knows. The movie becomes a series of staccato confrontations, interrupted by rambling monologues about Gino's childhood memories, made up by Seagal on the set.

Although the movie is not really enjoyable, it is effective, since Gino is free to deal with Richie and his dangerous pals without resorting to anything vaguely constitutional. When a gang attacks Gino's family in an apartment house, Seagal efficiently slaughters all except one, who smilingly surrenders and starts to say, "You're a cop. What are you going to do? Shoot me?" But before he even finishes, Gino crosses the room in a building rage, carries the guy along like a locomotive, and blasts him out a window.

Since you're expecting Seagal to simply shoot (and also expecting him to laugh with bloodthirsty delight), the fact that Gino

makes it hands-on, personal, and angry takes the audience by slightly unsettling surprise. That's the sort of rough, profane satisfaction this one delivers.

When the climax finally comes, it's also a little unusual in that Forsythe does his own stunting, and the fight is totally one-sided and wall-shaking. Although wounded, Gino reacts to a gut shot like a gnat bite, and carefully, systematically, brutally takes Richie apart. That action is even ordained by Richie's final appearance: holding a gun to his own head as if threatening to deny Gino of his subsequent "fun."

Out for Justice works because it is not completely predictable while being totally expected. Seagal still can't act, but his screen presence is undeniable, and when he gets mad he looks like the devil himself.

Even so, he has nothing on a small, quiet, unassuming Korean immigrant named John Woo. After an unsatisfying initial film career in Hong Kong, making wildly emotional kung-fu epics such as *Last Hurrah for Chivalry* and *Heroes Shed No Tears*, Woo returned to his home country to write. When he returned to the British colony several years later, he came armed with scripts the likes of which Asia had never experienced.

Borrowing liberally from Martin Scorsese, Francis Ford Coppola, and Sergio Leone, but also having his own unique vision, Woo's first New Wave effort was for renegade producer Tsui Hark, known as the "Steven Spielberg of Hong Kong." Under the aegis of Hark's successful Film Workshop company, Woo made the first great Chinese gangster thriller, deceptively titled *A Better Tomorrow*.

Using a potent casting combination of Hong Kong's most venerable film star, Ti Lung, and its newest heart-throb, Chow Yun Fat, Woo fashioned a fever-dream about the nature of brotherhood. In addition to brilliantly designed and executed violence, Woo stunned his audience with his cinematic vocabulary—establishing personality,

character, emotion, and suspense through judicious use of the camera and editing table.

After a ludicrous sequel, *A Better Tomorrow II*, that was thunderously effective because it was so overdone, Woo created his most successful international feature, *The Killer* (Circle Releasing): a beautiful blending of cinematic skill and bloody overkill. It is now playing in selected theaters throughout America, and it has to be seen *not* to be believed. The first *Better Tomorrow* movie made Chow Yun Fat an Asian superstar, and here he's back as a moral hit man confronting an amoral cop played by Danny Lee.

Woo's mastery of image has never been better as he blends the best of opera, ballet, and armaments into his most exhilarating, and ridiculous, bloodbath. Working out of a candle-and-dove-filled church, Chow's assassin kills only those he thinks deserve to die, but his conscience is stricken when he accidentally blinds a beautiful young singer (Sally Yeh) on his latest assignment.

Although he wants to give up the killing life, he needs more money to finance the girl's cornea transplant, not knowing that an alienated, obsessed cop is getting closer all the time. To cap off the plot, the killer's latest client, an incredibly perverse ganglord, wants him dead . . . just to be on the safe side. He hires a small army of expendable new murderers when Chow's best friend (once the top killer himself until a lame hand reduced him to middleman status) fails to do the dirty deed.

Chow loses faith in friendship just as the cop catches up to him. So while the guilt-ridden middleman tries to find an honorable way out of his predicament, the cop and killer meet in the singer's living room—holding guns to each other's heads but pretending to be childhood buddies for the blind girl's benefit. This is just one of Woo's many masterfully constructed sequences, as the similar antagonists on opposite sides of the law do a death dance around the girl's apartment as she obviously serves them tea.

Finally, the false friends become real friends as wave after wave of either white-jacketed or black-suited assassins appear to rub them out. They fight in the killer's house, the middleman's house, the evil client's office, a hospital called the "Scared [sic] Heart," and finally the dove-, candle-, and crucifix-filled church itself, where the cop and killer team to eradicate the bad gang guys.

All who deserve to, die, but not before the killer is blinded by the evil client—setting up the most overwrought, awful, hilarious moment of Woo's career: the dying killer and blind girl crawl toward each other, calling each other's name . . . and miss. She crawls right by him, their groping fingers missing by mere inches, as he dies in the dirt, pathetic and alone.

Woo's tale of cosmic justice so impressed everyone who saw it that he is now in Hollywood being "wooded" by both Universal and Warner Bros. to direct action pictures of theirs. The likes of *The Hard Way* and *Out for Justice* would have been well served by him, because Woo delivers something most American directors do not—honest, if overripe, emotion. □

TAD on TV

BY RIC MEYERS



I hate the Spring. A young man's fancy turns to love, yet you're in a dark, sticky room watching people kill each other. It's no fun, and Hollywood seems to know this. All the series are ending their seasons with increasingly lame cliffhangers, and reruns rule the airwaves. Case in painful point: **Dallas** (CBS).

I have only watched the series twice. First, the "Who Shot J.R.?" episode in 1980. (Was it really ten years ago? Already?) Second, the "final," two-hour episode of its thirteen-season run a few days ago. Nothing had changed. The decade-old episode was just as bad as the last episode, only the latter was twice as long. Correction: both episodes weren't bad—they were stupid.

For the record: J.R. Ewing (Larry Hagman) is alone at Southfork, drunk and feeling unloved. He's contemplating suicide when a thin man in a white tuxedo (Joel Grey) appears to show him what Dallas would have been like if J.R. had never existed.

This feeble version of *It's a Wonderful Life* might have had some amusing moments for veteran viewers if only it were not played out so pedantically. In this alternate universe, J.R.'s long-suffering wife, Sue Ellen (Linda Gray), is a successful soap-opera actress and married to a character who died on the actual show (Jack Scalia). J.R.'s noble brother, Bobby (Patrick Duffy), is an impoverished con man addicted to gambling, and J.R.'s arch-rival, Cliff Barnes (Ken Kercheval), is President of the United States.

The last episode of Dallas could be called *It's a Wonderful Life...*
J.R. style.



Jeffrey Meek and Christian Burgess (rt) star in "The Exile", a spy-snoozer.

But then, after a hundred minutes of showing J.R. that he had some worth after all, it turns out that Joel is not a guardian angel trying to get his wings, but an apprentice demon trying to get his horns. Appearing in a full-length mirror wearing a red three-piece suit and staring at J.R. with red eyes, the demon demands that J.R. kill himself anyway. It's a consummately dumb moment in an already brain-dead show.

Even within the logic of television, if this demon were trying to get J.R. to commit suicide, then Ewing's soul had to be damned, and it was a sure thing he would write in torment for eternity. Given that fact, wouldn't anyone spend the rest of his days trying to atone?

But even the certainty of J.R.'s suicide is a fake-out, since the producers never actually show us what happens. Instead, the camera freezes on Bobby's face after he arrives at Southfork, hears a shot, and runs to the door of J.R.'s bedroom. Fade-out on Bobby's stunned face.

I suppose it's fitting that a series famous for its amorality and stupidity—a show that erased the continuity of an entire season by showing it to be Victoria Principal's nightmare—would end with yet another cheap cheat. And network executives wonder why viewers are tuning out in droves. . . .

Speaking of tuning out, the weakest of the networks at the moment, CBS, has a good idea. Their mediocre late-night talk show with the bland Pat Sajak had been replaced by dreadful talk shows featuring temporary and even less talented substitutes. Why not attract insomniacs with five different sets, action-packed detective and mystery thrillers . . . one for each night of the week?

Why not indeed? The network call went out, and the studios responded. Five very serviceable ideas were developed and put into production. Then the Gulf War started. Even

better: that only gave producers more time to fine-tune their efforts. Finally, the war ended and CBS prepared to premiere their brain-children.

I confess: I'm a little biased to begin with. Last summer, writer-producer Bob Shayne approached me about the possibility of becoming Special Media Consultant on Stephen Cannell's late-night Wednesday series, *Scene of the Crime*, if he were chosen as producer. Cannell had established the concept of a repertory company performing different stories every week, and what Bob had in mind was adapting great mystery

Stephen Cannell is the host and creator of "Scene of the Crime".



stories. He was hoping that I would help him find them.

So now I can finally admit it. My plan was to secretly make *Scene of the Crime* "The Ed Hoch Show." I was going to buy the rights to every one of Ed's wonderful *Elle* *Queen's Mystery Magazine* stories and characters, so we would have enough great plots to fill a decade's worth of seasons.

Sorry, Ed. Sorry, Bob. Sorry, folks. It was not to be. Bob took the meeting with Cannell . . . and gave it back. The reason would be apparent to anyone who actually saw the show. But let's take this in chronological order.

First, the CBS marketing department came up with the evocative tag line: "Clues in the Night." But the executives overruled them, insisting the tagline should be "It's Too Hot to Sleep," thereby giving the impression there was going to be sizzling lead and warm flesh all over the place.

First rule of broadcasting: don't promise if you're not going to deliver—at least not if you expect to be successful. In actuality, the tagline should have been: "You think you can't sleep? Try five minutes of these." The "Crimestime After Primetime" lineup seems to have been specifically written and directed as a cure for insomnia. Perhaps the logic was that a snoozing audience would not change channels or switch off the set. What a cunning way to secure better ratings!

Anyway, the Tuesday opening-night offering was *The Exile*, an "espionage thriller" filmed in Paris. A more apt description would be "spy snoozer." As with all the "Crimestimes," the concept and casting was good; it was only the execution that should have been executed. The inaptly named Jeffrey Meeks, a hunk if there ever was one, plays a double agent who is double-crossed after the fall of the Berlin Wall. An intrepid spymaster secrets him in France, where he works with a crusty Parisian police detective.

All well and good—very good, in fact. The actors are uniformly fine, and the locations are terrific. The tragic thing is that no one has informed the writers how neat it looks. CBS had a remarkable opportunity to make five "Rocky & Bullwinkle" thrillers. That is, shows which took advantage of their late hour and modest budgets by being fast, witty, and sexy. Instead, they were slow, stolid, and modest.

The big problem with this particular one is in the exile's personality. A little sardonic cynicism would have been in character. Instead, Meeks is a holier-than-thou, constipated hot-head. By the end of the first episode, even I was looking for a set-up to frame him with. Anything to shut him up and get him out of my sight. Thankfully, I don't have to resort to anything so elaborate. All I have to do is hit the "Channel" button on the remote control.

Fly By Night showed up 23 hours later, and it is an unfortunately negative, but ultimately apt, title for a show that has all the ingredients, but none of the sense, necessary to make use of them. The primary reason to watch is star Shannon Tweed, willing actress and former Playboy Playmate of the Year.



Ramy Zada stars in "Dark Justice", a cross between L.A. Law and Death Wish.

She plays Sally Monroe, a six-foot blonde who's known to her friends as "Slick." Her friends are an ex-Air Force pilot named Mack (David Elliot), a French Canadian flier named Jean-Philippe Pasteur (François Gueteray), and an off-the-wall mercenary known only as Berry the Rat (Ian Tracy).

Together they run "Slick Air," a struggling airline which will ferry anybody or anything anywhere, for a price. This concoction has the makings of high-flying adventure, but guess what? It tries hard to be imaginative and witty, but the extent of the invention can be seen in those "humorous" character names.

Executive producer George Geiger tries hard, but not quite hard enough. The only time things get really exciting is during the extended striptease sequences when the camera lingers on Shannon changing clothes in her loft apartment. (The men are good-looking too, but the camera doesn't capture their nocturnal fashion statements.) But, of course, that's more excitement than any of the other series have, so if you're ever in the mood to take CBS up on its invitation, *Fly By Night* might be your best bet.

The biggest disappointment comes the following night, with the aforementioned *Scene of the Crime*, hosted and created by Stephen J. Cannell, the man who gave us *The Rockford Files* as well as *The A-Team*. The writer-producer he chose to guide this series was Ted Mann, and his idea of riveting mystery-suspense stories tends toward easily predictable *film noir* knockoffs, featuring uniformly unlikable stereotypes.

Cannell himself hosts the show, but he is no Serling or Hitchcock, which is especially obvious since the stories themselves don't even measure up to the faux *Twilight Zone* and colorized *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* made in the mid-1980s. Better to watch reruns of the real thing in syndication and on the "Nick at Nite" cable channel, than this pale plagiarism.

The most controversial program is reserved for Friday nights, and that is *Dark Justice*, another take on the "system stinks" kind of show. It's *Death Wish* by way of *L.A. Law*, as a judge whose family was murdered lets his hair grow, takes off his glasses, gets on a motorcycle, and goes after criminals who've slipped through legal loopholes.

"Out of the courtroom," states the publicity, "Judge Nick Marshall stings the bad guys where it hurts. His 'jury' includes former stripper Catalana 'Cat' Duran, a graduate of the state pen, Arnold 'Moon' Willis, and master of special effects Jericho

The cast of "Sweating Bullets" ...the best news since Nytol.



'Gibb' Gibson. Together, this band plays by the crooks' rules, turning their own code of honor against them . . . and that's where the fun begins."

Yeah, well, it certainly sounds like "fun" to me. This is the kind of show that wants to regurgitate its cake and eat it too. Try as it might, it can't completely eliminate the integral psychotic nature of the concept, which hangs like a sour cloud over all the light-headed proceedings.

The first episode started with a naked woman coming out of a swimming pool, cuddling up to a man in bed, then getting tortured and shot by a yuppie killer. The assassin gets off for reasons unknown, "and that's where the fun begins."

This is not a well show. What's worse, it's not very well done, either. It's only worth

watching to study how the moral content fluctuates wildly from scene to scene, and to witness for yourself the lengths to which the cast will go in order to think of memorable stage names. In addition to dependable supporting player Dick O'Neill, who plays Moon, the stars are Remy Zada, Clayton Prince, and Begona Plaza (that really is a person, not a mini-mall).

Last, and arguably least, there is *Sweating Bullets*. Although it runs on Monday, it was the final of the five to premiere. "Where does a top-notch DEA agent go when he loses his job?" the publicity asks. "Nick Slaughter chose the Florida Keys! A few years ago Nick messed up big-time helping a drug suspect, whom he believed to be innocent, escape the country. Convinced he'd rather be a peasant in paradise than a prince in hell, Nick hung

out a private eye shingle surrounded by azure seas and beautiful women."

Gee, I like him already. Who wouldn't like a stupid incompetent named Nick Slaughter?

Thankfully, Nick, as played by the pony-tailed Rob Stewart, more than lives up to his reputation as an idiot. After all, as the publicity goes on to state, he's "always living on the edge—the edge of danger, the edge of common sense, the edge of bankruptcy. Quirky, volatile, and ferociously impractical, Nick has rough-hewn charm and rough wit." With P.R. like this, who needs critics?

Suffice to say, the copywriter had *Sweating Bullets* nailed. It's on the edge of common sense and ferociously impractical. Then again, it's also slow and cheap. Ditto the entire "Crimetime After Primetime" lineup. It's the best news for insomniacs since Nyctol, and you can quote me on that. □

Novel Verdicts

BY JON L. BREEN

Explanation of symbols:

- A All or more than three-quarters of the book devoted to courtroom action
- ½ One-half or more of the book devoted to courtroom action
- ¼ One-quarter or more devoted to courtroom action
- B Relatively brief courtroom action; less than a quarter of the book
- C Collection of short stories or novelettes

ARMSTRONG, Harrison. *Act of Passion*. New York: Harper/Collins, 1991. (¼)

In a Florida court, Ann Cohen is accused of the murder of husband Marty and his mistress. She is represented by former neighbor and mob-connected "Great Defender" Bill Connolly. In over a hundred pages of courtroom action, the trial is expertly covered from beginning (a ball hearing with the defendant present only by TV monitor) to end (a good defense summation), with some terrific Q-and-A along the way. The novel is unusually well plotted, and the ending should be satisfactory even to those who see some of the surprises coming.

