The Armchair Detective

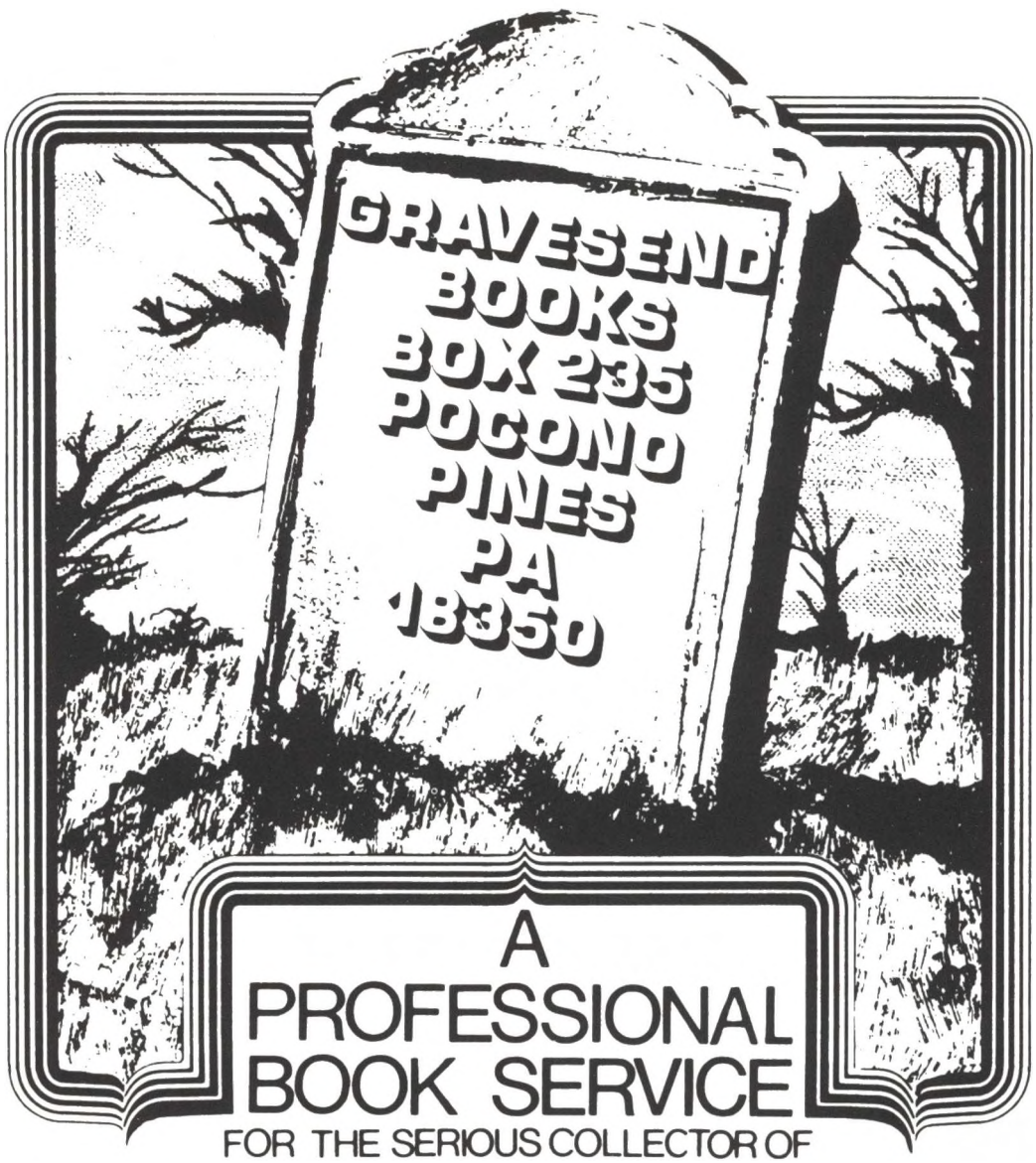
$6.00 Volume 18 Number 3 Summer 1985

Interview with Mary Higgins Clark

Ellis Peters: Another Umberto Eco?

The Novels of Martha Grimes

Collecting Bibliomysteries Part II



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Volume 18 **Number 3** **Summer 1985**

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THE UNEASY CHAIR

Dear TADian:

Elmore Leonard has joined the ranks of the overnight successes—and it's about time! He has produced a body of consistently fine novels, written over a period of about 25 years, and now—with the release of *Glitz*—"Dutch" Leonard has a bestseller. (The book jumped from No. 15 on the *New York Times Books Review* bestseller list to No. 7 in one week.)

Leonard has always received fine and glowing reviews, and the critical acclaim for *Glitz* has been as good, if not better, than his past notices. The review attention has been coupled with a general media barrage: television morning news shows, an article in the *New York Times Magazine,* another in *Rolling Stone* (!), and comparison in the sports pages of one of the New York dailies to Dr. J.

The reviews all mention suspense, thriller, mystery, or other denominator, and then go on to call the book a novel, which, of course, it is (and would be even if it were *only* a mystery story). I know that is an old problem, that lack of respect, but I don't think it hurts to mention it now and again.

What I don't know, though, what I can't understand after twenty years, is *why*. What has happened, for instance, between the publication of *Stick* and *Glitz,* to make the literary powerbrokers sit up and take notice? It is not only the Hollywood influence; both *Hombre* and *Mr Majestyk* have been filmed, and *Stick* should be in the theaters as you read this. As mentioned, Leonard's reviews have been as consistent as his writing. Suddenly, though, everyone is jumping on the bandwagon.

I do wish I could pinpoint the formula, and not only to help those writers I am fortunate enough to work with as an editor. The reviews of Ross Thomas's *Briarpatch* (another example of an always well-received author who does not seem to have captured the proper imaginations) mentioned that "this is the book that should make Ross Thomas a bestselling writer." It didn't, or at least not in the grandiose way in which the expression is generally understood. *Why*?

Why did *Kahawa* not make it? Why has Victor Canning never found a substantial audience? Newton Thornburg? Patricia Highsmith? Stanley Ellin? The list knows no bounds and is not limited to "genre" writers.

No, I'm not going to give any answers here; as I said, I don't have them. I don't even have any good guesses. (I will leave conspiracy theories to others.) I just have the questions, and that is the first step toward outlining the problem.

Whatever it was—the stars in their orbit, perhaps? —I am pleased that Dutch Leonard's time has come and wish him many more successful books (the success for him; the books for us).

For the others—my favorites and yours—I can only think of a friend's oft-repeated phrase: What goes around, comes around. You've given us pleasure and yours is bound to come.

Best mysterious wishes,

Michael Seidman

MICHAEL SEIDMAN

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Interview with

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Mary Higgins Clark

By Lucy Freeman

She is the Cinderella of suspense writers, though it was no Prince Charming who brought fame and fortune but her own eloquence on the printed page. She has a lovely, haunting face, wears clothes like a fashion model, slim and chic. There is a Madonna quality in the style of her long, dark hair and the thoughtful expression in her candid blue eyes.

She wanted very much, earlier in life, to be an actress rather than author. And Mary Higgins Clark has just achieved that first goal via another route. After becoming one of the world's top mystery writers, she recently made her first movie appearance. She flew to Cape Cod in November to play the part of a woman reporter in a film produced by Zev Braun, based on her first smash book *Where Are the Children?* Cape Cod was the actual locale of the scenes in the book.

On her return to New York, where she has an apartment on Central Park South, she describes her initial appearance as an actress: "I was a reporter in the scene where the character, Nancy Eldredge, is being led out of court in handcuffs after being convicted of the murder of her first two children. Jill Clayburgh plays the part, and she's absolutely wonderful. She *is* Nancy. The director told us, 'All right, everybody, I want lots of energy! Lunge at her. You're all vultures. Shout questions at her. ACTION!'" Mary's daughter, Carol, a professional actress, also appeared in the film as another news reporter.

Mary continues: "My big moment! I scrambled toward Jill, ahead of the pack. 'Come on, Jill!' I shouted. 'Tell the truth—admit it—you did kill your kids, Jill.'

"'Cut! Cut!' the director yelled. Then he barked, 'Who called her "Jill"?'"

Mary thought, So much for my acting career.

But they did a retake, and this time the author of the book on which the film was based remembered that "Nancy" was the name of the character she had created. "I'm still in the picture," she says, "but don't blink or look down at your popcorn or you'll miss me.

"It's thrilling to watch a story you have written unfold as a film," she admits. "What makes it so great is that they're doing *my* story just as I wrote it. When *A Stranger Is Watching* was made into a film, it was different. There was so much violence in it, I ended up feeling sorry for the villain. Even he was gratuitously mugged."

The success of *Children* (she has nicknames for each book, a key word taken from the title), her first book, enabled her to buy a house in Dennis, Cape Cod, twenty minutes from where they filmed in

Barnstable. She loves the Cape, spent seventeen summers there with her children, primarily in rented houses, one of which the children called the "sea shanty."

Mary's love of acting dates from the days of grammar school: "My older brother, Joe, had the lead in all the school plays. He had a beautiful singing voice—I can't carry a note in a hat. I was always part of the mob scene. Then, when I was in the sixth grade, I finally got a speaking part. It was: 'Come, let us dance to the music of this happy day.' I practiced the line for weeks. On the night of the play they gave my line to an eighth-grader who was in tears because she hadn't ever had a speaking part and was about to graduate."

But in high school Mary won the dramatic medal and, in a competition sponsored by the Catholic Youth Organization, she was rated "best actress in the Bronx." "So this secret passion to act has lurked in me for years," she explains. "That is why when I heard *Children* was being filmed on the Cape and they advertised a phone number for people who wanted to be extras, I called the number.

"I would have loved to attend the American Academy of Dramatic Arts," she muses, "but decided it was more practical to go to secretarial school for a year and then work. My father died when I was ten after the pressure of trying to save his business, an Irish pub in the Bronx, brought on a fatal heart attack. In those days everyone signed for dinners and drinks—there were no credit cards. The account book was filled with pages and pages of the money owed him. Everything had to be sacrificed to save the business. After all the financial matters were settled, there was $2,000 in insurance left for our family of four—my thirteen-year-old brother Joseph, my seven-year-old brother John, Mother, and myself."

Mary's parents had married in their late thirties, so Mrs. Higgins was in her early fifties. When she tried to get a job, she found it impossible. An employment agency advised her to save the carfare—they couldn't even find work for college graduates, let alone a middle-aged woman out of the job market for fourteen years, even though she had been the chief buyer for the bridal division of B. Altman before her marriage.

Both Mary and her mother took babysitting jobs. Joe got a newspaper route. Even so, it was impossible to keep up the house payments, and a few years later they lost their home. "Mother moved seven rooms of furniture into a three-room apartment," Mary recalls. "She was so sure that someday she'd get her house back. She loved it so much. Friends told her to take Joe out of school and put him to work, but she said, 'No house is worth an education. Joseph will have his diploma.'"

Her oldest son graduated from Cardinal Hayes High School in 1944 and enlisted in the Navy during World War II. Six months later, at eighteen, he died in service. Mary was then a scholarship student at Villa Maria Academy and worked three afternoons and weekends at the Shelton Hotel in Midtown Manhattan as a telephone operator. "There were a couple of ladies of the evening who lived in the hotel. I used to love to listen in on them."

After graduation, she went to the Wood Secretarial School to learn shorthand and how to type, so that she could qualify for a secretarial job and help her mother with the family finances. Her first job after graduating was in the advertising field, at Remington Rand. There she learned all about advertising from the assistant manager.

He took the trouble to explain to this sensitive, beautiful young woman why an ad was placed in *Life* or *Collier's*, or why a certain piece of copy had worked, another failed. "I had a three-year tutorial in advertising," Mary says.

She also worked Saturdays at Lord & Taylor as a salesgirl: "I've always loved beautiful clothes. Maybe because my mother and aunt had been buyers, I was always clothes conscious. Lord & Taylor paid five dollars for the day, but, oh, that lovely discount. And I had an eye out for when the prices were slashed to the giveaway level."

Of those days she says, "There were no 'woulds' or 'shoulds' or 'coulds' or 'ought to' about extra jobs. I *had* to. But as a result I met many, many wonderful people." She dated several men but did not fall in love, though she had serious thoughts about a copywriter at Remington Rand.

Then, after three years at the advertising agency, she heard "seven words that changed my life."

One evening, she and her friend Joan Murchen were enjoying an after-work drink in the Martha Washington Hotel when another friend, Letha Smith, sauntered in wearing her Pan Am uniform, though this was forbidden airline hostesses off-duty. "But Letha could get away with anything," Mary says. "She sashayed across the room, crumpled in a seat at our table, and said—'God, it was beastly hot in Calcutta!'"

The seven words hit Mary with a gentle shock. She was suddenly aware: "I had never been out of the Bronx! When you've never been out of the Bronx, those are fighting words. I realized there was a whole world to see."

The next morning, both she and Joan raced to La Guardia Airport to apply for jobs as airline hostesses

at Pan Am. "You had to be between five feet two inches and five feet six inches," Mary says. "You had to have a college degree or worked in public relations—my advertising job allowed me to qualify. You also had to speak a foreign language. I could pray in French but little else. Joan and I hired a tutor and ate in expensive French restaurants to learn the French words for various foods. Then we took the battery of Pan Am tests and passed. I got the job. It was like being a starlet."

The love plot of her life now thickened, as well as her career: "When I told my boss at Remington Rand I was leaving—he was a very understanding man—he and his wife asked me out to dinner to celebrate and said I should bring an escort."

Faint heart never won gallant knight. She thought at once of Warren Clark. He would never ask her out. She would be waiting until doomsday. If she wanted a date she would have to invite him. She thought, What have I got to lose? I've been trying to land him for five years.

Starting at sixteen, she had been in love with Warren. He was the older brother of her younger brother John's best friend. Mary had heard and continued to hear over the years her brother talk about Warren: "Warren did this, Warren did that, Warren said this—" with the idolatry of a younger brother for an older one, so that Warren had become a constant part of her fantasy life though she had never gone out with him.

Warren worked for American President Lines, later would leave to become regional manager for Capital Airways. He lived around the corner from her in the Bronx. She would see him at the 12:15 Mass on Sundays. She spent most of the Mass looking at him.

"I had an immediate crush on him the first time I saw him," she says. "He was so debonair. So good-looking. I hoped he wouldn't get serious with another girl until I was old enough to be proposed to."

One evening, she had been invited, at least, along with her little brother, to Warren's home for supper by his mother. He left early, saying he had a date. She felt let down.

She could only hope now, as she called his home, that he was not engaged or married. He answered the phone.

"What's new, Mary?" he asked.

She gulped, summoned her courage. "I wondered if you could go out with me on Friday night with my boss and his wife. They're inviting us to dinner to celebrate my new job with the airlines."

"Sorry," he replied, she thought with some relief, "I'm tied up Friday night."

She had bargained for this. "Oh, it's a *week* from Friday."

He paused, as though reluctant to accept. "I don't have anything then."

They arranged to meet before dinner. She heard through the brother-grapevine that Warren had told a friend, "I'm robbing the cradle next Friday night." He was nine years older than Mary.

The foursome ate at Charles in the Village. Then Mary's boss and wife headed for Grand Central and suburbia. Warren and she went for a drink at Ernie's Three Ring Circus. As they sat at a table, she noticed he was jotting notes on a small piece of paper.

Ever curious about "the word," she asked, "What are you writing?"

"The list of people we'll have at the wedding," he said casually.

And, she says, "That was my proposal." Her engagement started with a courtship as dramatic as anything she has written. But dramatic in a different way—the way of love, not murder.

"Don't get all girly and cute," Warren told her. "You know we're going to be married." He had, of course, over the years sensed how she felt about him.

> It took six years and forty rejection slips before she sold her first short story to *Extension* magazine in 1956 for $100.

"You can fly for a year—get it out of your system," he said. "I'll take my mother to drive-in movies."

In relating this experience, Mary breaks off to exclaim, "He was fun. Oh, God, was he fun!"

She took his advice, flew for a year, saw un-Bronx-like scenes in Europe, Asia, Africa. Though born in Manhattan, Mary had grown up in a pleasant section of the Bronx, in a Tudor brick and stucco house now occupied by a doctor and family, near Jacoby Hospital and the Albert Einstein School of Medicine. As an airline hostess, she often spent several days in London. She saw Warren between flights. Once she was gone a month on the British Gold Coast in Africa. She went through a revolution in Damascus. She was aboard the last flight into Czechoslovakia before the Russians closed the airport to American planes.

She enjoyed her year as airline hostess: "It was so different then. Those were the prop planes. Sixty-two passengers. One class. One stewardess and a purser. You called everyone by name. You were instructed that this was your living room and these were your guests."

After the year, she left Pan Am to marry. A large

wedding at St. Francis Xavier Church in the Bronx, the day after Christmas. The bridal attendants wore green satin dresses with hoopskirts carried red roses.

With time on her hands, Mary signed up for her first writing course at New York University, serious about a new career—a career that would be a gamble, but now she did not have to earn a living and could take financial risks.

"Write about what you know." Professor William Mowery advised her. "You've been a stewardess. Use the stewardess background. So an editor will look at your short stories and say, 'Ah, another Mary Higgins Clark story.' Take a dramatic incident with which you are familiar and then go on with it. Say, 'Suppose this then happened—'"

"And this has always worked for me," she admits.

There came to mind her experience on the last flight into Czechoslovakia. "Suppose the stewardess finds a young revolutionary hiding on the plane as it's about to leave," she thought. "He pleads with her to help him escape. Says if she turns him over to the police, who are racing up the steps to the plane, they will kill him. Will she try to help him out of the country?"

She called the short story "Last Flight from Danubia." It took six years and forty rejection slips before she sold it to *Extension* magazine in 1956 for $100. She framed that first letter of acceptance. The story was reprinted in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* in January 1985 under the title "Stowaway." She made the hero an eighteen-year-old member of the underground, named him "Joe" after her older brother.

"I visualized the way Joe looked as I described the young revolutionary," she says. "I use a piece of someone I know, a live person—the essence of that person rather than a thin little disguise—for most of my characters. The physical resemblance to someone I know helps the character come alive on the page."

Her life, up to then, had held the pain of several acute losses. First, her father's death when she was ten. "He was a very handsome, tall, thin man," she recalls. "The pub he owned was not the stereotyped pub but an elegant one. Elegant as he was. He always looked as if he had stepped out of a bandbox." Then there had been her brother's death during the war. Her younger brother John would die in an accident in 1973, at 42. And her mother was to die in 1969, deprived of the enjoyment of watching her beloved daughter achieve great fame in the world of books.

Mary and Warren were married for fourteen years and nine months when, at 45, he suffered a fatal heart attack at their home in Washington Township, New Jersey. "He had a mild attack in 1959," Mary recalls, "and if it had been today, he would have a by-pass operation and still be alive. He was a heavy smoker. He had smoked two packs a day since he was a teenager."

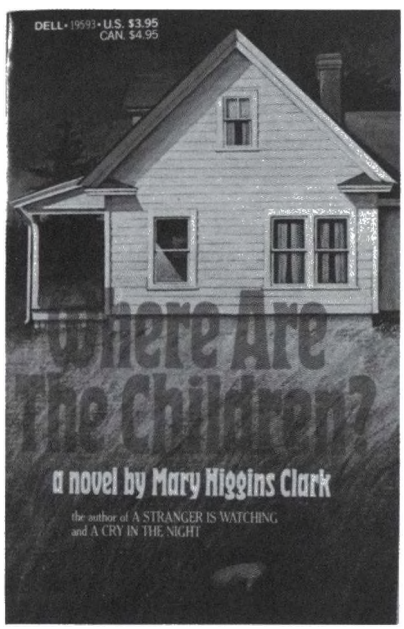
That evening in 1964 when he had the fatal attack, he died as she was applying mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. His mother happened to be at the house, and, as she watched her son die, she collapsed. By the time the doctor arrived, both she and Warren were dead. She had told Mary she did not want to survive her sons. She was 76, with not a grey hair, a striking woman. "I loved her," Mary says. "She was the head of the Companions of the Forests of America, a national social and philanthropic organization started by her sister.

"At least after his first heart attack we had five more years." Mary says of her husband. "And Patty, our youngest, five when he died, had a chance to know her father. All the children"—there were four others—"had the chance to have a father. The five years he lived were a gift." She wrote an article for *Redbook* titled "The Five Years That Taught Me How to Live." Over the years, she has sold short stories to *Redbook, McCall's, The Saturday Evening Post.* One of her stories, "Beauty Contest at Buckingham Palace," was in the *Post* anthology *Best "Post" Stories of 1962.*

Because of his heart condition, Warren was underinsured and not included in the pension plan of his company. "I had to go to work," Mary says. "The short-story market had collapsed. Just a few hours

before Warren died, I had called a friend, Elizabeth Pierce, who does radio script writing and is now an editor of *Celebrity Bulletin.* She had often asked me to join her company in writing for radio. I began writing radio shows."

The first was called *Portrait of a Patriot.* She wrote five four-minute scripts a week for this series. Each script began with a question such as, "He was the tailor from Tennessee who became President of the United States—do you know who he was?" There followed a vignette about the person and then the answer to the question (in this case, Andrew Johnson).



"I started writing these shows three weeks after Warren died," Mary says. "I wrote at home the first year, then went into the office in New York from 1964 to 1970. I also sold shows and helped produce. I wrote for Betsy Palmer, Hugh Downs, Lee Anne Merriwether, Bill Cullen, Peggy Cass. I worked on three different shows at a time, wrote fifteen scripts a week."

She worked to get money to educate her five children. She wanted each to be able to go to fine private schools. To her, this was the most important thing in life.

Even as her creative words flew out over the air waves, she started to miss the printed word. "You write a radio show, but then it's gone, gone forever," she explains. "I decided I wanted to write a book. It's important to know you're working on something you want very much."

She wrote from 5 A.M. to 7 A.M. every morning: "Once you're up at 5 A.M., you have the assurance the house is silent, no questions from the children, even the dog is asleep." She never works at night unless on a "terrible deadline."

After the two early-morning hours of writing, she would wake the children and feed them: "Seven slices of French toast each for the two hungry, athletic boys. Carol was like a rag doll in the morning. I practically had to dress her. Patty didn't want to go to school, clung to me.

"Then I would dress—partially. I would run out to join the car pool to New York at 7:40, curlers in my hair. It became the rule it was indecent to look into the back seat until the George Washington Bridge. Which meant that by then Mary would no longer be scrambling into her clothes, was now fully dressed, and had put on makeup."

She finally finished the book. Though her short stories had been primarily in the suspense field, her first book was a biographical novel based on the life of George Washington. It was called *Aspire to the Heavens* and published in 1969. "It was read by seventeen people, remaindered as it came off the press," she says. "But at least it proved to me I could write." She believes the title, taken from the family motto of the mother of George Washington, "served to hold the book back. Everyone thought I'd written a prayer book. It was displayed in stories next to the Bible." One of Mary's strong points is her original sense of humor. She easily inspires others to laughter, even the grim ones.

She then started her own company, Aerial Communications, writing and producing radio shows. Her partner was Frank Reeves, "the best salesman I've ever known. Even so, it was scary. For the first six months, I had no salary."

She also wanted to write a second book. With the biography out of the way, she decided to write what she had always really wanted to write—a novel of suspense. She said to herself, "I love to read suspense. Let's see if I can write it."

She worked for three years, those early morning hours, on *Where Are the Children?* based on a true case. She turned it in to agent Patricia Myrer in October 1973. Doubleday and Harper & Row turned it down for the same reason: "They liked the book but felt that children in jeopardy would upset women readers. Turn them off."

Pat then sent the manuscript to Phyllis Grann, now publisher at Putnam's, then an editor at Simon and Schuster. She read Mary's book while sailing off Westport, Connecticut. When she finished, she asked her husband to please pull in to shore. She jumped off the boat, went to the nearest phone, and called Pat Myrer. "Don't show Mary Higgins Clark's book to anyone else. I want to buy it." Simon and Schuster paid a $3,000 advance. That was in May 1974.

There is pleasure in Mary's voice as she recalls

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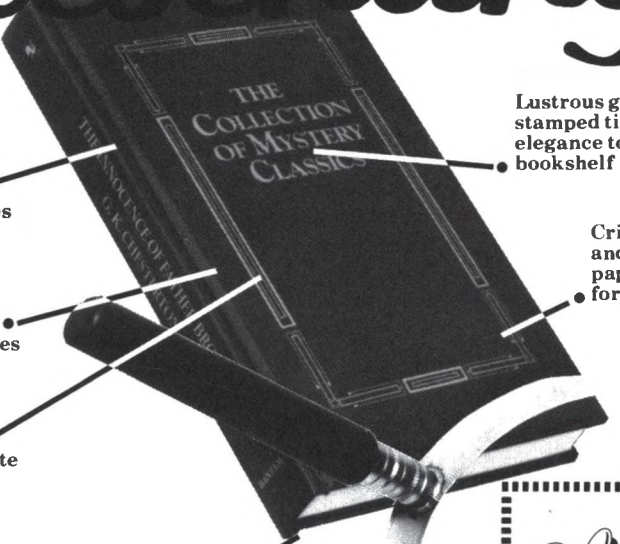

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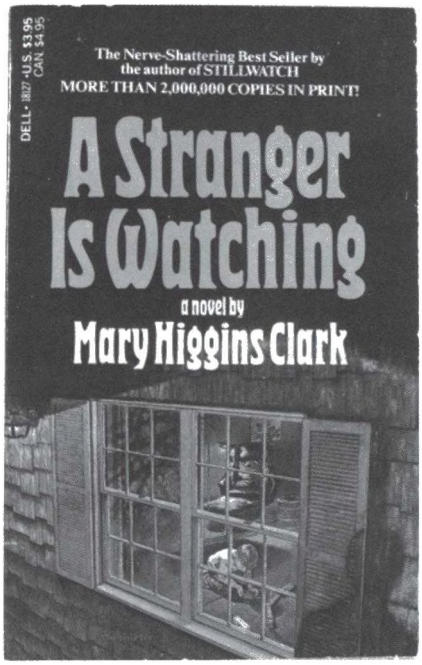
these events. "When Simon and Schuster buys a book, you just die. They're so big."

But the advance would not take care of the school bills. That August, Mary wondered how she would get money to pay for her children's education. She had gradually pawned piece by piece the family jewels left by her mother-in-law, hoping to redeem them some day. They kept going up in value, so every year she had to pay more interest, but she had more collateral.

At that time two of her children were in law school, one attended Dartmouth, one was going to Mt. Holyoke in the fall, and the youngest was at the Immaculate Heart Academy, a private girl's school.

One August afternoon, the phone rang and Mary answered it upstairs. It was Pat Myrer with the news that Dell had just paid $100,000 for paperback rights to *Children*. "I went screaming down the stairs to the children, 'I've sold! I've sold!' I called friends. Then sent out for a case of champagne. We had a party going in twenty minutes.



"And," says Mary, "that first paperback sale made the difference between scrimping to try to educate the children and freedom from worry about the eternal dollar."

She sat down and made a list of "things I always wanted to do." It was headed by "college." She felt she could finally get the education she wanted, since her children were provided for. In 1974, she started going to Fordham University at Lincoln Center three nights a week. She graduated *summa cum laude* in philosophy. In 1983, she was awarded an honorary degree of doctor of literature by Villanova University.

> "From 1964 to 1970. . . I worked on three different shows at a time, wrote fifteen scripts a week."

She has slowly been taking up other activities on the list: tennis, swimming, dancing, skiing—cross-country, downhill and water skiing—and playing the piano. She bought a piano but as yet has not gone past "Drifting," the notes of which decorate page three of her book for beginners.

In the ten years between 1974 and 1984, she wrote four other bestselling suspense novels. All have been at the top of the *New York Times* bestseller lists and have been bought either as movie or television films. Her second, *A Stranger Is Watching*, was published in 1978; the third, *The Cradle Will Fall,* 1980; *A Cry in the Night,* 1982 (in which Kirk Douglas is interested). *Stillwatch,* just published, is already in fourth place on the *New York Times* hardcover bestseller list as of November 30, 1984.

All her books are still in print. *Children* is in its 39th printing and has sold over 3,000,000 copies in paperback. *Stranger* has sold 2,500,000. Every three or four months, there is a new printing of one or another of her books.

Which is her favorite? She laughs. "It's like asking which is your favorite child."

Where Are The Children? became an instant best-seller in 1975, shooting Mary to stardom in the publishing world. She is no feminist in the sense that she is out there fighting with Gloria Steinem, but she is a super-feminist in another sense—she has raised five children practically by herself and has had a literary career second to no other woman in this country, financially speaking.

She enjoys not only writing but helping to sell her books. "I believe in going into little bookshops to autograph books and appearing on small radio stations, as well as on TV, because I think it all sells books." She goes in tours she describes as "all over the peapatch," though she prefers small doses, coming home for a few days, then going out again.

She is generous to a fault in helping other authors, willing to give quotes for book jackets when she likes the book, though her agent has limited her to a number of such quotes per year. "If you give too many, they become meaningless," she explains.

Mary has had only one publisher, Simon and Schuster. Michael Korda is her editor today. Another man came into her life after she had been a widow for fourteen years when she met Raymond Ploetz, a six-foot, five-inch attorney. They were participants on a law panel in Chicago on a television show in August 1977. He spoke as a matrimonial lawyer who had been divorced and had custody of his four children. She spoke as a single parent who had raised five children, including two who had become lawyers.

A year later, they had a gala wedding at Tavern on the Green on Central Park, attended by friends of both the bride and groom and their combined nine children. The marriage is now in the process of dissolution. "It did not work out." Mary says very sadly. "I never thought I'd go from 'Five Little Peppers and How They Grew' to 'Kramer vs. Kramer.' Life does funny things to you." She has the house in Washington Township where she raised her children, the house she bought on Cape Cod, and the New York apartment overlooking Central Park South.

What was the first thing she ever wrote? "My first poem," she says. "At the age of seven. It was a poem about Easter. Pretty awful, even though I was only seven. But my mother thought it was wonderful. She was my first and best fan.

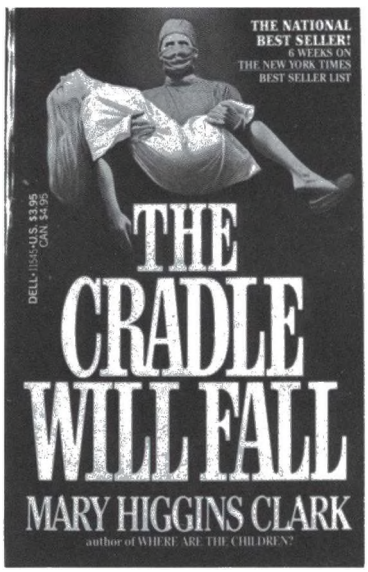
"I can't sing on key," she adds apologetically, "I dance with the grace of a battleship being tugged into harbor, and my daughters remind me the hems on their school uniforms were Scotch-taped. I had to do something well." She also is a fine cook, as proved by the fluffy light omelet she makes for brunch in the kitchen of her New York apartment. ("Don't use too much milk.") At one point, she is stirring the omelet, answering questions about her past, and picking up the kitchen extension phone as daughter Carol phones from Cape Cod to ask what time Mary will arrive at the Hyannis airport to make her movie debut in *Children*.

She has heard writers say they feel that they live in a "prison," forced internally to produce a certain number of words each day. "I don't feel that way. I think you're very lucky to be a writer when you consider the dull, boring jobs most people have. What work offers such immense creative satisfaction? It's a blessed field to be in."

She penned her thoughts about writing in an eloquent essay, "And Give Me Yesterday," published in *The Recorder* (1984) of the American Irish Historical Society, of whose Executive Council she is a member. She wrote:

I can speak for no other author. We are indeed all islands, repositories of our own memory and experience, nature and nurture. But I do know that whatever writing success I have enjoyed is keyed, like a kite, to string, to hand, to the fact that my genes and sense of self, spirit and intellect have been formed and identified by my Emerald Isle ancestry.