Some courtroom queries: Would a lawyer really object to a question on cross examination on the grounds that it was leading? And in Florida, doesn't the prosecutor (with whom the burden of proof lies) get a second shot at the jury following the defense summation?

BERKENSON, Marc. *Special Circumstances*. New York: Avon, 1991. (B)

Various courtroom procedures are visited briefly (for a total of about 35 pages) in this compelling and provocative crime novel, with the main case finding Los Angeles lawyer Ben Green representing Black Muslim Rashid James in a drug-related murder. On the prosecution side is a somewhat inept but very gung-ho former Marine officer. The title



refers to the California test for imposition of the death penalty, and there is a brief description of the much more extensive jury-selection procedure used in such cases.

FORREST, Katherine V. *Murder by Tradition*. Tallahassee, Fla.: Naiad, 1991. (¼)

Through the solid police work of L.A. detective Kate Delafield, Kyle Jensen is brought to trial in the stabbing death of restaurateur Teddie Crawford. Was Jensen justified, protecting himself against an unexpected homosexual advance, or was the crime a premeditated gaybashing murder? Kate, whose lesbianism must be kept concealed to permit her to do her job, joins forces with prosecutor Linda Foster to overcome the homophobia of the criminal justice system and (in the new spirit of many courtroom novels) give the scumbag defendant the justice he deserves. The defense attorney knows of Kate's lifestyle, and she fears he may use it against her on the stand.

Trial scenes take up most of the second half of the book, and they are effectively done, including enough detailed bloodstain testimony for Rumpole's Penge Bungalow Murder. Some buffs might regret that there is not more explanation of some of the objections and rulings, and Foster is allowed to get away with murder herself in her direct examination of Kate, but the scenes certainly work dramatically, and the suspense is palpable.

There is a good out-of-court scene in a lesbian bar, where Kate describes jury selection and her friends cast their own all-homophobe courtroom: Jesse Helms as judge, with William F. Buckley, Jr., Anita Bryant, Phyllis Schlafly, Eddie Murphy, Andrew Dice Clay, and California politicians Robert K. Dornan and William Dannemeyer among the jurors.

STREAM, Arnold C. *Until Proven Guilty*. Chelsea, Mich.: Scarborough, 1991. (¼)

In a case that offers some echoes of *An American Tragedy*, New York attorney Tommy Attleboro is called to Florida to defend boyhood friend Felix Evans on a charge of murdering his wife Lorna, the girl Felix stole from Tommy in their student days. Lorna has vanished in the Gulf of Mexico at the end of an ill-fated Everglades boating expedition, and her body has not been found.

This is the kind of book that courtroom buffs love most, knowing that the author is a highly regarded litigator. The interplay of lawyers and juries is especially interesting, and every aspect of the trial is covered in detail with over one hundred pages spent in court. Surprisingly, the good-of-boy judge leaves the courtroom during jury selection, telling the advocates to call him if they need him. The trial account climaxes with an unconventional defense summation and an even more irregular jury verdict. In a post-verdict section, Attleboro finds his way to the painful truth. □

PAULA GOSLING'S LUKE ABBOTT REFEREES A DEADLY GAME.

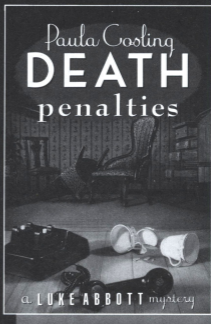
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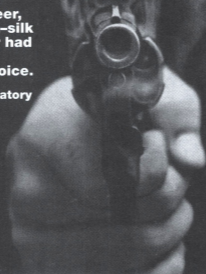
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ARMED, AND SAINTLY

During his career,
smoother-than-silk
Simon Templar had
many favorite
weapons of choice.

by Dana Martin Batory



LESLIE CHARTERIS's creation Simon Templar, known also as "The Saint," used a multitude of firearms between his first appearance in *Meet The Tiger* (1928) and his last in *Catch The Saint* (1975). Though he used American and English sidearms, his preference was clearly those of German manufacture—particularly Lugers. It is easy to understand why.

The Luger, or Parabellum Pistol, is undoubtedly the most widely known and recognized of all German designs and probably the most coveted. The 9mm Luger cartridge is still the most widely used semi-automatic pistol caliber. Although the Luger is not the most reliable of combat weapons or the most powerful, it was the finest mass-produced automatic pistol ever.

The pistol has had a long, romantic history outside of fiction, both in war and in civilian life. It has gone to all the corners of the globe with hunters, trappers, explorers, and prospectors. The gun is light and compact, as is the ammunition. The slanted grips make aiming easy and natural. The pistol is finely machined to extreme tolerances and accurate to great distances.

Although the light, small-caliber bullets have little

so-called "shocking power," they have killed big game by exact placement. Because its bullets make long, narrow wounds, killing power on body shots is poor unless vital areas are struck. Since they reach deep, however, they have often been used to finish off heavy game downed with a rifle.

The exact models used by the Saint can be narrowed down to two. In "The Invisible Millionaire" (*Follow the Saint*, 1938), Templar's "fingers opened off the big Luger, and it plonked on the boards at his feet." This was probably a 1934 Mauser Commercial.

Manufactured by Waffenfabrik-Mauser, they were designated for commercial sales inside and outside Germany. The 9mm magazine held the standard eight rounds. Empty, with a 4-inch, blued-finish* barrel, the pistol weighed 30 ounces. Several have been reported in 7.65mm.

Mr. Dana Martin Batory is a freelance writer, photographer, and cabinetmaker who has written for such publications as the BAKER STREET JOURNAL, the BAKER STREET MISCELLANEA, the SHERLOCK HOLMES JOURNAL, and RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY. He is single and lives in Crestline, Ohio surrounded by old books and older machinery.

In *The Saint's Getaway* (1932), when Simon was holed up in police headquarters, "he reached the police chief's office [with] a Luger automatic rifle under each arm." This would have to be the 1914 Artillery Luger. It was issued for service in August or September 1917, the first examples falling into the hands of Allied looters during a trench raid in the Loos sector in September 1917.

The pistol is similar to the Commercial Luger, except that a 7½-inch barrel is fitted, together with a rear sight graduated up to 88 metres, just ahead of the chamber. Originally, it was equipped with the standard 9mm magazine, but in 1911 a curved "snail" magazine was invented by Tatarek and von Benks and early in 1918 was issued with the 1917 model. This, together with the attachable butt-stock, converted the pistol into something resembling a semi-automatic rifle. These weapons were widely issued to NCOs of machine gun units, artillery observers, and shock troops.



While on the subject of Lugers, one should mention the .38 Luger used by Captain Friede in *The Saint in Miami* (1940). While there are hundreds of Luger variations, there are only two common calibers known—the 7.65mm (also known as the .30 Luger) and the 9mm. Two Lugers were produced in .45 caliber (automatic) in 1906 for United States Army testing, but only one is known to exist. There are rumors that small or "baby" Lugers were available in .32 automatic, but none has surfaced. There are no .38 Lugers.

Another German manufacture favored by Simon was "a light but beautifully balanced Walther" also appearing in "The Invisible Millionaire." This was the Walther PPK automatic known as the *Polizeipistole Kriminal* (Detective Pistol), a smaller edition of the Walther PP, intended for plainclothes police use in place of a holster gun—hence PPK. It is also called the *Polizeipistole Kurz* (Short Pistol).

It would have appealed to the Saint's keen sense of humor to use a police-issue firearm. I have test fired nearly all of the pistols mentioned in this article, and

the PPK is my personal favorite in looks, feel, and accuracy.

Made by Waffenfabrik of Zella Mehlis, it is one of the few double-action automatic pistols. Weighing 19 ounces empty, it has a 3¼-inch barrel with fixed sights (overall length 5⅞-inches). It was available in .22 Long Rifle (5.6mm), .25 Automatic (6.35 mm), .32 Automatic (7.65mm), and .380 Automatic (9mm). The 7.65mm magazine held seven rounds. This was the preferred pistol of German officers in World War II.

The Saint does not seem to have liked English pistols, but other characters used them. A "Webley Mark VI .455 Service revolver" surfaces in *The Saint in Miami*, and a "wicked little snub-nosed Webley automatic" appears in *The Saint's Getaway* (1932). This would have to be either the Webley 9mm Military & Police Automatic or the Webley Metropolitan Police Automatic.

The fixed-sight, double-action Mark VI held six rounds. Barrels came in lengths of 4, 6 and 7½-inches. Overall length with a 6-inch barrel was 11¼-inches; weight 38 ounces.

The Military & Police Automatic's magazine held eight rounds of 9mm Browning Long. The 8-inch, fixed-sight pistol weighed 32 ounces empty. The Metropolitan Police Automatic was available in .32 Automatic (eight-round magazine) and .380 Automatic (seven-round magazine). The 3½-inch, fixed-sight barrel gave it an overall length of 6¼-inches and a weight of 20 ounces.

When used for killing man or beast, American cartridges and big-bore guns put foreign guns in second place. The Saint had a fondness for the powerful Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum. In "Arizona" (*The Saint Goes West*, 1942), "Simon Templar checked the fit of the specially built silencer on his .357 Magnum." A .357 also appears in *The Saint in Miami*.

First sold in 1935, the .357 furnished power, extreme range, and, with metal-piercing bullets, deep penetration. I have seen my brother pick off empty beer cans at 100 yards with his 6-inch .357.

The six-shot, double-action revolver came in blued or nickel finish. Barrel lengths were available in 3½, 5, 6 and 6½-inches. The overall length with a 6-inch barrel was 11¾-inches (weight 44 ounces). The pistol had adjustable target sights. Until 1938, it was custom-made in any barrel length from 3½ to 8¾-inches.

As for the "specially built silencer," it must have been very special. Silencers on revolvers are totally useless. They only work on automatics.

Other U.S. pistols appearing in the Saint stories are the .38 Colt Automatic used by Simon in *The Saint in New York* (1935). Equipped with a 4½-inch barrel with fixed sights, it was 7½-inches long and weighed 31 ounces. The magazine held seven rounds.

*Unless noted, all pistols are of blued finish.

Roger Moore
was always on target
as The Saint.



It was discontinued in 1928. The pistol had been a favorite of outdoorsmen since its introduction in 1903. It was flat-shooting, gave deep penetration, and was reliable.

Sheriff Newt Haskins in *The Saint in Miami* uses a .45 Colt revolver. Of course, one must mention that famous American handgun used so skillfully by Simon's sometime sidekick Hoppy Uniatz, the .45 Colt Automatic (Models 1911 and 1911A). With a 5-inch, fixed-sight barrel, it had an overall length of 8½-inches and a weight of 39 ounces. The magazine held seven rounds. Like all the automatics mentioned, a round could be chambered first, increasing the capacity by one.



Although the Colt is generally considered to be one of the most difficult handguns there is to learn to shoot well, Hoppy apparently had no problem. Many outdoorsmen and soldiers have claimed the single-

action .45 Colt Automatic as their favorite. With the single-action Army Colt .45 revolver, it shares the honor of being America's most history-making pistol.

It probably has the most reliable of all mass-produced auto-pistol systems. The big, short, but heavy bullet is not meant to shoot flat but rather to hold its "punch" so well that even at long ranges it can do serious damage. It has an accurate range of 75 yards and a maximum of 1,600 yards (achieved by elevating the pistol to 30 degrees).

As to the Saint's marksmanship with a pistol, he seems to have gotten better over the years, as this series of quotations illustrates:

... [T]he Saint, as a pistol shot, had never been in the championship class.

— *The Saint Closes the Case* (1930)

He was not, as he had admitted, the greatest pistol shot in the world...

— *The Saint Closes the Case*

He did not approve of firearms, which he considered messy and noisy and barbarous inventions of the devil.

— "The Wonderful War"

The Saint Wanted for Murder (1931)

"I am the greatest gun artist in the world," said the Saint persuasively, but with a singular lack of honesty...

— "The Million Pound Day"

The Saint vs. Scotland Yard (1932)

He crouched in the shadow of a bush with his gun

raised, and said in a much more carrying voice: "I bet I can shoot my initials on the face of the first guy who sticks his nose outside."

—"The Affair of Hogsbotham"
Follow The Saint (1938)

At that, he estimated the range at a little more than a hundred yards, and raised his brown right hand on a rock in front of him as coolly as if he had been trying a trick shot for his own amusement. Judgement of distance, speed, and elevation merged into one imperceptible coordination as he squeezed the trigger. The Magnum jarred in his grip with a discreet *flup!*, but he still held the aim until he saw the car swerve on one flattened front tire. . . . —"Arizona,"
The Saint Goes West (1942)



The Saint saw it, and his hand went like lightning to his gun; but from the start of that movement everything seemed to happen at once. He saw the rattler's tail dissolve into a quivering blur of warning, but before the sound even reached his ears the pinto had heard it and lurched sideways, losing its foothold on the treacherous scree. Simon thought that he fired at the same moment as the snake struck, but he had no chance to meditate about it just then. But she looked at the rattlesnake writhing and lashing a few feet away, its back almost cut through by the Saint's bullet. —"Arizona"

His automatic was out in his hand when he flung the door open, to look across the room at Freddie Pellman. . . . staring with a hideous grimace of terror at the rattlesnake that was coiled on his legs, its flat triangular head drawn back and poised to strike.

Behind him, the Saint heard Esther stifle a faint scream; and then the detonation of his gun blotted out every other sound.

As if it had been photographed in slow motion, Simon saw the snake's shattered head splatter away from its body, while the rest of it kicked and whipped away in a series of reflex convulsions that spilled it still writhing spasmodically on to the floor. □

—"Palm Springs,"
The Saint Goes West

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19 The Queen's Ransom (1981) was filmed in 1961 by the British Screen Gems. It featured the late Sir John Gielgud as the Queen's Ransom. It was the last film to feature Gielgud as the Queen's Ransom.



20 John Baxendale was hired for the role of Dr. Watson in the 1988 film. He was the first to play the role of Dr. Watson in a British film. He was also the first to play the role of Dr. Watson in a British film.



21 The first Sherlock Holmes film was the 1916 silent film, The Hound of the Baskervilles. It was the first film to feature a Sherlock Holmes character. It was the first film to feature a Sherlock Holmes character.

The Game Is Afoot

Put on your thinking caps (Deerstalkers, naturally) and break out the tobacco—for the following Sherlock in the Cinema quiz is positively “a three-pipe problem”:

The Problems

1. Who played Sherlock Holmes in the most films? How many?
2. Who was the first “official” Holmes to grace the silver screen?
3. How many times did Basil Rathbone, the most famous Sherlock, appear on film as the Baker Street sleuth?
4. In Rathbone’s first film as Holmes, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, he didn’t receive top billing. Nor did his Watson, Nigel Bruce. So who did?
5. In what sequel to a Rathbone/Holmes movie does neither Rathbone nor Holmes appear?
6. Can you name the Sherlocks in these films: *A Study in Terror* (1965), *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* (1970), *The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes’ Smarter Brother* (1975), *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* (1976), *Murder by Decree* (1979), *Young Sherlock Holmes* (1986), *Without a Clue* (1988)?
7. What role do film greats Orson Welles, John Huston and Sir Laurence Olivier have in common?
8. What part have Robert Duvall and cartoon character Mr. Magoo both played?
9. What role has this unlikely foursome shared: Buster Keaton, George C. Scott, Roger Moore and Harry Reams?
10. Who was first actor to play the Great Detective on television? Who was Holmes in his first TV series?
11. During his series of televised Sherlock Holmes cases, Jeremy Brett has teamed with two Watsons. Can you name them?
12. In *Without a Clue*, when Holmes and Watson part ways after an argument, Watson tries his hand at crime-solving alone, calling himself “The Crime Doctor.” Who was the original Crime Doctor?



18 Famous: The series of Holmes films starring Rathbone and Bruce continue to be the most popular of the genre. The most recent film, *Without a Clue*, was released in 1988. It was the last film to feature Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes.



20 The first “official” Holmes to appear on film was William Gillette in 1916. He played the role of Sherlock Holmes in the film *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. It was the first film to feature a Sherlock Holmes character.



11 David's Watson in 1966. With the release of *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution*, the role of Watson was played by a number of different actors. It was the last film to feature a Watson character.



10 The first Sherlock on TV was Louis L'Amour's *The Man Who Shot the Moon* in 1950. It was the first TV series to feature a Sherlock Holmes character. It was the first TV series to feature a Sherlock Holmes character.



11 Each new Watson. David in *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* and the Magoo character in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* were the first to play the role of Watson in a British film. He was the first to play the role of Watson in a British film.



12 An actor named, or the name closest to it, was used for the character of “The Crime Doctor” in *Without a Clue*. It was the last film to feature a Sherlock Holmes character.

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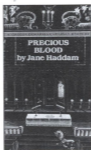
COZY

Precious Blood by Jane Haddam. New York: Bantam, 1991. \$4.50

Jane Haddam (Orania Papazoglou) created Gregor Demarkian in *Not a Creature Was Stirring*, and, as far as I can find, he is the first serial Armenian sleuth in the mystery field. A former FBI agent, now retired but obviously in demand for solving specific cases of murder, Demarkian is uncertain what Cardinal John O'Bannon wants of him. Cheryl Cass's body has been found in an alley in Colchester, New York, where the Cardinal presides and where Cheryl went to the Catholic schools twenty years ago. The conclusion is that she committed suicide, but apparently something about her death has made the inner circle of Holy Name Cathedral and of St. Agnes parish uneasy.

Cheryl's return to Colchester has stirred up the unpleasant memory of an incident at Black Rock Park in which the participants were six of Cheryl's high school classmates. Of the three girls involved, one has become a modern, assertive woman occupied in politics, another has become a traditional wife and mother of nine children, and the third is now Sister Scholastica, head of St. Agnes school. The three men have taken paths more similar to each other. Andy Walsh is the parish priest at St. Agnes, Tim Dolan is also a priest but assigned as assistant to the Cardinal, and Barry Field, eschewing his Catholicism, is a communications media minister. All six have motives for wishing Cheryl dead, and the red herrings pointing in all directions are very convincing.

Judy Egan has invested a great deal in campaigning to get her man started on a



political career in Albany. Peg Monaghan has put as much into creating her large, happy family. Sister Scholastica is up for a promotion but has not been completely honest about her background. Andy Walsh, forever challenging the Cardinal's traditional Catholicism, cannot afford to give the hierarchy any grounds for getting rid of him. Barry Field is in the middle of negotiations for joining a national television ministry. Tim Dolan is simply ambitious to climb the ecclesiastic ladder. The number of suspects narrows down, however, as the suspects themselves become victims.

Precious Blood leaves a satisfied feeling because, aside from the good writing, the author meets all the other criteria for a good mystery. The key clue is presented fairly; no secrets are kept from the reader. The characters (for those who know Catholic parish life) are believable, and their behavior is in keeping. Haddam also provides solid educational material on some of the struggles that are ongoing in the Church. In addition, her method of murder is medically realistic. If one had to find a flaw, it would be that other options are not explained away so that

murder would appear to be the choice resolution.

This could be filed in the "amateur sleuth" category, but parish boundaries and general tone is "cozy," and that tone is reinforced by the warmth of Haddam's detective and his Armenian heritage. One is happy that it takes a bit over 300 pages to tell the story and wishes for another Haddam-Demarkian book. And there at the end of *Precious Blood* is the beginning of the next one, to be called *Act of Darkness*.

—Maria Broley

The Summer of the Danes by Ellis Peters. New York: The Mysterious Press, 1991. \$16.95

It is almost unfair for me to review Ellis Peters' books. As founder of the Ellis Peters Appreciation Society, it is pretty much a foregone conclusion that I will love everything she does. While this one is not the strongest book of the series (*The Potter's Field* is a tough act to follow), it admirably continues her recent trend to deeper and more thoughtful stories—and, perhaps not so incidentally, to stories in which the outcome is not a foregone conclusion. In fact, the good Brother Cadfael does not even solve this particular murder: the wrong-doer ultimately confesses for the sake of his soul.

Cadfael's old friend and apprentice, Brother Mark, has been dispatched by the bishop to present two gifts with the hope of forestalling problems with some politically unpopular ecclesiastical appointments in Wales. Cadfael accompanies him to serve as translator and companion in the court of Owain, Prince of Gwynedd. Owain, embroiled in a feud with his brother, soon finds his court in an uproar over the death of one of his brother's emissaries and the disappearance of the daughter of a respected clergyman. Before he can act on either, his brother arrives in Wales with mercenary Danes, in the desperate hope of regaining his land and position. Cadfael soon finds himself a hostage of the Danes and learns the fate of the young woman.

As always, Peters has a sure hand and a surer heart in the creation of her bright, beautiful, and usually willful young women—no less her young men, who are generally of a more even temperament. As hostage, though, Cadfael has more time for introspection, and we learn more about him in this book than in any since *The Virgin in the Ice*. We also learn a great deal about Welsh custom and law, a subject on which Peters is quite learned: witness her *Brothers of Gwynedd Quartet*, set not so very long after Cadfael's time.

Although Brother Cadfael has an aging body—a point which is emphasized here as nowhere before—his mind and heart are still

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young, and it is clear that he still has a few adventures left in him, as long as Ellis Peters agrees to be his chronicler.

—Sue Feder

Mom Meets Her Maker by James Yaffe. New York: Worldview Library, 1991. \$3.50

Mom does not knit, carry an umbrella, inadvertently get into difficulties, or have any of those trademarks of the famous elderly lady sleuths. Mom, in her seventies, does kind of a Nero Wolfe thing, figuring out the mystery from information brought to her by her son, Dave, the special investigator with the public defender's office in Mesa Grande, Colorado.

In this particular "Mom" mystery, Abe and Sarah Meyer, with their son Roger, have come to public defender Ann Swenson, complaining about Reverend Chuck Candy. The minister of the Effulgent Apostles of Christ has decided to outdo all other Christmas displays with bright lights galore and music blasting until 2 a.m. During one of Roger's attempts to discuss the situation with Reverend Candy, there is a scuffle and Candy's gun goes off with no one hurt. Shortly thereafter, the Reverend is found murdered and Roger is the number-one suspect, which he reinforces by disappearing.

With chicken soup, chopper liver, and schnecken, Mom, smarter than any of the attorneys, asks her son the right questions to gradually get to the solution. While that is going on, the story takes on an added bit of mystery when the American Civil Liberties Union offers to take the case for the defense, making Dave and his boss, Ann, wonder why. This is an equal opportunity book, and, halfway through the story, Yaffe has involved, in addition to the ACLU, the Unitarian Church, an Episcopalian minister, the mayor of Mesa Grande, the one and only local newspaper's editor, and the town's rabbi. All except Rabbi Loewenstein feel that Roger should plead guilty. In the meantime, Roger has decided to turn himself in, and, while he is in jail, another murder is committed and Mom is closer to saving Roger.

Mom, just this side of psychic, offers her son a solution but changes that scenario a couple of times. In fact, while putting the pot roast in the oven, Mom gives the story one more twist, which is one too many for this reader.

There are no great surprises here, but the book is fun to read, partly because Yaffe plays so fair at poking fun at everything—all religions (not with malice), all bureaucracy, all human foibles. Even Mom, the wise, universal Jewish mother (found in every culture), comes in for her share by being caricatured to some extent. There are humorous bits throughout, as for example in explaining what a yarmulke is—"one of those small round caps that a pious Jew wears indoors and out, because at all times he's supposed to keep a covering between the top of his head and God. A Jewish female doesn't have to follow this rule: God, apparently, doesn't have anything against the top of her head."

In addition, there is a gentle prodding of

conscience and an attempt at raising social awareness, but only the characters in the book get hit over the head. One is given the choice of levels in reading *Mom Meets Her Maker* from entertainment to philosophy, or anything in between. Mom's beginning and ending monologues, addressed to God, add to the "cozy" ambience, present throughout the book.

—Maria Brolley

PRIVATE EYE

A Fistful of Empty by Benjamin M. Schutz. New York: Viking, 1991. \$17.95

A Fistful of Empty is the fifth Leo Haggerty novel. Haggerty is a private investigator working out of Washington, D.C. He runs Rocky Franklin Investigations for his friend Rocky Franklin and has several operatives working for him. As the book begins, Haggerty is working late at the office, swamped with paperwork. When his live-in love Samantha Clayton, home early from New York, calls and asks him to come home because she wants to talk to him, he refuses since he has promised his best friend, bounty hunter Arnie Kendall, to act back-up when he grabs a neo-Nazi bail jumper, Harold "Warhog" Snipes. They take Snipes easily, but, when he gets home, Haggerty finds that Samantha has locked him out of the bedroom.

Samantha remains angry for a few days, then calls Haggerty at work to come home so that they can finally talk. When he arrives, he finds the house ransacked and Samantha beaten and raped. (As a result of this, she has lost the baby she was ready to tell Haggerty about.) She tells him that the man had wanted a key he said Haggerty had taken from him, but Haggerty has no idea what this is about. When he calls Arnie for help, he finds that Arnie has been shotgunned to death in a set-up and that his apartment also has been ransacked. Haggerty arranges for protection for Samantha and then plans to find the killer himself. "I had a war to wage," Haggerty says. He also plans to stay away

from Samantha and his office, in order to protect those he cares for.

Haggerty decides that Snipes is the connecting factor. In jail, after Haggerty twists his arm, Snipes tells him that he has stolen a key from a man at a party and stuffed it in the back seat of Arnie's car. When the man came to the jail, Snipes told him Arnie and Haggerty had the key. When Haggerty recovers the key, he finds that it is to a locker containing a computer data disk. Haggerty brings it to a friend to decipher. It turns out to involve a company trying to develop a drug to prevent AIDS from passing from mother to child.

A Fistful of Empty is a well-written novel that will keep the reader involved in not only the mystery of who killed Arnie and attacked Samantha and why, but in the strained personal relationship of Haggerty and Samantha, as well as the question of Haggerty's response to violence. The ending, however, is rather depressing. One feels that more is needed to resolve the case and the reader's feelings about Haggerty himself.

—Martin Friedenthal

Polaroid Man by Michael Cormany. New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991. \$15.95

The desk clerk at a seedy hotel looks to private eye Dan Kruger: "You look like a drinking man . . . Your hands shake, you're puffy in the face, you got dull eyes." A police lieutenant tells him, "You dress like a damn street person. Chicago cops tell me you're a lowlife alkie pill-popper." No doubt about it, Kruger is a substance-abuser. When he's not guzzling booze, he's chewing pills of one sort or another.

Also a heavy smoker, at 38, Kruger is a washout, getting—if he's lucky—maybe one case a year. The rest of the time, he ekes out a living as lead guitarist for a rock group calling itself Full Frontal Nudity. He earns enough money to keep him high and in cigarettes. On those rare occasions when he is working on a case, he spends more time fighting off the effects of a hangover than tracking down evil-doers.

So, why is the guy so likable? Well, for one thing, he owns a pet rabbit named Bugs whom he carts around in a crate and who serves as his Watson (Kruger reviews the

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details of a case out loud while Bugs twitches his nose and listens). For another, he possesses some of those virtues we traditionally associate with the gumshoe-cum-hero. He refuses to be scared off a case—even after being fired and when continuing could cost him his life. And he does not use others, even when they attempt to use him.

In *Polaroid Man*, he is hired by a blonde sexpot named Andrea Gale, whom he meets at a bar where he is playing a gig. Next day, when he calls at her apartment to receive his instructions, he finds her savagely beaten body lying on the floor. End of case, apparently, except that her boyfriend, a dude named David Stone, is charged with the crime and hires Kruger to prove his innocence.

Innocence is a relative term in *Polaroid Man*. At times, it seems that the only character not guilty of at least some minor crime or moral infraction is Bugs. For example, there is wealthy factory owner Ronald Headon; with a penchant for young women, might he be Andrea's killer? There is Ronald's wife, Sandy, a bitter alcoholic who hates her husband but not the rich lifestyle he pays for. There is Ronald's former business partner, a shadowy character named Wylie, also an alcoholic. And McCoy, a cop on the take. Plus a half-dozen assorted potheads, average joes, and even a few reputable citizens, all with possible motives for murder.

Through a haze of booze and dope, Kruger has to sort it all out, while stumbling over bodies and getting himself periodically beaten insensible. Somehow, he manages to retain his sense of humor throughout, and enough of his faculties to bring the case to a satisfactory conclusion.

This is the fourth Dan Kruger novel. A series worth discovering.

—Edward Lodi

The Dead of Winter by Michael Allegretto. New York: Avon, 1991. \$4.95

If mystery novels were automobiles, Michael Allegretto's *The Dead of Winter* would be an Oldsmobile or Buick. It's solid, dependable. Not like flashy imports, which often have more pizzazz than substance, or a hulking luxury car, slowed by its own heft.

Allegretto's Denver private detective Jake Lomax, in his second outing, agrees to look for barber Joe Bellano's daughter Stephanie, who has disappeared after a confrontation.



She was upset that her father, whom she never suspected of being a bookie, had been arrested. Bellano is killed by a car bomb, making Lomax's search all the more intense. He has four prime suspects—four customers in Joe's barbershop the day Stephanie vanished. His investigation brings surprising revelations about things not known about Stephanie, and not-so-surprising revelations about the interests of the local mob.

—Bernard A. Drew

Second Chance by Jonathan Valin. New York: Delacorte, 1991. \$17.95

Second Chance is the ninth mystery to feature Harry Stoner, a private investigator working out of Cincinnati, Ohio. It is an excellent, though ultimately rough, example of the genre.

Stoner is hired by psychiatrist Philip Pearson to find his daughter Kirsten Pearson, who had disappeared from the University of Chicago. Pearson also has a son, Ethan, whom he has not seen for several years, and a second wife, Louise. His first wife Estelle committed suicide fifteen years earlier.

In Chicago, speaking to Kirsten's roommate and professors, Stoner learns that Kirsten has had a mental breakdown the previous summer, and one of her professors believes that she could be heading for suicide. Discovering that the brother Ethan and his wife and son are now in Chicago, Stoner goes to see him, only to find that Ethan has left, with Kirsten, leaving his wife and child behind. Stoner learns that Ethan has believed that his mother did not commit suicide but was killed by a black man. Stoner believes that the two Pearson children are looking for

Herbert Talmadge, a black psychopath who has just been released from prison for killing a woman around the time of their mother's death. Stoner must try to find them before they kill Talmadge, or are killed by him. At the same time, in trying to find them, Stoner starts investigating Estelle Pearson's death and the people involved in it.

Second Chance is very well written, both in plot and style, and Stoner comes across as the knightly, archetypal hardboiled detective, but it contains one major drawback. The conclusion of the book is very tawdry. Not in gruesome descriptions, but in what we find out about the characters and the things they have done and had done to them. The horrible things that people do to each other, even to loved ones and family members, should not be off limits to writers of fiction, but, if it is being dealt with, it should signify more than just another plot device. The revelations at the end of *Second Chance*, while well founded in what has gone before, seem to be used only for shock value. No moral conclusions are drawn. This aside, *Second Chance* may be enthralling and, for the admirer of Jonathan Valin's considerable talents, well worth reading.

—Martin Friedenthal

GENERAL

Fielder's Choice by Michael Bowen. New York: St. Martin's, 1991. \$16.95

Surely no one could resist a book that begins: "Going into the sixth inning of the New York Mets' game against the Milwaukee Braves on September 26, 1962, Jerry Fielder figured that the Mets still had a decent chance to win. As it turned out, that was the last mistake Fielder ever made."

Fielder is an Irishman from New York, a minor hood and "Celtic hustler from Hell's Kitchen." He's a character straight out of Damon Runyon, given to saying things like, "I thought the only practicing Catholics left in America were micks 'n' people in Bing Crosby movies"—his comment when he discovers that a non-Irish character attends church regularly.