She then mentions "at least one godmother" who "lingered beside" her and whispered, "I bequeath you the need to write, the heart hunger to record. I will you remembrance. Listen to the people who surround you. The Irish are natural story tellers, blessed in abundance with tales of wit and woe." When Mary was seven and given the usual leather-bound, five-year diary, her first entry, she says, did not show much promise. It read: "Nothing much happened today." But before long the pages started to fill, until now a trunk full of diaries record the years.



In this essay, she also describes members of her mother's family, and neighbors in the Bronx, including a Mr. Fitzpatrick,

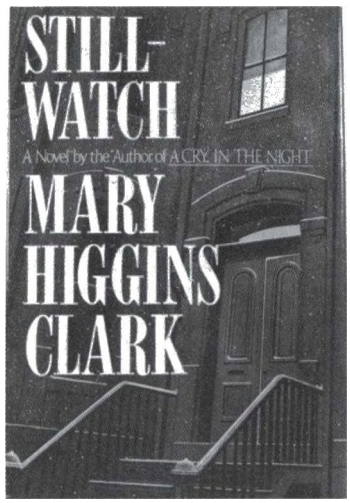
a skinny immaculate old man with a full white mustache and sad knowing eyes. His favorite perch was the low brick wall that separated our stoops. Summer and winter, he'd sit out there, his fleshless bottom protected by a thick pillow, eternally puffing at a pipe that sent clouds of blue smoke swirling through the air. One spring morning I returned home from the early Saturday morning Mass and to my alarm noticed the cluster of neighborhood children on the sidewalk outside my house. It was Mr. Fitz who broke the news. "Ah, Mary," he sighed, "I'm afraid your Dad is dead."

I was "Daddy's girl" and the yearning for that lost presence helped me form the character of Katie deMaio in one of my novels, *The Cradle Will Fall*. A refrain still runs through my head of the special song my father sang to me—offkey of course, I come by tone deafness genetically—"Sunday night is my delight and pleasure don't you see."

She wrote that she learned the philosophy "Triumph from tragedy" around the dining room table:

> If you're down today, surely you'll be up tomorrow. On the other hand, when things are going well, don't take it for granted. Like as not there's trouble brewing. My mother would get a "feeling" about this one or that one, as day follows night you can be sure that the subject of her attention was in for a rough time. Yet when she endured her darkest hours, the deaths of my father and brother, she never lost the buoyant hope that everything would eventually right itself.

It was that "sense of persistent hope" that kept her at writing for the six years she received rejection slips for her first short story. During those years, "Mother cheerfully minded my babies to give me a couple of hours a day to write. 'You'll make it,' she assured me."



Has success changed her? "What's to change? I've been very blessed. We know there are many wonderful writers whose books don't become financial successes."

She has been asked why she so often writes about children, especially the endangered, lost child. "Everyone becomes a vigilante when a child is in jeopardy," she replies. Someone once asked her, "Is it that you really hate kids?" "The very opposite is true," she says. "The Irish love their children with a fierce passion and the greatest of tragedies is to lose a child. I always felt I *had* to have children, I would never think of *not* having children of my own. When I write about children in danger, I am expressing the fears I have carried over to adulthood."

She mentions the time when she was five and taken to the funeral of her thirteen-year-old cousin Kathleen, who had been in the hospital with the ailment known in those days as St. Vitus's Dance, for which there seemed no cure. Kathleen's mother, May, had been told of a marvelous new series of injections which would have her daughter up and about in a week. Trustingly, she signed the necessary permission forms. The first injection was administered, and a few hours later Kathleen was dead.

"I can still hear the heartbroken protests of her mother," Mary recalls. "'I want Kathleen, I want Kathleen,' as the coffin was lowered. With head shakes and sighs, that story was often recalled: 'If May had been able to afford a private doctor, they'd never have experimented on the poor child.' The urge to get ahead, to somehow always be sure that my own children would have private doctors, became sealed on my soul in those discussions."

Pointing out that whatever name she has made as a writer has been in the suspense field, she says: "Writing suspense is challenging and satisfying. I write about very nice people whose lives are invaded by evil. I grew up among very nice people whose lives were invaded by the human condition with its peaks and valleys. From them I learned that it is not always how we *act* but how we *react* that is the measure of our worth."

Is writing ever difficult for her? "Sure," she says. "I love the storytelling aspect, but, even with all the writing I've done, it's still hard for me to get people in and out of a room. I envy writers who can move people. I have to push them."

She also does a lot of revising. "In *Cradle,* I rewrote and rewrote and rewrote. I wrote the first one hundred pages three times. Then I realized Katie, the heroine, was married to a judge and the line kept running through my head: 'The Court Will Protect.' I knew somebody was out to hurt Katie, but I was blocked in writing about it because of the thought—The Court Will Protect. Meaning her husband, the judge.

"Then one day I thought, 'But if the judge is dead, Katie would be alone in the world and have to face the danger all by herself. Katie is only twenty-eight and now would have room in her life for a new love interest.' Then the story flowed."

The judge, incidentally, was modeled after a friend who is a Superior Court judge in New Jersey. She called to tell him, "I'm awfully sorry, but you died." After the novel was published, as he played golf one day with three other judges, one of them, knowing he was a friend of hers, asked if he had read Mary Clark's latest book. "I died in it," he laughed.

Mary says that someday she wants to take a year off from writing suspense and tell the tale of her Irish heritage. She already has the title in mind—*And Give Me Yesterday*. The quote comes from a poem that starts, "Lord, put back Thy universe and give me yesterday."

"I do not wish yesterday back," she insists, "only the fullness of its memory, a memory that guides and

strengthens me always. I'm perfectly content with this age in my life. I don't feel I want to turn back the clock. Or to be younger. My life has been very full. I loved having children. And I love being a writer. I always wanted to earn my own money, not have it given to me. I wanted to do it myself."

And the rewards for such independence have been great, rewards other than financial. On November 11, 1984, Mary was honored by the Federation of Women's Clubs of New Jersey and Douglass College as an outstanding writer. Mary Roebling, the banker, and Ella Levin, editor of *Woman's Day,* also received awards. Several women in the audience came up to Mary, said, "When I was sick I read your books and felt much better." Some reported, "I never could get my kid to read until I gave him one of your books." Mary reflects: "You hear such remarks and you think, 'Okay, I'm making some kind of contribution, giving people pleasure.'"

> "I love being a writer. I always wanted to earn my own money, not have it given to me. I wanted to do it myself."

She became an avid reader at eight. "Mother would yell as I lay in bed reading at night, 'Is that light off, Mary?'"

She would quickly turn off the light and call down, "Yes." "Then," she says, "I would read by the light in the street. It was just outside and shone in my window. I was not lying to mother." During the day, she always had a book in hand, curled up with it on the old overstuffed velour sofa.

Mary is a member of the Mystery Writers of America, on its Board of Directors for the past eight years. She is also a member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors, has served on its membership committee. "If you join a group," she says, "you take it seriously and work hard for its goals."

Her favorite American mystery authors include Thomas Chastain, Dorothy Salisbury Davis, Charlotte Armstrong, Donald Westlake, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Robert Bloch. As for the British, she enjoys P. D. James, Agatha Christie, Josephine Tey, Dorothy Sayers, Ellis Peters, Christiana Brand.

She has enjoyed traveling in recent years, says of a trip to Russia: "I was struck by the lack of spontaneity, of warmth, in the people, and the scarcity of food. I think of what our lives would be like if we had to live as the Russians do. I think also of the children growing up there. And those who have been starving in Ethiopia. When I see them on TV, I get a sense of agony, of helplessness. I think of how well, in contrast, my grandchildren are taken care of. And of how very lucky we are. We're in the top one persent of the world's population who live so comfortably. I am constantly grateful for that."

She is proud of her books but prouder of her children. "I have five adults who are my friends. I love my children. I raised them through the drug years without a problem. They never gave me an ounce of trouble. They had the normal children's accidents, of course. They were all active kids."

The oldest, Marilyn, 33, the original model for Katie in *Cradle*, is an assistant prosecutor. Warren, 32, is also a lawyer, has his own firm. David, 30, produces radio shows. Carol, 28, is an actress. Patricia, 26, works in commercial real estate in New York. The happiest thing in Mary's life today is being a grandmother, she says. She has two grandchildren.

One has the feeling that Mary Higgins Clark's extraordinary popular and monetary success has of course been welcomed by her but has had little or no effect on the graciousness of spirit which she has always conveyed to others. She is too wise, she has experienced too much of life's pain, not to know the importance of love, of caring, of friendship. The antithesis of what she writes so vividly about. But then, as she also knows, life is full of paradoxes. One reason it is so challenging. And Mary has never run from a challenge. Not even in the face of forty rejections on her first short story. At the end of the forty there was acceptance. And she was on her creative way.

In her essay for *The Recorder,* Mary describes her concept, where, "if it pleases the dear Lord and I have been admitted through the gates, I will be assigned my permanent place." A door opens onto a lareg dining room, and

> everyone will be around the table; my parents and brothers; Agnes [her spinster aunt]. . . old Mr. Fitz puffing at his pipe, Uncle Richard with his tool kit attending to recalcitrant latches and knobs and explaining how he married *all* the Durkin sisters [her aunts]. Warren will have a seat waiting for me beside him and might just mention that I was always late arriving. A kettle will be whistling and a cozy waiting to keep the teapot warm. Someone will say with great satisfaction that now we do have time for a grand talk and the storytelling will begin.

Mary's storytelling has begun splendidly on earth. May it continue for years, to the pleasure of her millions of readers and to the enrichment, emotionally as well as coin-wise, of her own very exciting life. □

Ellis Peters:

By Andrew M. Greeley

On a fine, bright morning in early May in the first part of the twelfth century (probably 1137), a short, stocky man in his late fifties, barrel-chested and with the walk of a sailor, can be seen before Prime picking out cabbage seedlings in the monastery garden of the Abbey of Shrewsburry of St. Peter and Paul. The man is Brother Cadfael (pronounced Cad-VALE), a Welsh monk who is the herbalist of the monastery, in charge of providing both seasoning and medicine to the monastery community—rue, sage, rosemary, gilbers, gromwell, ginger, mint, thyme, columbine, herb of grace, savoury, mustard, fennel, tansy, basil and dill, parsley, chervil and marjoram. In the background are peonies and poppies which also provide useful material for Brother Cadfael's healing efforts. The poppies are especially important in the first Brother Cadfael story, *A Morbid Taste for Bones.*

Thus there enters on the mystery scene one of the most fascinating detectives to come down the pike in a long time. Cadfael the crusader, the lover, the hero who entered Jerusalem with Godfrey of Bouillon, the captain of a ship with which the crusader army fought off pirates, now settled to spend the final years of his life tending a monastery garden, healing the sick and the infirm, and solving twelfth-century mysteries.

In the nine mysteries published since 1977, author Ellis Peters has re-created the world of England in the first years of the High Middle Ages, a time of innocence and vitality in the reborn Benedictine monasteries. Just as Umberto Eco has re-created the world of a Benedictine monastery of mid-fourteenth-century Northern Italy, so Peters gives us the picture of an English monastery two centuries before. Edith Pargeter (Ellis Peters's real name) is not a genius at the new art and science of semiotics as is Umberto Eco. Her books are not filled with the elaborate word games, the complex philosophy, the intricate puzzles of *The Name of the Rose.* Unlike Umberto Eco, she does not believe that the purpose of the title of a story is to confuse the reader. It is highly unlikely that Brother Cadfael will ever rise to the top of the *New York Times* bestseller list. Yet, for this reader at any rate, she is a far better storyteller than Umberto Eco. Moreover, her "medieval novels of suspense," as the covers of the hardback books say, or "medieval who-dunnits" as the British paperback editions call them, provide an interesting counterpoint to *The Name of the Rose.* Umberto Eco undoubtedly describes truth in his book. Ellis Peters, for her part, has only verisimilitude; and, as any storyteller knows, verisimilitude makes for a better story than truth and may, finally, at the level of myth and symbol, be even more true.

Born in 1923, Edith Pargeter grew up in Shropshire, served in the Royal Navy during the war,

Another Umberto Eco?

and developed an interest in Czechoslovakia because of shame over the betrayal of that country by the West at Munich. She has been translating Czech literature as well as writing her own novels since she was mustered out of the service in 1945. (During the Prague spring in 1968, she was given an award by the Czech government.) Her Ellis Peters *persona* emerged in 1959, and she won the Edgar in 1961. Brother Cadfael was originally intended to be in only one novel, based on the actual incident of the translation of the patroness's bones to Shrewsbury abbey.

Peters's stories can be said to have everything—colorful monks, touching young love, marvelous atmosphere, a fascinating and complex detective, and, most importantly of all, ingenious puzzles. If you are one of those mystery fans who feels cheated when the mystery is too easy, Ellis Peters will not disappoint you. If you hold tenaciously to the position that all the atmosphere in the world does not compensate for a dull plot, Peters is just the new writer you're looking for. Paradoxically for a woman of Czech origin writing about medieval England, she weaves the classic mystery puzzles of which contemporary English women authors seem to be the most skillful practitioners.

Only P. D. James, as far as this writer is concerned, compares with Ellis Peters as the mystery find of the last ten years.

And Brother Cadfael is at least as appealing, if not quite so pretty, as Cordelia Grey.

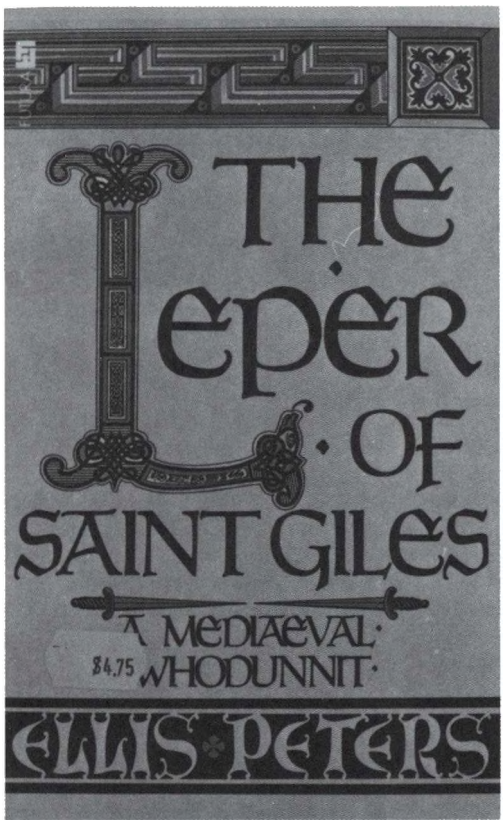
In *A Morbid Taste for Bones,* Brother Cadfael is sent by Abbot Heribert (a well-meaning and pleasant but ineffectual leader of the monastic community) to accompany Prior Robert on a pilgrimage to Wales to bring the bones of St. Winifred (a saint whose head was chopped off by a pagan Welsh prince and then miraculously placed back on her body so that she could live to become the abbess of a monastery) to Shrewsburry Abbey, where she may be venerated as the Holy Patroness. Brother Robert—sleek, glib, ambitious—has his heart set on becoming the new abbot. He also has a rather low opinion of the herbalist, a Welsh peasant with a dubious background; indeed, often in the story the other monks wonder about Brother Cadfael. He certainly is devout and careful in his monastic practices (though not above sneaking out after Compline to be on his mystery-solving business); yet has he not seen too much life to be a good monk?

As we learn, Cadfael is even more a man of the world than his brother monks realize. There have been many women in his life: Rischildis, his childhood sweetheart; Bianca, a Venetian; Arianna, a Greek boat girl; and Mariam, a Saracen widow from Antioch; and many others, too.

Father Andrew M. Greeley's latest novel, VIRGIN AND MARTYR, was published by Warner Books in March 1985.

Having known them was part of a harmonious balance that made him content now with his harbored, contemplative life, and gave him patience and insight to bear with these cloistered simple souls who had put on the Benedictine habit as a life's profession, while for him it was a timely retirement. When you have done everything else, perfecting a conventual herb garden is a fine and satisfying thing to do. He could not conceive of coming to this stasis having done nothing else whatever.

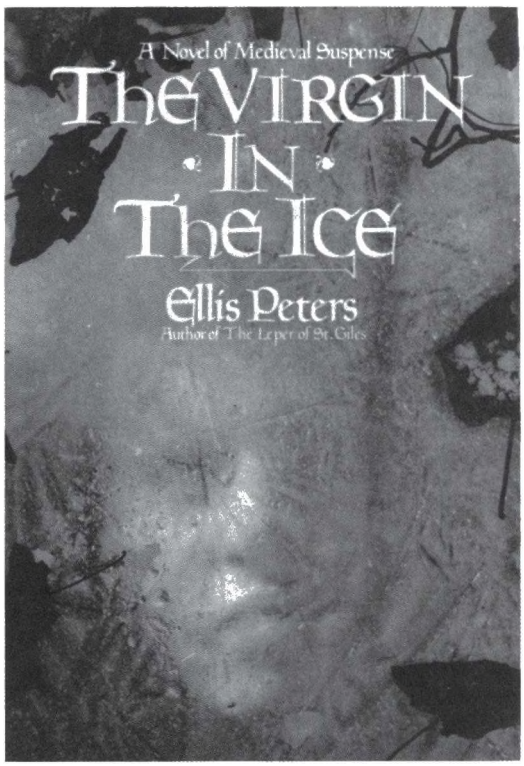
The Welsh townsfolk in Gwytherine are understandably reluctant to give up the relics of their little saint. One of the local squires, the leader of the opposition, is mysteriously murdered. An exiled English nobleman, in love with the squire's radiant daughter, is blamed for the crime. Cadfael must solve the mystery, free the young lovers, rein in the ambitions of Prior Robert, and bring St. Winifred,



or something that would be presumed to be St. Winifred, back to Shrewsburry.

As is often the case in the stories, Cadfael takes into his confidence one of the young people, this time Sioned (Joan), the gorgeous young Welsh heiress. Cadfael and Sioned wrap up all the loose ends and solve the mystery at considerable risk, with almost as much skill as Peters displays in bringing the tale to its gently ironic and comic ending. Cadfael admits that if he were thirty years younger he would give Engelard, Sioned's lover, stiff competition. As it is, he returns to the monastery enjoying the wondrous little secret which is at the core of *A Morbid Taste for Bones,* to learn a few years later that Sioned and Engelard have given their first son a wonderful Welsh name—Cadfael.

"Well, well!" said Brother Cadfael, "I'm certainly gratified. The best way to get the sweet out of children and escape the bitter is to have them by proxy, but I hope they'll never find anything but sweet in their youngster."



One cannot find in contemporary mystery fiction a more appealing or satisfying introductory volume to a mystery series than *A Morbid Taste for Bones.* Futura publishers in England began issuing the Brother Cadfael mysteries in paperback in 1984. At least four of them are available (in addition to the first volume, *The Leper of St. Giles, The Virgin in the Ice,* and *The Sanctuary Sparrow*). The latter two are also available in American paperback, and all of the nine existing mysteries are available in William Morrow hardcover editions. The Cadfael paperbacks have been extremely successful for Futura—more so, the publisher admitted to me, than anyone, including Ellis Peters, could possibly have anticipated. With any good fortune, they will be even more successful in this country, and mystery connoisseurs will find

themselves waiting eagerly each year for a new Cadfael story to appear and every six months for a new paperback. I predict that Americans will promptly fall in love with the tough little ex-crusader, and we may just get him up on the bestseller list, along with Brother William of Baskerville, after all.

The second mystery, *One Corpse Too Many,* begins on a specific date—the early summer of 1138. The remaining seven stories bring us into the middle of September in the year 1140. (The last story I have is *The Devil's Novice,* published by Morrow in 1983; volume nine, *Dead Man's Ransom,* has yet to find its way into my possession—but I'm looking!)

In *One Corpse Too Many,* civil war is rending the Shropshire countryside. The Empress Maude and King Stephen are contending for the crown of England, and Stephen, perhaps too easy-going, has finally been moved to battle. Shrewsburry town is in the possession of those who are loyal to the Empress. Stephen attacks and captures it and appoints his Aide, Gilbert Pretscote, as Sheriff of Shropshire. After the capture of the citadel of Shrewsburry, the remaining garrison is summarily executed. Aline, the daughter of Queen Maude's garrison chief, takes shelter in Shrewsburry Abbey, which steers a careful course of neutrality between the two warring factions. Brother Cadfael, from the secure position of Welsh neutrality, takes the lovely and vulnerable young woman under his wing. Like Sioned, she almost at once becomes a protégé of the good Brother. King Stephen's loyalists are searching for her because she may know where the stolen silver treasure of Shrewsburry has been hidden. Moreover, two men loyal to the king are in love with her, one of them a dubiously loyal young Norman to whom she is attracted despite his apparently dangerous plots.

Unlike Umberto Eco, Peters does not believe that the purpose of the title of a story is to confuse the reader.

While Brother Cadfael and some other monks are preparing the bodies of the executed garrison for burial, they discover one corpse too many. Who is the corpse? Why was he killed? What connection does he have with the lost treasure, and how will threats to the lovely Aline be turned away, especially

the most serious of threats, which comes from slight, dark, seemingly sinister young Norman, Hugh Beringar. Will Brother Cadfael be able to keep his freedom of movement as Prior Robert gains more and more power in the monastery?

One Corpse Too Many adds but one dimension to the already fully developed "formula" (a surely non-perjorative use of the term) of its predecessor, and now events are set precisely and deeply in historical context.

Hugh Beringar turns out to be very different from what we expected, and as the story ends he has been appointed Pretscot's Under-Sheriff, a position in which he will become a more or less permanent Dr. Watson to Brother Cadfael. And the happy, if sometimes bemused, husband of the fair Aline.

In *Monk's Hood* (American publication 1981), it is December of 1138. The battle line has left Shrewsburry far behind. A guest in the monastery, Gervais Bonel, is suddenly taken ill from symptoms that Cadfael knows all too well: he has been poisoned with oil of monkshood, useful for creaking bones but deadly dangerous to those who swallow it. Despite Cadfael's efforts, Bonel dies and his step-son is accused of the murder. Cadfael believes him innocent and is powerfully motivated to save him because his mother, Bonel's wife Rischildis, is Cadfael's sweetheart, whom he has not seen for forty years.

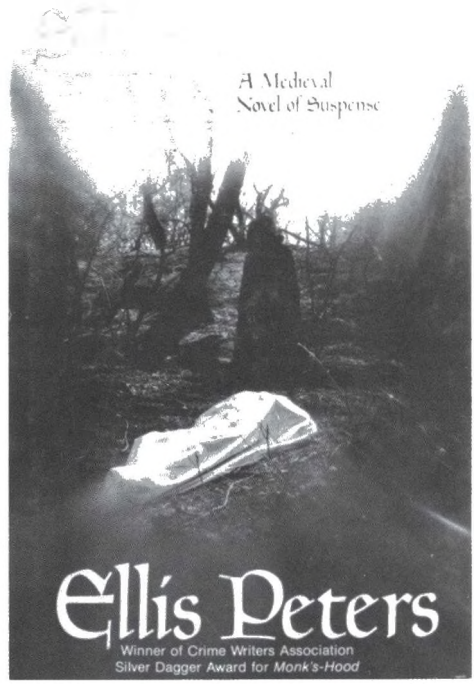
The collection of Peters' novels gives a fascinating reconstruction of the religion, history, social structure, culture, politics, and lifestyle of England in the twelfth century.

In the meantime, political intrigue threatens the Abbey of Shrewsburry. Poor old Heribert was not diligent enough in supporting the King. He is summoned to the Papal Legate, perhaps to be replaced. Prior Robert confidently expects that he will be the new abbot. The implications for Cadfael are ominous. With the help of Hugh Beringar, Cadfael solves the mystery, saves Edwin, and is able to be a friend if not a lover to Rischildis. A new abbot comes to the monastery, Father Radulfus, and Prior Robert's machinations are thwarted. The book ends with Cadfael wondering about Rischildis.

He wondered if he could legitimately plead that he was still confined within the enclave until Rischildis left and decided that would be cowardly only after he'd decided that in any case he had no intention of doing it. She was, after all, a very attractive woman even now and her gratitude would be a very pleasant indulgence; there was even a decided lure in the thought of a conversation that must inevitably begin to have "Do you remember . . . ?" as its constant refrain. Yes, he would go. It was not often he was able to enjoy an orgy of shared remembrances.

In a week or two, after all, the entire household would be gone. . . all those safe miles away. He was not likely to see much of Rischildis after that. Brother Cadfael heaved a deep sigh that might have been regret, but might equally well have been relief. Ah well! Perhaps it was all for the best!

In *St. Peter's Fair,* the fourth of the Brother Cadfael chronicles (American publication 1981), it is the thirtieth day of July, 1139, the Feasts of St. Peter and Paul, the patronal festival of the monastery. Brother Radulfus is safely ensconced as the Abbot and is steering "the rudder of this cloistral vessel" with a strong, firm hand. Fortunately for him and for us,

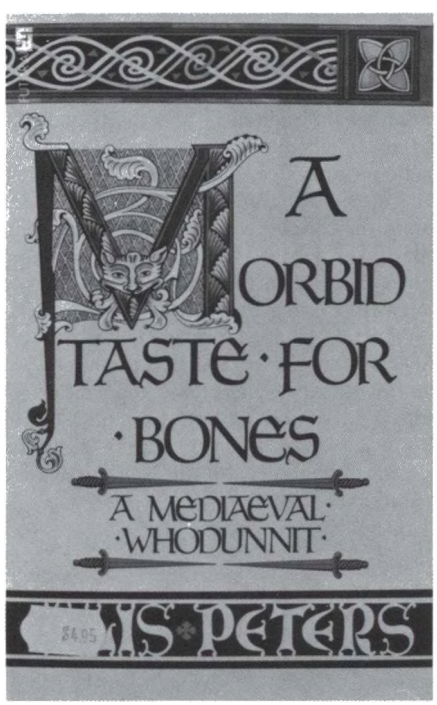


Radulfus shrewdly recognizes all of Cadfael's talent and supports vigorously Cadfael's poking around into mystery and crime, sometimes even assigning him the role of monastic detective. The good herbalist must occasionally still slip out of the monastery after Compline, but usually when he is engaged in his investigations he has the full support of Father Abbot.

Just under the surface of the bustling prosperity of the fair in the monastery foregate, however, there is sinister intrigue. Soon the Empress Maude and her half-brother Robert of Gloucester will land in England to continue the civil war. Conspiracies are afoot to draw the powerful Earl Renulf of Chester into alliance with the Empress. The King's spies are everywhere in the foregate, sniffing for plot and conspiracy. There's good news, too. Aline Beringar is pregnant and she and Hugh in a few months will have a child.

A prosperous merchant is murdered; a local boy is blamed. The merchant's niece is trapped, apparently defenseless against the schemes of an evil man. Cadfael to the rescue in what may well be the most exciting of all the chronicles thus far, complete with a chase across the English and Welsh countryside which would be splendid in a film. Or in a television series.

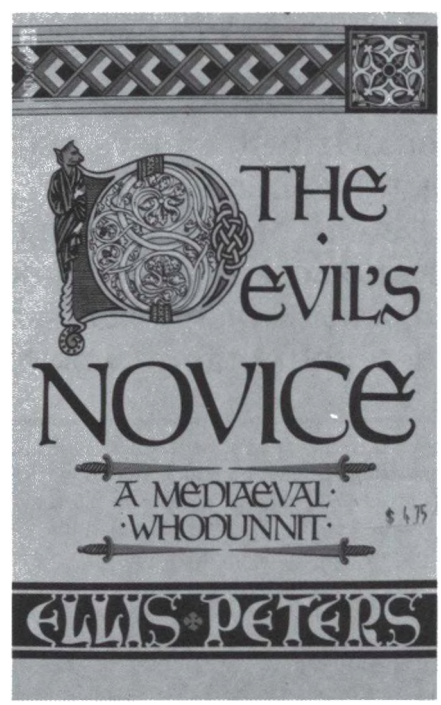
In *The Leper of St. Giles,* published in hardcover in 1982, the summer of 1139 has turned to autumn and Brother Cadfael, his mind very much on his



captain in the Holy Land, the great Paladin Guimar DeMassarde, finds himself caught up in a drama of intrigue and conspiracy and viciousness involving the leper colony and the church of St. Giles, which the monastery administers. The great crusader, in Cadfael's opinion the greatest of them all, is on his mind because his granddaughter, Iveta, was about to be forced into a marriage of convenience arranged by her ambitious and greedy guardian. Suddenly there is one and then another murder. The young woman is free from torment, a ward of the Abbot, and will doubtless soon marry the man she really loves. But Cadfael is not altogether satisfied. The killer of the first victim is in his castle cell awaiting trial and certain condemnation, but who killed Iveta's guardian, and what is the role of the mysterious leper called Lazarus, who has appeared transiently at St. Giles?

Cadfael knows, finally, that Guimar DeMassarde did not die in the Holy Land and comes to understand why he wishes to continue to be thought dead.

In 1982, there appeared my favorite of all the Cadfael chronicles, *The Virgin in the Ice* (the first of the American paperbacks). It is now December of 1139. A young woman's body is found in the ice, a victim of murder, and apparently the daughter of a great noble family in Worcester which has been caught up in the battle between the Empress and the King. In fact, the virgin in the ice is not the lady Ermina, and her murder was not part of a political



conspiracy, but the story is also about sons, about the first son of Hugh Beringar, who has become now almost an adopted son of Cadfael, and also about a young man, a Saracen in origin it would seem, and aspiring to be a knight, named Olivier, who is the true love of the Lady Ermina and, as we begin to suspect toward the end of the story, also the son of Cadfael and his Saracen lover, Miriam. Cadfael

straightens out the problems of the young people and sends them happily on their way. Even though Hugh Beringar as Deputy Sheriff should keep them in this district, he co-operates with Cadfael's plan to free the young couple. Hugh boasts proudly of his son: "Wait until you see him! A son to be proud of!"

Cadfael rode mute and content, still filled with wonder and astonishment, all elation and humility. Eleven more days to the Christmas feast, and no shadow hanging over it now, only a great light. Time of births, of triumphant beginnings, and the year now richly celebrated—the son of the young woman from Worcester, the son of Aline and Hugh, the son of Miriam, the son of man...

A son to be proud of! Yes, amen!

The Sanctuary Sparrow, published in the United States in 1983, takes place four weeks after Easter, in the spring of 1140. The war has now moved far to the south, and peace reigns again in Shropshire. It has been a hard winter but a gentle spring, and Brother Cadfael is caught up in a spring mystery, a tale of twisted love called *The Sanctuary Sparrow.* A young man takes refuge in the monastery with a mob from Shrewsburry in hot pursuit. He is guilty, they say, of robbery and murder. He is scarcely more than a child, a traveling performer, Liliwan, a Saxon orphan with no family, no home, and no one to love or be loved by—no one except the serving girl, Rannilt. Of course, Cadfael saves Liliwan for Rannilt, but unfortunately he is not able to save an older and more haunted pair of lovers. The principal love affairs in the Cadfael stories are usually among the gentry, sometimes among the nobility. But Rannilt and Liliwan, two of Cadfael's most charming young lovers, represent the dregs of medieval English society. They cannot hope for or expect much in life, but they have one another and they have their love, which will serve them well. Love, however, does not save the other couple. Hugh Beringar, reflecting on this tale, the most somber of the Cadfael chronicles:

The greatest achievement of the Cadfael chronicles is Peters' ability to help us feel and accept the common humanity which links us to these inhabitants' world.

"Old friend. . . . I doubt if even you can get Susanna into the fold among the lambs. She chose her way, and it's taken her far out of reach of man's mercy, if she'd ever live to face trial. And now I suppose," he said, seeing his friend's face still thoughtful and undismayed, "You will tell me roundly that God's reach is longer than man's."

"It had better be," said Brother Cadfael very solemnly, "otherwise we are all lost."