When Fielder ends up dead at a Mets game at the Polo Grounds in 1962, his two new friends the Currys set out to find his murderer. After all, they reason, Fielder would still be alive if they had stayed at the game with him. These two are as fine a pair of married sleuths as you will come across in contemporary crime fiction. Thomas Andrew Curry is a 32-year-old lawyer who surrendered his law license "rather than let anyone think they could use the threat of losing it to control him," and who now freelances for his father's law firm. He is married to Sandrine Cadet Curry (a.k.a. Sandy), a translator who grew up in French Algeria, speaks three languages, and has a mind like a steel trap. Her first response to being taken to a baseball game is to ask, "Is baseball objectivist or phenomenological?" and to expand on this

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with, "Is there truly a coherent principle informing what the players do, or are they simply engaging in random movements, with spectators investing what happens with their own subjective meanings?" She becomes a master of the game in no time, learning from Fielder to score plays like an old pro, and there is poetic justice in the fact that her scorebook becomes a significant clue in the solving of Fielder's murder.

In many ways, Sandy and Thomas are an updated version of Nick and Nora Charles. They obviously enjoy one another, have a good life, do interesting things, and meet interesting people, and the reader believes Thomas' father when he explains that they maximize one another's strengths so that, together, they are more formidable than each would be alone.

Thomas and Sandy are aided in their search for Fielder's killer by Thomas's father, T. Graham Curry, and his law partner, Theodore Furst, another good pair of characters readers will want to see more of. Furst is the narrator of this story, and, although the murder and investigation take place in 1962, he is telling it to the reader today, in the 1990s. No explanation is given for this thirty-year lag. The characters, the overall pace of the story, and the baseball information, however, are engaging enough so that only a book reviewer would think to question the time leap. All others will surely enjoy this novel that, in addition to being a plausible mystery, is a loving tribute to the Mets and the Polo Grounds.

—Joan G. Kotker

Bones of Coral by James W. Hall. New York: Knopf, 1991. \$20.00

Environmental pollution—the illegal disposal of hazardous waste—provides the motivation for multiple murder in *Bones of Coral*. The opening sentence establishes the theme: "Cassie Raintree was dying of brain cancer every afternoon at two-thirty." Cassie is a character in a popular soap opera, played by Trula Montoya, whose real-life illness—multiple sclerosis—has brought about her fictional demise. Although her debility prevents Trula from continuing with the grueling regimen demanded by daytime TV, it does not prevent her from taking an active part in solving a medical mystery: the high incidence of MS in Key West, Florida. Can the unusual number of cases in the area—including her own—be attributed to something in the environment? Something man-made?

Meanwhile, Trula's high school sweetheart, whom she has not seen in twenty years, has his own mystery to solve. Did his father commit suicide or was he murdered? Shaw Chandler returns to Key West to find the answer. There he encounters Trula, and the two team up—investigatively and romantically.

This is no whodunit. From the outset, we know who the bad guys are: Douglas Barnes *père*, a retired Naval officer who operates the local high-tech dump; and Douglas Barnes *fit*, a semi-moronic sociopath with a penchant for ludicrous rhyme. (When he torches a building to destroy evidence, he conceives

the notion of including a body as a red herring. "Confusing the issue, charcoal tissue." It's his idea of poetry.)

The title derives from the familiar passage in Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which begins, "Full fathom five thy father lies; / Of his bones are coral made." The quotation serves as the book's epigraph and underscores a second theme, the relationship between father and child. First, there is Shaw's relationship with his father, a wife-beater who twenty years ago mysteriously confessed to two murders and deserted his family. Then there are Trula and her father, Dr. Montoya. Although bonded by love, dark secrets from the past threaten to tear them apart. And finally, Douglas and Dougie Barnes, two of the creepiest villains ever to grace—or rather, soil—the pages of the genre. Parental love—or any other kind—is totally alien to the elder Barnes, who thinks of his son as a freak whose only usefulness in life is as an agent for murder. As for Dougie—suffice it to say that he is unique—and a good thing for the rest of us that he is one of a kind.

One other character deserves mention: Elmira the booker, who gets her jollies from inflicting pain. She and Dougie are the perfect match.

There is no lack of excitement or suspense in *Bones of Coral*. Add sex and humor (both somewhat perverse), mix in a message of environmental responsibility, and you have the makings of a good read.

—Edward Lodi

Murder Misread by P. M. Carlson. New York: Doubleday Crime Club, 1990. \$14.95

Even without the author blurb on P. M. Carlson, a Ph.D. in the psychology of language and reading, the reader quickly picks up on the background that so often is the impetus for writers who document academic mysteries. Carlson has clearly "done time" in academic institutions, where the inmates and their keepers (the professors and administrators) go more than a little crazy in the ivory tower.

Protagonist Maggie Ryan is a statistician who returns to her *alma mater* on a contract basis to help professor Charlie Fielding with his current project on reading theory: "How does a skilled reader read?" Carlson's premise is that even a skilled detective can "misread" clues, as virtually everyone, police and amateur detectives, does in this crime novel. Tal Chandler, an immensely popular retired professor, is murdered on campus, and Maggie teams up with his widow, Anne, to find the criminal, whom they suspect is a member of the psychology department. As Maggie points out to Detective Walensky, "Professors can be just as naughty as any other group of people. They just use bigger words to explain it."

Maggie and Anne, the statistician and the French professor, form an alliance that is uneasy at first but becomes stronger as trust develops between the two. Both are thoroughly believable characters with depth and humor and finely realized senses of grief and anger. Carlson plays fair with the reader while making the unmasking of the criminal a surprise indeed. *Murder Misread*, like previous Carlson efforts, comes highly recommended.

—Susan L. Clark

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The Dead Pull Hitter by Alison Gordon. New York: Onyx, 1991. \$3.99

Alison Gordon, like her forty-year-old heroine Kate Henry, was the first woman sports reporter to follow the Toronto Blue Jays baseball team, herein called the Toronto Titans, now contenders for the American League East championship. Shortly after the Titans win in their division, designated hitter Pedro Jorge (Sultan) Sanchez is murdered, his head smashed in with a blunt instrument. Then the Titan's star pitcher, righthander Steve Thorson, also gets his brains beaten in by a baseball bat.

Kate goes to work to solve the crime, which puts her in danger, too. In spite of her personal interest in Staff Sergeant Lloyd Munro, who is in charge of the case, she bypasses him and does several other foolish things that call her to the attention of the murderer. In a typical TV ending, the killer visits Kate, tells her all about the crime, and tries to kill her, which allows her to be saved by Munro.

The plot is unbelievable and full of loose ends, but Gordon's writing about the baseball team has the ring of accuracy and is fun to read.

—Herbert Resnicow

Murder in Luxury by Hugh Pentecost. Toronto: Worldwide Library, 1991. \$3.50

From the opening paragraph of this book, the reader can rest assured that he is in the hands of a master—a Grand Master, actually, the Mystery Writers of America having

awarded Hugh Pentecost that award in 1973.

First published in 1981, *Murder in Luxury* is the seventh in a series of marvelous adventures featuring Pierre Chambrun, manager of the luxurious Hotel Beaumont in New York, and his assistant Mark Haskell. Life in the busy Beaumont is rarely quiet; this glamorous hotel is a microcosm of society, with love and hatred, life and death (especially death) occurring regularly.

When beautiful Valerie Summers arrives at the Beaumont, she is both a victim and a possible suspect in a vicious murder. She is the daughter of one of the world's wealthiest men, and her husband has recently died in a tragic fire. To escape the painful reminders of her marriage, Valerie moves to New York City, where she isolates herself from the rest of the world. After a local drug dealer is found dead in her apartment, she seeks shelter at the famous hotel.

But death follows Valerie into the Beaumont. During her first evening at the hotel, Mark convinces her to join him for drinks and dinner. A few moments after he says goodnight to her outside her door, she finds another dead body inside her room. Although Mark can vouch for Valerie's whereabouts during the time the murder took place, the police—in particular, Lieutenant Matt Keegan—still suspect her. Even placing her under police protection does not seem to stop the deaths from occurring; the next victim is the policeman guarding her! While Valerie is in the company of a number of policemen when the latest murder happens, Keegan is not quite ready to drop his favorite suspect: he now believes that she has an accomplice helping her kill.

Chambrun takes murders in the Beaumont personally, very personally, and he sends Mark out to investigate Valerie's past. It seems as if Valerie's recent history is riddled with destruction—her best friend killed in a plane crash, her first love left crippled in a vicious mugging. Is she a victim of a mad vendetta, or is she a cunning killer?

I was convinced I knew who was behind the murders, and I'm delighted to say I was totally wrong. While playing completely fair with his readers, Pentecost skillfully weaves a plot involving enjoyable characters and complex motivations. No scene rings false in this book—the action scenes rocket along;



the slower-paced character-development scenes build the foundation for later events.

I have thoroughly enjoyed every book I have read in this series. Although *Murder in Luxury* is set in 1980, the pace and locale are reminiscent of a much more genteel time, perhaps the 1930s or '40s. Life in the Beaumont is good for those thirsty enough to enjoy it and for those readers lucky enough to discover Hugh Pentecost.

—Liz Currie

Cyberbooks by Ben Bova. New York: Tor, 1990. \$4.50

Computer genius Carl Lewis has invented an electronic book. The size and price of a standard paperback, it will serve as a complete library for anyone able to insert a cheap program wafer and read. The cyberbook will eliminate the old-fashioned, bulky, expensive, paper/print book, save trees, and even allow books to be sent via modem. (This is not science fiction; the technology is available today.) Innocent hero Carl hopes that this new cheap availability of literature will cure illiteracy and ignorance. He is going to sell the package to Bunker Books, of Tarantula Enterprises, Ltd., owner of Webb Press, doesn't get him first.

Our Candide is torn between Mrs. Alba Bianca Bunker, wife of the invisible owner of the publishing house, and Weldon W. Weldon, owner of Tarantula, whose office is a real jungle, complete with editor-eating snakes. Carl teams up romantically with Lori Tashkajian, who, as an editor for Bunker, is not allowed to read anything ("Office hours are too valuable to be wasted in reading manuscripts") in his efforts to get his invention accepted by publishers. There are multiple subplots, all frighteningly resolved in a perfectly logical way.

Bova is a deservedly respected science-fiction writer and editor who, to the best of my knowledge, has never published another mystery besides this one. It is a real mystery, with five successful—successful?—murders plus one that doesn't quite come off. It has a detective, a solution, and a dénouement, but the mystery is the least important part of the story. *Cyberbooks* is really a revoltingly accurate exposé of the publishing field—not too highly exaggerated—that should be read by every writer, reader, and editor in the business. Funny, clever, and witty, it is a true

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horror story—that is, it's about the true horrors of publishing. Highly recommended.

—Herbert Resnicow

The Unexpected Corpse by B. J. Oliphant. New York: Fawcett, 1990. \$3.95

Shirley McClintock's Uncle January and Aunt Billie were accidentally killed while vacationing. After much thought, it is decided that their ashes will be buried in Colorado. At the burial, however, someone brings an extra urn of ashes, making for three instead of two corpses. Shirley is a strong, mature, twice-widowed farmer who is the peacekeeper in her extended family. Her very presence and thoughtfulness are comforting to those in deep pain, especially Beth, Uncle January's daughter, and Claris, Uncle January's stepdaughter. As Shirley observes about her cousins: "Beth was trying to be nice to Claris, Claris was trying to be nice to Beth. Neither of them liked the other. . . . What an ironic mess."

The Unexpected Corpse is filled with several unexpected sequences. Characters and Colorado country blend incredibly well for an unqualified delight which is an intelligently crafted, worthy successor to Oliphant's *Dead in the Scrub*.

—Ira Hale Blackman



Heartshot by Steven F. Havill. New York: St. Martin's, 1991. \$16.95

Bill Gastner, Undersheriff, Posadas, New Mexico, is pushing seventy, potbellied, arthritic, trying to ignore chest pains, and unwilling to retire. He is teamed with Estelle Reyes, an intelligent, hardworking cop who is young enough to be his granddaughter, and he is saddled with a new sheriff who is more politician than policeman.

A late-night car accident leaves five local teenagers dead and faces Gastner with the question of what \$150,000 worth of cocaine

was doing in the car. There is also the problem of how to handle an old friend, Benny Fernandez, father of one of the teens, who is determined to prove his son's innocence even if he has to kill someone to do it.

Gastner is handed a very young outside cop to infiltrate the high school and find the source of the drugs, but this only leads to more mayhem. Using Estelle's cleverness, and his own contacts and common sense, Gastner keeps digging and uncovers the source of the cocaine and the unusual way in which it is smuggled in, but, in so doing, he is trapped by the murderer and placed in a situation that could kill him.

This is the first mystery by Havill, who has written several Westerns. The identity of the killer is telegraphed, but the writing is so smooth and professional, the characterizations so well done, and the story flow so seamless, that I look forward to another story about old Bill Gastner. I wish he were five years younger and took better care of himself.

—Herbert Resnicow

Bad Business by Anthony Bruno. New York: D&Acorie, 1991. \$19.00

Anthony Bruno's maverick FBI agents, Cuthbert (he hates that first name) Gibbons and partner Mike Tozzi, are quite a pair. In their fourth appearance, *Bad Business*, they are sitting on their hands, waiting to testify against a Mafia drug dealer named Salamandra and his associates. A powerful, high-ranking assistant U.S. District Attorney, Tom Augustine, has sold his soul to the mob in exchange for financing for a run at the mayor's office. Augustine desperately wants the case to end in mistrial. He has promises to keep. He kills a key witness, and two FBI agents, and neatly covers it up by initiating an independent investigation of Tozzi, whose off-hand remarks about knocking off drug dealers was overheard by a zealous journalist and smeared all over the newspapers.

Gibbons and Tozzi gradually figure out what is going on, but not before: Tozzi finds himself falling for an old friend, Lesley Halloran, now attorney for Salamandra; forty kilos of heroin turns up missing; there is a confrontation in an aikido gym; Halloran's daughter is kidnapped; and there is a flying race through Lower Manhattan. This intense thriller has wit, grit and character. Even the bad guys—the Sicilian mobsters peddling drugs—have dimension, showing, however briefly, their own "code of honor."

—Bernard A. Drew

Flight of a Witch by Ellis Peters. New York: The Mysterious Press, 1991. \$16.95

This once-elusive entry into the delightful series of mysteries featuring C.I.D. Detective Sergeant George Felse is seeing its first American printing now, nearly thirty years after it was written.

Those who have read other Felse novels will find this one very atypical—none of the Felse family appears very much, and the

murder victim is completely off-stage. In fact, the reader knows nothing about him, and cares nothing except in the sense that one cares whenever an innocent person is violently killed.

The real mystery here is the character and motivation of young, beautiful Annet Beck, who disappeared for five days and insisted that she was gone for only a couple of hours. The murder, of course, took place during her absence, and it quickly becomes clear that she was in the vicinity at the right time. It also quickly becomes clear that she is not guilty



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but probably knows who is. She will not reveal anything about her absence, and the frantic people who adore her must try to figure it out before the murderer tries to eliminate the one person who can identify him.

Peters's forte is generally her wonderful characters and her uncanny ability to read the hearts and minds of young people—particularly young men. Here, however, she succeeds, as in few other of her books, in making the village and its environs one of the main characters. There is one charming young man who neither appears often nor says very much, but is strangely whole and believable—proving once again that Peters's skilled pen does not necessarily use many words, just the right ones.

—Sue Feder

Carolina Gold by Douglas McBrierty. New York: St. Martin's, 1991. \$16.95

The story opens with a murder high in the Carolina hills. The only witness is a black Labrador that gets shot for its trouble. One of the owners of a new shop in town, "Carolina Gold," is missing. Pat McPhee, the young sheriff, begins to unravel the mysteries behind the injured dog, the missing owner, and an odd assortment of interesting Carolina characters. Pat's deputies include Lucus, a 340-pound redneck, and Billy Birdsong, a full-blooded Cherokee. The three of them begin an investigation that promises the reader a clever plot, a believable bunch of characters, and an ending that does not fail to surprise.

Douglas knows North Carolina, and his

descriptions blend into the interesting mystery. It is his third McPhee mystery, the others being *Whitewater VT* (1987) and *Snowshot* (1988). His approach is to keep it simple but tell a good story. The result will cause the reader to ask for more.

—Dustin A. Peters

ESPIONAGE

The Running Target by Gerald Seymour. New York: Harper Paperbacks, 1991. \$4.95
There are no innocent people in *The Running Target*, only victims.

Charles Eshraq, a young Iranian expatriate, is a victim of his country's revolution. His father, uncle, and seventeen-year-old sister were tortured and executed by the fanatics who seized power with the expulsion of the Shah. Charles and his mother escaped to America. But Charles returns. His motive: vengeance. His means: smuggling heroin out of Iran and into England, in order to obtain money with which to purchase the high-tech weapons that will enable him to kill those responsible for the deaths of his loved ones.

David Park, member of an elite unit dedicated to putting a stop to Britain's drug traffic, is also a victim of his own obsessions. He eats, drinks, breathes his job. Combating drugs is more important to him than anything in his personal life; he sees his marriage crumble but does not care. He cares only about catching drug kingpins, particularly Charles Eshraq.

Matthew Furniss, stationed in England but head of the British intelligence network in Iran, is a victim first of the bureaucratic bungling (including his own) that allows him to fall into the hands of Iranian authorities; second of brutal torture by those same authorities; and finally of his own pride.

Furniss is the central character, the tie that binds. Eshraq is like a son to him; it is Furniss who enables the young man to carry out his plan for revenge. And it is to Furniss that Park's narcotics investigation leads.

This action novel has enough soul-searching to please even the Carré fans. The point of view shifts from character to character every two or three pages (and there are nearly six hundred pages). At first, this constant shifting disorients the reader. Where are we? England? Turkey? Iran? Whose mind are we in? Park's? Eshraq's? Or any one of two dozen other characters? But eventually the book establishes its own rhythm, and we are carried along in a rush of events to the inexorable conclusion.

This is a book to keep the adrenalin flowing. At times the suspense is unremitting. And the scenes of torture are graphic enough to cause the reader to wince with pain. But the overall effect is one of pleasure: of having read a good story, of having been forced to examine, once again, the values of our modern world.

—Edward Lodi



Spy Line by Len Deighton. New York: Ballantine, 1991. \$5.95

It has been many years since Bernard Samson's wife Fiona abandoned him and their two children and defected to the Soviet Union. She is now a top agent with the KGB. So why is a meeting between the two of them being planned, and by whom? Just exactly where do her loyalties lie? And how does Bernard's old nemesis, Soviet secret agent Staines, fit into all of this?

Fans of Len Deighton will need no introduction to these characters and their world of espionage. And viewers of public television have seen them featured in a series based on an earlier trilogy. They are like old friends—or enemies—we have known for years. In *Spy Line*, at least a score of familiar faces from previous books appear. Several, however, will not appear again, having by novel's end made their final, if somewhat bloody, bows.

In the world of espionage, ambiguities abound. Not even death is what it seems—read *Spy Line* and see for yourself. As for Samson and Fiona, the ending leaves enough questions unanswered to form the framework for still another trilogy. Something to look forward to.

—Edward Lodi

THRILLER

Prayer for the Dead by David Wiltse. New York: Putnam, 1991. \$19.95

Characterization is what sets *Prayer for the Dead* apart from the current glut of psychological thrillers. Author David Wiltse is not content with a simple premise of a psychopath pursued by a law enforcement agent. Wiltse delivers an emotionally engaging study of two troubled individuals on both sides of the law.

Roger Dyce is the psychopath whose demented childhood is fully examined in the novel. His adversary is an FBI agent who suffers from intense introspection about the adrenalin rush he gets from killing. The agent, named Becker, is undergoing psychoanalysis, not only for his own benefit but to

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try and comprehend the psyche of the serial psychopath. In the process, Becker learns a great deal about himself as well as being able to project into the mind of the killer.

The possibility that Becker has found, in his choice of occupation, a socially acceptable outlet for his self-perceived neurosis is an intriguing concept. His identification with the murderer is a reflection of a disturbing duality in his nature. As he grapples with this duality, he learns to love and accept love with a remarkable female character who is extremely interesting. Their romantic interlude is one of the least forced and best written in the genre.

The murderer, alas, has less rewarding relationships and would probably not benefit from psychoanalysis. He is depicted as a victim of his circumstances, and his victims are chosen because they remind him of terrible memories. He is at once a poignant and horrific figure.

If the current trend of expedient, non-dimensional psychological thrillers that is flooding the book racks is depressing the discerning reader, he should remember that there are some writers who are trying and succeeding beyond that tendency. David Witse is one such example.

—Sheila Merritt

Cupid by Robert Sims Reid. New York: Bantam, 1991. \$3.95

This is a novel which tells us some favorable things about the state of Montana and some unfavorable things about the state of mankind. It is unusual and enjoyable to have a novel from the Rocky Mountains' Big Sky Country, so let's study it closely.

Detective Leo Banks of the Rozette, Montana police department, who tells the story in the first person, is a philosopher whose thoughts are given to the reader on every page. This is Leo's first appearance, and, while he leads the cast, several other characters are seen frequently as well. Janice Bowie, an intelligent and attractive college professor, who is Leo's current girlfriend; Sky King Hudson, who once knifed Leo in the back; Marian Tawney, Sky's pretty girlfriend and a former dancer; and an assortment of not-very-capable police department detectives are some of the main characters.



The case begins with Sky King Hudson's murder and the need to locate his killer. It continues with a second murder, this time of a young woman who is partially buried in a park and whose left buttock features a dragon tattoo. The story is told through dialogue, with many flashbacks and much of Leo's philosophizing. About halfway through the book, both of the murderers have made their appearances. This is the signal that the cast of characters for the final scenes has now gathered, and the plot begins to move at a faster pace.

Cupid is an unusual novel. It starts out to be a quiet police procedural with a likable, wisecracking detective hero, but soon it changes into a thriller. Eventually, Leo becomes the rogue policeman, a law unto himself, who takes over the several murder cases and ends up shooting the criminals in his own front yard. Readers who like one type of story may not like the other between the same covers.

The first portion of the book impresses this reviewer as being well done, and thrice-married Leo comes across as a likable and intelligent fellow, though immature and a perpetual loser. The dialogue contains many good similes, and Leo's paleontological hobby will please everyone. The writing is witty and relatively tight and smooth, the scenes and characters realistic and believable. Initially, Leo himself appears to be an energetic if superficial new hero, but his narrow cynicism eventually gets to be tiresome. Many character backgrounds are sketched in so briefly that the reader will

wonder what these people are really like. Moreover, the motivations for certain murderers are never cleared up so that one is left to wonder why.

The reader who thrives on chases will like this story, especially the final shootout. It will be interesting to see which if any characters, in addition to Leo, survive this one to make a repeat performance in Reid's next Detective Banks novel.

—John F. Harvey

Double Down by Tom Kakonis. New York: Dutton, 1991. \$19.95

Gambling for high stakes—that is the subject of *Double Down*, a novel of suspense set in steamy Florida, where it is not just the climate that accounts for the temperature. The heat that has poker pro Tim Waverly squirming originates from mob boss Gunter Dietz. Seems that Waverly incurred the latter's displeasure a year or so ago by—in the words of one of Dietz's underlings—"nicking some company profit." Dietz wants his money back—with interest. And he wants it fast. Waverly and his buddy Bennie Epstein have exactly two weeks to raise half a million dollars. Or else.

What Waverly and Epstein do not know for certain, but can guess, is that Dietz intends to get more than just his money back. You don't best the mob and live to tell about it. Sets a bad example. The stakes in this game go as high as their lives.

The novel opens with a chance meeting between Tim Waverly and Caroline Crown. The two are old friends; they grew up together, attended the same schools, the same college. It's been fifteen years since they've seen each other. Caroline is still married to Tim's old friend Robbie. But not happily. It doesn't take a great deal of intuition to figure out what's going to develop from this situation.

It is through Robbie that Waverly meets the wealthy wheelers and dealers who invite him to join in on a high-stakes poker game. A long shot—but maybe Waverly can win enough to buy Dietz off, or at least stall for time.

Much of the action of *Double Down* is seen through the eyes of the two hit men hired by Dietz to keep tabs on Waverly and Epstein—and to kill them once the money has been paid. "Considered fatally handsome by some, himself included," D'Marco "Frog" Fontaine is a fitness nut, a vegetarian who spends his days working out, molding his muscles to perfection. Not too keen on sex, he gets his thrills from self-discipline and job satisfaction. He does "stunts"—an icepick and blowtorch are tools of his trade. He is looking forward to administering the *coup de grâce* to Waverly and Epstein. Sigurd Stumpley, on the other hand, is your all-American slob. Flutulent, overweight, but not overly bright, he has been foisted onto D'Marco by Sigurd's uncle, who hopes that working with a pro will help prepare Sigurd for a life of crime.

Tensions between the two reluctant partners provide an element of comedy. The dialogue, too, is witty. In fact, Kakonis is such a master of slang and criminal argot that



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he calls to mind, in this respect at least, no less a talent than Mark Twain. Humor, however, is secondary to suspense. The description of the poker playing is reminiscent of *The Cincinnati Kid*. There is action—physical, sexual, and psychological—throughout the novel, and the ending is a corker. Kudos to Kakonis for this one.

—Edward Lodi

COLLECTION

The Last Word and Other Stories by Graham Greene. New York: Viking, 1991. \$18.95

The Last Word is, as it turns out with Graham Greene's recent death, the last publication from one of the world's most respected writers of "serious" fiction. This collection might satisfy Greene's fans, but it will do little to advance his reputation with critical readers. These stories seem to have been assembled because of the publisher's desire to take advantage of Greene's reputation rather than to further his legacy as a writer. The stories span his career, 1923–89; none is in the *Collected Short Stories*, and, with one or two exceptions, none deserves to be. Greene deserves to be remembered for more than these stories, and, of course, he will be. But one story, published in 1982, shows that Greene was still capable of the kind of writing found in *The Comedian*, *Our Man in Havana*, and *Brighton Rock*.

"An Appointment with the General" is a short, concise, nearly flawless account of cross-cultural power relationships that place first- and third-world relations into the spotlight of sexual politics filtered through the paternalism of a radical chic tourist of the revolution, a French editor who sets the occasion for the conflicts which animate the tale. A young woman reporter on assignment for a leftist Paris magazine interviews a

general who has recently led a revolution in an unnamed country.

The woman, in an interesting twist worthy of Greene at his best, becomes the victim of her own attempt to exploit the general and his revolution. She loses her own affiliation with the oppressed yet fails to gain awareness of her manipulation by the editor for whom she works. The general is an enigma to the reporter since he refuses a pre-determined plan, and it is only life according to plan that makes sense to the writer, the editor, and, perhaps, the reader. "A programme kills," says the general. And in this is spoken the tragedy of the revolution, for not having a program is what will eventually kill the revolution, or at least this is what is implied. The last words of the general as translated for the woman is that he dreams of death.

The Last Word is certainly not the last word on Graham Greene, and, for ten questionable stories, a couple of good ones, and one excellent one, it is doubtful that it is the *Word* that many will want to pay nearly \$20 for.

—Joe Napora

Waiting for Orders by Eric Ambler. New York: The Mysterious Press, 1991. \$18.95

The debt we owe Ambler defies calculation. If he and Graham Greene had not spent part of the twelve years of Hitler's Thousand Year Reich writing novels of political intrigue and espionage, the genre today would likely still be mired in the patriotic-thriller rut we associate with BullDOG Drummond and James Bond. As a writer of short stories, however, Ambler, in both quantity and quality, has given us less than Greene. One sharply etched but shapeless 1939 tale of the encounter on a freezing Alpine night between an English surgeon and a cell of the German anti-Nazi resistance; six passable but unexceptional armchair-detective exercises from 1940 featuring Dr. Jan Czissar, Czech refugee and unofficial consultant to Scotland Yard; a final 1972 yarn (actually, according

to Ambler's all-too-brief introduction, the remains of an aborted novel) about a *coup d'état* somewhere in Central America. These eight offerings make up the complete short stories of Eric Ambler. It is nice to have them gathered together, but primarily because of their author, not their excellence. For the latter quality, kindly reread *Background to Danger*, *Epitaph for a Spy*, *Cause for Alarm*, *A Coffin for Dimitrios*, *Journey into Fear*—the seminal novels that, along with Graham Greene's from the same period, brought espionage fiction to maturity.

—Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

NONFICTION

Yesterday's Faces, Vol. 5: Dangerous Horizons by Robert Sampson. Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1991. \$35.95; \$17.95 paper

Here is the latest volume of what has been described as a six-volume set on series characters in American pulp magazines. This volume is a kind of catch-all, dealing with characters who simply have adventures, as opposed to those who fight crime, cause crime, fly to other worlds, etc., described in previous books.

The first half is roughly geographical, dealing with sea heroes, heroes in the Far East, heroes in Africa, and heroes in South America. After a break for illustrations, the book becomes more miscellaneous. Chapter 5 features Janie Frete, a female adventurer in hickory shirt and trousers, who does her adventuring just before World War I. Chapter 6 discusses the life and work of Hashknife Hartley, cowboy detective. And Chapter 7 pulls out adventures from all walks of life: secretaries, firemen, traveling salesmen, hoboes, baseball players, jazz musicians, gold-diggers, and even politicians

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Sampson gives a multi-level account of all these heroes. He does not forget that there is more to a story than the characters on paper. There are the authors, a strange and lonely breed, the editors and publishers, often stranger, and the readers. The world of the readers is admitted and discussed. Sampson explains how the violence of adventure tales before World War I differed from the violence after. He suggests explanations for adventure stories starring vaudeville promoters or saxophone players. And he points out reasons to enjoy a story in which cardboard characters are pushed through plots borrowed from ancient melodramas.

Sampson is perfectly willing to admit the flaws in the tales. Mockery runs never very far beneath the surface of prose that grows on you, despite the occasional typo, miscue, or mixed metaphor. It is a gentle mockery, recognizing what the pulp writer was trying to do and understanding the difficulty of the job:

"All the serials contain two or three plot threads that wander in and out of the chapters. Sometimes the threads flow naturally together. Sometimes they have to be grabbed and tied together by a sweating author whose characters seem to be ignoring him."

"Any story device that has been around for twenty thousand years should be honored, not dismissed with a sneer."

It's all good clean fun, despite the slaving fiends who keep kidnapping the heroine. The next volume is to be *Living Lives*, to deal with "Secret Service, Bent Heroes, Warriors." No mention is made of its being the final volume of the series. One hopes it is not.

—Dan Crawford

A Need to Kill by Mark Pettit. New York: Ivy Books, 1991. \$4.95

People who believe they have found simple cures for crime will find this factual account of the career of young John Joubert informative as well as interesting.

Joubert was born in 1966, raised in Maine, became an Eagle Scout. His mother censored his TV viewing, eliminating shows she thought too violent. She sent him to an all-boys' Catholic high school. He had only one date in his life and had never kissed a girl.

John Joubert had only one minor fault. He killed little boys.

(Not that he ignored women, exactly: he knifed 28-year-old college student Vicky Goff in the back one snowy January night in 1980 at the University of Maine.)

But the killings that brought him into the news and terrorized the town of Bellevue, Nebraska for five months began early one Sunday morning in 1983. Customers on the paper route of thirteen-year-old Danny Joe Eberle began phoning his parents to complain that they had not received their paper that morning. Police found his bicycle and remaining papers, but it was three more days before a 130-man search team, including FBI, local police, and the county sheriff's office found the boy. Dead of ten knife wounds, with human bite marks on leg and shoulder, he had been tied hand and foot and stripped to his shorts.

But the terror really began when the next body was found...

Written in clear, straightforward journalistic prose, this short book details the police hunt, including the hypnotizing of two witnesses to retrieve the license number of a car; the praiseworthy co-operation of the media in broadcasting appeals for information; the killer's arrest, confession, and trial. When false names are used, the author identifies them as such. There is a little padding, a chapter on the criminal methods of sex offenders who had nothing to do with the murders, and some evidence of hasty writing at the end.