In the eighth of the Cadfael chronicles, *The Devil's Novice,* the wheel of the year has turned again, and it is the autumn of 1140 (the book was published in the United States in 1983). Political intrigue once more involves the Abbey of Shrewsburry and its persistent herbalist. A messenger from Bishop Henry of Blois to the Earl of Chester is murderer near the Abbey, part of a convoluted plot in which Chester will betray King Stephen and make common cause with the Empress Maude. Somehow connected with these sinister connivers is a new novice in the Abbey, a squire's son named Meriet, who tries desperately to fit into the monastic community but seems too much the knight, too much the warrior, and even too much the lover to have a true monastic vocation. The struggle raging in his soul and his resulting nightmares upset the peace of the monastic community, and Merier, simultaneously passive and violent, is dubbed the devil's novice.

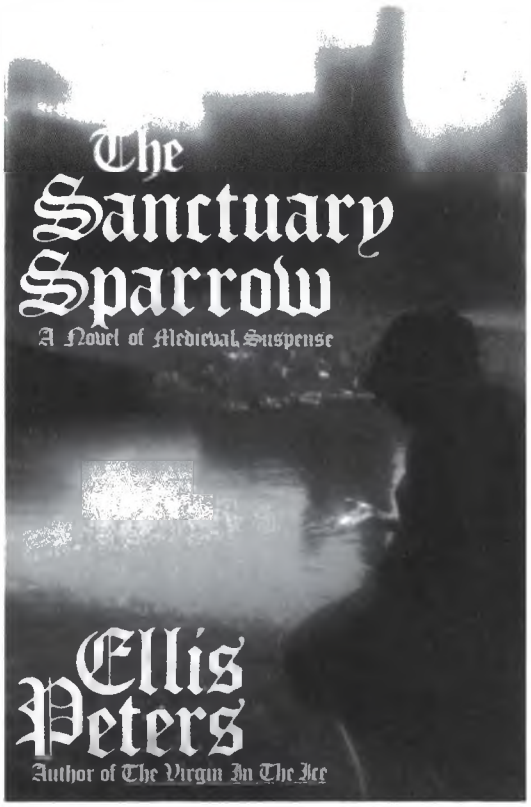
Only Brother Cadfael is able to see the link between this young man, in whom he sees a reflection of himself at the same age, and the treason that is abroad in the land. The devil's novice does not belong in the monastery, but Cadfael knows in whose arms he does belong and finally comes to see how treason in the country can cause treason in families. The devil's novice is freed from the monastic community and freed from the even worse burden of conflict with a harsh but well-meaning father. The love of Isouda and Meriet is one which revives Cadfael's faith in the goodness of human nature despite all the treachery and conspiracies and schemings and connivings and treason. The former devil's novice, once a proud, stubborn, arrogant young man, becomes gentle and considerate, even of his enemies.

"Child," said Cadfael, shaking his head over such obstinate devotion, but very complacently, "you are either an idiot or a saint and I'm not in the mood at present to have much patience with either. . . . There, be off with you! Take him away, girl, and let me put out the brazier and shut up my workshop or I shall be late for Compline!"

Cadfael can well afford to laugh on his way to Compline because he has once again routed his old enemy Prior Robert, the Prior's stooge, Brother Jerome, and also, in the course of solving the crime and freeing the devil's novice, he has arranged that the other novice in his charge, Brother Mark, will study for the priesthood.

In addition to *Dead Man's Ransom,* two more novels have been published in England—*The Pilgrim*

of Hate and *An Excellent Mystery*. It is important to insist that there is not the slightest decline in the fascination, the appeal, the mystery, the color, and the charm of the Cadfael chronicles. They march before us in stately procession not unlike the monastic community going to prayer. The series, started on a high level of quality with *A Morbid*



Taste for Bones, has maintained that same quality implacably for the last eight years. *The Devil's Novice* is every bit as good as *One Corpse Too Many* or *The Virgin in the Ice.*

One's choice of which tale one likes best is purely a matter of personal taste. Each one of the chronicles is a first-rate mystery story. The collection of them is a fascinating reconstruction of the religion, the history, the social structure, the culture, the politics, and the lifestyle of England in the twelfth century. Having read all the chronicles, one feels that one has become part of a little section of England around Shrewsburry between 1137 and 1140, and that one knows the monks and the townsfolk and the squires and the nobility almost as though they were friends and neighbors. Ellis Peters is well along the way toward the creation of what might be a monumental series of stories—pure pleasure for mystery fans and rewarding reading for anyone.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of the Cadfael chronicles is Peters's ability to help us feel and accept the common humanity which links us to these inhabitants' world, so very different from our own. There is a terrible temptation in the study of the past to what one might call temporal ethnocentrism: to be so appalled by the barbarism and the ignorance and the superstition of other ages as to have contempt for the people who lived in those ages and almost exclude them from the same human race of which we are a part. The writing on the Middle Ages of the late Barbara Tuchman has always seemed to me to be especially prone to that temptation. Even *The Name of the Rose,* a classic of its own kind, leaves us feeling at the end that Adso and William of Baskerville were very, very different from us "moderns."

Brother Cadfael and his friends and proteges and allies, and even the criminals he hunts, are very much part of the same human race to which we belong. Different from us? Yes indeed—different beliefs, behaviors, biases than we have, certainly, but still men and women with the hates and the fears, the ambitions and the sorrows, the joys and pain that we know so well. This may be the greatest achievement of all in the Brother Cadfael chronicles.

And they would indeed make a wonderful television series! □

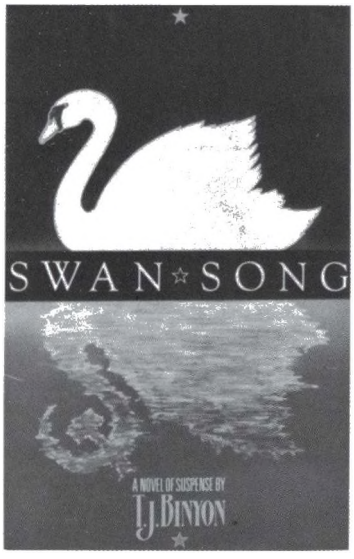
AJH REVIEWS

ALLEN J. HUBIN Consulting Editor

Photo: Robert Smull

Short notes. . .

The late J. R. L. Anderson's stories about Colonel Peter Blair continue to appear here; most recent is ***Death in a High Latitude*** (Scribner's, $12.95). Why would unnamed terrorists kidnap an executive of an oil conglomerate and demand as ransom an unremarkable 360-year-old map of the Arctic—a map which has unaccountably disappeared from the British museum responsible for its care? The puzzle is a neat one, at least on the surface, and Blair works with German colleagues to track a conspiracy to

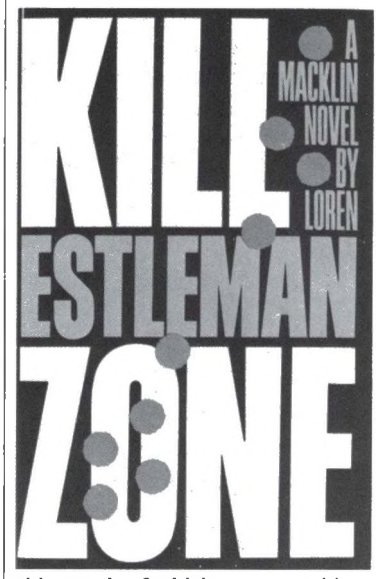


its chilly conclusion. Pleasant adventure, but the rationale of the conspiracy doesn't hold oil or water.

T. J. Binyon, who has studied and traveled in the Soviet Union and now teaches Russian at Oxford, puts his knowledge of that country to good use in ***Swan Song*** (Dial, $14.95). This is a most unusual intrigue novel, a refreshing change of pace. Morozov teaches English literature in Moscow. An acquaintance, well risen in the KGB, pressures him to re-establish contact with their former mutual lover, Lyuba, who seems to have converted to a religious sect with revolutionary aspirations. Morozov is beset also by various Westerners of similar interests in obscure religions and equally unclear motives. Of what possible danger to the State could the few visionary followers of Father Zakhor be?

Loren D. Estleman forsakes his Amos Walker series for a tellingly grim, abundantly bloody, and quite unlovely view of a professional killer sent after terrorists in ***Kill Zone*** (Mysterious Press, $14.95). An apparent madman, armed to the gills and assisted by a band of unbalanced misfits, hijacks a Lake Erie tour boat full of passengers and announces that he'll blow the whole lot to tiny fragments unless ten prisoners are freed. A jailed mobster thinks he'll win his own release if he sends his tame assassin to solve the problem, and the FBI agrees to the scheme. So Peter Macklin, himself the subject of a contract, heads for open water.

One of life's mysteries, to me at least, is the survival to the fourth volume of John Gardner's pedestrian continuation of Ian Fleming's James Bond series. Here we have ***Role of Honor*** (Putnam, $11.95), in which Bond "retires" from the service and is tutored in computer programming in order to infiltrate the nefarious organization of an American computer genius who has settled in England to market computer games to the public and computer-devised crimes to more select clientele. Behind all this is a hare-brained scheme to destabilize the world. An undemanding read,



this novel, of which not a word is to be believed.

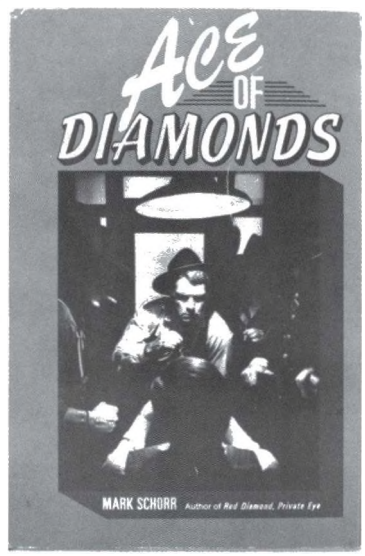
Henry Franklin, a naïve county librarian whose uneventful life is filled only with heroic fantasies and the earnest encouragements of his beauteous fiancée, is visited by an apparent representative of British Intelligence and asked to go to Karachi to apply his particular expertise in ancient Arabic documents. But murders and intrigues are the fare upon arrival, and Henry, despite sincere protestations, manages to convince everyone he's anything but an innocent bookman, escaping death repeatedly, foiling ungodly schemes, and winning the heart of an Israeli agent. Agreeable

enough is Roy Harley Lewis's ***Where Agents Fear To Tread*** (St. Martin's, $11.95), which I reckon we're to regard as a latter-day spoof of James Bond.

Appleton Porter, that 6'7" spy with the incandescent blush returns for more incompetent accomplishments in ***The Only Good Apple in a Barrel of Spies*** (Doubleday, $11.95) by Marc Lovell. It seems a pickpocket lifted something from a Russian agent just before the latter dropped dead on a London street. Everyone wants to find the pickpocket, including a fetching lady who might be an Australian apprentice picker of pockets or maybe a deadly representative of the KGB. Porter, in "disguise" as a fellow "dip," disobeys every instruction as he careens around London with/after the girl and the elusive pickpocket. Pleasant foolishness.

I don't know if Rome, portrayed by Michael Mewshaw in ***Year of the Gun*** (Atheneum, $14.95) as governed in blood by Red Brigade terrorists, is as bad as that, but the picture is certainly grim. David Rayborne, an American illegally living in Italy in 1977 and writing for a threadbare newspaper, is desperate for money. He decides that an account of the Brigade might sell—he even gets an advance from a publisher. But without Brigade contacts (that he's aware of), he creates fiction, imagining what the terrorists are like, what they might be plotting—like a kidnapping of industrialist Aldo Moro. Too close he's come—fatally too close. Taut storytelling, if not so enjoyable nor propped up with any very attractive characters.

The fifth Dan Mallett adventure by "Frank Parrish" is ***Death in the Rain*** (Dodd Mean, $12.95), which is certainly satisfactory but does not play to the greatest strength of the character or setting. Mallett follows the pursuit of his late father, poaching in his patch of rural England, and as a consequence is suspected by the police of every crime committed in his vicinity. Here it's the murder of an elderly lady, committed amidst robbery, and Dan shares police suspicion with a winsome lass. He's besotted with the lass, of course, and his mother, who becomes deaf and senile in the presence of policemen, schemes to reform Dan to the straight life by marrying him



off to the girl, whose family background has passed her inspection. What a tangle for Dan to sort out. . .

The third Sister Mary Teresa Dempsey mystery by "Monica Quill" (Ralph M. McInerny), and my first, is ***And Then There Was Nun*** (Vanguard, $11.95). Septugenarian Sister Mary, affectionately known as Emtee Dempsey, is (with two younger acolytes) the vestigial remains of the Order of Martha and Mary, now bastioned in a house on Walton Street in Chicago. The Order once had a school, whose former students turn up periodically in one sort of trouble or another. Here it's Diana Torrance, co-owner (with her husband) of a very successful girls' soccer team. She speaks mostly lies, apparently, especially concerning said husband, soon to turn up as the first corpse. Police and Emtee do some sparring, the former frothing, the latter calm and insightful, on their way to a staged dienouement on the shores of Lake Michigan. Entertaining character dynamics.

Imagine a New York cabbie who thinks he's a 1940s private eye and, aside from a few distracting flashbacks to his real identity, who acts the role of a two-fisted investigator. That's Simon Jaffe = Red Diamond, and he's back for a second caper in ***Ace of Diamonds*** by Mark Schorr (St. Martin's, $13.95). This is amusing nonsense, but parodic nonsense it is and not particularly my cup of tea. Here Diamond goes to Las Vegas at the behest of a billionaire club owner to find out who's behind the recent surge in crime. Diamond supposes it's his old nemesis, Rocco Rico, for whom he looks under every rock, and hopes that he might find again his true love and deliver her from Rico's tentacles. Blood flows everywhere, corpses abound, willing wenches wiggle wondrously, and Diamond escapes from deadly peril every third chapter or so. For those who are interested.

Alison Smith, mother of five, sometime newspaper columnist, receptionist at Harvard, manager of a day-care center, and author of two children's books, debuts in our field with ***Someone Else's Grave*** (St. Martin's, $11.95). This winsome tale is well set in a small town in Vermont and features its beleaguered police chief, Judd Springfield. A widow lady of Coolidge Corners takes flowers to the cemetery each Memorial Day. This time one grave is freshly disturbed, and something is sticking out of the soil. Before she's able to report her terrifying find, she's assaulted and left for dead by a murderer who's by no means done with killing. These events in a normally tranquil town could lead to loss of confidence in its police chief, and Judd is untimely distracted by the trials of a young nephew and the promise of a secure job at the state level. I reckon we'll see more of Springfield and Coolidge Corners. —AJH

Juno Was a Man or, The Case of

By Geoffrey O'Brien

In the mid-1960's the American reading public was being given a rapid remedial course in homosexuality, as books like *City of Night, Last Exit to Brooklyn, Another Country* and *Our Lady of the Flowers* transformed the unmentionable into the unavoidable. It was all part of the golden age of literary legalization, with *Naked Lunch* and *The Story of O* tumbling out on the heels of *Black Spring* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Embarrassed critics grasped for deeper meanings; Pauline Reage was really penning a meditation on Love, Genet's novels were really dissections of the problem of identity. All in all an air of covert titillation prevailed.

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In this context the gay subculture functioned as a sideshow attraction. The Rechy and Selby novels were taken as a test of the reader's limits, something like literary splatter movies. Henry Miller was robust, D. H. Lawrence spiritually ennobling, John Cleland innocently elegant, Terry Southern bracingly satiric; novels of homosexual life, by contrast, were seen as plunges into degradation, chronicles of sexual enslavement. For decades sleazy paperbacks had promised to tell all, but they had never made good. Now it was finally to be spelled out on the page: See the Lowest Depths of Urban Squalor and Tawdry Vice. See the Ultimate in Violent Perversion. See the Damned Souls Writhe in Hell.

Up until that point, a particular literary genre had nurtured the American vision of homosexuality, a

The Hardboiled Homophobes

genre whose point of departure was a burning curiosity to know what really goes on in the lower depths: the hardboiled crime novel. While the reform-minded social realists (Crane, Norris, Farrell, et al.) had never had much time for homosexuality—perhaps sharing the notion that it was chiefly an aristocratic pastime typical of pallid Etonians—the hardboiled writers from Hammett onward found it hard to keep away. Although gays are not as commonly associated with tough-guy fiction as racketeers, crooked cops or B-girls, the fact remains that all the main contributors to the genre—Hammett, Chandler, Cain, Spillane, Ross Macdonald, John D. MacDonald, among others—helped to elaborate a gay stereotype. As the influence of hardboiled realism spread, the incidence of homosexual characters increased dramatically in mainstream mystery writing. Eric Garber of the San Francisco Lesbian and Gay History Project has uncovered more than 350 crime novels employing gay motifs. The references, rare in the Twenties, scattered in the Thirties, start to become pervasive in the postwar Forties. While lesbian and gay male characters appeared in roughly equal numbers, it is in the depiction of gay males by male writers of the tough-guy school that the most interesting contradictions arise.

The shadowy mirror figure of The Homosexual starts out as a fillip of exotic coloring for Hammett and Chandler, assumes crucial importance for James M. Cain, and by the late Forties—for writers as different as the liberal Macdonald and the arch-reactionary Spillane—takes center stage in a particularly malevolent form. A fictional wave of scapegoating coincides with the anti-gay witch hunt taking shape in Washington, while a liberal wing of novelists converts the homosexual, hitherto a figure either farcically or horribly grotesque, into a subject for "objective" psychological analysis. Freud conquers all, as mass market fiction becomes a hive of amateur headshrinkers. For half a century hardboiled writers, vacillating between the obsessive hatred of the gaybaiter and the uneasy tolerance of the armchair psychiatrist, tried to cope with a half-formed but mysteriously persistent fictional presence that kept returning to their novels like an unsatisfied ghost.

The process begins as early as 1926 in *The Sun Also Rises,* that fountainhead of hardboiled clichés. (Generations of writers would attempt to rewrite sentences like: "She was built with curves like the hull of a racing yacht, and you missed none if it with that wool jersey.") Virtually the first thing we learn about Jake Barnes is his anger at the sight of a group of young men with "newly washed, wavy hair...white hands, wavy hair, white faces, grimacing, gesturing, talking." His lady love, the aristocratic Brett Ashley is "very much with them," and in a moment the Parisian whore with whom he has been democratically chatting will be "taken up by them. . . . They are like that." Characteristically Hemingway apologizes for an emotional response he is obviously reveling in: "I was very angry. Somehow they always made me angry. I know they are supposed to be amusing, and you should be tolerant, but I wanted to swing on one, any one, anything to shatter that superior, simpering composure."

The passage is prototypical in a number if its implications. Homosexuals are to be identified by their dress and hairstyle; they are pale of countenance, facetious of speech, given to exaggerated gesticulating; above all they are cliquish and condescending in their dealings with the rest of humankind. The trivial details of gesture and adornment are seen as repulsive not in themselves but as the emblems of a moral evil. Hemingway's fundamental sin here, of course, is his pretense that homosexuality is widely tolerated and that only Jake Barnes "somehow" feels this simmering rage. The male reader is not so subtly invited to extend camaraderie to poor lonely Jake as he sulks down the street into the next bar, an archetypally honest man undone by hordes of simpering hypocrites.

Alongside Hemingway's barely contained paranoia, Dashiell Hammett's treatment of Joel Cairo in *The Maltese Falcon* is more straightforward. Cairo, whose hair (we are always told about the hair of homosexuals!) is "black and smooth and very glossy," who walks with "short, mincing, bobbing steps" and who has a "round effeminate chest," is merely one of a gallery of exotic types. His identity as a homosexual is subordinate to his identity as a *Levantine,* i.e., a repository of every form of vice

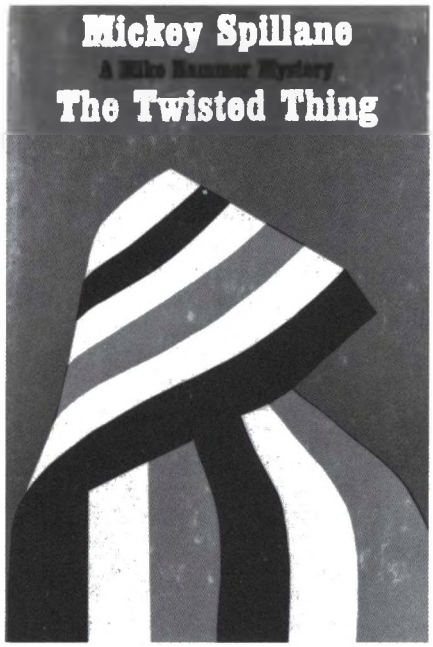
and Oriental rascality. Nevertheless he is not represented as a threat to civilization or even to the composure of Sam Spade. His main role is to be the butt of a series of rough jokes, to say "Oh, you big coward!" when Spade threatens him or to cry out "as a woman might have cried" when punched in the mouth by his lover, the gunman (and gunsel) Wilmer. The latter episode elicits from Spade a grin and a derisive remark about "the course of true love."

It is the depiction of gay males by male writers of the tough-guy school that the most interesting contradictions arise.

Sam Spade's bullying may seem indistinguishable from that of Mike Hammer, but there is a difference, however esoteric. Spade treats Cairo with amused contempt, but he deals with him as an individual whose homosexuality is a foible in the same general category as the promiscuity of Brigid O'Shaughnessy or the womanizing of Miles Archer, a venal rather than mortal sin. There are none of the squeamish undertones already evident in Hemingway and which will swell to a sense of cosmic revulsion in books like Spillane's *Vengeance Is Mine* or Ross Macdonald's *The Dark Tunnel.*

Homosexuality also plays a role in the elaborate mosaic of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* (1939), in the form of pornographer and blackmailer Arthur Gwyn Geiger's proletarian boyfriend, Carol Lundgren, with his "moist dark eyes shaped like almonds, and a pallid handsome face with wavy black hair growing low on the forehead in two points." Philip Marlowe uncovers The Secret by furtively exploring a bedroom. Such hotel-detective tactics are standard procedure for private ops smoking out a sexual proclivity. The Peeping Tom aspect of private investigation is never more apparent than when Sam Spade notes that "Cairo's bed was smooth and trim. . . . His bathroom-cabinet was stocked with cosmetics—boxes, cans, jars, and bottles of powders, creams, unguents, perfumes, lotions, and tonics," or when Philip Marlowe peeks into the chamber of Arthur Geiger deceased: "It was neat, fussy, womanish. The bed had a flounced cover. There was perfume on the triple-mirrored dressing table." Like a witch revealed by the tiniest of blemishes or a spy discovered by a displaced thread, the hidden deviant is betrayed by the turn of a coverlet or the lingering scent of perfume.

Chandler's characterization of the Geiger/Lundgren couple is restricted to a comparison of Geiger's



feminine furnishings with Lundgren's "hard bare masculine bedroom with a polished wood floor... The bed was narrow and looked hard and had a maroon batik cover." Lundgren is one of the few working class gays to surface in these novels, and is consequently assumed to be so butch that he even forgoes a soft mattress. Later on Marlowe confronts him: "You've got a nice clean manly little room in there. He shooed you out and locked it up when he had lady visitors. He was like Caesar, a husband to women and a wife to men. Think I can't figure people like him and you out?" (Marlowe understands them so well that at one point—in a scene Bogart made famous—he indulges in a bit of impersonation: "If you can weigh a hundred and ninety pounds and look like a fairy, I was doing my best.")

Although he never tackled the subject in fiction again, Chandler was full of ideas about homosexuality, ideas so contradictory and half-baked that the letters in which he airs them tend to trail off in confusion. He affects a certain humane tolerance, but declares that "homosexuals (not bi-sexuals, that is a matter of time and custom), however artistic and full of taste they may seem to be, always lack any deep emotional feeling. They are wonderful with surfaces. . . . Their physical bravery was proved in the war, but they are still essentially the dilettante type." Elsewhere he speaks of "the peculiar mentality of the homosexualist, his sense of taste, his surface brilliance often, his fundamental inability to finish anything." (Coming from Chandler, a chronic procrastinator who left most of his projects uncompleted,

this is quite amusing.) Having come this far, he suddenly does an about face: The really awful individual is not the homosexual but the morally complacent bourgeois, the "business man at a stag smoker...the type of man who would come down hardest on the abnormal." This flicker of sympathy for the homosexual as scapegoat is quickly extinguished by another bout of pontificating: "The mob impulse to destroy the homo is like the impulse of the wolf pack to turn on the sick wolf and tear him to pieces, or the human impulse to run away from a hopeless disease. . . . All cruelty is a kind of fear. Deep inside us we must realize what fragile bonds hold us to sanity and these bonds are threatened by repulsive insects and repulsive vices." Chandler is in trouble here, working himself into what he evidently senses is a logical dead end, and then he caps it with a weird twist of reasoning that cancels out what has gone before: "And the vices are repul-

Bogie and Martha Vickey in *The Big Sleep*

sive, not in themselves, but because of their effect on us. They threaten us because our own normal vices fill us at times with the same sort of repulsion." At this point he breaks off self-consciously; as he so often did, Chandler verges on self-knowledge and then turns away from it with painful awkwardness.

James M. Cain, in *Serenade* (1937), plunged into the midst of the territory that Chandler skirted. This novel, dedicated to the proposition that there is "five percent of a homo in every man, no matter how masculine *he* imagines himself to be," is a hard-boiled soap opera that would have made an ideal project for Fassbinder. Not content with the book's major cheap thrill—the revelation that the hero has had a homosexual affair—Cain piles up grand opera, Mexican bordellos, overnight Hollywood success, the avant-garde music scene and, ultimately, flight across the Caribbean and down through Central America.

The hero, John Howard Sharp, a near-great opera singer, is caught between two figures who represent the poles of his sexual nature. His career goes up and down like a yo-yo, depending on which pole dominates: Winston Hawes, the wealthy, homosexual musical genius who by seducing him robs him of his gift, or Juana, the earthy, illiterate Mexican prostitute who restores not only his manhood but his singing voice. Homosexuality is here identified with civilization, while Juana, with her erotic healing power, represents a Rousseauan state of nature. Winston Hawes is pretty much Chandler's homosexual stereotype—brilliant surface and emotional hollowness—decked out in more elaborate accoutrements: he is fabulously wealthy ("There's something about rich people that's different from the rest of us") and is able to manipulate Sharp through his farflung economic and political influence; he is the most aesthetically advanced musician in the world, but there is "something wrong about the way he thought about music, something unhealthy"; he is, naturally, pallid and fine-boned, to contrast with Juana's dark-skinned, broad-hipped earthiness. When Cain tries to find a metaphor for Hawes' fundamental evil, he ends by comparing him to a woman: "He was like some woman that goes to concerts because they give her the right vibrations, or make her feel better, or have some other effect on her nitwit insides. . . . That woman was in him, poodle dog, diamonds, limousine, conceit, cruelty and all."

Cain sees Winston Hawes not as a socially marginal figure but as the establishment personified, with industries and police departments at his beck and call, while the prostitute Juana is the most powerless being imaginable. But only she can elicit the full splendor of Sharp's baritone: "Hoaney, these man who love other man, they can do much, very clever. But no can sing. Have no *toro* in high voice, no *grr* that frighten little *muchacha,* make heart beat fast. Sound like old woman, like cow, like priest. . . . When you love Juana, you sing nice, much *toro.*" Winston refuses to relax his grip on Sharp, and attempts to have Juana deported; she responds by running a bullfighter's sword through him in the midst of one of his decadent parties, while Sharp watches on the sidelines: "I knew I was looking at the most magnificent thing I had ever seen in my life."

Unfortunately, with Winston eviscerated the book loses all its tension. Sharp has his voice and his masculinity back, but he remains the same dismal human being he has been all along. Like most Cain heroes he slides downhill, destroys the thing he loves, and is left off in the middle of nowhere. For this the world had to be deprived of all future music from the great Winston Hawes? It seems a poor bargain.

Winston Hawes may be taken as a paradigm of the homosexual stereotype: a member of a social elite, having great hidden influence even though his pro-

clivities are in conflict with those of society at large. He is not merely personally subversive; he is part of a larger conspiracy. Here as elsewhere, the gay subculture as seen as a grotesque carnival: "A whole mob of them was in there, girls in men's evening clothes tailored for them, with shingle haircuts and blue make-up in their eyes, dancing with other girls dressed the same way, young guys with lipstick on, and mascara eyelashes, dancing with each other too, and at least three girls in full evening dress, that you had to look at twice to make sure they weren't girls at all." The individual may be risible; the *mob* is terrifying.

This particular crew does little more than conspire to make Winston Hawes' concerts a success; but in the next decade, more sinister homosexual conspiracies will be implied. Ross Macdonald's first novel *The Dark Tunnel* (1944), for instance, sees a close connection between Nazism and sexual deviance: "I thought of Roehm, the homosexual chief of the S A whom Hitler murdered with his own talented hands in the blood-bath of 1934. I thought of the elegant Nazi boys I had seen in the Munich nightclubs, with their lipstick and their eyeshadow and their feminine swagger, and the black male guns in their holsters. I thought of the epicene white worms which change their sex and burrow in the bodies of dead men underground."

The Dark Tunnel typifies the use of homosexuality as a metaphor for unnamable evil. The villains are villains because they are Nazis, yet there is the unspoken suggestion that they would not be quite so bad if they were not homosexual, that it is their sexual otherness which alienates them from the common bonds of human decency. None of the political crimes attributed to these agents evokes as much disgust as a description of cosmetics applied to a male face: "His makeup was tastefully applied but it couldn't stand white daylight. His lips were rich and red like fresh liver. The rouge on his cheek-bones was carefully tapered-off but it was too gaudy against the chalky whiteness of his powdered face." It is Death in a German Expressionist clown mask, a demon designed to elicit sexual squeamishness on behalf of a good political cause.

The plot of *The Dark Tunnel* hinges on transvestism. The hero's long-lost Social Democratic lady love, mysteriously emerged from German captivity, turns out to be her Nazi twin brother in drag. (Despite much head-shaking and lingering doubt, it takes the hero most of the book to figure out the substitution.) There was a period when cross-dressing became as frequent in crime fiction as in the comedies of Shakespeare. A genre based on fooling the reader has an obvious use for gender switches, and even the ultratraditional R. Austin Freeman resorted to the

device in the last of his Dr. Thorndyke novels, *The Jacob Street Mystery* (1942). Freeman carefully avoided any hint of what he would probably have called "inversion" by presenting sexual impersonation as simply a "comparatively easy and extremely convincing" way of changing one's identity in order to commit the perfect murder: "The present fashions are favorable to such personation. Women's hair is worn in all sorts of ways from a close crop to a mop of fuzz; and it is not only waved or curled artificially but is also dyed or bleached, quite openly and without exciting remark. Again, there is the extensive make-up, which is almost universal. . . . There is also what we may call psychological disguise; the adoption of feminine habits and modes of behavior and the creation of circumstances suggesting a feminine personality."

The cold-blooded practicality of such an approach is alien to American fiction. On this side of the Atlantic, sexual disguise invariably stems from sexual preference; not even a murderer would compromise his manhood unless his tendencies lay that way in any case. "Good female impersonators usually are pansies," a knowledgeable FBI agent declares in *The Dark Tunnel.* The converse applied to what private eye Paul Pine calls "the Lesbian angle" in John Evans' *Halo in Brass* (1949), a piece of sub-Chandlerian hokum in which a homespun girl from the sticks—"she's still got hay in her hair and wouldn't know a Lesbian if one bit her in the leg"—is oblivious to the fact that her big-city roommates are "queer as a set of purple teeth" and thus winds up implicated in a murder committed out of psychotic jealousy. (Psychotic jealousy is a primary characteristic of crime-fiction Lesbians.) The real murderer eventually surfaces disguised as a man. Actually, she has been around all through the book, which should have been obvious from the fact that "Stuart Whitney" is "handsome," "clean-shaved," "supercilious," and wears a blue brocaded silk robe and maroon pajamas. Silk robes are a giveaway. After it's all over we get a solemn lecture from the detective: "A lot of masculine women 'cross over' and take on the personality, manner, character and clothing of a man. Except for a few physical differences they *are* men. Hell, you read every so often of some case where a guy has been married for years, held down a job and is highly respected by his neighbors—and then he gets in an accident or something and it turns out he's a woman." Happens all the time, Paul.