Pettit is at his best in relating the effect of the crimes on the victims' families, friends, cops, and community, such as the supermarket cashier who got an uneasy feeling when she saw killer and victim together in a parked car a few minutes before the crime, could not pin it down to anything, and drove

on past. She will wonder for the rest of her life what might have happened if she had stopped, gone back, and investigated.

Verdict: A clearly written, interesting account of a young serial killer and his usually younger victims. The author makes no attempt to account for John Joubert's motives or peculiar actions. True crime fans will appreciate the emphasis on the effects of the crimes on the lives altered by them.

—Frank D. McSherry, Jr.

Jim Thompson: Sleep with the Devil by Michael J. McCauley. New York: The Mysterious Press, 1991. \$19.95

Almost fifteen years in the ground, Jim Thompson is the liveliest corpse in popular culture, with most of his books back in print, three movies based on his work released in 1990 alone (most notably, of course, *The Grifters*) and several more in development, and scholars swarming over every nook and cranny of his world. Born in Oklahoma, seasoned and embittered in the dog-eat-dog environment of the oilfields, preprogrammed apparently to fail at whatever he set his hand to, Thompson somehow managed to stay sober long enough during the 1950s and early '60s to write the twenty-odd paperback originals which brought to American *noir* literature a new naturalism, a raw intensity, and an exceptionally sharp, psychotic edge. He did not leave much of a paper trail as he lurched sadly through his life, so it is only to be expected that most of Michael McCauley's account of him is devoted to lengthy expositions of his fiction. For the biographical element, McCauley relies mainly on interviews with Thompson's sisters, widow, and children and with his longtime editor, the late Arnold Hano, and secondarily on what can be gleaned from the patently autobiographical material—unreliable as so much of it demonstrably is—in Thompson's early mainstream novels. Greater depth of biographical detail would have enriched this study, but Thompson's life, like the lives of his *noir* peers Cornell Woolrich and David Goodis, was particularly isolated and resistant to the investigator's hammer and chisel. If what McCauley tells us is all that will ever be learned of this roughneck doomchild, it would only confirm one of the bleakest lessons of Thompson's novels: that no one ever knows another person or even himself.

—Francis M. Nevins, Jr.

Private Eyes: What Private Investigators Really Do by Sam Brown and Gini Graham Scott. New York: Carol Publishing Group, 1991. \$12.95

What the authors—one private investigator and one professional writer—have done here is interview a number of California private eyes, each with an interesting specialty: undercover work, personal injury suits, electronic surveillance, murder, and so on. The eyes are asked what they do, how they do it, and how they like it. Each interview also includes a few stories of actual cases, to show how it goes.

Naturally, the authors go in for a lot of

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debunking, trying to overturn the stereotype of private eyes as the "aloof, alcoholic, uneducated ex-cop" or "social misfits breaking down doors." Fast women, fancy cars, and office bottles are replaced with paper trails, computer terminals, and legal liabilities. Still, there are exciting tales to tell: foreign travel in pursuit of missing persons, the latest in electronic nosiness, special precautions to elude the revenge of the guilty. But the private eyes are unanimous in saying that it's not all it looks to be on TV; one even comments, as surely no good book private eye ever did: "I don't like to do any of that snoopy stuff anyway."

The subjects of the interviews are alike in many ways—a history of odd and varied jobs before settling on investigation, a love for the job's unpredictability and variety, and an admission that that very unpredictability makes it murder on one's private life. Almost all conclude by saying that they would not want a child of theirs going into this line of work.

The book ends with one of the authors (the writer) trying to revive a lifelong ambition to become a private eye, investigating a man she is suing for the \$80 he owes her. The investigation, like many of those recounted in earlier chapters, does not result in much, but it is thorough. I, for one, would not have thought to check his birth certificate.

In fact, the authors most closely resemble Sherlock Holmes in their capacity for asking

their subjects questions that leave me wide-eyed as a Watson, wondering, "Where did *that* come from?" Good editing might have eased some of these out of the text, along with some of the redundancies and typos. There is far too much "And then we asked" here, giving the book as a whole the feel of a collection of feature articles written by an undergraduate journalism major. The sensation is enhanced by the sudden ending of the book after the description of the author's own investigation. A summary of some sort might have better rounded off a collection of fairly interesting interviews.

—Dan Crawford

Lawmen in Scarlet: An Annotated Guide to Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Print and Performance by Bernard Drew. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1990. \$30

Ask the average American how he pictures a Mountie. My peers will, like as not, immediately think of Dudley Doright protecting his Nell from Snidely Whiplash. Those a generation or so older will inevitably think of Nelson Eddy warbling "Indian Love Call" (arguably that generation's version of "Having My Baby" in more ways than one) with Jeanette MacDonald. It perhaps brings cold comfort to our northern neighbors that the most accurate popular picture of the Mounties held by Americans is Sergeant Preston of the Yukon. At least "this series was filmed outdoors in the real snow to lend

an air of authenticity (although the snow was in the mountains of California and Colorado instead of Canada)."

It takes small publishers such as Scarecrow or Garland to take these specialized reference books, so lovingly created by fans, out of the photocopy stage and into real book form, knowing that the market is miniscule. And they do not stint on quality—acid-free paper excellently bound in cloth, text peppered with well-reproduced movie stills (one from "Cameron of the Mounted" clearly defining the relationship of the Mounties to their horses and women), and covers of magazines and pulp, all combining to make this a most attractive book.

Lawmen in Scarlet is divided into two parts, "Prose and Poetry" and "Drama," and each is subdivided into such finely tuned areas as "Comic Books," "Comic Strips," "Radio," and so forth. There is a title index, and a separate actor index in the drama section. The whole thing is preceeded by a brief history of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and a list of reference books.

The only flaw, if you can call it that, is the lack of personal commentary about the various entries. While most of the items are accompanied by a brief description of plot or some other helpful information, I would have been fascinated to read the author's opinions—I suspect most of them would have been hilarious.

—Sue Feder

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Martha Grime's *The Old Contemptibles* has been released on audiocassette.

Aline, Countess of Romanones: *The Spy Wore Silk*, read by the author (Harper Audio, 3 hrs.). Watch out, John le Carré! Here comes the Countess, international beauty, family woman, and superspy, with an autobiographical tale about a plot to assassinate King Hassan that takes us from Morocco to Casablanca to Las Vegas. We meet shady lovers, canny Soviet agents, traitors, and William Casey (before his ascension to the head of the CIA). It's all a bit woozy, but fast-paced, and not without some suspense. And the Countess's elegant, dowager-like reading adds to the overall entertainment level.

Jay Brandon: *Fade the Heat*, read by Robert Foxworth (Simon & Schuster Audioworks, 3 hrs.). Written by a former lawyer in the San Antonio, Texas, District Attorney's office, this tale of a fictional San Antonio D.A. is another in a long line of novels inspired by the success of *Presumed Innocent*. In this case, the D.A.'s son is accused of a brutal rape. In stacking the deck against him, Brandon has to ignore credibility and break a cardinal rule: he doesn't provide enough information for the reader to be in on the game. At least he doesn't on this abridgement, which is adequately read by Foxworth. (Order: 1-800-678-2677)

Truman Capote: *In Cold Blood*, read by Michael McConnochie (Audio Renaissance, 3 hrs.). Arguably the best true crime story ever written, Capote's study of the 1959 murder of a Kansas family, and the aftermath of the crime, is still riveting material, even in abridged format. But the author's voice was so distinctive and so familiar that any other

reader automatically diminishes the effectiveness of the material.

Leslie Charteris: *Thanks to the Saint*, read by Charles Collingwood (G. K. Hall, 5 hrs., 18 min.). The irrepressible Simon Templar, soon to be the subject of two separate film series, is heard here in an unabridged collection of six of his capers from the late 1950s. Originally written for *The Saint Magazine*, these highly entertaining variations on the cheater cheat are all located in the United States, and one of them, *The Perfect Sucker*, manages to mix self-parody with a splendid surprise ending. British reader Collingwood has a tendency to make all Americans sound like thugs and all women like "dames," but for the Saint's voice he is able to mimic admirably the very appropriate light-hearted banter of Roger Moore. (Order: 1-800-343-2806)

Mary Higgins Clark: *Double Vision* and *The Lost Angel*, read by Mary-Louise Parker (Simon & Schuster Audioworks, approx. 1 hr. each). These two unabridged readings of short stories from Clark's collection *The Anastasia Syndrome* involve two heroines—a sister being pursued by the murderer of her twin and a woman whose daughter has apparently been kidnapped by her ex-husband. *Vision* is the better of the two yarns with its rather harsh appraisal of the actor's life. Actress Parker, whose career took a giant step with her appearance in the Broadway production *Prelude to a Kiss*, is especially adept at portraying Clark's resourceful protagonists.

George Chesbro: *Shadow of a Broken Man* and *The Fear in Yesterday's Rings*, read by B. D. Wong (Random House Audio, 3 hrs. each). *Shadow* is the book that introduced dwarf detective Dr. Robert Frederickson, criminologist and former circus performer (Mongo the Magnificent). It's a splendid tale that mixes real detection with hardboiled situations and New Age science as Mongo searches for a man supposed to be long dead. That's an old situation, but Chesbro updates it brilliantly.

Fear, Mongo's newest sleuthing, his best in years, marks his return to the Big Top to find out what manner of evil has overtaken his old circus. Meanwhile, a series of grisly murders seem to be the work of a werewolf. Is there a connection? Absolutely.

Reader Wong, who played the title role in Broadway's *M. Butterfly*, seems to have been tapped as the reader of all the Mongo stories. His unusual phrasing takes a while to get used to, but his obvious sense of humor and ironic tone is his dead-on target.

Don DeLillo: *Libra*, read by Stephen Lang (Harper Audio, 3 hrs.). Authors from William F. Buckley to Richard Condon have woven

fiction around the assassination of John F. Kennedy, but the results are usually thrillers of a sort dealing with fictitious heroes or anti-heroes. DeLillo's effort focuses on Lee Harvey Oswald, his wife Marina, and, later, Jack Ruby—a character studies placed in context of a theoretical what-if scenario of conspiracy involving right-wing puppeteers, Mafia goons, and graduates of the Bay of Pigs fandango. It is a daring literary concept, but DeLillo brings it off beautifully. And this abbreviated version is just as spellbinding, enhanced mightily by Lang's versatile rendition. The film (*Last Exit to Brooklyn*) and television (*Crime Story*) actor provides excellent narration, slipping in and out of character smoothly and effectively.

Nelson DeMille: *The Charm School*, read by James Naughton (Random House Audio, 3 hrs.). As silky and entertaining as was the author's *The Gold Coast*, that's how dull and predictable this very dated Cold War spy saga is. The idea of the Russians having a secret "charm school" where United States POWs are forced to train KGB agents in American behavior is not bad. But the romantic entanglements of the hero and heroine, and the machinations to which DeMille resorts in order to place them in jeopardy, are downright sappy. Reader Naughton was one of the stars of the private eye musical *City of Angels*.

Dick Francis: *Longshot*, read by Kenneth Branagh (Harper Audio; 3 hrs.). In Francis's most recent mystery, John Kendall, author of travel guides and survival manuals, agrees to help a racehorse trainer with his biography. Unfortunately, the trainer's life is suddenly upset by a series of "accidents." And when Kendall steps from behind his typewriter to poke about, he winds up lost in the wilderness with an arrow in his back. It's the mixture as before—heroes, flawed heroes, the vilest of villains, and fascinating pockets of information (in this case survival skills)—resulting in the same satisfying read we've come to expect from the author. This adaptation preserves most of the mysterious elements nicely. But, surprisingly, the splendid young British actor Kenneth Branagh (Oscar-nominated last year for his *Henry V*) proves to be a rather bland reader.

Dorothy Gilman: *Mrs. Pollifax and the Whirling Dervish*, read by Sada Thompson (Bantam Audio, 3 hrs.). Mrs. Pollifax, Gilman's series heroine, is a kindly but shrewd grandmother who works part-time as a CIA agent in exotic corners of the globe. *Dervish* places the resourceful granny in jeopardy in Morocco, working at cross purposes with a rude spy named Max Janko. An imposter needs to be weeded out of a ring of Moroccan informants. At the same time,



Ellis Peter's first *Brother Cadfael* chronicle is now available on tape.

though, someone seems to be targeting the CIA-friendly informants for death. Sada Thompson, an Emmy-winner for *Family*, brings dignity and credibility to his exercise in mild suspense.

Robert Goldsborough: *Fade to Black*, performed by Michael Murphy (Bantam Audio, 3 hrs.). Goldsborough's fifth novel using Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin is set in the competitive world of Manhattan ad agencies. The author, an executive editor of *Advertising Age*, clearly knows this high-pressure environment well, and his 1990 work is one of the better of these "new" Nero Wolfe mysteries. Bantam's taped abridgement is once again read by actor Murphy in his usual laid-back manner. This time, the reading seems even a bit more laconic than usual. Somehow, one imagines Archie being much peppier than Murphy cares to make him. And the performer's Wolfe is still far from "satisfactory." The secondary characters, though, are done with some flair and energy. Minimal music helps set the scenes.

Martha Grimes: *The Old Contemptibles*, read by Tim Curry (Simon & Schuster Audioworks, 3 hrs.). British police Superintendent Richard Jury and his aristocratic friend Melrose Plant, the recurring detectives in Grimes's series of mystery novels named after pubs, make their audio debut with this abridgement of the author's 1991 bestseller. Grimes—an American whose books are set in England—contrives to combine elements of the modern, realistic police procedural with aspects of a more old-fashioned puzzle yarn, the sort that featured eccentric amateurs with money and time to spare for snooping. On this adaptation, the mixture is uneven. The theoretically savvy Jury picks up a woman at a street bazaar, falls immediately in love, and contemplates marriage, despite signs that his intended is unstable and unsuited. When the woman dies of a drug overdose, Jury comes under suspicion; and pal Plant, a man with a

serious (and tedious) Armani fetish, swings into sleuthing mode. It's hard to say whether Tim Curry's earnest, enthusiastic delivery helps or hinders this odd combination of forced humor and farfetched plot. Grimes fans, though, may find this just their pint of bitter.

John Grisham: *The Firm*, read by D. W. Moffet (Bantam Audio, 3 hrs.). Mitch McDeere, Harvard Law supergrad, spurns bids from more prestigious firms for a job offer from a low-key Memphis outfit that seems too good to be true—and is. Bendini, Lambert & Locke specialize in tax work, and their biggest client is the organized crime family that virtually owns and operates B.L.&L. Newcomer McDeere soon must choose between being undercover for the FBI and spending the rest of his life in a witness protection program; or staying with The Firm (which allows no defections) and going down with it when the Feds finally win. But McDeere—with the help of his beautiful wife, his outlaw brother, and a murdered private eye's savvy secretary—finds a third way out in lawyer-author Grisham's better-than-average 1991 thriller, a bestseller presold to the movies. Actor Moffet (*Black Widow*, *Pacific Heights*) does a good job narrating this abridgement, though some of his minor-character dialects are a bit hard to take.

Jack Higgins: *Day of Judgment*, read by Edward Woodward (Dove, 3 hrs.). Prior to President Kennedy's visit to the Berlin wall in 1963, a group of monks and priests, a British major, and a young woman doctor enter East Germany to rescue a captured priest. He's being brainwashed by a rogue American who hates his native land. Needless to say, the mission is eventually successful, but not without its sacrifices. And the ending is hardly the expected one. Woodward, who has done several of Higgins's novels for Dove, is at his best here.