Chandler was full of ideas about homosexuality, ideas so contradictory and half-baked that the letters in which he airs them tend to trail off in confusion.

If hard-and-fast demarcation of sexual identity is perceived as analogous to moral order, nothing will induce more paranoia than the notion that sexual identity can be convincingly counterfeited by a few dabs of mascara and a quick change of clothes. Mickey Spillane's *Vengeance Is Mine* (1950) is the most notorious manifestation of that paranoia. As the outstanding purveyor of right-wing fantasia in popular fiction, Spillane has been raked over the coals by liberal intellectuals ever since he swept away the competition with *I, the Jury* in 1947. To some extent Spillane served as a whipping boy for having badly enunciated attitudes that were implicit in much other fiction, "serious" as well as popular; but it must be admitted that nobody ever quite equaled Spillane's blend of vigilante fury and psychosexual phobia.

Vengeance Is Mine is a variation on the earlier *I, the Jury,* in which Mike Hammer fell in love with Charlotte, a beautiful lady psychiatrist who turned out to be the leader of a dope ring and incidentally the murderer of his best friend. Mike responded by shooting her in the stomach while she was performing a seductive striptease in an effort to dissuade him. In *Vengeance Is Mine* this episode is constantly recalled as the great romantic tragedy of Mike's life, the reason why he hesitates to get involved with model agency executive Juno Reeves, even though she affects him powerfully: "Her smile made sunshine and the funny feeling started around my stomach."

Juno—"queen of the lesser gods and goddesses"—is a remote, regal beauty whom Mike feels constrained to put on a pedestal, even as she tells him that "I think I like to be treated rough and you're the only one who has tried it." One evening Juno invites him to dinner at an "unusual" little restaurant which Mike knows well: "It used to be a fag joint and the food was good then too. . . . Come on, let's see how the third side lives." Mike Hammer entering a gay bar is not quite the picture of relaxed worldliness: "There was a pansy down at the end of the bar trying to make a guy who was drunk to notice. . . . I got a smile from the guy and he came close to getting knocked on his neck. The bartender was one of them too, and he looked put out because I came in with a dame." Against this backdrop Mike and Juno continue their coy courtship, flirting, holding hands, but never quite getting down to business. Mike, it seems, has a problem. Every time he's about to

The Mysterious Press Salutes Its Three Edgar Award Nominees.

Lawrence Block,
"By The Dawn's Early Light"
from
THE EYES HAVE IT

WINNER

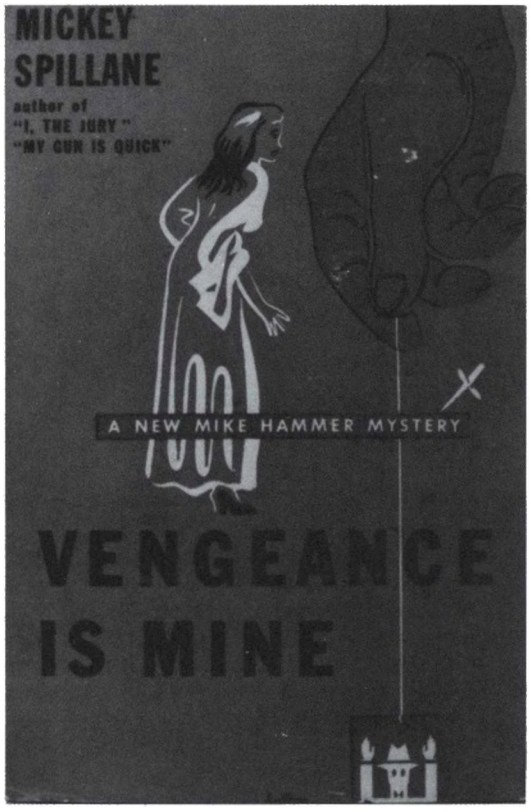
Michael Z. Lewin,
"The Reluctant Detective"
from
THE EYES HAVE IT

Donald E. Westlake,
"After I'm Gone"
from
LEVINE

DISTRIBUTED BY FARRAR STRAUS GIROUX

embrace Juno, he has a flashback vision of the beautiful, evil Charlotte.

It comes as no surprise that the imperious Juno turns out to be the mastermind of yet another criminal ring, devoted to blackmail this time, and that Mike will close in for the kill in the last chapter, Luger in hand. But memories get in the way and he can't do it: "I didn't think it would be this much trouble to kill another woman but it is." The impasse is resolved when Mike, grappling with the fleeing Juno, accidentally tears her gown off: "Damn it, I knew it all along and it was too incredible to believe. Me, a guy what likes women, a guy who knows every one of their stunts...and I fall for this. . . . I knew why I'd always had a resentment that was actually a revulsion when I looked at her. Juno was a queen, all right, a real, live queen. You know the kind. *Juno was a man!*" Since Hammer cannot (this time around) kill a woman, she must be transformed into a man: "I forgot all my reservations about shooting a woman then. I laughed through the blood on my lips and brought the Luger up as Juno swung around with eyes blazing a hatred I'll never see again." The rage vented against the homosexual has been deflected from its original feminine object. Like



Winston Hawes, Juno Reeves is killed in order to preserve the hero's sense of equilibrium.

The ritual killing of Juno tied in perfectly with the mood of the times as exemplified by the government's purge of homosexuals in government, a campaign which provided the impetus for David Karp's *The Brotherhood of Velvet* (1952). Karp's book—an exercise in left-wing paranoia which makes an interesting corollary to Spillane—posits a conspiracy of preppies, a Mafia-like fraternity called The Brotherhood of the Bell whose membership corresponds to the WASP establishment. They destroy their political enemies by stirring up a carefully stage-managed wave of anti-gay hysteria. Karp hedges by making the campaign's targets the innocent victims of false testimony, but nonetheless his novel is one of the first indications of a counterthrust to the prevailing oppressive tendency.

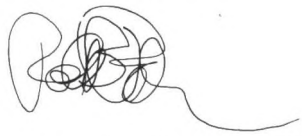
The Fifties saw a rapid deployment of homosexual imagery. The same paperback houses that published crime writers like John D. MacDonald and Jim Thompson also flooded the market with an abundance of gay-related novels, ranging from the sympathetic to the alarmist. There was a heavy emphasis on Lesbian novels, marketed with an eye on the

straight male audience drawn to the alluring cover art of books like *We Too Must Love* and *The Evil Friendship*. The use of the words *shadow* or *twilight* in the title was the usual way of tipping off the reader.

A certain sophistication becomes perceptible, along with the heavy influence of the Kinsey Report. Even the paperback crime writers feel constrained to add some depth to their portrayal of homosexuals, which usually means the bandying about of psychological jargon. The concept of homophobia even begins to emerge, as in John D. MacDonald's *The Damned* (1956), in which the hero's manhood is evidenced by championing of a gay male couple—harmless effeminate types—against the bullying of an aggressive macho villain. The gaybaiting bad guy, whose interior monologues are a thinly veiled parody of Spillane, is shown up as a repressed homosexual; but as usual the message is ambiguous. The villain's villainy is evidenced by his bullying of homosexuals, but the deeper point is that he is a villain in the first place because he cannot accept his own homosexuality. MacDonald shies away from considering what sort of person he would be if he *could* accept it. (An answer is suggested in the later *Dress Her in Indigo* [1969], in which a similar character is actually seduced and, as it were, made over by a scheming set designer: "I expect that after the weekend David will be moving in, and in a few months he will have rather a pretty little lisp. He might become a much nicer person, actually.")

Raymond Chandler wrote that "the difficulty of writing about a homo is the utter impossibility of getting inside his head unless you are one yourself, and then you can't get inside the head of a heterosexual man." None of the writers we have looked at attempted to write from a gay point of view; in their novels the homosexual is a mask, a shadow, a secret manipulator, a figure in disguise whose mere existence is more shocking than any crime. The detective knows all about that kind of person, yet finds him alien in a way an ordinary murderer is not; his presence defines a limit of sympathetic understanding, and ultimately a limit of humanity. Today, of course, we live in a different world; the landscape of crime fiction has changed drastically, and writers like Joseph Hansen (*Death Claims*), George Baxt (*A Queer Kind of Death*), and Nathan Aldyne (*Vermilion*) have taken the mystery genre into regions that Chandler never dreamed of. Nevertheless the precession of imaginary homosexuals stalking the pages of Hemingway and Cain and Spillane lingers on as something more than a memory. Like all stereotypes that rise in response to an obscure necessity, they have a tenacious life and can be expected to survive as long as the need for them is felt. □

COLLECTING MYSTERY FICTION



ROBERT B. PARKER

By Otto Penzler

Rightly or wrongly, the history of American hardboiled detective fiction is described in a brief continuum: Dashiell Hammett to Raymond Chandler to Ross Macdonald to Robert B. Parker.

While this effectively eliminates such authors as Carroll John Daly, who invented it, and Mickey Spillane, who kept it alive and outsold all the others combined, it is a good shorthand list of the dominant practitioners of this uniquely American form of literature.

It is interesting to note that both Macdonald and Parker began their careers by deliberately emulating Chandler (as did Stephen Greenleaf, Howard Browne, and, evidently, just about everyone else who attempted the form after World War II). The good ones soon evolved their own styles; the second-raters kept trying to pastiche Chandler – which was impossible – and soon faded from print.

Macdonald admitted that he studied Chandler and tried to write in his style until he found his own voice in *The Galton Case*. Analogously, Parker admitted that his work followed the rhythms of Chandler through his first book and into the second, when he began the struggle to break free. While the influence certainly continues, it is abundantly clear that, now, Parker writes in his own style, and it is a style that has made him the most popular private eye writer of the 1980s.

(Remember that Travis McGee isn't a private eye, nor are the characters in the books by Elmore Leonard, Dick Francis, Joseph Wambaugh, Lawrence Sanders, or the other bestselling mystery writers on the contemporary scene.)

It remains for the passage of time to determine whether Parker's place in that elite continuum is assured, and whether his much-loved creation, Spenser, will enjoy the enduring fame of Sam Spade, Philip Marlowe, Mike Hammer, Lew Archer, and McGee. It is sometimes hard to remember that Spenser and Parker are relative newcomers to the crime scene, with *The Godwulf Manuscript*, the first novel, arriving on the shelves as recently as 1974. Ross Macdonald had been writing for a quarter of a century before he made the bestseller list, for example, and neither Hammett nor Chandler ever did.

So, while Parker's star has risen faster than most of his illustrious predecessors, historical perspective is often needed to accurately place an author in context. More than popularity is needed to assure a writer of his place in history. Carroll John Daly, for example, was far more popular than Hammett when both wrote for *The Black Mask* magazine in the 1920s and early 1930s.

What is most significant is the enduring pleasure of the books: can they be reread with pleasure, and can they be read twenty years after publication and still have something important to say to their readers? And what influence does the style have on the subsequent generation of writers? And do the books get better as the series progresses, or do they get windier, shoddier, or duller? Only time and longevity can answer those questions.

For the moment, however, it is reasonable to state that Parker, along with Elmore Leonard and Dick Francis, is the hottest mystery writer on the scene (though all three would object to being categorized as a mystery writer, with some justification, since their novels are good enough to transcend the genre – as all good genre books do).

And no author – including Hammett, Chandler, James M. Cain, Macdonald, and Spillane – is more actively collected at this time than Parker. Some of this collecting enthusiasm, of course, reflects availability. It is difficult to see an enormous number of new collectors starting Chandler or Hammett collections, since the collectable books are so few, so rare, and so expensive. It is impossible to ignore those writers for any serious collector of mystery fiction or modern American literature, but it is folly for the novice or beginner to start his collecting with them. Parker, for the past five years or so, has been a splendid starting point for those interested in acquiring work by a major author at reasonable prices.

Naturally, this has already changed, as the first three books are no longer common and are no longer inexpensive, with fine copies of all selling for well in excess of $100 each. Still, most of the later books are easily available in fine first editions, and, because Parker has been collected almost from the beginning, there are a reasonable number of proof copies available, and signed copies are relatively abundant. Parker has been, always, one of the most generous authors in America in terms of making himself available for autographing parties in bookshops, for talks to various groups, and other functions at which he has not failed to be gracious about signing books for fans. In this era of plastic protective covers for dust wrappers, and the increased awareness of collectors about the condition of their books and dust wrappers, even the scarcer early books often turn up in fine collector's condition.

There is no excuse for accepting a below-average Parker, however, if one is a serious collector. The first three books are no longer sitting on bookseller's shelves in bountiful quantities, but a little patience and persistence will turn one up within a reasonable time at a price that is still affordable to most collectors. If this will still be true in three or four years is difficult to know. Three years ago, it was possible to pick up a fine first edition of *The Godwulf Manuscript* within a day or two, for less than $50. Today, it would probably take several weeks, possibly a couple of months, to locate one, and the price would be double or triple that amount. This is not to suggest that this will continue, or that the pace will remain the same, but it does provide some indication of the current enthusiasm of Parker collectors.

Another indicator of Parker's popularity with collectors is the recent burst of limited editions published by small presses. Two books by Lord John Press are entirely by Parker and sold out virtually *before* publication. Two introductions to works by Raymond Chandler have had similar experiences.

With a television series based on Spenser bringing the character and, by extension, the author, to millions of new people, there is little likelihood that the Parker express will be slowed for a long, long time.

No bibliography or checklist of Parker's work has yet been published as a separate volume, nor any biographical work, the closest being David Geherin's *Sons of Sam Spade*, an unfortunate title for an otherwise competent volume which is devoted to Roger Simon, Andrew Bergman, and Parker (published by Ungar, 1980).

Estimated retail values for all books will be given only for copies with dust wrappers, except where noted, as copies without dust wrappers have little value. Only the first three books would be worth as much as, say, $25 for a fine copy without dust wrapper (mainly to someone who simply wanted a hardcover copy of the book – not to a serious collector).

Be warned! Copies of Parker's first editions in less than fine condition are not acceptable to any serious collector. Whereas, for the rarest books by early writers in the hard-boiled tradition, collectors often settle for copies with chipped dust wrappers or slightly soiled covers, this is not true for Parker's books. It is virtually impossible to find very fine dust jackets for Hammett's *The Dain Curse* or Chandler's *The High Window* or Spillane's *I, the Jury* or Kenneth Millar's *The Dark Tunnel*, and, even when they do appear in the market, they are very expensive and earmarked only for the most dedicated collector.

The Godwulf Manuscript

First Edition: Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1974. Tan cloth, front cover printed with stylised "G" in brown; spine stamped in gold and printed with two brown ornaments; rear cover blank. Issued in an illustrated, predominantly white, dust wrapper.

Note: A portion of the novel was previously published in *Argosy* magazine, October 1973.

The words "First Printing" must appear on the copyright page. All copies also bear the letter "C" next to the "First Printing" slug. Since all copies have it, it is of no significance for bibliographic purposes.

The largely white dust wrapper is, not unexpectedly, extremely likely to have become soiled, placing a substantial premium on clean, fresh copies of the dust wrapper. While the book is the most common of the first three Parker novels, clean and bright dust wrappers are becoming scarcer and scarcer.

A small number of proof copies were issued in white wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$ 30.00
Fine	120.00
Very fine	150.00

God Save the Child

First Edition: Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1974. Black cloth, stamped in silver on front cover and spine; rear cover blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly beige.

Note: Publication date was October 21, 1974.

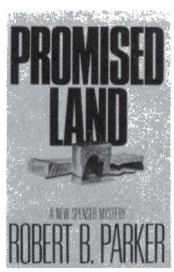
The scarcest of the Parker novels by a wide margin.

The copyright page must have the words "First Printing." All copies bear the letter "C" next to the "First Printing" slug. Since all copies have it, it is of no significance for bibliographic purposes.

A small number of proof copies were issued in yellow wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$ 35.00
Fine	135.00
Very fine	175.00



Mortal Stakes

First Edition: Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1975. Black cloth, stamped in red foil on front cover; stamped in silver on spine; rear cover blank. Issued in a pictorial (photographic) dust wrapper, predominantly black.

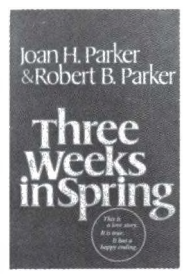
Note: While not quite as scarce as *God Save the Child, Mortal Stakes* is by far the rarest of the books in a fine dust wrapper. Just about every copy seems to have a heavily rubbed jacket, suggesting that perhaps the ink wasn't quite dry when the books were stacked. Whatever the reason, a truly immaculate, shiny black dust wrapper is excessively scarce and may be beyond reach, as even the author's copies are rubbed.

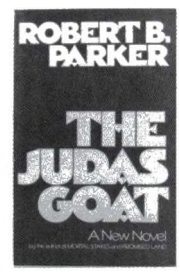
Houghton Mifflin changed its copyright page information at this time, and, instead of printing the words "First Printing," used a series of numbers to indicate the printing history. Copies of the first printing of the first edition must have the series of numbers go from 1 to 10. Second printings begin with the number 2, and third printings begin with the number 3; I do not know if there were subsequent printings, though it is irrelevant from the collector's point of view.

A small number of proof copies were issued in wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$ 30.00
Fine	125.00
Very fine	175.00





Promised Land

First Edition: Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1976. Blue cloth, printed in dark blue on front cover and spine; rear cover blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly white.

Note: The copyright page employs the series of numbers to indicate the printing history; copies of the first printing begin with the number 1 and run up to 10.

Promised Land was given an Edgar Allan Poe Award by the Mystery Writers of America as the best novel of 1976.

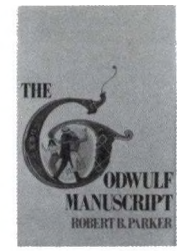
Estimated retail value:

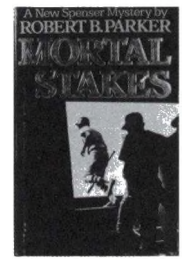
Good	$15.00
Fine	35.00
Very fine	50.00

Three Weeks in Spring (with Joan H. Parker)

First edition: Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1978. Beige cloth, stamped with blue foil on spine; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a predominantly red dust wrapper.

Note: Not a Spenser novel, not a mystery, not fiction, but included for the sake of completeness, *Three Weeks in Spring* is an account of Joan Parker, the novelist's wife, and her battle with cancer.





The copyright page employs the series of numbers to indicate the printing history; copies of the first printing begin with the number 1 and continue to number 10. There were at least three printings.

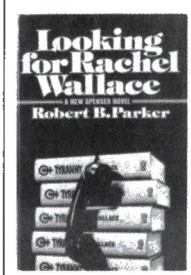
Estimated retail value:

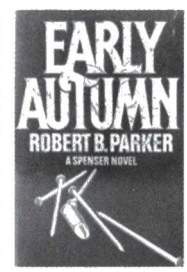
Good	$10.00
Fine	20.00
Very fine	25.00

The Judas Goat

First Edition: Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1978. Blue cloth, spine stamped with silver; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a predominantly blue dust wrapper.

Note: The copyright page employs the series of numbers to indicate the printing history; copies of the first printing begin with the numeral 1 and continue to number 10.





A small number of proof copies were issued in wrappers.

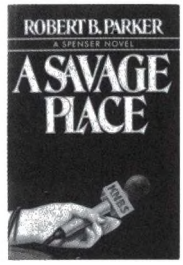
Estimated retail value:

Good	$12.50
Fine	30.00
Very fine	40.00

Wilderness

First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, (1979). Green boards, black cloth spine, stamped with silver; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper.

Note: The first book away from Houghton Mifflin and with Delacorte, which is essentially the hardcover imprint of Dell



paperbacks. It is a suspense novel, not featuring Spenser.

The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

A substantial number of proof copies were issued in gray wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$10.00
Fine	20.00
Very fine	25.00

Looking for Rachael Wallace

First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, (1980). Dark gray boards, black cloth spine, stamped with gold; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly black.

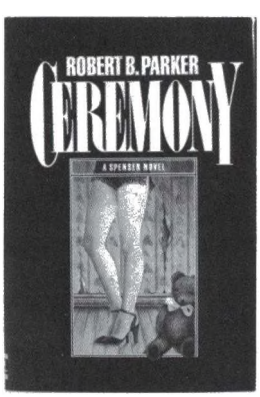
Note: The copyright page must bear the words "First Printing," which are replaced with the words "Second Printing," "Third Printing," etc. on subsequent printings.

An unaccountably scarce title to find in very fine dust wrapper—much scarcer than the previous three books and the last of the Parker novels that is difficult to find in collector's condition.

Proof copies were issued in wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$10.00
Fine	25.00
Very fine	35.00



Early Autumn

First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, (1981). Orange/tan boards, black cloth spine, stamped with gold; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly black.

Note: The copyright page must bear the words "First Printing," which are replaced with the words "Second Printing," "Third Printing," etc. on subsequent printings.

Proof copies were issued in orange wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$10.00
Fine	20.00
Very fine	25.00

A Savage Place

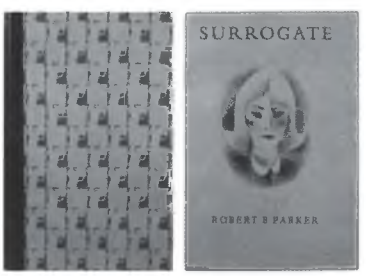
First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, (1981). Dark gray boards, black cloth spine, stamped with gold; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly black.

Note: The copyright page must bear the words "First Printing," which are replaced with the words "Second Printing," "Third Printing," etc. on subsequent printings.

Proof copies were issued in red wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$10.00
Fine	17.50
Very fine	20.00



Ceremony

First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/ Seymour Lawrence, (1982). Dark gray boards, black cloth spine, stamped with gold; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly black.

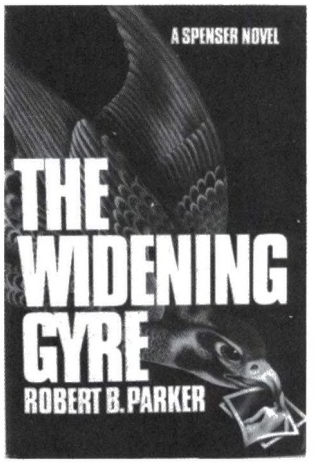
Note: The copyright page must bear the words "First Printing," which are replaced with the words "Second Printing," "Third Printing," etc. on subsequent printings.

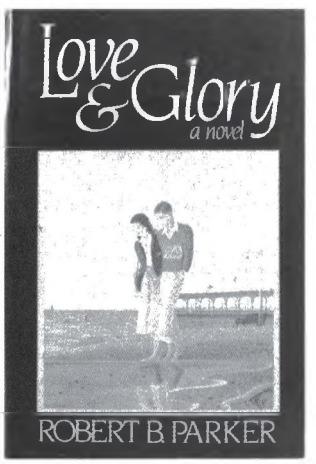
Published in March, 1982.

Proof copies were issued in blue wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$10.00
Fine	17.50
Very fine	20.00





Surrogate

First Edition: Northridge, Cal., Lord John Press, 1982. Pale gray boards, purple cloth spine, stamped with gold; front and rear covers printed with pale lavender design. Issued in an orange pictorial dust wrapper, printed with black.

Note: A Spenser short story, originally written at the request of *Playboy* magazine, which subsequently rejected it. It was published in an edition of 350 copies, of which 300 were produced as described above, each copy being numbered and signed by the author.

The deluxe edition was limited to 50 copies in orange boards, printed with a maroon design, with a maroon leather spine, stamped with gold. It was issued in a black cloth slipcase. These copies were numbered 1 to 50, and signed by the author.

Since copies of this book were produced exclusively for the collector's market (the regular edition was published at $38.00, the deluxe edition at $75.00), it is unlikely that many copies are in less than pristine

condition and no collector should find acceptable a copy in less than new condition.

Estimated retail value:

Regular Edition	$ 75.00
Deluxe Edition:	175.00

The Widening Gyre

First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, (1983). Blue boards, black cloth spine, stamped with gold; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly black.

Note: The copyright page must bear the words "First Printing," which are replaced with the words "Second Printing," "Third Printing," etc. on subsequent printings.

Proof copies were issued in wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$10.00
Fine	15.00
Very fine	17.50

Love and Glory

First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, (1983). Blue boards, red cloth spine, stamped with gold; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a full-color pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly blue.

Note: Neither a Spenser novel nor a mystery, this is a love story and is included in this compilation only for the sake of completeness.

The copyright page must bear the words "First Printing," which are replaced with the words "Second Printing," "Third Printing," etc. on subsequent printings.

Proof copies were issued in wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$ 7.50
Fine	12.50
Very fine	15.00

Backfire (by Raymond Chandler)

First Edition: Santa Barbara, (Cal.), Santa Teresa Press, 1984. Paper edition bound in green decorated wrappers. Cloth edition bound in red full cloth on front cover, black cloth on back cover and spine, and wrapping around to the front cover, on which a silhouette has been cut to provide the image of a man with a gun. A small piece of gray cloth is affixed behind the gun to give the impression of a backfire from the gun. A white paper label, printed in red and black, is affixed to the spine. Issued without dust wrapper.

Note: This attractively produced volume is a proposal for a screenplay by Raymond Chandler, previously unpublished. It has a preface by Parker, written specifically for this volume.

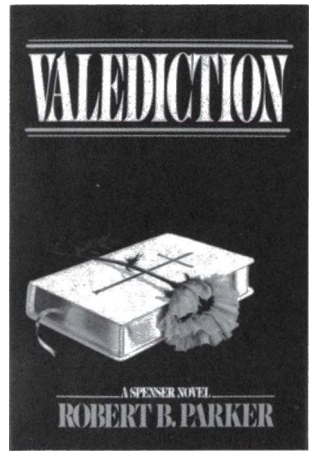
This is an item produced exclusively for the collector's market, in a variety of forms. The paper-covered issue was limited to 200 copies. The cloth edition was limited to 126 copies, 100 of which were numbered, 26 of which were lettered; the lettered copies were issued in slipcases of black cloth. In addition, and not part of the tabulation noted above, there were five special presentation copies, each for a designated recipient, and not offered for sale. All copies of all issues were signed by Parker.

All copies published are likely to be still in pristine condition, and no collector should find acceptable a copy in less than perfect condition.

A few sets of galley proofs were pulled during the production process, in two states, a different type face being used for the title and other changes being made. It is interesting to note that the galley proofs were dated 1983. A few sets of unbound signatures (the pages of the books, as printed, but remaining unbound) also exist.

Estimated retail value:

Paper-covered edition:	$ 25.00
Cloth, numbered edition:	75.00
Cloth, lettered edition:	250.00



Valediction

First Edition: (New York), Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence, (1984). Black boards, black cloth spine, stamped with silver; front and rear covers blank. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper, predominantly black.

Note: The copyright page must bear the words "First Printing," else it is not a first printing. As of the writing of this column, no later printings have been seen.

Published April, 1984.

Proof copies were issued in off-white wrappers.

Estimated retail value:

Good	$ 7.50
Fine	12.95
Very fine	12.95

The Private Eye in Hammett and Chandler

First Edition: Northridge, Cal., Lord John Press, 1984. Black cloth, printed with a white illustration on front cover; stamped in gold on spine; rear cover blank. Issued without dust wrapper.

Note: This is, strictly speaking, not the first edition, as it is an edited version of Parker's doctoral thesis, which may be purchased through University Microfilms as a photocopy of the typewritten paper and which was available before the Lord John Press volume. This edition is the first commercially produced edition, has a new preface by the author, and has been edited somewhat to make it more accessible.

The cloth edition was limited to 300 copies, numbered and signed by Parker.

There was also a deluxe edition, bound in marbled boards and red leather spine, stamped with gold. It was limited to 50 copies, also numbered and signed by Parker.

Since this title was issued in a limited edition, it was again aimed at the collector's market and all copies should be in pristine condition; no collector should accept a copy that is not as new.

Estimated retail value:

Cloth edition	$ 50.00
Leatheredition	125.00

By the time this column appears, there will be at least two more major books of interest to Parker fans.

Probably the first to appear will be *Raymond Chandler's Unknown Thriller: The Screenplay of Playback,* which will feature a long (more than 4,000 words) introduction by Parker, discussing Chandler's work in general and this unproduced screenplay in particular. It will have been published by The Mysterious Press in a trade edition ($15.95) and a limited edition of 250 copies, numbered and signed by Parker ($50.00). As usual, there is also an edition of 26 lettered copies for presentation, none of which are offered for sale.

Of greater significance in the Parker canon is *Catskill Eagle,* the eagerly awaited "fat" Spenser novel, to be published by Delacorte Press/Seymour Lawrence; it is the volume that his publisher expects to get Parker a lengthy stay on the bestseller lists.

Not described above are the articles and reviews Parker has written for numerous publications, nor his book on weightlifting, as it seems too far removed from the aim of this column.

Plans for the future include a Spenser cookbook and further novels about the man who must be regarded today as America's best-loved private detective. □

Christie Tea or Chandler Beer

The Novels of Martha Grimes

By Ray B. Browne

Among the scores of contemporary British and American detective fiction authors who continue the tradition of the Golden Age by writing about British subjects in British settings, there is one new writer who mixes her love for the tradition with a healthy touch of the "mean street" philosophy of Raymond Chandler; she mixes her Agatha Christie tea with warm suds from the pubs. This writer is Martha Grimes, author of three books: *The Man with a Load of Mischief* (1981), *The Old Fox Deceived* (1983), and *The Anodyne Necklace* (1983). In many ways, the novels are typical of the modified classical school, but they are also strikingly different, in spite of the fact that some readers and reviewers are classifying Grimes as Christie's literary descendant. Grimes, incidentally, insists they are wrong.

The stories are surely typical in the affection shown for the British scene as the proper setting for detective fiction. Grimes, a professor of English at Montgomery College, Takoma Park, Maryland, has traveled widely and observantly throughout the British Isles, all eyes and ears, soaking up every bit that she has seen and heard. As a professor of English literature, she is addicted to literary allusions and quotations. Her combination of local color and customs, history, literature, and folklore enriches her books. She is also keenly interested in the theatre, and her first two books incorporate plays and celebrations as means to swing and develop the plot. In effect, like Shakespeare, whom she obviously deeply loves, she uses plays within novels or drama within drama to develop her art.

Like Christie before her, Grimes believes that one murder is likely to beget others, so she is not, initially, economical in her crimes. *The Man with a Load of Mischief* for instance, which takes place in a

small town in Northamptonshire, has four deaths, all unusual if not grotesque. In the first killing, a man is garroted and his head stuffed into a keg of beer. The second body is discovered hanging, covered with snow, on the signpost of an inn, up so high that no one, at first, observes the absurd figure swinging in the wind. Another murder is committed on stage before the eyes of the audience during a presentation of *Othello,* and one near-murder is just avoided as the detective dangles over a tall cliff, literally hanging on by his fingernails.

Grimes becomes more economical in the number of murders in subsequent novels, but the jarring abruptness of her crimes is hardly diminished. In the third book, for instance, a young woman is fiddling for pennies in a London Underground station when she is apparently purposelessly smashed over the head; the plot that ties this attack in with a murder in the village of Littlebrone, forty miles away, is a complicated one.

The first novel develops around the greed of a former playwright, who pits one lover against another and covers his tracks so carefully that only a clever detective uncovers the truth. Grimes reveals the guilt of the person, in a variation on the closed-room solution that is amusingly satisfactory. The following two books are somewhat more open in their solutions.

All three books are complex. The first is as rich and intricate as an old elaborate footrug. The second unfolds the story of the possible double of an heiress who left home eight years earlier and who might well be prevented from returning so that various people might profit by inheritance, marriage, or some other means. After two murders, the detective finds the murderer just in time to prevent more violence. The plot of this novel hinges on a city-wide re-enactment of *Twelfth Night,* when people are in disguise, and murder and escape seem easy—but the possibility that the wrong person might be killed is increased as well. The third novel tells the story of the murder of a young woman and the mutilation of her hand, which bears rings from a village forty miles from London; to this crime is added unnecessary murder of another woman who happens to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Both murders are connected to drug-related activities and the theft of a piece of jewelry named the Andyne Necklace.

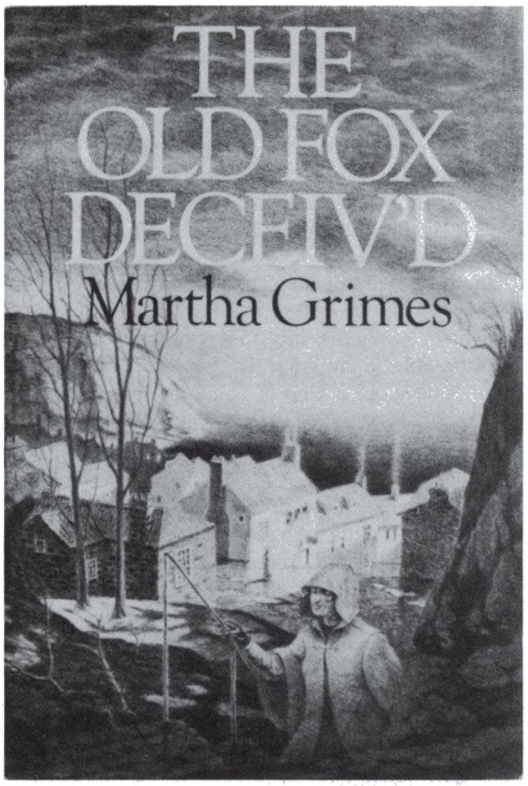
In all three books, the setting for these manifestations of man's inhumanity to man—or, generally, to women and teenagers—is a country mile from the conventional British mystery. Out of a realization that there are too many detective writers jostling one another in the castles and country estates of Britain to make detection work there profitable and enjoyable, Grimes has placed the action of all three books in or near country inns and taverns. Her eyes caress and her words describe the old inns as though they were the haunts of all the worthwhile people of the past. They are also excellent places for crime. At one point, Grimes has her detective ask if there could possibly be a single inn in all of Northamptonshire that has not had a murder committed in it.

Grimes has worked out rather successfully the at times ridiculous and artificial situation of her sometimes official, sometimes private detective and his helpers, making use of the tensions that arise among them. Her leading detective is Inspector Richard Jury, who is stationed in London but goes out to the provinces when he has to—reluctantly, and with considerable grumbling. In her work in general, Grimes develops a kind of paeon to Britain, and she thinks of Jury as "the true Englishman"—and to Jury, as Grimes says, that is "the ultimate compliment."

His helper is Sergeant Wiggins, a bumbling dope who can just manage to follow directions. He always has the sniffles and requires medicine constantly. This affliction and requirement Grimes turns very neatly to Jury's advantage—on one occasion, it saves his life. This pair is assisted, and frustrated, by Chief Inspector Racer, also from the London office, who tries to supervise and help Jury. They always have unofficial helpers in the persons of Melrose Plant, who appears in all three books, Lady Agatha Ardry, and various others. Although Inspector Racer is arrogant and proud of his record, Jury and Wiggins are humble and don't mind at all having other people assist them in solving a murder. In general, both Jury and Grimes think people take things too seriously. Throughout the books, there is a light-hearted approach to life, though Grimes has two or three themes which are obviously of great concern and importance. Typically, she confronts these themes with a directness of approach and language similar to that of the successful British detection-novel writer Ruth Rendell.

One serious theme is Grimes's concern for and interest in people of the kind who populated Hogarth's and Dickens's work at an earlier period. Similar characters are seen today in the works of such writers as Michael Innes (especially in *Daffodil*) or Julian Symons—though Grimes's people are without the duplicity and meanness found in the latter's characters.

Grimes has a special fondness for children, dogs, and cats. Most are preternaturally bright. She weaves them in in subtle but always enjoyable and helpful ways. They are a strange group, human and non-human. In *The Man with a Load of Mischief,* for example, she has a set of waifs, a boy and a girl about twelve years old, who appear almost by accident and become an integral part of the plot. When confronted by Inspector Jury and asked their names, the



boy replies that his name is James, but the girl is so shy (or devilish) that she will not answer the question. So Jury names them both James, the boy James I and the girl James II. She is happy to be so named. The two kids help Jury track the person who committed a murder and provide him with a slingshot, a gift that saves his life later on. In *The Old Fox Deceived,* there is another curious boy, aged 12, named Bertie. In *The Anodyne Necklace,* Grimes creates several groups of shadowy kids, but the principal one is Emily Louise, more realistic than her predecessors but, unfortunately, not as effective. Grimes states in correspondence that she has "a rather obsessive interest in kids" and that what she does with them in her books "is no doubt owing to something in [her] own psyche." As readers, we hope Grimes will continue to tap the deep well of that psyche. Equally as amusing as the kids is the gifted dog Arnold, appearing in the second book, that plays the old folk game "Simon Says" and saves Jury's life.

Grimes is not sentimental about kids and dogs—she is surrealistic. These "animals" are the essence of life. They are symbols, perhaps, of the waywardness, the vagaries, of human nature. They are wild and untutored, yet sensible and useful in a mad world. They, at least, make sense, though at times Grimes seems not to have yet learned exactly what they mean to her and how she is going to handle them. This uncertainty, in fact, is their strength. As soon as she begins to make them more normal, as in *The Anodyne Necklace,* they become less interesting.

Certain aspects of nature, likewise, virtually monopolize her attention, but she might not quite know what to do with them. The most obvious and most compelling example is snow. Snow is as important in the first two books as is air. The first book begins in a quiet snowfall, and snow hides the body of the second victim, who hangs from the sign outside the inn. Snow provides the virgin territory which is dirtied by the footsteps of the murderer, and desecration of snow provides the castings of the steps which Inspector Jury uses to pursue the murderer. The second book, *The Old Fox Deceived,* ends with a kind of prayer to snow. As Jury winds up his investigation of the murder, he steps out into the weather, and Grimes turns her prose to a description of snow: "The snow wasn't sticking; he wished it were. He wished, as he walked down the High, that there were great heaps of it—dry, white, untrammeled." Grimes's greatest paean to snow, making it a worker of magic and a transformer of the ordinary into the Great Mysterious, occurs at one of the high points of *The Man with a Load of Mischief.* When Inspector Jury wants Vivian Remington, one of several lovely women in the novel, and his favorite, to love him, and she refuses and walks away, the scene leads to one of the most powerful symbols in the whole book: Vivian is "making another neat line of tracks across the unbroken snow," and, as she enters a house, "From this distance it was like watching a doll go into a dollhouse and shut the door behind her." She recedes into the distance, and into a different form and existence. As is frequently the case in these books, Grimes has powerful symbols working, though they don't always point explicitly and sharply at her meaning.

Her symbols and message—in fact most of the burden of at least the first book—coalesce in one set of images. In *The Man with a Load of Mischief,* as Inspector Jury is cornering the murderer, a drama begins to unfold in the local church. Jury is in the pulpit, searching for a diary which he knows has been left there, when the murderer enters and stands below the detective in the pews, with his gun ready to shoot. He knows that Jury has no gun, thus, symbolically, no power. The murderer begins to taunt Jury and shoots at him. Jury snaps out the light, moves around to avoid being shot, and then saves himself by employing two very mundane artifacts given him earlier. One is the slingshot given him by the two children James I and James II. Jury uses as ammunition for this slingshot some cough drops that the ever-ill Wiggins has dropped in his pocket. With these simple, worldly instruments, Jury shoots out

the colored windows of the church. Each shot makes a loud bang as it breaks the holy windows, creating a diversion which allows Jury to escape until assistance comes. Readers who are symbol-sniffers can make a great deal of this scene. It well exemplifies Grimes's style of thinking and writing—mixing the mundane with the spiritual, but emphasizing the former more than the latter.

> Grimes's books are powerful comedies of no-manners, of the assumed gap between the blue-blooded and the red-blooded people.

In many ways, the delight of the books is in Grimes's style. Her figures of speech are homey, yet closely observant, and many of her best phrases describe the world of children and animals—especially animals. For example, she has a gray cat bestir itself, its "face besotted with sleep." In another instance she describes the same animal: a "gray brindled cat slipped from the sill and walked toward the back... pregnant with ownership." I would like to see Professor Grimes's own household.

But perhaps Grimes's most effective writing is used to describe those country inns with which she seems almost obsessed. A few lines from *The Man with a Load of Mischief,* taken from the introduction, demonstrate her whole attitude:

The English inn stands permanently planted at the confluence of the roads of history, memory and romance. Who has not, in his imagination, leaned from its timbered galleries over the cobbled courtyard to watch the coaches pull in, the horses' breath fogging the air as they stamp on dark winter evenings? Who has not read of these long, squat buildings with mullioned windows, sunken, uneven floors; massive beams and walls hung round with copper; kitchens where joints once turned on spits, and hams hung from ceilings. There by the fireplace the travelers of lesser quality might sit on wood stools or settles with cups of ale. There the bustling landlady sent the chambermaids scurrying like mice to their duties. Battalions of chambermaids with laundered sheets, scullions, footmen, drawers, stage-coachmen, and that Jack-of-all-trades called Boots waited to assist the traveler to and from the heavy oaken doors. Often he could not be sure whether the floor would be covered with hay, or what bodies might have to be stepped over or crept past on his way to breakfast, if he slept in an inner room. But the breakfast more than made up for the discomfort of the night, with kidney pies and pigeon pies, hot mutton pasties, tankards of ale and muffins and tea, poached eggs and thick rashers of bacon.

Grimes likes to play around with the way in which such old inns were named. Her knowledge of folklore and etymology is extensive and accurate. For example, she tells us about how the "Bull and Mouth" inn got its name. It was named in commemoration of the taking of Boulogne Harbor by Henry VIII, and "Bull and Mouth" was a loose rendering of Boulogne Mouth. She assumes that another inn, the "Elephant and Castle," does not derive its name from the many folktales told in the vicinity about finding elephant bones, or from an escapade of Eleanore of Aquitaine, but from the howdah on the elephant's back. Grimes suggests that the origin of the name for the inn "Goat and Compass" was the prayer "God Encompasseth Us," and that "The Iron Devil" came from the French word *"Irondelle."* To me, perhaps because it was also an American tavern, the most interesting of her derivations is for the inn "Bag o' Nails," which Grimes says came quite logically from a misunderstanding and misspelling of the word "Bachanals." Grimes loves these bits of English lore.

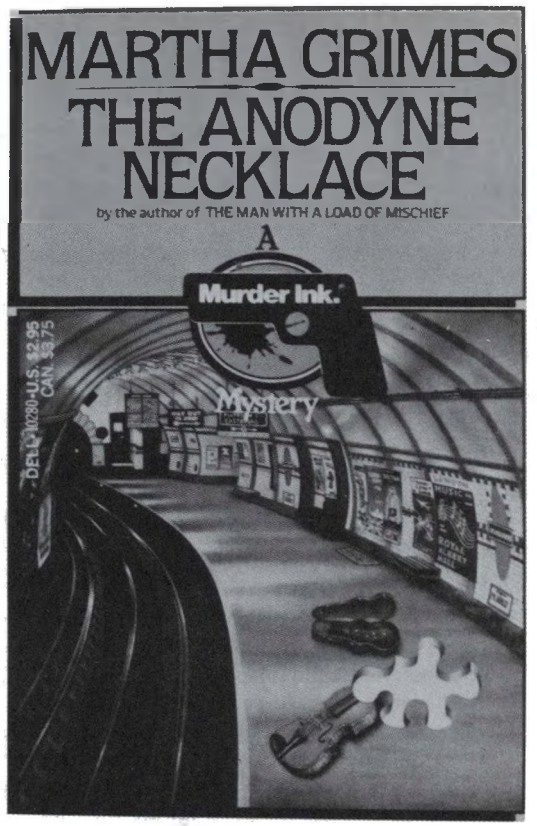
The question arises of the place of these books in contemporary British detective fiction and of their impact on the trend. Of course, it is premature to evaluate their effect at this point, but there are certain features which seem obvious. So far, the effect of the books has been steady and growing. Grimes is getting

a steadily increasing readership. There may be only a small "school of Jury," but this school is ever expanding because Grimes's hero has a strong and starkly outlined personality and Higgins, his assistant, is both credible and delightful—more so than many other sidekicks, for example Leo Bruce's Sergeant Beef. Her other characters are richly developed, even those who make cameo appearances, such as the children on whom she lavishes vivid though brief attention. But humble detectives such as hers, no matter how thoroughly developed, develop national and international reputations slowly. Hers will come.

Her books are realistic, and there are few writers at the moment working the same vein with greater strength, although Michael Innes and Julian Symons might be given as examples. Grimes's is a peculiar and unique strength. Her most powerful trait is the settings—those musty, secretive, delightful, ancient bits of architecture, the country inns. She knows and loves the countryside and the inns and paints them surrealistically. In *The Anodyne Necklace,* she is less concerned with the inn than with the necklace called by that name. This book is, therefore, in setting and inn lore less interesting than its predecessors. Many readers will believe that Grimes's earlier, peculiar approach to the country inn life of Britain constitutes a vein of literary gold that she could have made her very own and through it enriched our appreciation of the British side of the genre, had she not decided to broaden out into more conventional areas.

She is, in this treatment, developing her setting in a way quite different from that of other writers. Leo Bruce, for instance, in his Sergeant Beef and Carolus Deane series, works essentially the same territory, but in a dissimilar fashion. Bruce uses the same geography—small villages, country lanes and woods—and also likes the country tavern setting. But there is a major difference, especially with regard to the taverns and pubs. Bruce likes the territory. "There's always a pub in your cases," says a character in *Jack on the Gallows Tree* (1960). "I believe you like all that phony darts-with-the-locals stuff." Bruce does like the atmosphere, because Beef can use it to milk the locals of their information. Sometimes his inns are places to be hated. In *Furious Old Women* (1960), for instance, Bruce has a tavern overrun with religious zealots who display on a table a sign that says "There's an Inn-Sign on the Road to Hell." To Grimes, on the contrary, an inn is far more than a mere building or setting. It is an organic character, pulsating with history and life, often more important and alive than many of the characters.

Throughout her books, Grimes's attitude toward people is bemused understanding. She does not cattily condescend to some of her people, *á la* Agatha



Christie; they are all worthy of respect in their own right. In the wide range from the humblest to the most aristocratically pretentious, Grimes finds them all amusing. Oftentimes her most loving attention is given to the lowly and ignorant, with whom she obviously feels most comfortable and on whom she lavishes her most detailed development.

Grimes's books are powerful comedies of no-manners, of the assumed gap between the blue-blooded and the red-blooded people, and tell how both types flow through the same channels in rural England. Her people are delineated in Hogarthian outlines, vitalized by Dickensian gusto, but characterized by a detached humor and understanding that make them distinctly and exclusively Grimesian; her people just don't look and act like other Britishers. They and their world are fascinating and far more enjoyable than the conventional British detective fiction world. At this point, she really has no superior in what she does. Her world is enriched by every new novel, and our admiration grows.

In a toast to this fine new writer, readers of British detective fiction will want to raise their pints of appreciation to Grimes and sing out, "long live the country inns, the peculiar animals, Richard Jury and his group of assistants, and those marvelous, surreal children!" Long write Martha Grimes! □

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Japanese Mystery Fiction in English Translation *John L. Apostolou*
Bibliography of Secondary Sources for 1979 *Walter S. Albert*
Classic Corner: "Kesho Naik, Dacoit" by Sir Edmund C. Cox
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Robert L. Fish: In Memoriam
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Quiz: "This Gun for Hire"
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Gervase Fen *William A. S. Sarjeant*
Interview with Peter Lovesey *Diana Cooper-Clark*
Agatha Christie's Ariadne Oliver *Sylvia W. Patterson*
Was The Old Man in the Corner an Armchair Detective? *Fred Dueren*
A Bibliography of Anthony Berkeley Cox (Francis Iles) *Paul R. Moy*
Classic Corner: "The Burglaring Joke" by Anthony Berkeley Cox
Hugo Gernsback's "Scientific Detective Monthly" 3 *Robert A. W. Lowndes*
The Best of Hitchcock *Raymond Obstfeld*
Murder Can Happen Anywhere *Deborah Bonetti*
The Detective Novels of Ronald A. Knox *William Reynolds*
"Night Must Fall" *Albert Borowitz*

Vol. 14, No. 4

John Dickson Carr's Solution to "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" *Lillian de la Torre*
Adolf Hitler and John Dickson Carr's Least-Known Locked Room *Douglas G. Greene*
In Defense of Mr. Fortune *William A. S. Sarjeant*
Interview with Patricia Highsmith *Diana Cooper-Clark*
Crime Writers Third International Congress *Edward D. Hoch*
Classic Corner: "Garroted!" by Frank Price
Stanislaw Lem and John Dickson Carr *Edmund Miller*
The Return of Michael Shayne *Helen McCloy*
Bibliography of Secondary Sources for 1980 *Walter S. Albert*
Raymond Chandler's Self-Parody *Randall R. Mawer*
Hugo Gernsback's "Scientific Detective Monthly" 4 *Robert A. W. Lowndes*

Vol. 15, No. 1

Work of J. J. Connington *David Beams*
Hugo Gernsback's "Scientific Detective Monthly" 5 *Robert A. W. Lowndes*
P.I. Novels of 1980 *Robert J. Randisi*
Profile of Norbert Davis *John L. Apostolou*
Chester Himes *Jay R. Berry, Jr.*
Classic Corner: "Red Hand" by Neil Munro
Bouchercon XII *Mary Ann Grochowski*
Guilty Until Proven Innocent *Hannelore Hess*
Ernest Bramah on Max Carrados
The Saga of Albert Campion *J. Randolph Cox*
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Collecting Mystery Fiction: Introduction to Collecting *Otto Penzler*

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Manning Coles and Tommy Hambledon *William A. S. Sarjeant*
The Espionage Fiction of Anthony Price *Jeanne F. Bedell*
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Vol. 15, No. 3

The Oriental in Mystery Fiction: The Sinister Oriental *Greg Goode*
The Oriental in Crime Fiction and Film: A Bibliography of Secondary Sources *Greg Goode*
The Demoniacal St. Amand and the Brave Baron von Kaz *Douglas G. Greene*
A Necrology for 1981 *George Wuyek*
Classic Corner: "Greaves' Disappearance" by Julian Hawthorne
Interview with William R. Cox *Jim Traylor*
Collecting Mystery Fiction: Clayton Rawson *Otto Penzler*

Vol. 15, No. 4

Robert van Gulik and Judge Dee *William A. S. Sarjeant*
The Oriental in Mystery Fiction: The Orient *Greg Goode*
Nick Carter, Killmaster *Will Murray*
Classic Corner: "The Mystery of a Diamond Robbery" by Harvey Scribner
Interview with Stephen Greenleaf *Thomas Chastain*
Poe's Purloined Letter *Kenneth Gavrell*
Collecting Mystery Fiction: S. S. Van Dine *Otto Penzler*

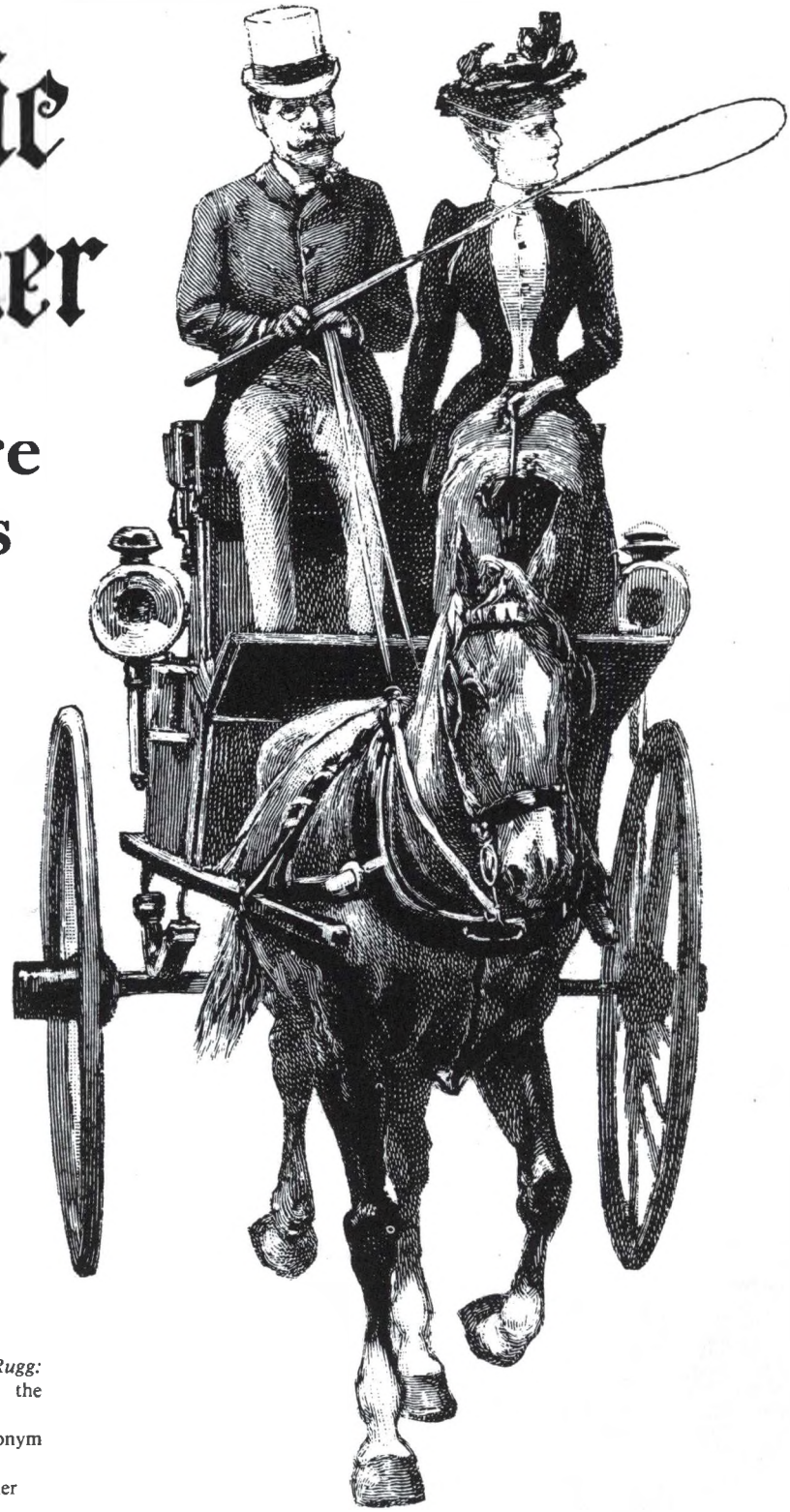
Vol. 16, No. 1

Interview with James M. Cain *John Carr*
Hollywood in California Detective Fiction *Nicholas O. Warner*

Classic Corner

Rare Tales from the Archives

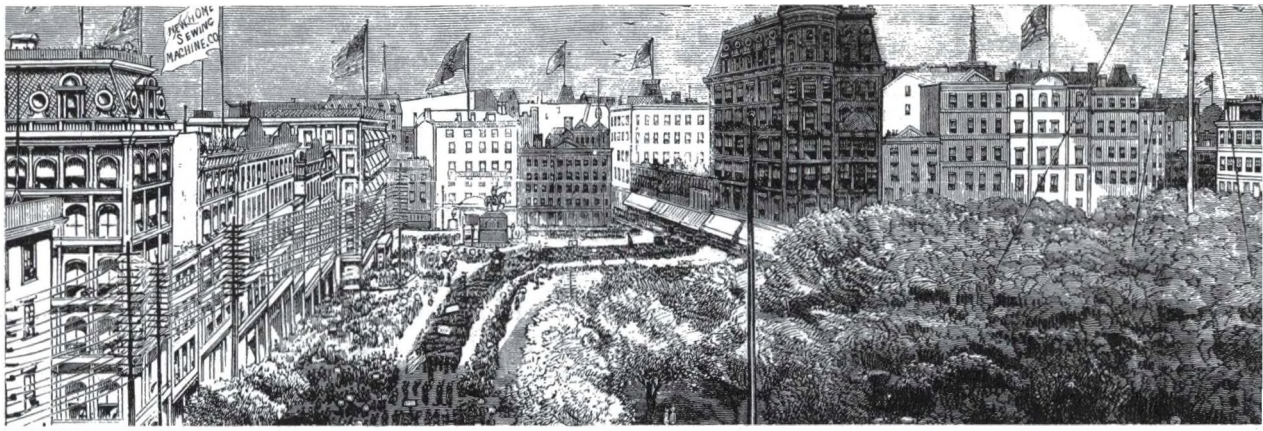
Further Account of Peter Rugg



This is the sequel to the best-selling *Peter Rugg: The Missing Man,* which was published in the "Classics Corner" of TAD 18:2.

The author is William Austin, using the pseudonym of the letter-writing character of the first volume.

—Otto Penzler



By Jonathan Dunwell

In the autumn of 1825 I attended the races at Richmond in Virginia. As two new horses of great promise were run, the race-ground was never better attended, nor was expectation ever more deeply excited. The guardians of Dart and Lightning, the two racehorses, were equally anxious and equally dubious of the result. To an indifferent spectator, it was impossible to perceive any difference. They were equally beautiful to behold, alike in colour and height, and as they stood side by side they measured from head to forefeet within half an inch of each other. The eyes of each were full, prominent, and resolute; and when at times they regarded each other, they assumed a lofty demeanour, seemed to shorten their necks, project their eyes, and rest their bodies equally on their four hoofs. They certainly showed signs of intelligence, and displayed a courtesy to each other unusual even with statesmen.

It was now nearly twelve o'clock, the hour of expectation, doubt, and anxiety. The riders mounted their horses; and so trim, light, and airy they sat on the animals as to seem a part of them. The spectators, many deep in a solid column, had taken their places, and as many thousand breathing statues were there as spectators. All eyes were turned to Dart and Lightning and their two fairy riders. There was nothing to disturb this calm except a busy woodpecker on a neighbouring tree. The signal was given, and Dart and Lightning answered it with ready intelligence. At first they proceed at a slow trot, then they quicken to a canter, and then a gallop; presently they sweep the plain. Both horses lay themselves flat on the ground, their riders bending forward and resting their chins between their horses' ears. Had not the ground been perfectly level, had there been any undulation, the least rise and fall, the spectator would now and then have lost sight of both horses and riders.

While these horses, side by side, thus appeared, flying without wings, flat as a hare, and neither gaining on the other, all eyes were diverted to a new spectacle. Directly in the rear of Dart and Lightning, a majestic black horse of unusual size, drawing an old weather-beaten chair, strode over the plain; and although he appeared to make no effort, for he maintained a steady trot, before Dart and Lightning approached the goal the black horse and chair had overtaken the racers, who, on perceiving this new competitor, threw back their ears, and suddenly stopped in their course. Thus neither Dart nor Lightning carried away the purse.

The spectators now were exceedingly curious to learn whence came the black horse and chair. With many it was the opinion that nobody was in the vehicle. Indeed, this began to be the prevalent opinion; for those at a short distance, so fleet was the black horse, could not easily discern who, if anybody, was in the carriage. But both the riders,

very near to whom the black horse passed, agreed in this particular—that a sad-looking man and a little girl were in the chair. When they stated this I was satisfied that the man was Peter Rugg. But what caused no little surprise, John Spring, one of the riders (he who rode Lightning), asserted that no earthly horse without breaking his trot could, in a carriage, outstrip his racehorse, and he persisted, with some passion, that it was not a horse—or, he was sure it was not a horse, but a large black ox. "What a great black ox can do," said John, "I cannot pretend to say; but no racehorse, not even flying Childers, could out-trot Lightning in a fair race."

This opinion of John Spring excited no little merriment, for it was obvious to everyone that it was a powerful black horse that interrupted the race; but John Spring, jealous of Lightning's reputation as a horse, would rather have it thought that any other beast, even an ox, had been the victor. However, the "horse-laugh" at John Spring's expense was soon suppressed; for as soon as Dart and Lightning began to breathe more freely, it was observed that both of them walked deliberately to the track of the race-ground, and putting their heads to the earth, suddenly raised them again and began to snort. They repeated this till John Spring said, "These horses have discovered something strange; they suspect foul play. Let me go and talk with Lightning."

He went up to Lightning and took hold of his mane; and Lightning put his nose toward the ground and smelt of the earth without touching it, then reared his head and snorted so loudly that the sound echoed from the next hill. Dart did the same. John Spring stooped down to examine the spot where Lightning had smelled. In a moment he raised himself up, and the countenance of the man changed. His strength failed him, and he sidled against Lightning.

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PETER RUGG

At length John Spring recovered from his stupor, and exclaimed, "It was an ox! I told you it was an ox. No real horse ever yet beat Lightning."

And, now, on a close inspection of the black horse's tracks in the path, it was evident to everyone that the forefeet of the black horse were cloven. Notwithstanding these appearances, to me it was evident that the strange horse was in reality a horse. Yet when the people left the raceground, I presume one-half of all those present would have testified that a large black ox had distanced two of the fleetest coursers that ever trod the Virginia turf. So uncertain are all things called historical facts.

While I was proceeding to my lodgings, pondering on the events of the day, a stranger rode up to me, and accosted me thus, "I think your name is Dunwell, sir."

"Yes, sir," I replied.

"Did I not see you a year or two since in Boston, at the Marlborough Hotel?"

"Very likely, sir, for I was there."

"And you heard a story about one Peter Rugg?"

"I recollect it all," said I.

"The account you heard in Boston must be true, for here he was today. The man has found his way to Virginia, and for aught that appears, has been to Cape Horn. I have seen him before today, but never saw him travel with such fearful velocity. Pray, sir, where does Peter Rugg spend his winters, for I have seen him only in summer, and always in foul weather except this time?"

I replied, "No one knows where Peter Rugg spends his winters; where or when he eats, drinks, sleeps, or lodges. He seems to have an indistinct idea of day and night, time and space, storm and sunshine. His only object is Boston. It appears to me that Rugg's horse has some control of the chair; and that Rugg himself is, in some sort, under the control of his horse."

I then inquired of the stranger where he first saw the man and horse.

"Why, sir," said he, "in the summer of 1824, I travelled to the North for my health; and soon after I saw you at the Marlborough Hotel I returned homeward to Virginia, and, if my memory is correct, I saw this man and horse in every state between here and Massachusetts. Sometimes he would meet me, but oftener overtake me. He never spoke but once, and that once was in Delaware. On his approach he checked his horse with some difficulty. A more beautiful horse I never saw; his hide was as fair and rotund and glossy as the skin of a Congo beauty. When Rugg's horse approached mine he reined in his neck, bent his ears forward until they met, and looked my horse full in the face. My horse immediately withered into half a horse, his hide curling up like a piece of burnt leather; spellbound, he was fixed to the earth as though a nail had been driven through each hoof.

" 'Sir,' said Rugg, 'perhaps you are travelling to Boston; and if so, I should be happy to accompany you, for I have lost my way, and I must reach home tonight. See how sleepy this little girl looks; poor thing, she is a picture of patience.'

" 'Sir,' said I, 'it is impossible for you to reach home tonight, for you are in Concord, in the county of Sussex, in the state of Delaware.'

" 'What do you mean,' said he, 'by state of Delaware? If I were in Concord, that is only twenty miles from Boston, and my horse Lightfoot could carry me to Charlestown ferry in less than two hours. You mistake, sir; you are a stranger here; this town is nothing like Concord. I am well acquainted with Concord. I went to Concord when I left Boston.'