The Eagle Has Flown, read by David McCallum (Simon & Schuster Audioworks, 3

hrs.). This popular sequel to *The Eagle Has Landed*, the novel that elevated Higgins to the bestseller charts, has an intriguing wrap-around: author Higgins is braving assassination by revealing this tale of World War II deception and counter-deception. His hero (anti-hero?) is once again IRA gunman Liam Devlin. Its story takes place shortly after Devlin's failed mission for the Germans (to kill Winston Churchill) has resulted in the capture of German assassin Kurt Steiner. Devlin is hired by the Nazis to free Steiner. But this is only a warmup, leading to another possible assassination target. The politics are so twisted in this oddball tale—the killers are the good guys, yet they are placed in a situation in which they must help Hitler—that it is difficult to figure out whom we're supposed to be cheering. McCallum's use of accents is a definite plus in this abbreviated narration.

Susan Kelly: *Until Proven Innocent*, read by Pamela Klein (Brilliance Corp., 7 hrs.), presented unabridged, involves a crime writer's efforts to free her police lieutenant lover from a tight murder frame. It is only mildly diverting for most of its seven hours, but its ending is suspenseful enough to be almost worth the wait. Pamela Klein's voice is pleasant and versatile.

Stephen King: *Two Past Midnight: Secret Window, Secret Garden*, read by James Woods (Penguin/Highbridge, 6 hrs.). This story, the unabridged second part of the book *Four Past Midnight*, focuses on a fantasy writer named Mort Rainey, who, though apparently successful, is a burnt-out wreck, newly divorced and living a too-lonely life. He's visited by a vaguely familiar stranger from his past who accuses him of plagiarism. Soon the stranger begins to extract a retribution that grows increasingly more violent. Actor Woods (*Salvador*, *Best Seller*) reads the yarn with a fine flair for the dramatic. (Note: This is a particularly well-packaged cassette box that other companies should consider.)

John le Carré: *The Spy Who Came of Age and The Spy in His Prime*, read by the author (Random House Audiobooks, 3 hrs. each). (Both these engrossing sets, like the previously released *The Pleading Spy*, are adapted by the author from his bestseller *The Secret Pilgrim*. Narrating is Ned, a longtime servant in the British espionage establishment, who also served as guide through le Carré's *The Russia House*. Prompted by a visit from the familiar George Smiley, Ned ruminates over a lifetime of Cold War crises and moral ambiguities. *Coming of Age* includes an account of Ned's running to ground a rogue agent lost in the tangled aftermath of Vietnam. *Prime* has Ned breaking the personal code of a lonely cipher clerk suspected of sending secrets to the other side. From Lebanese hotels to London flats, these marginal and desperate types all seem to reflect back a bit of Ned; while the narrator himself remains something of a mystery. A summing up and a looking forward, this latest episodic le Carré contains echoes of

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such older masters as Somerset Maugham and Graham Greene. As usual, the author's reading is superbly accomplished and supremely worldly.

Ed McBain: *Snow White & Rose Red* and *Three Blind Mice*, read by Ken Howard (Dove, 3 hrs. each). These adaptations of two additions to the fairy tale/nursery rhymetitled series featuring Florida lawyer Matthew Hope are excellent combinations of riveting story and expert reading by actor Howard (TV's *The White Shadow*). In *Snow White*, Hope is hired by a beautiful young woman who claims that her mother has unjustly and maliciously committed her for paranoid schizophrenia. The question: Is she victim or crazed victimizer? *Mice* has Hope working for a man accused of brutally murdering and mutilating three Vietnamese who were found innocent of raping his wife.

Sara Paretsky: *Indemnity Only*, read by Kathy Bates (Bantam Audio, 3 hrs.). Paretsky's female private eye V.I. Warshawski, a cop's daughter, makes her debut in this complex case set in Chicago. It begins with a prominent banker ostensibly hiring V.I. to locate his son's missing girlfriend; and it leads to union corruption, insurance fraud, murder, and other unsavory matters. Reader Bates, the excellent stage and screen actress, turns in another fine performance for this, her third Paretsky audio abridgement.

Robert B. Parker: *Perchance to Dream*, read by Elliott Gould (Dove, 3 hrs.). In the book, this "sequel to Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep*" uses italics to indicate sections from Chandler's novel, as opposed to Parker's continuation. On tape, no aural distinction is made. Still, it's not hard to tell the difference between Chandler's Chandler and Parker's rather ineffective mock work. Gould reads the book slowly and carefully, as if he's not quite sure why the words don't flow the way they do when he reads the real thing.

Ellis Peters: *A Morbid Taste for Bones*, read by Glyn Houston (Listen for Pleasure, 3 hrs.). This 1977 novel is the first chronicle of Brother Cadfael, the twelfth-century Benedictine monk who explores various sorts of medieval mysteries in over a dozen of

Peters's works. An herbalist, a Welshman, and a fellow of some experience in the secular world, Cadfael (pronounced "Cad-vile") is a most unusual sleuth, at once exotic and believable. His initial outing has him traveling back to Wales with his prior and other monks to take possession of a saint's relics, an errand delayed by murder. Actor Houston brings the multiple characters to vivid life in this abridgement. (Order: 1-800-962-5200)

Mario Puzo: *The Fourth K*, read by David Dukes (Random House Audiobooks, 3 hrs.). The premise in this abridgement is that Francis Xavier Kennedy, a nephew of JFK and Bobby, is President of the U.S. And not a very good one. When terrorists kidnap his daughter, and worse, he becomes unhinged. There are all sorts of events in this perfectly awful tale, ranging from the murder of a Pope to the planting of a hydrogen bomb in Manhattan. But there is no suspense and no line of logic, and one has to ask, "What's the point?" For whom do we root, or even care? We should have some pity for Dukes, who surely must have had to read this adaptation more than once to narrate it as professionally as he does.

Mary Roberts Rinehart: *The Man in Lower Ten*, narrated by Grover Gardner (Audio Book Contractors, Inc., P.O. Box 40115, Washington, DC 20016, approx. 6 hrs.). This unabridged reading of the 1903 novel by Rinehart helps us understand why the author was once the highest paid in America. It's brimming with action and romance, and it has a curiously breezy narration that undercuts its obviously dated origins. The protagonist is a hapless young man who takes a train ride from hell. His berth is taken by a drunk. His clothes and briefcase (filled with crucial documents) are stolen. Then the guy in his berth is murdered, and the train catches fire. Our hero meets a beautiful girl, falls in love with her, and discovers that she's his best friend's fiancée. Grover Gardner's rendition is excellent.

John Sandford: *Shadow Prey*, read by Ken Howard (Harper Audio, 3 hrs.). This extremely violent novel, set in Minneapolis, pits an abrasive policeman against a murderous Native American named Shadow Love. There

are two other, elder Native Americans who are performing ritual, sacrificial deaths around the country. Reader Howard, one of the best of the audio narrators, moves the tale along admirably. But the protagonists are basically unlikable and the situations unnecessarily unpleasant.

Ross Thomas: *Twilight at Mac's Place*, read by Robert Culp (Dove, 3 hrs.). In this adaptation of one of Thomas's best novels in years, his long-time heroes, Padillo and McCorkle (*The Cold War Swap*, *Cast a Yellow Shadow*), return to assist Granville Haynes. The young man's father, a CIA veteran named Steadfast Haynes, has passed away, and, since he knew where all the bodies were buried, there is much speculation about the contents of a book of memoirs that he left behind. It's a very witty, knowledgeable novel about political morality. Actor Culp (TV's *I Spy* and *The Greatest American Hero*) does well by this splendid material.

Margaret Truman: *Murder at the National Cathedral*, read by Rene Auberjonois (Random House Audiobooks, 3 hrs.). This latest mystery carrying the Truman name is not as carefully plotted as the other titles in the series. (Those involved in its publication apparently did not know or care that its title contains two inaccuracies.) It follows the further adventures of lawyer and amateur sleuth Mac Smith, Anabel Reed (now his wife), and tough detective Tony Buffalino as they try to find out the secret of the body in the Cathedral. Fortunately for his audio abridgement, reader Auberjonois, whose credits range from the film *M*A*S*H* to the Broadway musical *City of Angels*, is a master of dialects. He makes the story sound more interesting than it reads.

Donald E. Westlake: *The Curious Facts Preceding My Execution*, read by Artie Johnson (Dove, 1 hr.). In these short stories from Westlake's collection, a burglar in a devil suit runs into trouble at a masquerade, a husband plans his wife's demise and has to put up with countless interruptions, a con man meets his match, and a vicious TV host pushes one of his associates to shoot him and has only an hour to figure out the identity of his murderer.

Steve Wick: *Bad Company: Drugs, Hollywood and the Cotton Club Murder*, read by Stephen Yankee (Brilliance Corp., 9 hrs.). This fascinating, well-researched study of the events surrounding the murder of would-be film producer Roy Radin makes for a thoroughly engrossing unabridged reading. Wick tells us a good deal about Radin's life leading up to his attempt to co-produce the film *The Cotton Club* with Robert Evans. Then he introduces us to Elaine "Laney" Jacobs, the reputed drug dealer who also wanted to use the prestige film as her entry into the movie business. Radin's murder and the ensuing investigation and trial take up the book. It's rare that you find a work of fiction with quite so many twists and turns. Yankee's telling of the tale is praiseworthy. □

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Letters

Columbo Fans

I am in the process of creating a newsletter for the television show *Columbo*. The newsletter will appear quarterly, and each issue will focus on a specific episode and will also include articles on larger themes. If you would be interested in receiving, or contributing to, such a newsletter, please contact me at *Columbo Newsletter*, 412 Smithfield Street, Suite 279, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.

S. P. CATZ
Pittsburgh, Penn.

The Less, The Better

The Spring 1991 TAD arrived yesterday, and most of it has already been devoured. A splendid issue. If there is anything to complain about, it is the less than lively letters column. This is not a function of the editor, but rather of TAD's readers. I made a New Year's resolution to do my part to stir up a bit of *legitimate* controversy, as perhaps in my letter regarding the Winter 1991 issue and, now, below.

I take issue with my colleague in columny, the accusatory Mr. DeAndrea. I do not feel that a mystery reviewer has either the require-

ment (or the space) to detail such things as, to use Bill's example, "holes" in the plot. His comparison to Mike Nevin's full-blown study of Ellery Queen is the old apples and oranges bit. Mike was not constrained by the same deadlines or wordage limit as the average reviewer.

Moreover, a reviewer's obligation, in addition to being honest, is to his readers. Describing plot sufficiently to pinpoint and plug up any holes the author has dug is likely to spoil surprises for readers. I firmly believe that the less a reviewer says about a plot, the better. Anthony Boucher was a reviewer who did not document all his negative opinions. Ultimately, the relationship between a reviewer and a reader becomes one of trust. I found I generally trusted (and agreed with) Boucher, and I was satisfied that, if he recommended a book, it was worth trying.

I realize that DeAndrea, as a *writer*, would like specifics if his book is criticized. As reviewers, however, our audience is the *reader/fan*. After all, to paraphrase Clemençeau, mystery fiction is too important to be left to the mystery writer.

MARVIN LACHEMAN
Santa Fe, N.M.

archy and agatha

I feel as if I'm writing into a void since you (or someone) made the curious and unheralded decision to drop the readers' comment column (a kind of haughty "No talking back, class!" attitude more linked to the Olympian smugness of the *New Yorker* crew than you guys), but even if you prefer to let TAD textual errors go unrectified, I suppose you can still forward the following comments to B. A. Pike, who wrote the article on Agatha Christie's short story collections in the Winter 1991 issue. (Not that I think I'm alone in pointing this data out; there's always the chance the absence of that letters column may have kept others who noted the same need for corrective comment from writing. It *did* keep me from getting around to it until now, when reading a novelette in *Dead Man's Mirror* reminded me of my bibliographic duty as the director of a research library.)

Re: item 8, p. 100, "Agatha's Stories" (TAD 24:1). *Dead Man's Mirror*, Dodd, Mead, 1937 (SFACA copy is the second printing), does include "The Incredible Theft." Contents page listing: "Dead Man's Mirror," p. 1; "The Incredible Theft," p. 109; "Murder in the Mews," p. 177; "Triangle at Rhodes," p. 255.

Re: item 11, p. 100, "Agatha's Stories" (TAD 24:1). *Witness for the Prosecution*, Dodd, Mead, 1948 (first edition) does include "Sing a Song of Sixpence" (p. 151) and "The



Mystery of the Spanish Shawl" (p. 175).

I would normally double-space a letter intended for publication, but in this case—in the words of the immortal archy—"wothehell, wothehell." (Or was that mehitable? More research...)

BILL BLACKBEARD
Director, San Francisco Academy of
Comic Art

✓ archy says that Mr. Blackbeard should have looked on p. 115 in that issue for the "Letters" column, where the class does talk back. TAD guesses that Mr. Blackbeard has not seen much of TAD previously, or he would know that our readers may always say "bravo" or "yful," as the case may be.

Barry Pike replies:

It seems I was simply wrong about the absence of "The Incredible Theft" from *Dead Man's Mirror*, and I apologize to TAD's readers. The entry for *Dead Man's Mirror* in Al Hubin's bibliography makes it clear that the story is present in the first edition but was omitted from certain paperback reprints. I looked everywhere except in Hubin, alas. I'm still confused about *Witness for the Prosecution*—not by Bill Blackbeard's unequivocal statement but by the evident existence of an edition containing nine stories

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that has caused the uncertainty. Steve Powell had the nine-story version for sale. Can he—or anyone—now determine its status, since it's clearly not the first edition?

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Already an established publisher of quality mystery fiction, Doubleday re-enters the contemporary mystery scene this October by replacing its famed Crime Club line with an exciting new program, Perfect Crime. Under this imprint, Doubleday will publish an array of quality hardcover titles—with Bantam's Crime Line publishing most of the paperback.

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Portrait of a Female Detective

The emergence of a new breed of female heroes in popular fiction—specifically, the strong-minded women who now appear in many contemporary mysteries—is being

ELEANOR REGIS SULLIVAN

On July 12, 1991, at the Calvary Hospital in the Bronx, the mystery community lost one of its most valuable members to cancer.

Eleanor is best remembered as the editor in chief of Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine, where her editorial skill and judgement led to her receiving the Ellery Queen Award for excellence in 1987. Eleanor did not begin her career in the publishing field, however; early in her life, she taught elementary school (for a decade) and worked with Vietnam Vets. She entered publishing as an editorial assistant for Pocket Books in 1960, and then became an editor at Scribner's. Fred Dannay asked her to join him at EQMM in 1970 to be his top assistant and eventual successor. From 1970 to 1981, she was the managing editor of EQMM, and she also

edited AHMM. After Dannay's death in 1982, Eleanor assumed the position of Editor of EQMM.

Eleanor Sullivan is also the author of six short stories written under three pseudonyms; her story "Ted Bundy's Father", published under the name Ruth Graviros, was nominated for an Edgar in 1990. She also wrote an anecdotal memoir of Fred Dannay, a jig-saw mystery, edited numerous anthologies and served two terms on the board of the MWA.

The mystery field mourns her passing and extends its sympathy to her immediate family, and to her other family: the staff at Davis Publications, all the authors who were ever encouraged by her, and all who were lucky enough to have known her during her wonderful career in the field of detective and suspense fiction.



documented for posterity.

In a joint endeavor of Sisters in Crime and the National Women's History Project, women mystery authors have been asked to respond to a questionnaire about their protagonists and provide information about themselves for the NWHP archives. These materials will be turned over to NWHP in a ceremony on the campus of Mills College in Oakland, California.

The event is scheduled for 2:30 P.M. on Sunday, August 25, and will be co-sponsored by Mills College's Women's Study Group. Speakers will include representatives of both Sisters in Crime and NWHP, as well as award-winning mystery author Nancy Pickard.

A summary of information from the survey will be made available at the Mills

College event, according to project co-chairs Mary Bowen Hall and Sarah Andrews. All Sisters in Crime members writing stories with female protagonists were asked to respond to the questionnaire. More than a hundred authors returned information about themselves and their protagonists, and a small comparison group of male authors was also studied.

"We've created a group portrait, a word snapshot of women protagonists at this moment in time," Hall said. The report summary will be available after August 25. Anyone wishing a copy should send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Sisters in Crime, 16 Woodgreen Street, Santa Rosa, CA 95409.