" 'But,' said I, 'you are in Concord, in the state of Delaware.'

" 'What do you mean by state?' said Rugg.

" 'Why, one of the United States.'

" 'States!' said he, in a low voice; 'the man is a wag, and would persuade me I am in Holland.' Then, raising his voice, he said, 'You seem, sir, to be a gentleman, and I entreat you to mislead me not; tell me, quickly, for pity's sake, the right road to Boston, for you see my horse will swallow his bits; he has eaten nothing since the day I left Concord.'

" 'Sir,' said I, 'this town is Concord—Concord in Delaware, not Concord in Massachusetts; and you are now five hundred miles from Boston.'

"Rugg looked at me for a moment, more in sorrow than resentment, and then repeated, 'Five hundred miles! Unhappy man, who would have thought him deranged; but nothing in this world is so deceitful as appearances. Five hundred miles! This beats Connecticut River.'

"What he meant by Connecticut River, I know not; his horse broke away, and Rugg disappeared in a moment."

I explained to the stranger the meaning of Rugg's expression, "Connecticut River," and the incident respecting him that occurred at Hartford, as I stood on the door-stone of Mr. Bennett's excellent hotel. We both agreed that the man we had seen that day was the true Peter Rugg.

Soon after, I saw Rugg again, at the toll-gate on the turnpike between Alexandria and Middleburgh. While I was paying the toll, I observed to the toll-gatherer that the drought was more severe in his vicinity than farther south.

"Yes," said he, "the drought is excessive; but if I had not heard yesterday, by a traveller, that the man with the black horse was seen in Kentucky a day or two since, I should be sure of a shower in a few minutes."

I looked all around the horizon, and could not discern a cloud that could hold a pint of water.

"Look, sir," said the toll-gatherer, "you perceive to the eastward, just above that hill, a

small black cloud not bigger than a blackberry, and while I am speaking it is doubling and trebling itself, and rolling up the turnpike steadily, as if its sole design was to deluge some object."

"True," said I, "I do perceive it; but what connexion is there between a thunder-cloud and a man and horse?"

"More than you imagine, or I can tell you; but stop a moment, sir, I may need your assistance. I know that cloud; I have seen it several times before, and can testify to its identity. You will soon see a man and black horse under it."

While he was speaking, true enough, we began to hear the distant thunder, and soon the chain lightning performed all the figures of a country-dance. About a mile distant we saw the man and black horse under the cloud; but before he arrived at the toll-gate, the thunder-cloud had spent itself, and not even a sprinkle fell near us.

As the man, whom I instantly knew to be Rugg, attempted to pass, the toll-gatherer swung the gate across the road, seized Rugg's horse by the reins, and demanded two dollars.

Feeling some little regard for Rugg, I interfered, and began to question the toll-gatherer, and requested him not to be wroth with the man. The toll-gatherer replied that he had just cause, for the man had run his toll ten times, and moreover that the horse had discharged a cannon-ball at him, to the great danger of his life; that the man had always before approached so rapidly that he was too quick for the rusty hinges of the toll-gate; "but now I will have full satisfaction."

Rugg looked wistfully at me, and said, "I entreat you, sir, to delay me not; I have found at length the direct road to Boston, and shall not reach home before night if you detain me. You see I am dripping wet, and ought to change my clothes."

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PETER RUGG

The toll-gatherer then demanded why he had run his toll so many times.

"Toll! Why," said Rugg, "do you demand toll? There is no toll to pay on the king's highway."

"King's highway! Do you not perceive this is a turnpike?"

"Turnpike! There are no turnpikes in Massachusetts."

"That may be, but we have several in Virginia."

"Virginia! Do you pretend I am in Virginia?"

Rugg then, appealing to me, asked how far it was to Boston.

Said I, "Mr. Rugg, I perceive you are bewildered, and am sorry to see you so far from home; you are, indeed, in Virginia."

"You know me, then, sir, it seems; and you say I am in Virginia. Give me leave to tell you, sir, you are the most impudent man alive; for I was never forty miles from Boston, and I never saw a Virginian in my life. This beats Delaware!"

"Your toll, sir, your toll!"

"I will not pay you a penny," said Rugg; "you are both of you highway robbers. There are no turnpikes in this country. Take toll on the king's highway! Robbers take toll on the king's highway!" Then in a low tone he said, "Here is evidently a conspiracy against me; alas, I shall never see Boston! The highways refuse me a passage, the rivers change their courses, and there is no faith in the compass."

But Rugg's horse had no idea of stopping more than one minute; for in the midst of this altercation, the horse, whose nose was resting on the upper bar of the turnpikegate, seized it between his teeth, lifted it gently off its staples, and trotted off with it. The toll-gatherer, confounded, strained his eyes after his gate.

"Let him go," said I, "the horse will soon drop your gate, and you will get it again."

I then questioned the toll-gatherer respecting his knowledge of this man; and he related the following particulars:

"The first time," said he, "that man ever passed this toll-gate was in the year 1806, at the moment of the great eclipse. I thought the horse was frightened at the sudden darkness, and concluded he had run away with the man. But within a few days after, the same man and horse repassed with equal speed, without the least respect to the tollgate or to me, except by a vacant stare. Some few years afterward, during the last war, I saw the same man approaching again, and I resolved to check his career. Accordingly I stepped into the middle of the road, and stretched wide both my arms, and cried, 'Stop, sir, on your peril!' At this the man said, 'Now, Lightfoot, confound the robber!' At the same time he gave the whip liberally to the flank of his horse, which bounded off with such force that it appeared to me two such horses, give them a place to stand, would overcome any check man could devise. An ammunition wagon which had just passed on to Baltimore had dropped an eighteen-pounder in the road; this unlucky ball lay in the way of the horse's heels, and the beast, with the sagacity of a demon, clinched it with one of his heels and hurled it behind him. I feel dizzy in relating the fact, but so nearly did the ball pass my head, that the wind thereof blew off my hat; and the ball embedded itself in that gate-post, as you may see if you will cast your eye on the post. I have permitted it to remain there in memory of the occurrence—as the people of Boston, I am told, preserve the eighteen-pounder which is now to be seen half embedded in Brattle Street church."

I then took leave of the toll-gatherer, and promised him if I saw or heard of his gate I would send him notice.

A strong inclination had possessed me to arrest Rugg and search his pockets, thinking great discoveries might be made in the examination; but what I saw and heard that day convinced me that no human force could detain Peter Rugg against his consent. I therefore determined if I ever saw Rugg again to treat him in the gentlest manner.

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PETER RUGG

In pursuing my way to New York, I entered on the turnpike in Trenton; and when I arrived at New Brunswick, I perceived the road was newly macadamized. The small stones had just been laid thereon. As I passed this piece of road, I observed that, at regular distances of about eight feet, the stones were entirely displaced from spots as large as the circumference of a half-bushel measure. This singular appearance induced me to inquire the cause of it at the turnpike-gate.

"Sir," said the toll-gatherer, "I wonder not at the question, but I am unable to give you a satisfactory answer. Indeed, sir, I believe I am bewitched, and that the turnpike is under a spell of enchantment; for what appeared to me last night cannot be a real transaction, otherwise a turnpike is a useless thing."

"I do not believe in witchcraft or enchantment," said I; "and if you will relate circumstantially what happened last night, I will endeavour to account for it by natural means."

"You may recollect the night was uncommonly dark. Well, sir, just after I had closed the gate for the night, down the turnpike, as far as my eye could reach, I beheld what at first appeared to be two armies engaged. The report of the musketry, and the flashes of their firelocks, were incessant and continuous. As this strange spectacle approached me with the fury of a tornado, the noise increased; and the appearance rolled on in one compact body over the surface of the ground. The most splendid fireworks rose out of the earth and encircled this moving spectacle. The divers tints of the rainbow, the most brilliant dyes that the sun lays in the lap of spring, added to the whole family of gems, could not display a more beautiful, radiant, and dazzling spectacle than accompanied the black horse. You would have thought all the stars of heaven had met in merriment on the turnpike. In the midst of this luminous configuration sat a man, distinctly to be seen, in a miserable-looking chair, drawn by a black horse. The turnpike-gate ought, by the laws of nature and the laws of the state, to have made a wreck of the whole, and have dissolved the

enchantment; but no, the horse without an effort passed over the gate, and drew the man and chair horizontally after him without touching the bar. This was what I call enchantment. What think you, sir?"

"My friend," said I, "you have grossly magnified a natural occurrence. The man was Peter Rugg, on his way to Boston. It is true, his horse travelled with unequalled speed, but as he reared high his forefeet, he could not help displacing the thousand small stones on which he trod, which flying in all directions struck one another, and resounded and scintillated. The top bar of your gate is not more than two feet from the ground, and Rugg's horse at every vault could easily lift the carriage over that gate."

This satisfied Mr. McDoubt, and I was pleased at that occurrence; for otherwise Mr. McDoubt, who is a worthy man, late from the Highlands, might have added to his calendar of superstitions. Having thus disenchanted the macadamized road and the turnpike-gate, and also Mr. McDoubt, I pursued my journey homeward to New York.

Little did I expect to see or hear anything further of Mr. Rugg, for he was now more than twelve hours in advance of me. I could hear nothing of him on my way to Elizabethtown, and therefore concluded that during the past night he had turned off from the turnpike and pursued a westerly direction; but just before I arrived at Powles's Hook, I observed a considerable collection of passengers in the ferryboat, all standing motionless, and steadily looking at the same object. One of the ferry-men, Mr. Hardy, who knew me well, observing my approach delayed a minute, in order to afford me a passage, and coming up, said, "Mr. Dunwell, we have a curiosity on board that would puzzle Dr. Mitchell."

"Some strange fish, I suppose has found its way into the Hudson?"

"No," said he, "it is a man who looks as if he had lain hidden in the ark, and had just now ventured out. He has a little girl with him, the counterpart of himself, and the finest horse you ever saw, harnessed to the queerest-looking carriage that ever was made."

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PETER RUGG

"Ah, Mr. Hardy," said I, "you have, indeed, hooked a prize; no one before you could ever detain Peter Rugg long enough to examine him."

"Do you know the man?" said Mr. Hardy.

"No, nobody knows him, but everybody has seen him. Detain him as long as possible; delay the boat under any pretence, cut the gear of the horse, do anything to detain him."

As I entered the ferry-boat, I was struck at the spectacle before me. There, indeed, sat Peter Rugg and Jenny Rugg in the chair, and there stood the black horse, all as quiet as lambs, surrounded by more than fifty men and women, who seemed to have lost all their senses but one. Not a motion, not a breath, not a rustle. They were all eye. Rugg appeared to them to be a man not of this world; and they appeared to Rugg a strange generation of men. Rugg spoke not, and they spoke not; nor was I disposed to disturb the calm, satisfied to reconnoitre Rugg in a state of rest. Presently, Rugg observed in a low voice, addressed to nobody, "A new contrivance, horses instead of oars; Boston folks are full of peculiar notions."

It was plain that Rugg was of Dutch extraction. He had on three pairs of small clothes, called in former days of simplicity breeches, not much the worse for wear; but time had proved the fabric, and shrunk one more than another, so that they showed at the knees their different qualities and colours. His several waistcoats, the flaps of which rested on his knees, made him appear rather corpulent. His capacious drab coat would supply the stuff for half a dozen modern ones; the sleeves were like meal bags, in the cuffs of which you might nurse a child to sleep. His hat, probably once black, now of a tan colour, was neither round nor crooked, but in shape much like the one President Monroe wore on his late tour. This dress gave the rotund face of Rugg an antiquated dignity. The man, though

deeply sunburned, did not appear to be more than thirty years of age. He had lost his sad and anxious look, was quite composed, and seemed happy. The chair in which Rugg sat was very capacious, evidently made for service, and calculated to last for ages; the timber would supply material for three modern carriages. This chair, like a Nantucket coach, would answer for everything that ever went on wheels. The horse, too, was an object of curiosity; his majestic height, his natural mane and tail, gave him a commanding appearance, and his large open nostrils indicated inexhaustible wind. It was apparent that the hoofs of his forefeet had been split, probably on some newly macadamized road, and were now growing together again; so that John Spring was not altogether in the wrong.

How long this dumb scene would otherwise have continued I cannot tell. Rugg discovered no sign of impatience. But Rugg's horse having been quiet more than five minutes, had no idea of standing idle; he began to whinny, and in a moment after, with his right forefoot he started a plank. Said Rugg, "My horse is impatient, he sees the North End. You must be quick, or he will be ungovernable."

At these words, the horse raised his left forefoot; and when he laid it down every inch of the ferry-boat trembled. Two men immediately seized Rugg's horse by the nostrils. The horse nodded, and both of them were in the Hudson. While we were fishing up the men, the horse was perfectly quiet.

"Fret not the horse," said Rugg, "and he will do no harm. He is only anxious like myself, to arrive at yonder beautiful shore; he sees the North Church, and smells his own stable."

"Sir," said I to Rugg, practising a little deception, "pray tell me, for I am a stranger here, what river is this, and what city is that opposite, for you seem to be an inhabitant of it?"

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PETER RUGG

"This river, sir, is called Mystic River, and this is Winnisimmet ferry—we have retained the Indian names—and that town is Boston. You must, indeed, be a stranger in these parts, not to know that yonder is Boston, the capital of the New England provinces."

"Pray, sir, how long have you been absent from Boston?"

"Why, that I cannot exactly tell. I lately went with this little girl of mine to Concord, to see my friends; and I am ashamed to tell you in returning lost the way, and have been travelling ever since. No one would direct me right. It is cruel to mislead a traveller. My horse, Lightfoot, has boxed the compass; and it seems to me he has boxed it back again. But, sir, you perceive my horse is uneasy; Lightfoot, as yet, has only given a hint and a nod. I cannot be answerable for his heels."

At these words Lightfoot reared his long tail, and snapped it as you would a whiplash. The Hudson reverberated with the sound. Instantly the six horses began to move the boat. The Hudson was a sea of glass, smooth as oil, not a ripple. The horses, from a smart trot, soon passed into a gallop; water now ran over the gunwale; the ferry-boat was soon buried in an ocean of foam, and the noise of the spray was like the roaring of many waters. When we arrived at New York, you might see the beautiful white wake of the ferry-boat across the Hudson.

Though Rugg refused to pay toll at turnpikes, when Mr. Hardy reached his hand for the ferriage, Rugg readily put his hand into one of his many pockets, took out a piece of silver, and handed it to Hardy.

"What is this?" said Mr. Hardy.

"It is thirty shillings," said Rugg.

"It might once have been thirty shillings, old tenor," said Mr. Hardy, "but it is not at present."

"The money is good English coin," said Rugg; "my grandfather brought a bag of them from England, and had them hot from the mint."

Hearing this, I approached near to Rugg, and asked permission to see the coin. It was a half-crown, coined by the English Parliament, dated in the year 1649. On one side, "The Commonwealth of England," and St. George's cross encircled with a wreath of laurel. On the other, "God with us," and a harp and St. George's cross united. I winked at Mr. Hardy, and pronounced it good current money; and said loudly, "I will not permit the gentleman to be imposed on, for I will exchange the money myself."

On this, Rugg spoke. "Please give me your name, sir."

"My name is Dunwell, sir," I replied.

"Mr. Dunwell," said Rugg, "you are the only honest man I have seen since I left Boston. As you are a stranger here, my house is your home; Dame Rugg will be happy to see her husband's friend. Step into my chair, sir, there is room enough; move a little, Jenny, for the gentleman, and we will be in Middle Street in a minute."

Accordingly I took a seat by Peter Rugg.

"Were you never in Boston before?" said Rugg.

"No," said I.

"Well, you will now see the queen of New England, a town second only to Philadelphia, in all North America."

"You forget New York," said I.

"Poh, New York is nothing; though I never was there. I am told you might put all New York in our mill-pond. No, sir, New York, I assure you, is but a sorry affair; no more to be compared with Boston than a wigwam with a palace."

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PETER RUGG

As Rugg's horse turned into Pearl Street, I looked Rugg as fully in the face as good manners would allow, and said, "Sir, if this is Boston, I acknowledge New York is not worthy to be one of its suburbs."

Before we had proceeded far in Pearl Street, Rugg's countenance changed: his nerves began to twitch; his eyes trembled in their sockets; he was evidently bewildered. "What is the matter, Mr. Rugg? You seem disturbed."

"This surpasses all human comprehension; if you know, sir, where we are, I beseech you to tell me."

"If this place," I replied, "is not Boston, it must be New York."

"No, sir, it is not Boston; nor can it be New York. How could I be in New York, which is nearly two hundred miles from Boston?"

By this time we had passed into Broadway, and then Rugg, in truth, discovered a chaotic mind. "There is no such place as this in North America. This is all the effect of enchantment; this is a grand delusion, nothing real. Here is seemingly a great city, magnificent houses, shops, and goods, men and women innumerable, and as busy as real life, all sprung up in one night from the wilderness; or what is more probable, some tremendous convulsion of nature has thrown London or Amsterdam on the shores of New England. Or, possibly, I may be dreaming, though the night seems rather long; but before now I have sailed in one night to Amsterdam, bought goods of Vandogger, and returned to Boston before morning."

At this moment a hue and cry was heard: "Stop the madmen, they will endanger the lives of thousands!" In vain hundreds attempted to stop Rugg's horse. Lightfoot interfered with nothing; his course was straight as a shooting-star. But on my part, fearful that before night I should find myself behind the Alleghenies, I addressed Mr. Rugg in a tone of entreaty, and requested him to restrain the horse and permit me alight.

"My friend," said he, "we shall be in Boston before dark, and Dame Rugg will be most exceedingly glad to see us."

"Mr. Rugg," said I, "you must excuse me. Pray look to the west; see that thunder-cloud swelling with rage, as if in pursuit of us."

"Ah!" said Rugg, "it is in vain to attempt escape. I know that cloud; it is collecting new wrath to spend on my head." Then checking his horse, he permitted me to descend, saying, "Farewell, Mr. Dunwell, I shall be happy to see you in Boston; I live in Middle Street."

It is uncertain in what direction Mr. Rugg pursued his course, after he disappeared in Broadway; but one thing is sufficiently known to everybody—that in the course of two months after he was seen in New York, he found his way most opportunely to Boston.

It seems the estate of Peter Rugg had recently fallen to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for want of heirs; and the Legislature had ordered the solicitor-general to advertise and sell it at public auction. Happening to be in Boston at the time, and observing his advertisement, which described a considerable extent of land, I felt a kindly curiosity to see the spot where Rugg once lived. Taking the advertisement in my hand, I wandered a little way down Middle Street, and without asking a question of anyone, when I came to a certain spot I said to myself, "This is Rugg's estate; I will proceed no farther. This must be the spot; it is a counterpart of Peter Rugg." The premises, indeed, looked as if they had fulfilled a sad prophecy. Fronting on Middle Street, they extended in the rear to Ann Street, and embraced about half an acre of land. It was not uncommon in former times to have half an acre for a house-lot; for an acre of land then, in many parts of Boston, was not more valuable than a foot in some places at present. The old mansion-house had become a powderpost, and been blown away. One other building, uninhabited, stood ominous, courting dilapidation. The street had been so much raised that the bedchamber had descended to the kitchen and was level with the street. The house seemed conscious of its fate; and as though tired of standing there, the front was fast retreating from the rear, and waiting the next south wind to project itself into the street. If the most wary animals had sought a place of refuge, here they would have rendezvoused. Here, under the ridge-pole, the crow would have perched in security; and in the recesses below, you might have caught the fox and the weasel asleep. "The hand of destiny," said I, "has pressed heavy on this spot; still heavier on the former owners. Strange that so large a lot of land as this should want an heir! Yet Peter Rugg, at this day, might pass by his own door-stone, and ask, 'Who once lived here?' "

The auctioneer, appointed by the solicitor to sell this estate, was a man of eloquence, as many of the auctioneers of Boston are. The occasion seemed to warrant, and his duty urged, him to make a display. He addressed his audience as follows:

"The estate, gentlemen, which we offer you this day, was once the property of a family now extinct. For that reason it has escheated to the Commonwealth. Lest any one of you should be deterred from bidding on so large an estate as this for fear of a disputed title, I am authorized by the solicitor-general to proclaim that the purchaser shall have the best of all titles—a warranty-deed from the Commonwealth. I state this, gentlemen, because I know there is an idle rumour in this vicinty that one Peter Rugg, the original owner of this estate, is still living. This rumour, gentlemen, has no foundation, and can have no foundation in the nature of things. It originated about two years since, from the incredible story of one Jonathan Dunwell, of New York. Mrs. Croft, indeed, whose husband I see present, and whose mouth waters for this estate, has countenanced this fiction. But, gentlemen, was it ever known that any estate, especially an estate of this value, lay unclaimed for nearly half a century, if any heir, ever so remote, were existing? For gentlemen, all agree that old Peter Rugg, if living, would be at least one hundred years of age. It is said that he and his daughter, with a horse and chaise, were missed more than half a century ago; and because they never returned home, forsooth, they must be now living, and will some day come and

claim this great estate. Such logic, gentlemen, never led to a good investment. Let not this idle story cross the noble purpose of consigning these ruins to the genius of architecture. If such a contingency could check the spirit of enterprise, farewell to all mercantile excitement. Your surplus money, instead of refreshing your sleep with the golden dreams of new sources of speculation, would turn to the nightmare. A man's money, if not employed, serves only to disturb his rest. Look, then, to the prospect before you. Here is half an acre of land—more than twenty thousand square feet—a corner lot, with wonderful capabilities; none of your contracted lots of forty feet by fifty, where, in dog-days, you can breathe only through your scuttles. On the contrary, an architect cannot contemplate this lot of land without rapture, for here is room enough for his genius to shame the temple of Solomon. Then the prospect—how commanding! To the east, so near to the Atlantic that Neptune, freighted with the select treasures of the whole earth, can knock at your door with his trident. From the west, the produce of the river of Paradise—the Connecticut—will soon, by the blessings of steam, railways, and canals, pass under your windows; and thus, on this spot, Neptune shall marry Ceres, and Pomona from Roxbury, and Flora from Cambridge, shall dance at the wedding.

"Gentlemen of science, men of taste, ye of the literary emporium—for I perceive many of you present—to you this is holy ground. If the spot on which in times past a hero left only the print of a footstep is now sacred, of what price is the birthplace of one who all the world knows was born in Middle Street, directly opposite to this lot; and who, if his birthplace were not well known, would now be claimed by more than seven cities! To you, then, the value of these premises must be inestimable. For ere long there will arise in full view of the edifice to be erected here, a monument, the wonder and veneration of the world. A column shall spring to the clouds; and on that column will be engraven one word which will convey all that is wise in intellect, useful in science, good in morals, prudent in counsel, and benevolent in principle—a name of one who, when living, was the patron of the poor, the delight of the cottage, and the admiration of kings; now dead, worth the whole seven wise men of Greece. Need I tell you his name? He fixed the thunder and guided the lightning.

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF PETER RUGG

"Men of the North End! Need I appeal to your patriotism, in order to enhance the value of this lot? The earth affords no such scenery as this; there, around that corner, lived James Otis; here, Samuel Adams; there, Joseph Warren; and around that other corner, Josiah Quincy. Here was the birthplace of Freedom; here Liberty was born, and nursed, and grew to manhood. Here man was newly created. Here is the nursery of American Independence—I am too modest—here began the emanicipation of the world; a thousand generations hence, millions of men will cross the Atlantic just to look at the North End of Boston. Your fathers—what do I say!—yourselves—yes, this moment, I behold several attending this auction who lent a hand to rock the cradle of Independence.

"Men of speculation—ye who are deaf to everything except the sound of money—you, I know, will give me both of your ears when I tell you the city of Boston must have a piece of this estate in order to widen Ann Street. Do you hear me—do you all hear me? I say the city must have a large piece of this land in order to widen Ann Street. What a chance! The city scorns to take a man's land for nothing. If it seizes your property, it is generous beyond the dreams of avarice. The only oppression is, you are in danger of being smothered under a load of wealth. Witness the old lady who lately died of a broken heart when the mayor paid her for a piece of her kitchen-garden. All the faculty agreed that the sight of the treasure, which the mayor incautiously paid her in dazzling dollars, warm from the mint, sped joyfully all the blood of her body into her heart, and rent it with raputres. Therefore, let him that purchases this estate fear his good fortune, and not Peter Rugg. Bid, then,

liberally, and do not let the name of Rugg damp your ardour. How much will you give per foot for this estate?"

Thus spoke the auctioneer, and gracefully waved his ivory hammer. From fifty to seventy-five cents per foot were offered in a few moments. The bidding laboured from seventy-five to ninety. At length one dollar was offered. The auctioneer seemed satisfied; and looking at his watch, said he would knock off the estate in five minutes, if no one offered more.

There was a deep silence during this short period. While the hammer was suspended, a strange rumbling noise was heard, which arrested the attention of everyone. Presently, it was like the sound of many shipwrights driving home the bolts of a seventy-four. As the sound approached nearer, some exclaimed, "The buildings in the new market are falling in promiscuous ruins." Others said, "No, it is an earthquake; we perceive the earth tremble." Others said, "Not so; the sound proceeds from Hanover Street, and approaches nearer"; and this proved true, for presently Peter Rugg was in the midst of us.

"Alas, Jenny," said Peter, "I am ruined; our house has been burned, and here are all our neighbours around the ruins. Heavens grant your mother, Dame Rugg, is safe."

"They don't look like our neighbours," said Jenny; "but sure enough our house is burned, and nothing left but the door-stone and an old cedar post. Do ask where mother is."

In the meantime more than a thousand men had surrounded Rugg and his horse and chair. Yet neither Rugg personally, nor his horse and carriage, attracted more attention than the auctioneer. The confident look and searching eye of Rugg carried more conviction to everyone present that the estate was his than could any parchment or paper with signature and seal. The impression which the auctioneer had just made on the company was effaced in a moment; and although the latter words of the auctioneer were, "Fear not Peter Rugg," the moment the auctioneer met the eye of Rugg his occupation was gone; his arm fell down to his hips, his late lively hammer hung heavy in his hand, and the auction was forgotten. The black horse, too, gave his evidence. He knew his journey was ended; for he stretched himself into a horse and a half, rested his head over the cedar post, and whinnied thrice, causing his harness to tremble from headstall to crupper.

Rugg then stood upright in his chair, and asked with some authority, "Who has demolished my house in my absence, for I see no signs of a conflagration? I demand by what accident this has happened, and wherefore this collection of strange people has assembled before my door-step. I thought I knew every man in Boston, but you appear to me a new generation of men. Yet I am familiar with many of the countenances here present, and I can call some of you by name; but in truth I do not recollect that before this moment I ever saw any one of you. There, I am certain, is a Winslow, and here a Sargent; there stands a Sewall, and next to him a Dudley. Will none of you speak to me—or is this all a delusion? I see, indeed, many forms of men, and no want of eyes, but of motion, speech, and hearing, you seem to be destitute. Strange! Will no one inform me who has demolished my house?"

Then spake a voice from the crowd, but whence it came I could not discern. "There is nothing strange here but yourself, Mr. Rugg. Time, which destroys and renews all things, has dilapidated your house, and placed us here. You have suffered many years under an illusion. The tempest which you profanely defied at Menotomy has at length subsided; but you will never see home, for your house and wife and neighbours have all disappeared. Your estate, indeed, remains, but no home. You were cut off from the last age, and you can never be fitted to the present. Your home is gone, and you can never have another home in this world." □

By John Ballinger

COLLECTING

The first half of this checklist of bibliomysteries appeared in 18#2.

East, Robert. *Murder Rehearsal.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1934. A well-known detective story writer begins work on a tale of triple murder when three similar murders take place in reality.

Easton, Nat. *A Book for Banning.* New York: Roy Publishers, (1959). Bill Banning, a mystery writer and detective, is offered £4,000 to find Colonel Clifford's stolen manuscript.

Edgar, Keith. *I Hate You to Death.* Toronto: F. E. Howard, (1944). A prominent publisher arrives at a dinner party in his honor and finds a room of writers who were ill treated by him.

Estow, Daniel. *The Moment of Fiction.* New York: (1978). A private investigator and a crusading graduate school student hunt for a curious autobiography written by a renowned dead literary figure. A prestigious publisher tries to stop them fron finding the manuscript. The confrontation leads to violence.

Evans, John. *Halo for Satan.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, (1948). Bishop McManus of Chicago was offered a chance to buy a manuscript in the handwriting of Christ for twenty-five million dollars. Everything pointed to the belief that the manuscript was a forgery except for the fact that Raymond Wirtz was offering it for sale. He was a leading authority on ancient documents with impeccable credentials. Paul Pine is a private eye hired by the church to look into the matter. Murder is not far behind.

Farjeon, J. Jefferson. *End of an Author.* London: Collins, (1938). Peter Hanby was looking for a plot for his fiftieth crime novel and a secretary to help him with it. Then Peter became the mystery he had been looking for and his secretary was forced to solve the crime, with the help of the author's manuscript.

Farmer, Bernard J. *Death of a Bookseller.* London: Heinemann, (1956). An excellent mystery novel about the murder of a second-hand book dealer in London. There is a great deal of information here about the stratification of the book trade in England.

Feiffer, Jules. *Ackroyd.* New York: Simon and Schuster, (1977). A young man sets himself up as a private investigator under the name "Roger Ackroyd." He becomes involved with a mystery involving Oscar Plante, a sports-writer who is about to become America's number one serious author. Much about publishing.

Ferguson, John. *Death of Mr. Dodsley.* London: Collins, 1937. A Charing Cross Road bookseller was found murdered by police in his shop in the early morning. The only clues are three cigarette ends and two spent wooden matches and the fact that several of the books were not in the correct position in the shop.

Ferrars, E. X. *Breath of Suspicion.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1972. A bookseller looks into the disappearance of a popular author after the publication of the latest book is suggestive of an indiscretion.

_____. *Hunt the Tortoise.* New York: Doubleday, 1950. When Celia Kent returned to La Marette after nine years, she became involved with a complicated situation involving buried treasure, a disappearing tortoise, a frightened Swiss couple, and an Englishman who stole twelve volumes of Proust.

Fish, Robert L. *Kek Huuygens, Smuggler.* New York: The Mysterious Press, 1976. Huuygens is a Dutch spy, born in Poland and carrying an American passport. He smuggles a Bach cantata in one of these short stories.

Fisher, Norman. *The Last Assignment.* London: Triton, (1972). An unbelievably scarce book involving Nigel Morrison, an antiquarian bookseller from London, who is involved in blackmail and intrigue in Paris which leads back to the French Resistance of the Second World War. This is the only copy of the three Nigel Morrison novels I have ever seen.

Fitt, Mary. *Clues to Christabel.* Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1944. Marcia Wentworth began to write a biography of the successful novelist Christabel Strange when she began examining Christabel's diaries. The diaries, in the hands of Christabel's strange grandmother, reveal the solution to murder.

Flaubert, Gustave. *Bibliomania; A Tale.* Evanston: Northwestern University Library, 1929. No. 53 of 500 copies of this the first English translation of Flaubert's classic tale of book lust written when he was fifteen.

Fletcher, J. S. *Murder of the Lawyer's Clerk.* New York: Alfred Knopf, 1933. A lawyer's clerk is found murdered in his house. A scarce book from his library has been stolen, and Camberwell and Chaney, private investigators, are hired to find the connection between the two events.

_____. *The Ransom for London.* New York: Mason, 1937. The Right Honorable Hildebrand Arthur Pontifex, the Prime Minister, is blackmailed by a group of scientists

BIBLIOMYSTERIES

All listings are first editions, except when starred.

to pay ten million pounds in order to stop the people of London from being killed. Pontifex is a book collector and manages to stop into second-hand bookshops during the ordeal, where he receives instructions and clues.

_____. *The Yorkshire Moorland Murder.* New York: Knopf, 1930. A wealthy American book collector, a fictionalized A. S. W. Rosenbach, goes to England to buy a private library and becomes involved in murder on the moors.

Follett, Ken. *The Key to Rebecca.* New York: William Morrow, 1980. A master German spy, Alex Wolff, is at work in Egypt in 1942 as the destruction of the English troops there is imminent. He uses a copy of du Maurier's famous novel *Rebecca* as a code book to find secret British documents.

Ford, Elizabeth. *The House with the Myrtle Trees.* London: Lutterworth Press, 1942. A mystery set in late nineteenth-century London and involving the antiquarian bookseller and publisher Hubert Weekes.

Ford, Leslie. *By the Watchman's Clock.* New York: Farrar, 1942. (★) Daniel Sutton, the chief benefactor for Landover College in Maryland, was found dead inside the college's library. Outside, the watchman had been killed. So many people hated Sutton that it was difficult to make a list of likely suspects.

Forrest, Norman. *Death Took a Publisher.* London: George G. Harrap, (1936). Mr. Royle, of the mystery publishers Royle and Grat, Ltd., is found dead in his office. A manuscript from one of their authors leads to the final solution of the publisher's murder.

France, Anatole. *The Crime of Sylvestre Bonnard.* New York: Harper, 1890. One of the earliest bookselling suspense works, this story is of a book collector and his pursuit of a manuscript. It was based on his father's life as a bookseller. This is the first edition of Lafcadio Hearn's translation.

Franklin, Eugene. *The Bold House Murders.* New York: Stein and Day, (1973). When Osborne Kilgore takes out a ten-million-dollar insurance policy on his life, with his publisher and wife as beneficiaries, the insurance company is worried because everyone agrees that Kilgore would be better dead than alive. When he does die—murdered—the company investigates.

Frimmer, Steven. *Dead Matter.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, (1982). Howard Miller, a publisher from New York, is sent to Istanbul to pick up a manuscript that has been spirited out of Russia. Back in New York, a fellow editor is killed and a link established between the murder and the manuscript.

Fuller, Roy. *The Second Curtain.* London: Derek Verschoyle, (1953). George Garner, author and publisher's reader, becomes involved in the murder of an industrial manager when he is offered a job on a literary magazine sponsored by the manager's boss, Perrott. Then his old school friend disappears. Much about publishing.

Fuller, Timothy. *Harvard Has a Homicide.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1936. The campus murder of Professor Singer begins the chase through Harvard University for the killer. The Hasty Pudding Club and the Library are mentioned.

_____. *Three Thirds of a Ghost.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1941. Jupiter Jones attends the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary party for Bromfield Bookstore in Boston when shots ring out just as the main speaker, George Newbury, is to begin speaking. This plunges Jupiter into another adventure.

Gard, Oliver. *The Seventh Chasm.* New York: Dodd, Mead, (1953). Thrumbold Pye, a vacationing professor in New York's Italian quarter, is given a manuscript from a translator of a Latin version of Dante, a dying man. The manuscript holds the key to the identity of the mysterious Rubidus.

Garrett, Truman. *Murder—First Edition.* New York: Arcadia House, (1956). One of the worst novels I have ever read, made riveting by its sheer awfulness. The Northrup Public Library had a new male librarian, Henry W. Longfellow. Then Frazer Sheldon of the staff was murdered, throwing the rest of the library into panic.

Garve, Andrew. *The Galloway Case.* London: Collins, (1956). Detailed studies of a manuscript and bibliographical pursuits lead to the solution of a murder involving an older writer apparently stealing a plot from a younger one and then killing him.

Gifford, Thomas. *The Glendower Legacy.* New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, (1978). A young Harvard student discovers shocking historical documents about George Washington and is consequently murdered, leading to a Soviet-American confrontation.

_____. *Hollywood Gothic.* New York: G. P. Putnam's, (1979). Screenwriter Toby Challis, accused of murdering

his wife, unearths the real killer and more in this Hollywood exposé.

_____. *The Wind Chill Factor.* New York: G. P. Putnam's (1975). A town library and courthouse are blown up, the librarian murdered and two attempts are made on the life of the grandson of a Nazi sympathizer—all for a box of decaying Nazi documents left to the library of the small Minnesota town. The author's first novel.

Gilbert, Michael. *The Etruscan Net.* (London): Hodder and Stoughton, (1969). Set in Florence, this mystery surrounding newly found Etruscan antiquities involves an Englishman who runs a bookshop in the city.

_____. *The Family Tomb.* New York: Harper & Row, (1969). Originally published in England under the title *The Etruscan Net.*

Gloag, John. *Documents Marked "Secret".* London: Cassell & Company, (1938). An English advertising man suffers amnesia after reading an American gangster novel. He believes he is one of the characters, an American G-man, and consequently becomes involved in espionage by "living" this fictitious role from the novel.

Goldman, James. *The Man from Greek & Roman.* London: Hutchinson, (1975). The Curator of Greek and Roman Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art steals a $3.6 million chalice. Previously content with his art works and research books, he is thrown into high adventure.

Goodrum, Charles A. *Carnage of the Realm.* New York: Crown Publishers, (1979). When several members of a coin collectors' club are murdered, a retired librarian and his cohorts from the mythical Werner-Bok Library help solve the crimes with the aid of the library and its computors. Many interesting comments on the contemporary library scene.

_____. *Dewey Decimated.* New York: Crown Publishers, (1977). The authenticity of some of the rare books and manuscripts at America's national library is questioned, leading to murder.

_____. "Writing the Library Whodunit: Murder and Intrigue Stalk the Werner-Bok Library." In *American Libraries,* April 1977. Goodrum talks about the techniques of writing detective fiction. A veritable How-to-dunit.

Goodspeed, Edgar J. *The Curse in the Colophon.* Chicago: Willett, Clark, 1935. A curse in the colophon of an ancient manuscript is discovered by a scholar. Then people who come in contact with the manuscript begin to die.

Gordon, Neil. *The Shakespeare Murders.* New York: Henry, Holt and Company, (1933). Peter Kerrigan, a not-too-scrupulous gentleman-adventurer, helps solve a murder and locates a missing treasure. Clues are found in quotations from missing Shakespeare samplers and their catalogue book.

Govan, Christine Noble and Emmy West. *The Mystery of the Vanishing Stamp.* New York: Sterling Publishing Co., (1958). A valuable stamp is stolen while being researched at a "dank, musty, and disheveled rare-and-second-hand bookshop." Enjoyable juvenile mystery story.

Graeme, Bruce. *And a Bottle of Rum.* London: Hutchinson, n.d. (1949). Antiquarian bookman Terhune finds a dead policeman. This leads him into an intricate plot involving smuggling on Romney Marsh.

_____. *Cardyce for the Defence.* London: Hutchinson & Co., (*c.*1936). Story of how Jeremy Cardyce, compulsive book buyer, becomes "barrister-cum-detective." "Mr. Cardyce's books conceived and bred books with as much regularity—though not, perhaps, so prolifically—as other people's pet mice... the books spread from the study to the bedroom, to the bathroom, and even to the kitchenette."

_____. *A Case for Solomon.* London: Hutchinson, n.d. (1943). Another mystery novel featuring Theodore I. Terhune. The case hinges on English law and a person wrongly convicted of a crime.

_____. *A Case of Books.* London: Hutchinson, n.d. (1946). This Theodore I. Terhune novel is almost completely about the antiquarian book trade in London.

_____. *The Coming of Carew.* London: Hutchinson, n.d. (1945).

_____. *Epilogue.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1934. Superintendent Stevens, one of Graeme's series detectives, solves *The Mystery of Edwin Drood,* which was left incomplete by Charles Dickens.

_____. *House with Crooked Walls.* London: Hutchinson, 1942. A Theodore I. Terhune novel which begins at Terhune's bookshop with a Panamanian visitor's request to see or buy Terhune's collection of books on the province of Kent.

_____. *Seven Clues in Search of a Crime.* London: Hutchinson, n.d. (1941). This is the first novel to feature the antiquarian bookman Theodore Ichabod Terhune. Much about books interspersed throughout the story.

_____. *Ten Trails to Tyburn.* London: Hutchinson, n.d. (1946). Theodore Terhune helps the police solve the murder of Old Peter, a recluse, when a typewritten manuscript is discovered that indicates that there was a crime.

_____. *The Undetective.* New York: London House and Maxwell, (1963). Mystery writer Alain Carter decides to increase his income by writing under another name and not even telling his publishers. His pseudonymous book is a bestseller. Everything goes well until a bookie is murdered in a manner described in the novel. The police, income tax people, and the publisher try their very best to find him.

_____. *Work for the Handman.* London: Hutchinson, (1944). Theodore I. Terhune begins another case with the opportunity to purchase a large library of 2,000 volumes.

Green, Anna Katharine. *The Golden Slipper and Other Problems for Violet Strange.* New York: Putnam's, 1915. Green's detective is faced with a series of problems. The eighth problem is "Missing: Page Thirteen."

Green, William M. *The Salisbury Manuscript.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, (1973). A successful New York editor is left with a half-written manuscript by her husband after he is found dead. The manuscript suggests that he might have

been involved in an illegal caper, causing Casey Ford to go to England to help solve the murder.

Greenaway, Peter van. *The Judas Gospel.* New York: Antheneum, 1972. A new Dead Sea Scroll is found, reputed to be an account of the life of Christ written by Judas Iscariot. The Vatican dispatches Giovanni della Paresi to negotiate the rights to this document. Paresi learns that some of those who sent him have thoughts that justify murder to win the scroll.

Greenbaum, Leonard. *Out of Shape.* New York: Harper & Row, (1969). A tyrannical professor was killed at Milton State University in Michigan. His death is linked to his research in the college library and extends back to Nazi documents in the past.

Grierson, Edward. *A Crime of One's Own.* London: Chatto & Windus, 1967. Donald Maitland is a romantic. He works in a bookshop and is a James Bond enthusiast, and becomes convinced that a spy ring is operating in his bookshop. His fellow employees think he's around the twist, but the spies are concerned.

Gruber, Frank. *The Buffalo Box.* New York: Farrar & Rinehart, (1941). A man claiming to be Lansford Hastings, author of *The Emigrant's Route to Oregon and California* asks Simon Lash for help. He needs it because the real Lansford Hastings died with the Donner Party. That very day Lash meets a descendant of Hastings who is trying to sell a copy of the book to a second-hand book dealer. At the heart of the mystery is a carved box belonging to a member of the Donner Party.

_____. *The French Key Mystery.* New York: Farrar & Rinehart, (1940). The first appearance of Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg. This bookselling pair specialize in selling a book called *Every Man a Sampson* on street corners. Johnny sells the books while Sam breaks false chains with his amazing strength.

_____. *The Gamecock Murders.* New York: Rinehart, (1948). Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg find a body after running from police who were chasing them for selling their books without a license at a Chicago poultry show. They run into the illicit sport of cockfighting as they try to clear themselves.

_____. *The Hungry Dog.* London: Nicholson & Watson, (1950). Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg go to St. Louis to collect an estate that Sam inherited from his uncle. The estate included two hundred St. Bernard dogs, whose feeding and care make the duo yearn for the days of selling books on a street corner. Not much of a bookish nature here.

_____. *Kiss the Boss Goodbye.* New York: Mercury, (1950). The first printing of Gruber's *The Last Doorbell* under this title. Daniel Sligo lay stabbed to death in the offices of the publishers, Business Journals, Inc. Everyone was convinced that the murderer was really trying to kill the senior partner, Ben O. Chapman, a thoroughly nasty man.

_____. *The Laughing Fox.* New York: Farrar, Rinehart, (1940). Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg are selling books in the Midwest when they come across an annual fair and auction for wealthy fox breeders and are confronted with murder.

_____. *The Leather Duke.* New York: Rinehart, (1949). Another Johnny Fletcher–Sam Cragg novel. The two booksellers cannot get books from their publisher and are forced for the first time in their lives to take a job—this in a leather factory—and find murder. Not much bookish here.

_____. *The Long Arm of Murder.* New York: Jonathan Press, n.d. (*c.*1950). First printing under this title of *Murder '97.*

_____. *Murder '97.* New York: Rinehart, (1948). A difficult book in the Simon Lash series. A Mr. Knox hires Simon to trace the ownership of a copy of Horatio Alger's *Ralph Raymond,* which was originally inscribed "to Stuart from Aunt Clarissa" in 1897. Simon Lash finds the original owner in a small town in Illinois.

_____. *Once Over Deadly.* New York: Jonathan Press, n.d. (*c.*1950). First printing under this title of *The French Key Mystery.*

_____. *The Scarlet Feather.* New York: Rinehart, (1948). Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg are still selling *Every-Man-a-Sampson* on street corners. Here they become involved with illegal cockfighting and murder.

_____. *The Silver Tombstone.* New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1945. Not much of a bookish nature here, but the novel does feature the pair of intrepid book salesmen, Johnny Fletcher and Sam Cragg. This time they become involved in a murder in Tombstone, Arizona, involving a silver mine.

_____. *Simon Lash, Private Detective.* New York: Farrar and Rinehart, (1941). This is the first novel to feature Simon Lash, Gruber's lethargic private eye who only accepts a case when his assistant threatens to sell pieces of his book collection to pay the bills.

Guild, Nicholas. *The Favour.* London: Robert Hale, 1981. A master spy takes on an assignment to rescue a Dutch bookshop clerk, the daughter of a friend, and encounters violent international intrigue in the process.

Haarhaus, Jul. R. *Maculaturalia, en Fantasi for Bokvanner.* Stockholm: "B.M.F.," 1023. A mystery involving a first edition of *En Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de la Mancha.*

Hale, Arlene. *Goodbye to Yesterday.* Boston: Little, Brown, (1973). Henry Dillard, a crusty millionaire, decided to give 10,000 rare books to the Hendricks Public Library and asked that the assistant librarian Heather Stevens be the one to catalogue them. Unknown to anyone else, he asked Heather to find a letter that was lost in one of the volumes. A mystery with romantic overtones follows.

Hallahan, William H. *The Ross Forgery.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, (1973). One of the more interesting new plots involves making a forgery of a Wise forgery. There is a good amount of technical facts on how to make a book appear old, including putting ink in a microwave over to age it.

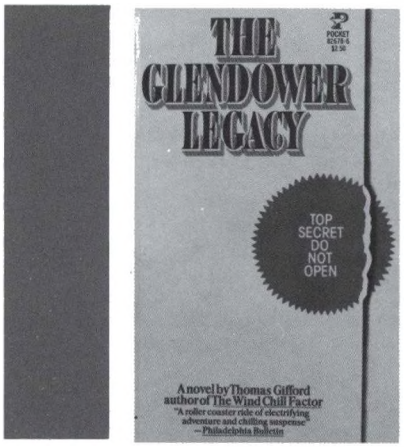
Halliday, Brett. *She Woke to Darkness.* New York: Torquil, 1954. A Mike Shayne novel which takes place at the Edgar Allen Poe banquet for the Mystery Writers of

America, and extends into the publishing world with real detective fiction writers as characters.

Hamilton, Henrietta. *At Night To Die.* London: Hodder & Stoughton, (1959). A Sally and Johnny Heldar mystery involving a murder, a Jacobite library, and antiquarian bookshops.

Hansen, Joseph. *Death Claims.* New York: Harper, 1973. (★) In investigating death claims, David Brandstetter is thrust into the rare book world. An excellent novel by Hansen, whose detective is a homosexual. Very well written.

_____. *Skinflick.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, (1979). David Brandstetter becomes involved in a murder in



which a group of born-again Christians try to close a pornographic bookshop.

Harding, John William. *A Conjuror of Phantoms.* London: F. Tennyson Neely, (1898). One of the key characters in this book is a book collector who uses his hobby in this complex tale.

Harling, Robert. *The Paper Palace.* London: Chatto & Windus, 1951 (★) A complex mystery dealing entirely with the publishing industry in England, with much inside information of a technical nature.

Harris-Burland, J. B. *The Brown Book.* London: John Long, 1923. A young man with "nerves" from the First World War accepts a job as a librarian for a famous private library owned by a self-made man. The previous librarian was killed, and strange events surround the room.

_____. *Doctor Silex.* London: Ward, Lock, 1905. Doctor Silex was a polar explorer and bibliophile. Years after his loss in an Arctic exploration, his close friend is given a manuscript written by the explorer before his death. There is a good deal about his library and bookish interests. A very scarce title, skirting both mystery and fantasy fiction.

Harrison, Michael. *The Exploits of the Chevalier Dupin.* Sauk City: Mycroft & Moran, 1968. A series of short stories including "The Mystery of the Fulton Documents."

Harriss, Will. *The Bay Psalm Book Murder.* New York: Walker, 1983. A special collections librarian at the Los Angeles University Library was killed by thugs who robbed him of $14. They left behind a copy of *The Bay Psalm Book* worth a fortune. The library officials were unable to find out why the librarian had this book in his possession and began to investigate the matter.

Harvey, W. F. *The Mysterious Mr. Badman.* London: Pawling and Ness, (1934). Althelstan Digby agrees to watch a bookshop for his friend in London while he attends the funeral of an uncle. Then a customer comes in and asks for Bunyan's *Life and Death of Mr. Badman.* This was the first request of three in the same day. Later that evening Digby discovered the book on the shelves, but it was stolen by the next morning. This is the beginning of an excellent book-selling novel.

Hay, Ian. *"The Liberry."* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1924. A curious story of Mr. Baxter, who built a library from the fourpenny book bins in front of antiquarian bookshops.

Healey, Ben. *The Vespucci Papers.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, (1972). Harcourt d'Espinal steals a recently discovered painting by Botticelli, a portrait of Simonetta Vespucci, not once, but twice. In the process he becomes trapped in a Machiavellian web. Part of the solution to his problems lies in a richly bound book of hours.

Heath, Eric. *Murder of a Mystery Writer.* (New York): Arcadia House, (1955). The Mystery Writers' Guild held their annual meeting at Mystery Lodge in the Sierra Mountains. The Lodge featured skulls and other frightening objects as decor. Then the mystery writer Ferninand Lang was murdered and the mystery writers were faced with a real plot to solve.

Heward, Dorothy. *The Pulitzer Prize Murders.* New York: Farrar & Rinehart, (1932). A prominent lawyer is murdered in a writers' colony. The plot centers around a manuscript and competition for the coveted Pulitzer Prize.

Higgins, Colin. *Foul Play.* Screenplay, 1977–78. A librarian is entrapped in a plot to kill the Pope when she gives a man a ride home from a party. A chase scene through the library stacks is included in this motion picture. The film starred Goldie Hawn and Chevy Chase. Colin Higgins wrote other screenplays, including *Harold and*

Maude and *The Silver Streak,* which involved Rembrandt letters.

Hill, Susan. *The Bird of Night.* New York: Saturday Review Press, (1973). Francis Croft was a great poet and insane. His friend and biographer tells about his horrors and his quiet periods.

Hitchcock, Alfred (editor). *Alfred Hitchcock's Solve-Them-Yourself Mysteries.* New York: Random House, (1963). A selection of short stories, including "The Mystery of the Man Who Evaporated" about the death of a mystery writer which involved his latest manuscript.

Hodgkin, M. R. *Student Body.* New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949. An academic novel involving a murder in the college library where the entire staff is suspect. An excellent novel of its kind.

Holding, James. "The Mutilated Scholar." In *Ellery Queen's Doors to Mystery.* New York: Dial Press, (1981). This is one of a series of short stories featuring Hal Johnson, the Library Cop. This is an excellent series, never featured in book form, and important for the genre.

Holme, Timothy. *A Funeral of Gondolas.* New York: Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, (1982). Achille Peroni, "the Rudolph Valentino of the Italian Police," becomes involved in a case involving a priceless manuscript. This leads him to a syndicate run by a priest, and many beautiful women.

Hopkins, Kenneth. *Body Blow.* London: Macdonald, 1962. Dr. Blow and Professor Manciple become entangled in international intrigue when they buy the library of Robert Southey, the English romantic poet, at auction. When the crates arrive, they discover a dead body in one of them.

_____. *Dead Against My Principles.* London: Macdonald, (1960). When the financier Simon Blunt is found dead in his country cottage, the police go to Dr. William Blow and Professor Manciple for the formality of identifying the body. They do not when they discover that the corpse does not have an appendix scar and Blunt definitely had his appendix removed.

_____. *Pierce with a Pin.* London: Macdonald, (1960). Gary Lee, a newspaper reporter, covers the opening of a museum and almost witnesses the murder of the new museum's donor.

_____. *She Dies Because...* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, (1964). The second William Blow and Gideon Manciple novel. The two professors solve a murder with clues from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century plots as well as those from the streets of Soho.

Hoppe, Joanne. *The Lesson Is Murder.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, (1977). Members of an elite high-school humanities class are murdered—one by one—as police, faculty, and students attempt to unravel a series of literary clues left by the murderer. They, of course, go to the library for help.

Howard, Clark. *Mark the Sparrow.* New York: Dial Press, 1975. A reporter and a law librarian review the case of Weldon Whitman, an inmate on death row, who admits being a robber, kidnapper, and sex pervert, but denies being a murderer.

Hoyle, Fred and Geoffrey. *The Incandescent Ones.* New York: Harper and Row, 1977. A student of Byzantine art, studying at Moscow University, receives a cryptic message telling him to buy two books at the University bookshop at a specific time. When he does, he finds a very special copy of *The Life of Pushkin* in his package.

Hoyt, Richard. *The Siskiyou Two-Step.* New York: William Morrow, 1983. A private detective in Oregon finds a body of a nude woman drifting down a river. This is connected with an international plot to steal a manuscript which reputedly was written by Shakespeare.

Hugo, Richard. *The Hitler Diaries.* New York: William Morrow, 1983. Written just before the "real" Hitler forged diaries appeared, this novel investigates publishers vying for Hitler's diaries, which are forgeries.

Hunt, Barbara. *A Little Night Music.* New York: Rinehart, (1947). More of a psychological novel about death than a mystery, this story is about a returning veteran's attempt to sell a book to a second-hand bookseller in Chicago on a cold winter's day.

Hunter, Alan. *Death on the Heath.* New York: Walker, 1981. The body of Frederick Quennell, an amateur yachtsman and managing director of a printing and book manufacturing firm, washes up on the shore and Chief Superintendent Gently must solve the murder.

Hyland, Stanley. *Top Bloody Secret.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, (1969). A very good espionage thriller concerning the first murder in the House of Commons since 1812. The library in the house plays a key role in the plot, as well as a manuscript housed there and library practices.

_____. *Who Goes Hang?* London: Gollancz, 1958. A mummified corpse is found in a wall cavity under Big Ben's bell cavity during routine repairs. Herbert Bligh, M.P., takes on the job of finding out who the corpse was and who killed him. The story is put together via good library research using the library in the House of Commons.

Iams, Jack. *Death Draws the Line.* New York: William Morrow, 1949. The star cartoonist of a comic strip is dead at his drawing board. He leaves a dying clue in his final strips that provide the solution to the crime.

Innes, Michael. *The Ampersand Papers.* London: Gollancz, 1978. Sir John Appleby is nearly struck by the falling body of Dr. Sutch, the archivist, while on a Cornish beach. The archivist fell from the north tower of Tresinnick Castle while studying the Ampersand papers for possible links to Wordsworth and Shelley.

_____. *Appleby & Honeybath.* New York: Dodd, Mead, (1983). On a weekend at an English country estate, Charles Honeybath finds a body in a library that later disappears. The secret to the mystery is in the papers of the library itself. Appleby collaborates with the famed painter to find the solution.

_____. *Appleby Talks Again.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1957. A series of Appleby short stories including "The Lombard Books" and other bookish tales.

_____. *Appleby's Answer.* New York: Dodd, Mead, (1973). Miss Priscilla Pringle, a well-known writer of detective stories, investigates the death of the last Rector of Long Canings when she meets a man on the train who offers to pay her £500 for an original murder scenario.

_____. *The Case of Sonia Wayward.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1960. Colonel Ffolliot Petticate makes two fateful decisions while under the influence of alcohol. First, he throws the body of his wife, the novelist Sonia Wayward, overboard rather than face questions arriving in port with a dead body. Second, he tells everyone that Sonia is on a long trip, while he continues to write the romance novels she was so famous for doing. The English title for this novel is *The New Sonia Wayward.*

_____. *Death at the President's Lodging.* London: Gollancz, 1936. (★) The first John Appleby novel. It involves a murder in cloistered St. Anthony's College. Several key scenes involve the college library. With a folding map of the college at the rear of the book.

_____. *From London Far.* London: Gollancz, 1946. (★) Meredith was returning the Duke of Newfield's valuable manuscript when he stopped into a tobacco shop, murmured, "London, a Poem," to which the tobacconist replied "Rotterdam's gone" and opened a trap door to the basement where Meredith found the Horton Venus by Titian.

_____. *Hamlet, Revenge!* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1937. A production of Hamlet, a missing rare book, Elizabethian scholars, and John Appleby combine in this intricately plotted mystery.

_____. *The Long Farewell.* London: Gollancz, (1958). Louis Packford, an Elizabethan scholar and friend of Sir John Appleby, is found dead, a doubtful suicide. A rare book from his collection, on which Shakespeare was said to have based his story of Othello, with notes in the playwright's hand, is missing. Appleby investigates.

_____. *Operation Pax.* London: Victor Gollancz, 1951. One of Michael Innes's best novels, in which a group of widely diverse characters find themselves driven to the stack area in the vaults of the Bodleian Library at Oxford University for the climactic scene to this novel. John Appleby shows up at the end to solve the crime.

_____. *The Paper Thunderbolt.* New York: Dodd, Mead, (1951). The American issue of *Operation Pax.*

_____. *The Secret Vanguard.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1941. The poet Philip Ploss is murdered. John Appleby traces his murderer through antiquarian bookshops, the British Museum, and other bookish places.

_____. *Silence Observed.* London: Gollancz, 1961. Although mostly involved with the art world, one of the murder victims was Jacob Trechmann, an antiquarian bookdealer whose shop was in the shadow of the British Museum.

_____. *The Spider Strikes.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1939. Richard Eliot is at work on his 38th mystery story when his fictional hero, the Spider, begins to perform a series of increasingly sinister exploits in the author's home—exploits that Richard thought to use in previous books but finally abandoned. Appleby solves the mystery.

Irwin, Wallace. *The Julius Caesar Murder Case.* New York: Appleton-Century, (1935). Written in the style of Dashiel Hammett, P. Manlius Scribo, the star reporter on the first tabloid, the *Evening Tiber,* finds out who killed Julius Caesar and who framed Brutus. A very funny book, rare in fine condition.

Jackson, Adah. *The Mystery of the Fifteenth Cypress.* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1937. A children's book that begins with "an old book and an old secret." .

James, M. R. *Best Ghost Stories.* Cleveland: World, (1944). James's ghost stories include "The Mezzotint," "Canon Alberic's Scrap-Book," and other bookish short stories.

_____. *Ghost-Stories of an Antiquary.* London: Edward Arnold, 1904. This classic book of ghost stories has many short stories of a bookish nature, including "The Mezzotint" and "Canon Alberic's Scrap-Book."

_____. *A Thin Ghost and Others.* London: Edward Arnold, 1919. Stories include those of a bookish nature such as "The Residence at Whitminster" and "The Diary of Mr. Poynter."

_____. *A Warning to the Curious and Other Ghost Stories.* New York: Longmans, Green, 1925. A collection of James's ghost stories, including "The Uncommon Prayer-Book" and "An Evening's Entertainment."

James, P. D. *Unnatural Causes.* New York: Scribner's, (1967). Adam Dalgliesh investigates the murder of Maurice Seton, a crime writer. Dalgliesh solves the murder with his expert knowledge of the Bloomsbury publishing world and the world of Soho strip joints.

Jane, Mary C. *Mystery at Shadow Pond.* New York: Scholastic, (1965). $10.00 A juvenile mystery involving books and a library. Paperback.

Johnson, W. Bolingbroke. *The Widening Stain.* New York: Knopf, (1942). This murder mystery, set at Cornell University, was written pseudonymously by Morris Gilbert Bishop, the school's librarian. The novel caused him no end of embarrassment. In an inscribed copy at Cornell, the author wrote:

A cabin in northern Wisconsin
Is what I would be for the nonce in,
To be rid of the pain
Of the Widening Stain
And W. Bolingbroke Johnson.

The story has the University Library as its principal setting. There is enough bibliophilic conversation to satisfy even the most hardened reader of the genre.

Jones, Howard. *Beware the Hunter!* New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, (1961). During a flight from Salzburg to London, a fully loaded pistol and a book of Shakespeare's sonnets find their way into Dr. John Haddon's luggage.

Judd, Margaret H. *Murder Is a Best Seller.* New York: Arcadia House, (1959). A local librarian in Loomisville, Vermont, writes an historical novel which is published by a

New York publishing firm and shows promise in becoming a bestseller. At a party given for the author, Claudia Carlton, a local girl who made good in New York's theater world, is murdered.

Kaminsky, Stuart. *He Done Her Wrong.* New York: St. Martin's, (1983). Toby Peters is asked to investigate the theft of Mae West's diary. Kaminsky is a professor of film at Northwestern University, and the novel is filled with cinematic characters and verisimilitude.

_____. *Never Cross a Vampire.* New York: St. Martin's, (1980). Bela Lugosi hires Toby Peters to clear William Faulkner of the murder of his literary agent. There is much about screen writings and things literary here. Kaminsky has a great deal of insider's knowledge of Hollywood.

Kaye, Marvin. *Bullets for Macbeth.* New York: Dutton, (1976). During a present-day production of *Macbeth,* Hilary Quayle conducts a contrapunctal investigation to find the identity of Banquo's third murderer as well as the name of the person attempting to kill a member of the theater group. The investigation ends at the Folger Library in Washington.

Keeler, Harry Stephen. *The Book with the Orange Leaves.* New York: Dutton, 1942. Keeler's plots are incredibly bizarre. This one concerns a book with orange leaves, a safecracker known as "X-Ray Eyes" who knows the contents of a safe before he opens it, and a man trying to find out how he does this for $1,000 which will buy his wife an operation she needs in order to live.

_____. *The Green Jade Hand.* New York: E. P. Dutton, (1930). A tangled plot involving Horatio Silverthorne, a bibliophile, who makes a bewildering discovery at an auction.

_____. *The Sharkskin Book.* New York: Dutton, 1941. A book of Chinese aphorisms passes from hand to hand, trapping all that come in contact with it.

Kelly, Mary. *March to the Gallows.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, (1964). Hester Callard, a young librarian recovering from the accidental death of her lover, has the only link with him—a necklace he gave to her—stolen. She then sees it on the neck of another woman whom she follows—straight into danger.

Kenney, Susan. *Garden of Malice.* New York: Scribner's, (1983). Roz Howard, a young professor of English at Vassar, is hired to edit the just discovered diaries and letters of the famed author Lady Viola Montfort-Snow. When she arrives in England, it becomes apparent that one or more of Lady Viola's friends will do anything to keep her from editing the papers—even murder.

Ketchum, Philip. *Death in the Library.* New York: Crowell, (1937). Very little to do with books.

Kiefer, Warren. *The Pontius Pilate Papers.* New York: Harper & Row, (1976). A mystery involving a group of Roman papyri which were discovered and deal with the persecution of the Jews by the Romans at the time of Christ.

King, C. Daly. *The Curious Mr. Tarrant.* London: Collins, 1935. (★) In the first edition this is one of the scarcest of all twentieth-century detective books. It is composed of eight short stories that include "The Episode of the 'Codex' Curse" in which a priceless Aztec Codex is stolen from a guarded, locked room.

Kisner, James. *Nero's Vice.* New York: Beaufort Books, (1981). "Nero's Vice" is a manuscript, reputed to be the most vile piece of pornography ever written, giving a first-hand account of assorted perversions in ancient Rome. As such, it is a most desirable item for *Sleaze* magazine to publish. When word of the impending publication leaks out, a threatening note is sent to the publisher.