Sisters in Crime was founded in 1986 to further the careers of women in the mystery field and to promote recognition of their contribution to the field. Membership is open to anyone interested in furthering these purposes. Requests for membership applications should be sent to the organization at 6040-A Six Forks Road, Suite 163, Raleigh, NC 27609.

The National Women's History Project, which just celebrated its tenth anniversary, promotes increased awareness of multicultural women's history and has become a major resource for educators, librarians, and journalists. Copies of their Women's History Resources catalogue may be requested by sending a postcard to NWHP, 7738 Bell Road, Windsor, CA 95492, or by phoning (707) 838-6000.

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Books about Books

Literature

What About Murder

BY JON L. BREEN

• McCauley, Michael J. *Jim Thompson: Sleep with the Devil*. New York: The Mysterious Press, 1991. 340pp. Illustrated. Bibliography. Index.

The first book-length Thompson study clearly does not tell the whole story of a writer whose stature continues to increase, but later writers will owe a debt to McCauley's preliminary effort. The book is almost equally divided between biography and critical analysis, with information on Thompson's life drawn from interviews with friends and professional colleagues and (admittedly well-filtered) from family members. Much is extrapolated from Thompson's novels and from his fictionalized autobiographies *Bad Boy* (1953) and *Roughneck* (1954)—a risky course, but the subject was among the most transparently autobiographical of novelists, at least at times, and McCauley is careful to separate fact from speculation. Some readers will get bogged down in the extensive, albeit efficiently done, plot summaries, but they add to the book's value as a resource for later commentators. Appendices include as full as possible a listing of Thompson's published work, though much of his work for true crime magazines is not easily found and the listing of English-language reprint and French editions for some reason breaks off in 1977. Of special interest is a 21-page annotated list of Thompson's unpublished and/or unfinished novels. Like the main text, they include extensive quotations from his writing. The quotes, more than the connecting matter, demonstrate what an original and formidable writer Thompson was and what the reader's appetite both for reading Thompson's own writings and for learning more about his tortured life.

A couple of mild quibbles: McCauley states that Thompson's novels were the "first paperback originals of any kind to be reviewed in the [New York] Times." According to my index of paperback original reviews in Anthony Boucher's "Criminals at Large" column, *The Girl in the Pictorial Wrapper* (WAM #11), the first Boucher column to review paperback originals was March 29, 1953, and the first Thompson book to be reviewed there, *Savage Night*, was not covered until September 6 of that year. The *New York Times Index* shows no earlier review of a Thompson paperback original. Thompson's two short stories about Mitch Allison in *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*, "The Cellini Chalice" (December 1956) and "The Frightening Frammis" (February 1957) are characterized as "novellas"; the former may marginally qualify for the term, but the latter is surely a short story.

• NASH, Jay Robert. *Encyclopedia of World*



Crime. Wilmette, Ill.: CrimeBooks, 1990. 6 volumes. Illustrated. Bibliography. Index.

This massive encyclopedia, recipient of a special Edgar award, deals with true crime cases and thus is outside the usual "What About Murder" boundaries. But there is some fictional interest in the occasional entries for authors of crime and mystery fiction and the inclusion of fiction titles in some of the bibliographies.

What mystery fiction writers belong in a true crime encyclopedia? Agatha Christie, of course, merits more than a page largely because of her 1926 disappearance. Arthur Conan Doyle gets over a page of text, and one of the illustrations, because of the influence of Sherlock Holmes; included are references to his real-life detective work (with cross-references to separate articles on Oscar Slater and George Edalji) and a claim that Professor Moriarty was based on an American Napoleon of Crime named Adam Worth (who also gets an article of his own). Edgar Allan Poe gets an entry by virtue of his invention of the detective story, as well as his fictionalized solution (in "The Mystery of Marie Røget") to the Mary Rogers case, which gets an entry to itself. Dashiell Hammett, himself a Pinkerton detective before taking up fiction writing, merits an even longer article than Christie or Doyle. Erle Stanley Gardner, who tried to clear the wrongly accused through his Court of Last Resort, receives a surprisingly brief entry compared to these others.

Selection criteria for writers are sometimes puzzling. Why include fiction writers not closely identified with true crime, e.g., Raymond Chandler (covered almost as extensively as Hammett), Ellery Queen, and Rex Stout, and ignore mystery writers such as Edgar Wallace, who (like Doyle) was occasionally cast (successfully or not) as real-life sleuth. Some renowned true crime specialists (e.g., Edward D. Radin and William Roughhead) surprisingly do not merit entries, though Edmund Lester Pearson does.

The inclusion of fictional, theatrical, and film adaptations in the bibliographies is often

helpful. Under Lizzie Borden, for example, we have the ballet *Fall River Legend* by Agnes DeMille, the George S. Kaufman/Moss Hart play *The Man Who Came to Dinner* (which included a character based on Lizzie) and its subsequent film adaptation, and several somewhat obscure novels—but not Evan Hunter's relatively recent Borden novel, *Lizzie* (1984). Three fictionalizations of the Hall-Mills case are cited, including Anthony Abbot's *About the Murder of the Clergyman's Mistress* and J. J. Conington's *The Twenty-One Clues*. The extensive Jack the Ripper bibliography reveals the inconsistency of the listings: some books only vaguely connected to the Ripper case are included (e.g., David Alexander's *Terror on Broadway* and Philip MacDonald's *The Mystery of the Dead Police*), while close fictionalizations such as Robert Bloch's *The Night of the Ripper* (1984) and Terrence Lore Smith's *Yours Truly, from Hell* (1987) are excluded. And it is unfortunate that books cited in the bibliographies at the ends of the articles (with author and title only) are not always included in the full-information bibliography in Volume VI.

Of course, nit-picking this book on the basis of its fiction-related content is like judging a steakhouse on the quality of its swordfish. As a resource on the history of real-life crime, this set has no equal, and for that it is recommended most highly.

• SELLERS, Peter, ed. *Cold Blood III*. Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic, 1991. xviii + 208pp.

The third in the original anthology series devoted to Canadian writers has a three-page introduction by editor Sellers, recounting the history of the series, plus six pages of notes on the sixteen individual stories and their authors. The amount of biographical information varies, but on writers such as golfing computer analyst John North, former pro boxer and "roughneck" Jack Paris, and wine writer Tony Aspler, it is unlikely to be duplicated elsewhere. □

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Dial N for Nonsense

BY LOUIS PHILLIPS

Of Real Bullets and the Making of "G-Men" (1935)

"By Warner Brothers' standards the budget of \$450,000 was astronomical, and a seemingly interminable six weeks were allotted in which to make the film. [James Cagney's] salary by this time was \$4,500. . . This may have made him feel important for the moment, but he found himself confronted with problems similar to those he had encountered in the low budget quickies. They still fired real machine-gun bullets into a cord of firewood near where Jimmy crouched, and he wondered whether it would be any consolation if his death occurred in a big budget movie instead of a programmer."

—Doug Warner, with James Cagney, *James Cagney: The Authorized Biography* (St. Martin's Press, 1983)

Teddy Roosevelt on Dealing with Criminals

"You don't want any mushy sentimentality when you are dealing with criminals. One of the things that many of our good reformers should learn is that fellow-feeling for the criminal is out of place."

About Mystery Plays in the Theatre

"Someone is always wondering why there are few more good mystery plays in the theatre. There are few more good mystery plays because they are no longer mysterious. The plays themselves, when from time to time we get them, are no better or worse than those we got years ago when the stage was full of them. It is simply that the public, along with the reviewers, has read so much mystery and detective fiction in books, magazines, and Sunday newspaper supplements that it can unravel a plot before the spuriously saturnine butler even starts putting on his makeup. And a mystery play that is not mystifying is about as successful as a detective with his badge in his hat."

—George Jean Nathan, *The Theatre in the Fifties* (1953)

Of Love and Crime #9852

WOODEN LEG STOLEN,
HONEYMOON DELAYED

Seattle, Washington. July 1, 1930. The honeymoon trip of Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Burns was delayed today while the police hunted for the thief who stole the bridegroom's wooden leg.

Of Comedians and Mystery Films

"Comedians are superb in mystery films, and mystery films should always have comedians in them."

—J.C.M. in *The New Yorker* (1935)

Great Moments in the Courtroom

ONCE AGAIN
DREAM BOOK WAS RIGHT

Philadelphia. August 11, 1934. Samuel Ellis told Judge Otto R. Helligman his "dream book" gave any figure beginning with 30 as the best number to bet. "Good," said his honor. "You take 30 days in prison."

Doris Miles Disney on Plots and One-Legged Midgets

"In answer to the question of where her plot ideas stemmed from, Mrs. Disney looked surprised, like the man who confessed he was fascinated by the sight of one-legged midgets. (Asked where he could find them, he answered, 'Find them! But how does one avoid them? They're everywhere!'). Like him, she finds her plots everywhere. She got the idea for 'Trick or Treat' from the Halloween custom, and devised a plot which had her villain arrive, costumed and masked at a party, and shoot a merry-maker dead."

—Jean F. Mercier, interview with Doris Miles Disney for *Publishers Weekly*

Hero Worship on a Grand Scale

"The more I see of Hitchcock's pictures, the less desire I have to see pictures other than his."

—François Truffaut

Legal Decisions of the 20th Century

BRIDE FOR A DAY, 19,
DENIED ALIMONY AS TOO YOUNG

Chicago. July 17, 1930. Mrs. Lottie Gut, 19, who married a 70 year old man eight unseem, was denied alimony by Judge Joseph Sabbath, who declared he did not wish to set a precedent in giving alimony to a girl so young.

The girl married Casimir Gut three years ago, but she testified that she lived with him only one day because his home was too crowded with cats, dogs, and birds.

Crime at Last

I have been told that the English word

LAST means CRIME in Swedish. Any truth to the rumor?

On the Phrase "Cat's Paw"

Cat's paw is a term that frequently lends itself to the titles of mystery novels. J. Heron, A. Hocking, N. S. Lincoln, M. Salter, and others have all written books with that title. But where does the term come from? William and Mary Morris, in their *Dictionary of Word and Phrase Origins* (a book that belongs in the library of every word-lover), tells us:

"A cat's paw is a person easily tricked into performing a dangerous task for someone else. It goes back to an ancient fable that appears in the collections of both Aesop and La Fontaine. It seems a monkey wanted to get some chestnuts out of a fire, so he persuaded a cat to do it for him. Result: one singed paw and one new word."

Numerology and Crime

NO. 12 UNLUCKY FOR
NEBRASKA CONVICT

Lincoln, Nebraska. August 2, 1934. (AP) It's the No. 12, not 13, that's unlucky for James O'Brien, recent arrival at the Nebraska penitentiary. He was first received at the prison on June 12, 1922, and given No. 8712. He served 12 years, and was released June 12, 1934. Out one month and 12 days, he was sentenced to another 12 years. He has a new number. 12,000.

Great Moments in the Court

In 1964, David W. Maurer published his study of pickpocketed argot, *Whiz Mob: A Correlation of the Technical Argot of Pickpockets with their Behavior Patterns* (Yale University Press). In that study, one of the dips provided the following description of his trial:

JUDGE: Now you tell the court in your own way what you were doing.

MAN: Well, Judge, your honor, I was out gandering around for a soft mark and made a tip that was going to pop a shot. I eased myself into the tip and just topped a leather in Mr. Bates' left prat when I blowed I was getting a jacket from two honest bulls. So I kick the okus back in the kick and I'm clean. Just then this flat-foot nailed me, so here I am on a bum rap. All I crave is justice, and I hope she ain't blind.

JUDGE: You seem to be honest. You're discharged. □

The Paperback Revolution

BY CHARLES SHIBUK

MICHAEL ALLEGRETTO

Barber-bookmaker Joseph Bellano approaches Denver private eye (and narrator) Jacob Lomax and persuades him to find his missing daughter—with a \$5,000 fee. Lomax reluctantly agrees, and his client is immediately killed by a car bomb. **The Dead of Winter** (1989) (Avon) is distinguished by its tightly wound plot, its terse narration and dialogue, and its explosive climax. It is happily devoid of dreary introspection and overelaborate (and unnecessary) descriptions.

WAYNE D. DUNDEE

This author has edited *Hardboiled* magazine and written several short stories. His second novel is set in Rockford, Illinois, stars series character Joe Hannibal, and concerns an investigation into the violent murder of two inoffensive pornographic film players. **The Skintight Shroud** (1989) (Dell) is a long (262 pages), first-person private eye novel, much of which is written with more assurance and strength than one would expect from a relative newcomer.

DICK FRANCIS

Since this author's debut in 1962, he has consistently turned out a series of engrossing suspense novels. The quality of his best work is so high that this column considers him one of the three best contemporary mystery writers. **Straight** (1989) (Fawcett) involves injured steeplechase jockey Derek Franklyn, who is forced to deal with numerous problems (many of which are criminous), including his newly deceased brother's gemstone business. This is a well-above-average Francis performance—so spell-binding that it is almost impossible to put down.

CYRIL HARE

This column is delighted to welcome Harper/Perennial's reprints of **Tenant for Death** (1937) and **Death Is No Sportsman** (1938) after a decade of silence. Both feature Inspector Mallett, a Scotland Yard detective not unlike Freeman Wills Croft's Inspector (later Superintendent) Joseph French. They are good, solid detective stories, and very typical of the work being turned out during the latter part of the Golden Age. Unfortunately, neither draws on its distinguished author's vast legal expertise, nor, since they are early efforts, do they give any indication of the four masterpieces to come.

FREDRICK D. HUEBNER

A Painting Postcard (1990) (Fawcett) with a fresh picture that is stylistically identical to the work of a famous, long-dead artist is sent to his granddaughter, who asks a friend, narrator-atteyner (and series character) Matthew Rjordard, to lend a helping hand. Ramifications include a fifty-year-old murder

case, suspected art forgeries, vast sums of money, drugs, a few serious attempts at murder, and many dead bodies.

SAM LEWELLYN

The excitements of sailboat racing and an awesome storm at sea are matched by watching the hero trying to best the vicious villains in **Death Roll** (1989) (Pocket Books). This novel is the author's third thriller. His fourth, **Deadeye**, is momentarily due (at this time of writing) for hardcover publication. If a review copy comes this columnist's way, it will be extremely difficult to resist, because it should take at least a year to achieve paperback publication—and who wants to wait that long?

JOHN LUTZ

A senior citizen, retired in Florida on a modest pension, is hired to impersonate someone more affluent for \$2,000 per week. He approaches disabled private eye Fred Carver and hires him to check out the *raison*



d'être for this largess. He exits Carver's office and starts his Cadillac. It explodes and bursts into **Flame** (1990) (Avon). *Flame*, unlike the usual contemporary private eye novel, is narrated in the third person, and it is tougher than most.

WARREN MURPHY

On the eve of retirement, U.S. Assistant Attorney General Lucius Darling is handed a two-week assignment by his superior: discover the reasons for the government's poor performance in political trial cases. Conspiracy? And what is the meaning of **Jericho Day** (1989) (Harper)? While encompassing serious issues, this novel is notable for its past and near-future storytelling structure, its ironic ending, and its sheer readability.

SARA PARETSKY

This author is the foremost contemporary female practitioner of the private eye novel, and her latest, **Burn Marks** (1990) (Dell), set in Chicago and starring V.I. Warshawski, is fully up to her high standard. It is perhaps too long at 340 pages, and does show too much of its protagonist's self-preoccupation, but it becomes absorbing as it unravels, and its last sixty pages have of power and suspense of an ignited stick of dynamite.

* * *

JON L. BREEN and MARTIN H. GREENBERG

Several of my TAD colleagues have contributed historical essays to the hardcover and extremely valuable **Synod of Sleuths: Essays on Judeo-Christian Detective Fiction** (Scarecrow Press, 1990). Edward D. Hoch reports on Catholic sleuths; Jon L. Breen handles Protestant and Mormon mysteries; Marvin Lachman details religious cults, and short story writer and novelist James Yaffe tells us about Jews in detective stories.

Many of the books discussed here have been published in paper covers. □

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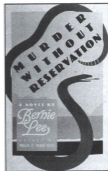
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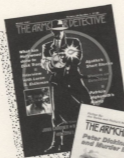
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