Klinefelter, Walter. *The Case of the Conan Doyle Crime Library.* La Crosse: Suman Press, 1968. The nonfiction account of how Walter Klinefelter finally saw Arthur Conan Doyle's library of reference books used when he was creating Sherlock Holmes. He gives a good account of meeting an alternatively nasty and delightful A. S. W. Rosenbach. With a checklist of the library itself added.

Knowler, John. *The Trap.* London: Jonathan Cape, (1964). An eighteen-year-old girl begins working for Wilhelm Schmidt, a dealer in rare books. "It is impossible to dismiss the sense of impending disaster as she is drawn into his alien, sinister world."

Kranes, David. *Margins.* New York: Knopf, 1972. Mark Eliot is a successful model for advertising agencies. In a bookshop he finds a passionate margin note scribbled by an "S. Weiss." Someone else buys the book, but Mark steals it from him and sets about to find out more about Susan Weiss, who wrote the note. Mark locates her and then trails her about Manhattan. A strange mystery novel.

Kurland, Michael. *The Whenabouts of Burr.* New York: Daw, 1975. Someone switches the Constitution of the United States with a variant copy that contains Aaron Burr's signature in place of Alexander Hamilton's. Paperback original.

Kurnitz, Harry. *Invasion of Privacy.* New York: Random House, (1955). Michael Zorn is a fast-talking young turk working for Continental Films in Hollywood. He purchases the rights to a novel, *Black Velvet,* written by a beautiful authoress. After the film is shot, Zorn finds out that the story was based on fact. There is violence from some rather unpleasant people and finally murder.

Kyd, Thomas. *Cover His Face.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, (1949). An American academic, Gilbert Weldon, goes to his relative's town of Fenny Dasset to look at a newspaper that reputedly contains the first published words of Samuel Johnson. When he arrives his relative is found murdered. Gilbert uses his skills at research to uncover the murderer.

Langton, Jane. *Dark Nantucket Noon.* New York: Harper, (1975). Murder on Nantucket island. The plot includes scenes at the whaling museum library and the central town bookshop.

_____. *The Minuteman Murder.* New York: Dell, (1980). Originally published as *The Transcendental Murder.* Paperback. First printing thus.

_____. *The Transcendental Murder.* New York: Harper, 1964. Set in Concord, Massachusetts, a local librarian becomes involved with a group of spurious letters which purport to show confessions of sexual intimacy among the transcendentalists. A murder takes place soon after the arrival of a world-famous Emerson scholar.

Lemarchand, Elizabeth. *Step in the Dark.* New York: Walker, (1976). A murder has taken place in the library of the Ramsden Literary and Scientific Society. A woman who was in the process of writing a history of the Society vanishes. A most puzzling mystery with a librarian and his assistant as prime suspects.

LeQueux, William. *The Closed Book.* London: The Smart Set, 1904. A book containing the secrets of the Borgias is discovered, and many prominent people throughout the world begin to die. The mystery centers around finding the book and learning what is written in it.

Levon, Fred. *Much Ado About Murder.* New York: Dodd, Mead, (1955). Leo had this literary talent but claimed to have written a novel which was made into a major motion picture and then received no money for it. After this, he entered a writing course given by the Association of Mystery Authors, and was found murdered. One of the plots written in class was used.

Lewis, Arthur H. *Copper Beeches.* New York: Trident Press, (1971). An unusual story centering around a contest run by The Sons of the Copper Beeches, who "perpetuate the legend that Mr. Sherlock Holmes is not a legend" but real. A member wages his entire Sherlockiana collection, valued at $100,000, that club members could not find him if he and his wife disappear. Strange things happen during the hunt.

Lewis, Roy Harley. *A Cracking of Spines.* London: Robert Hale, 1980. Matthew Coll owns an antiquarian bookshop in the West of England. He is asked to use his skills as a former military intelligence officer by the Antiquarian Booksellers Association to investigate thefts of books from libraries. Much about libraries and the book trade.

_____. *The Manuscript Murders.* London: Robert Hale, (1981). Matthew Coll purchases a rare sixteenth-century manuscript for an American university. There is some question as to whether or not it is a forgery. Matthew has a violent time in finding the answer.

_____. *A Pension for Death.* New York: St. Martin's Press, (1983). Matthew Coll accepts an assignment to purchase £300,000 of fine books for a large conglomerate's investment portfolio. Several people are murdered, and Coll uses his skill as an ex-British agent to find the killers.

Liddon, E. S. *The Riddle of the Florentine Folio.* New York: Doubleday, 1935. (★) Set in the American South, the matriarch of an old family was murdered, the family attempts to cover up the crime until a strange, black "conjure woman" is killed. The secret lies in a locked Florentine folio.

Limnelius, George. *The Manuscript Murder.* Garden City: Doubleday, (1934). Many people hated the author Sir Oscar Horton, and on his wedding night one of them murdered him. The clue to his killer's identity lies in two manuscripts. Not in Hubin.

Linklater, Eric. *The Merry Muse.* New York: Harcourt, Brace, (1959). Max Arbuthnot discovers an unpublished manuscript of bawdy poems by Robert Burns which touches off an intricate plot. Max is a delightful character, sixty years old, who believes that life is enjoyable to those with good digestion and a bad memory.

Littell, Robert. *The Amateur.* New York: Simon and Schuster, (1981). Charles Heller works for the CIA in cryptology. Off hours he uses the Corporation's computer to analyze Shakespeare's works in order to find a cryptogram that he is certain lies in the text revealing the true identity of the author.

Lockridge, Richard and Frances. *The Distant Clue.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, (1963). Two elderly men are found shot. One is Homer Lenox, who was writing a history of local families in Van Brunt, New York, the other a local librarian. Captain Heimrich learns some startling facts about some of the old families after reading Lenox's unfinished manuscript. This leads him to the solution of the crime.

_____. *The Drill Is Death.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, (1961). A British poet, on a temporary assignment teaching in a New York university, steps into a cab and finds the recently stabbed body of a girl. She turns out to be one of his students, who was spreading malicious rumors about him. The police suspect the poet, and he must prove his innocence.

_____. *Murder by the Book.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, (1963). Pam and Jerry North go to Florida for a vacation and discover the body of a former medical examiner on a pier. His notebook leads them to a local library in the search for his killer.

_____. *Murder Has Its Points.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, (1961). Mr. and Mrs. North host a party for their middle-aged novelist, Anthony Payne. The author is murdered, and the chase for his killer leads to a fog-shrouded house in Connecticut.

_____. *Murder Within Murder.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, (1946). Miss Amelia Gipson was doing research on her next book at the New York Public Library when she found one of her fellow researchers murdered and turned to her publishers, Mr. and Mrs. North, for help.

Lomax, W. J. *The Riddle of the Book-Mark.* London: Eveleigh, Nash & Grayson, (1926). A destitute antiquarian bookseller bids for a friend at a book auction only to be involved in a web of mystery. At the center of it is a strange book-mark.

Long, Amelia Reynolds. *The Corpse at the Quill Club.* New York: Phoenix, (1940). A member of an amateur writing club is killed. A journal is missing. Comments about publishing and writing. Scarce.

_____. *Death Looks Down.* Chicago: Ziff, Davis, (1944). Graduate English students studying Edgar Allen Poe are being killed in ways outlined by Poe in his stories. A central figure is Jod Phillips, who made his collection of Poe material available to the class. There is much about stolen manuscripts and identifying Poe rarities.

_____. *The Shakespeare Murders.* New York: Phoenix Press, (1939). Students are assigned research projects on different Shakespearian plays and are then found murdered in circumstances resembling scenes from the plays. The author's first book.

Ludlum, Robert. *The Chancellor Manuscript.* New York: The Dial Press, 1977. Peter Chancellor is told a story that involves a very powerful group of men who clandestinely run the government and were involved in the murder of J. Edgar Hoover. Chancellor writes the account of this story as a novel and becomes involved in proving his facts. Much about publishing.

McBain, Ed. *Lady, Lady, I Did It!* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961. A police procedural in which a murder takes place in a bookstore and the police of the 87th Precinct solve the crime. While not a particularly early McBain novel, this is very scarce and a most elusive title.

McCarry, Charles. *The Secret Lovers.* New York: Dutton, (1977). An espionage thriller involving smuggling a vital manuscript from Moscow to the West. Dutton in its promotional letter called it "one of the finest novels Dutton has published in its 125 years."

McCloy, Helen. *Two-Thirds of a Ghost.* New York: Random House, (1956). A successful author is killed during a cocktail party given by his publisher. The solution to the murder lies in the world of publishers, authors, critics, and agents.

McElroy, Hugh. *Unkindly Cup.* London: Chapman & Hall, 1946. A writer of crime fiction is murdered at a literary society's banquet. Suspicion falls on another author, while a third mystery writer solves the crime. In the process he gives us a clear picture of this genre of publishing.

McGinley, Patrick. *Bogmail.* New Haven: Ticknor and Fields, 1981. A whimsical entry in the collection. The murderer kills his victim by hitting him over the head with *The Encyclopaedia Britannica.* Having metaphorically been hit over the head with this work myself, I felt empathetic to its inclusion in this collection.

McInerny, Ralph. *Romanesque.* New York: Harper & Row, (1978). A novel of mistaken identity, conspiracy, betrayal, treachery, and high romantic comedy surrounding the kidnap of the Thomistic autograph and other priceless manuscripts from the Vatican Library.

_____. *Second Vespers.* New York: Vanguard, 1980. The death of a noted American author sparks renewed interest in his work. The cast of characters includes a librarian with unpublished letters, a book shop owner with one of the author's diaries, and an elusive stranger. The novel is the fifth in a series featuring Father Dowling.

McIntyre, John T. *Museum Murder.* Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1929. A painting is stolen from a museum. The entire staff, board of governors, and an artist are suspects. The museum has a library which plays a minor part in the drama.

Maclaren-Ross, J. *The Doomsday Book.* New York: Ivan Obolensky, (1961). An intricate plot revolving around a freelance writer accepting an assignment to find an unpublished novel in diary form written by Istvan Vogel. Just after accepting the case, Leo Marsh is called by the police because a man was murdered in a telephone booth with Marsh's address and number in his pocket.

Macleod, Charlotte. *Rest You Merry.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1978. A personal favorite. Professor Peter Shandy returns to the campus after the "Grand Illumination" Christmas decorations have been lit, to find a corpse in his house. The murder is linked to a collection of books and papers donated to the college library.

Magoon, Carey. *I Smell the Devil.* New York: Farrar & Rinehart, (1943). A medieval scholar, Adelaide Stone, discovers a passage in a manuscript describing the hiding place of the vast treasure of Dido. The next day the librarian of the rare book room is found murdered.

Malzberg, Barry N. and Bill Pronzini (editors). *Dark, Dark, Sins, Dreams.* Garden City: Doubleday, (1978). Contains "The Man Who Collected 'The Shadow'" by Bill Pronzini.

Mann, Edward Andrew. *The Portals.* New York: Simon and Schuster, (1974). A West Coast lawyer, Cary Ralston, finds a book of undecipherable symbols in the library of the Baron de Chantille, whose estate is being settled after a bizarre auto accident. The book is a supernatural primer of evil, and naturally, in the hands of a lawyer, all hell breaks loose.

Mann, F. O. *Albert Grope: The Story of a Belated Victorian.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., (1931). A life story of a man who apprenticed as a bookseller. Much information about the workings of a second-hand bookshop in London at the turn of the century.

Markstein, George. *Chance Awakening.* New York: Ballantine, (1978). A Russian spy lies "asleep" in England

for seven years and is activated by means of a coded message found on page 34 of an antiquarian bookseller's catalogue.

Mathieson, Theodore. *The Great "Detectives."* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1960. Mathieson constructs stories with historical figures as detectives. Omar Khayyam solves a locked-room mystery by a stain left on a copy of a book, and Miguel Cervantes finds a passage in his own novel *Don Quixote* which clears him in a murder investigation.

Mearson, Lyon. *The Whisper on the Stair.* New York: Macaulay, (1924). A missing person, presumably dead, leaves behind a trail of murder and violence after his books are sold to an antiquarian bookshop, and then again to a collector.

Meyer, Lynn. *Paperback Thriller.* New York: Random House, (1975). Dr. Sarah Chayse was a psychiatrist. She was shocked when a paperback novel described her office down to tiny details and revealed intimate knowledge of her confidential files. She investigates the matter into the world of publishing.

Meynell, Laurence. *Die By the Book.* London: Crime Club, (1966). The Duchess of Mexe is prepared to sell one of the six most valuable books in the world, the *Mexe Book of Hours.* A series of violent events follow her announced decision.

_____. *Sleep of the Unjust.* London: The Crime Club, (1963). A freelance writer accepted a job to catalogue 14,000 books in the library of a Press Baron at his country estate. The "unjust" of the title might have come from the fact that the author expected him to complete his task in one month.

Miller, Agnes. *The Colfax Book-Plate.* New York: Century, (1926). A classic bookselling novel in which Miss Constance Fuller, a young female bookseller in staid Darrow's Rare Book Shop, finds an unrecorded bookplate designed by the famous artist, Mr. Colfax, for an American client. Then seemingly unrelated murders begin occurring. A bookplate is affixed to the front cover of both copies of the first American edition.

Miller, Walter M. Jr. *A Canticle for Leibowitz.* Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1960. A futuristic novel set in the aftermath of nuclear war. The setting is a monastery in the Southwest founded by the Albertian Order of St. Leibowitz. There monks recreate illuminated manuscripts of blueprints left by their saint. One of the great underground classic novels of our time.

Miquel y Planas, R. *La Llegenda del Llibreter Assassi de Barcelona.* Barcelona: Casa Miquel-Rius, 1928. A very fine copy of this famous tale of murder between book collectors in Barcelona, Spain.

Mojtabai, A. G. *Mundome.* New York: Simon and Schuster, (1974). Richard Henken is an archivist in a large, moldering library. His character is set against Meg, who seems to be his opposite. A psychological novel about the lives split between the library and the bustling world outside.

Monteilhet, Hubert. *Dead Copy.* London: Macdonald and Janes, (1975). Subtitled "a wicked, witty novel about the publishing of an international best seller." Characters include a "young librarian," a "plump publisher," and a "distinguished professor. . .and plagiarist."

_____. *Murder at the Frankfurt Book Fair.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1976. The first American edition of *Dead Copy.*

Morgan, Charles. *The Judge's Story.* London: Macmillan, 1947. A judge retires. He has collected books all his life and now sets out to write a novel about the Athenians. Once he starts research on the book, he is stopped by murder and mystery which he must solve before he can continue with his book.

Morley, Christopher. *The Curious Case of Kenelm Digby.* New York: The Universal Coterie of Pipe Smokers, 1975. One of Morley's favorite book anecdotes. With an afterword by Herman Abromson. The piece was originally published in Morley's *Tales from a Rolltop Desk.*

_____. *The Haunted Bookshop.* Garden City: Doubleday, Page, 1919. The classic bookshop mystery, which takes place in an antiquarian bookshop.

Morton, Anthony. *Books for the Baron.* New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, (1952). John Mannering hunts through London for a package of stolen books. In the process he meets some very interesting book dealers and book collectors.

Morton, William. *The Mystery of the Human Bookcase.* New York: Mason, (1931). A publishing novel in which a manuscript helps solve the crime. The dust jacket has bodies shelved on a bookcase.

Moskowitz, Sam. *The Man Who Called Himself Poe.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1969. Contains Robert Bloch's short story "The Man Who Collected Poe."

Moye, Polley & Brown Books. *A Bookman's Christmas Carol.* Seattle: Moye, Polley & Brown Books, 1981. A Christmas story about murder in an antiquarian bookshop by this Seattle bookshop. This was the first in a series of Season's Greetings by the firm.

_____. *A Christman Crime.* Seattle: Moye, Polley & Brown Books, 1982. The second in a series of bookish Christmas mysteries that take place in the antiquarian bookshop of Kedge and Marley.

Moynahan, Julian. *Pairing Off.* New York: William Morrow, 1969. The story of Myles McCormick, who spends his days working at the Boston Free Library cataloguing books in odd alphabets and his evenings pursuing women. Very accurate portrait of life in a large public library.

Munby, A. N. L. *The Alabaster Hand, and Other Stories.* London: Dennis Dobson, (1950). A series of ghost stories in the style of M. R. James written in a German P.O.W. camp during the war. Several of the stories are book-related, including "The Tregannet Book of Hours" and "The Inscription."

Murphy, Marguerite. *Borrowed Alibi.* New York: Avalon Books, (1961). Amanda Robertson is the town's librarian. Her cousin comes to visit from London. She seems

acquainted with Byron Phillips, the town's handsome socialite. The two girls attend an upper-class party where Phillips makes a surprising play for Amanda. Then he is found murdered the following day in the town's library. With writing up to the Avalon standard.

Nash, Simon. *Unhallowed Murder.* New York: Roy Publishers, (1966). A vicar who collects old, rare books is found murdered in his London church. The police investigate and connect his hobby and his murder to a group of Satanists.

Nelson, Hugh Lawrence. *The Title Is Murder.* New York: Rinehart, (1947). Lucius Braxton, the owner of San Francisco's most exclusive bookstore, was found dead in his office. Suspects include the bookshop staff, whom Braxton treated with little sensitivity.

Nevins, Francis M., Jr. *Publish and Perish.* New York: Putnam's, 1975. A bestselling novelist dies in a fire. A note to the paper intimates that it was murder. The author's lawyer, who drew up his will, investigates. His case involves both publishing and academia.

North, John. *A Shade Byronic.* London: Jarrolds, (1933). A spinster in twentieth-century London meets someone who could be Byron's ghost. An antiquarian bookseller gives her information about Byron and his circle. Very scarce ghost tale.

North, Sam. *209 Thriller Road.* New York: St. Martin's Press, (1979). The Novel Shop sells stories. The owner will write a novel, on demand, for a customer, with the customer as the hero. Danny Plant, a wealthy scrap iron merchant with questionable ties, wants a story written. He is murdered soon after and his friends start observing the Shop. A curious mixture of fantasy and mystery.

Offord, Lenore Glen. *Walking Shadow.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1959. An anonymous writer adds lines to a Shakespearian play at the Ashland, Oregon, Shakespeare Festival that lead to a murder. Other strange events occur which lead the protagonist to think that the Festival is jinxed.

O'Malley, Patrick. *The Affair of John Donne.* New York: M. S. Mill, 1964. A Society devoted to the writings of John Donne is a front for an ultra-right-wing group. Counter-espionage agents Harrigan and Hoeffler are assigned to infiltrate and break up a sinister plot against the country.

O'Toole, G. J. A. *Poor Richard's Game.* New York: Delacorte, 1982. An historical novel concerning Washington and Jefferson sending an investigator to Paris to find a spy in Benjamin Franklin's staff. The investigator finds the traitor and in the process finds secrets concerning Franklin and the notorious Hell Fire Club.

Oursler, Fulton. *The Reader's Digest Murder Case.* New York: Farrar, Straus & Young, (1952). A murder takes place on the grounds of *The Reader's Digest.* Much about publishing. Not in Hubin.

Packard, Frank L. *The Locked Book.* Toronto: Copp, Clark, (1924). A book on a barbaric altar with a dragon design on it could be the solution to a missing Rajah's treasure. The mystery involves a yachting party when their boat strays off course.

Page, Marco. *Fast Company.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1938. A classic novel about the rare old book trade. Joel Glass investigates the murder of a New York book dealer. Much fast dialogue and information about bookselling. The character of Glass is reported to have been based on the real bookseller Ben Abramson.

Parker, Robert B. *The Godwulf Manuscript.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1974. This is the first Spenser novel, featuring a detective so tough that his creator did not even bother to give him a first name. Here he chases all over Boston looking for a stolen illuminated manuscript.

_____. *Looking for Rachel Wallace.* New York: Delacorte Press, (1980). Spenser is hired to protect a feminist author who has had threats made against her life. This involves trailing her through book-signing parties, speeches, and other publisher-related tasks.

Patrick, Q. *File on Fenton & Farr.* New York: William Morrow, 1937. A file of clues that should lead the reader to expose the murderer of a baffling crime. One of the clues is a dust jacket for a book.

Pearson, Edmund L. *The Adventure of the Lost Manuscripts & One Other.* Boulder: The Aspen Press, 1974. An original story about Sherlock Holmes finding a lost manuscript. It originally appeared in *The Library* in 1911. Illustrated by Rob Pudim.

_____. *The Secret Book.* New York: Macmillan, 1914. A famous series of stories involving "The Secret Book." Some are Sherlock Holmes related.

_____. *Sherlock Holmes and the Drood Mystery.* Freeville: The Aspen Press, 1973. Sherlock Holmes solves the mystery of Edwin Drood. Scarce.

Peden, William. *Twilight at Monticello.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1973. Set at the University of Virginia, the story concerns a group of Jefferson scholars, including a "beautiful and amoral archivist."

Perkins, Frederic B. *Scrope; or, The Lost Library.* Boston: Roberts Brothers, 1874. One of the earliest American novels involving mystery and bookshops. A great deal of the novel takes place in Gowan's second-hand bookshop in New York City.

Perowne, Barry. *A Singular Conspiracy.* Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, (1974). A mystery based on a four-month period in Edgar Allan Poe's life in 1844 which has been left unaccounted for by literary historians. The author supposes a meeting with Charles Baudelaire in France. Very literary.

Phillips, Stella. *The Hidden Wrath.* New York: Walker, (1982). A "completely honest" librarian at Braseley Adult College is know for her sharp and caustic statements. When she is found dead, no one particularly mourns her passing, until Detective Inspector Matthew Furnival starts investigating the possibility that she was murdered.

Philmore, R. *The Good Books.* London: Gollancz, 1936. A professor is murdered. He had been working on a project with several other academicians on assembling a list of "good books" to be read by the lower classes.

Platt, Kin. *Dead As They Come.* New York: Random House, (1972). The editor of a totally despicable murder mystery writer searches for his killer. Since he had abandoned his wife, double-crossed most everyone he came in contact with, and betrayed his friends, there are a lot of suspects.

Potter, Jeremy. *The Dance of Death.* New York: Walker, (1968). Mr. Rowlandson Jones is a print shop owner doing the definitive study of Thomas Rowlandson, the artist. He assists his own research by stealing original Rowlandson drawings from the great libraries of the world. Close to death, he is hampered in finishing his great work by a nagging wife, and the body of a young assistant, with whom he had an affair, lying on the rug in his office. One of the best plotted and written novels in our collection.

_____. *Hazard Chase.* London: Constable, (1964). The theft of an ancient manuscript is closely followed by a gruesome death on an ancient tennis court. Talbot B. Talbot, the American tennis champion and amateur sleuth, searches for the killer.

Prather, Richard S. *The Comfortable Coffin.* Greenwich: Fawcett, (1960). Contains the first book appearance of "My Queer Dean" by Ellery Queen, which concerns a missing book reputed to have a presentation from Francis Bacon to William Shakespeare in it. A paperback original.

Price, Anthony. *Our Man in Camelot.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1976. A U.S. Air Force jet is missing. A search on the background of the pilot reveals a strong interest in the literature surrounding King Arthur. There are links between this research and key documents held in Russian libraries.

Priestley, J. B. *Salt Is Leaving.* London: Pan, (1966). Dr. Salt investigates the disappearance of an antiquarian bookseller and a flighty young girl with the assistance of the bookseller's daughter and assistant.

Pronzini, Bill. *Blowback.* New York: Random House, (1977). The Nameless Detective goes to an old army buddies' remote fishing camp to await the results of a biopsy and, while he is there, solves a murder case. Some musing about Nameless's pulp collection.

_____. *Hoodwink.* New York: St. Martin's Press, (1981). Nameless attends a pulp convention where he talks with other collectors and the writers themselves. There is a murder and Nameless solves it. A great deal of collecting discussions, and inner workings of publishing.

_____. *A Killing in Zanadu.* Richmond: Waves Press, 1980. A publishing related story featuring Nameless. Included is a checklist of Pronzini's novels.

_____. *Labyrinth.* New York: St. Martin's Press, (1980). Nameless accepts an assignment to pay for a new shipment of pulp fiction for his collection. He is supposed to protect a man and finds him at the scene of a murder with a smoking gun in his hand.

_____. *Panic!* New York: Random House, (1972). Nameless becomes involved in a complex plot while trying to find Jack Lennox, a man fleeing from the wrath of his ex-wife. Lennox is befriended by a children's book writer and

then pursued into the desert and almost killed. Some musing about Nameless's pulp collection.

_____. *Scattershot.* New York: St. Martin's Press, (1982). Nameless takes on a series of simple cases and ends up with pending legal action, a police department ready to revoke his license, and a threat against his life. There is some reflection about his collection of pulp fiction.

_____. *Undercurrent.* New York: Random House, (1973). Nameless investigates a newly married man's indiscretions and finds him murdered. In the course of his investigation he meets an author of a twenty-year-old, forgotten mystery that has to do with the present. Some mention of Nameless's pulp collection.

_____. *The Vanished.* New York: Random House, (1973). A recently discharged master sergeant vanishes. The Nameless Detective searches for him. A good deal of musing about Nameless's pulp fiction collection.

_____, and Collin Wilcox. *Twospot.* New York: Putnam's, (1978). An interesting experiment with two mystery writers having their detectives collaborate in solving a murder. Each writes alternating chapters from the point of view of his detective. Pronzini writes about Nameless and offers some musings about his collection of pulps.

Purtill, Richard. *Murdercon.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1982. A science-fiction convention is the scene for this story involving a legendary writer and his lost story. Both seem to be involved with murder at the convention.

Queen, Ellery. *The Great Women Detectives and Criminals.* Garden City: Blue Ribbon, 1946. Contains Frederick Irving Anderson's "The Jorgenson Plates," a publishing story featuring the technical aspects of publishing in England and America.

_____. *In the Queens' Parlor.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957. A nonfiction potpourri of observations on the detective novel, including "Evolution of a Bibliomaniac."

_____. *The Queen's Awards, 1946.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1946. Contains the first of Michael Innes's Appleby short stories, "Lesson in Anatomy."

Rathbone, Julian. *Base Case.* New York: Pantheon, (1981). A complex narrative interspersing the building of a nuclear base, gem dealers, and members of a literary congress in a murder mystery.

Reach, Angus B. *Clement Lorimer; or, The Book with the Iron Clasps.* London: Bogue, (1849). (★) With twelve plates by Cruikshank. The plot has to do with a book handed down from generation to generation that bears a curse on a family.

Reno, Marie R. *Final Proof.* New York: Harper, (1976). An editorial director for a large book club is found shot in her office over a set of galley proofs. There is much about publishing here. A first novel.

Rhode, John. *Death of an Author.* London: Geoffrey Bles, (1947). The world of publishing is explored when a best-selling author is found dead after he was seen cutting wood, and suspicious circumstances are noticed.

Robinson, Robert. *Landscape with Dead Dons.* London: Gollancz, 1956. Nicholas Flower came to the Bodleian Library to read *Paradise Lost* from the first edition. When he received a copy from the librarian, all he found was blank paper stuffed between the covers. Nicholas then discovered other important books similarly defaced, and investigated the matter to find a plot against English civilization was afoot.

Rodney, Bryan. *The Owl Flies Home.* London: Wright & Brown, (1942). The bibliophile and master cracksman, Francis Villiers, journeys to Ireland on a speaking engagement and to steal from the dishonorable in order to support his bibliophilic interests. Scotland Yard Inspector Darch is in pursuit.

_____. *The Owl Hoots.* London: Wright & Brown, (1945). Francis Villiers is a world-famous book collector who gives lectures on bibliophilic subjects. He supports this gentlemanly habit by being a master "cracksman" and thief who leaves a trademark after each crime identifying the thief as "The Owl." There is a good deal about book collecting here.

Ronns, Edward. *Terror in the Town.* New York: McKay, 1947. (★) A New England mystery concerning a strange series of break-ins in which some individual systematically ransacked public libraries. Verity Farland investigates, touches on information about a whaling ship and a lost treasure.

Rosenbach, A. S. W. *Neuverejnitelne Memoary.* Praze: Method Kalab, 1925. A privately printed excerpt from Rosenbach's *Unpublished Memoirs.* Most likely, the first Czechoslovakian translation.

_____. *The Vanishing Diary.* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1961. A young test pilot bails out of his plane over England and finds a padlocked box in a deserted shepherds' hut where he spends the night. Inside is a missing diary that offers clues to a murder.

Riddell, John. *The John Riddell Murder Case.* New York: Scribner's, 1930. Book reviewer John Riddell is found dead in his apartment. The cause of death is listed as acute boredom. Sherwood Anderson, Calvin Coolidge, Alexander Woolcott, and others are suspects. The story is written as a parody on Philo Vance mysteries.

Roberts, F. C. *The Strange Case of the Megatherium Thefts.* Cambridge: University Press, 1945. This rare piece of Sherlockiana involves the theft of books from the Megatherium Library. In the accompanying letter, Roberts states that the story was not intended for wide distribution and that it was based on an incident in his own club library.

Roberts, James Hall. *The Q Document.* New York: William Morrow, 1964. A two-thousand-year-old papyrus scroll disappears from Germany during World War II and appears again in Japan some years later. Professor Cooper sets out to authenticate it.

Robinson, Lewis. *The Manuscript Murder.* London: Arthur Barker, 1933. When Colonel Sir Oscar Horton is found shot through the head a few hours after his wedding, Joseph Marks, his lifelong friend and now a famous detective-story writer, has a unique method of assisting the police. He recreates the scene of the crime exactly and eventually unmasks the murderer.

_____. *The Unpublished Memoirs.* New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1917. A series of short stories of bookish mysteries by the great bookseller himself. Sowerby claimed that this was the only one of his books that he wrote by himself.

Rosenberg, Betty. *Bibliomania; or, Bound to Kill.* Glendale: The Battledore Press, 1981. An essay on mystery novels that involve book collectors as characters.

_____. *Booked for Murder.* Glendale: The Battledore Press, 1979. An essay on detective and mystery fiction that takes place in libraries.

_____. *The Letter Killeth.* Los Angeles: Karmiole, 1982. A reprint of the two previous books, with a third essay, "Publish and Perish," added.

Rosenfeld, Lulla. *Death of the I Ching.* New York: Clarkson N. Potter, (1981). At a Greenwich Village party, several guests ask light-hearted questions to the ancient book of oracles, the *I Ching,* only to receive answers of impending doom. One of the partygoers is killed that evening, and several other disasters occur until the investigaton of the matters begins.

Ross, Barnaby. *Drury Lane's Last Case.* New York: Viking, 1933. An involved story which includes in its cast of characters museum curators, a bibliophile, a young scholar, a librarian, and Drury Lane himself.

Ross, W. E. D. *One Louisburg Square.* New York: Lenox Hill Press, 1974. Bette Carelli became the sole heir of an estate from a missing uncle and aunt she never met. The provisions of the will insist that she live in his house in Boston at One Louisburg Square. There she meets a world of book collectors and art lovers.

Rothberg, Abraham. *The Thousand Doors.* New York: Holt, Rinehart, Winston, (1965). Warren Stone, an American literary agent, is thrown together with a diverse group of characters in Dubrovnik and becomes involved in international intrigue.

Rowley, J. De La Mare. *The Passage in Park Lane.* London: Thornton Butterworth, (1928). A feud between two old families dated back over several generations when Mr. Merriman picked up a manuscript volume from a second-hand bookshop that revealed, in a cypher chess problem, a horrible conspiracy against the rival family that Merriman is in time to stop.

Russell, Charlotte Murray. *Murder at the Old Stone House.* Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1935. Jane Edwards, a shrewd and lovable spinster, solves two murders which involve a teapot, a candle, and a unique book.

St. John, Wylly Folk. *The Mystery Book Mystery.* New York: Viking, (1976). The mystery takes place at a writers' conference, with the protagonist being a seventeen-year-old student learning to write a mystery novel.

Salkeld, Michael. *Missing from the Shelf.* London: Geoffrey Bles, 1936. The author's first, and only, mystery, in two variant bindings. No priority indicated. A missing book from the library of the retired Mr. Tomlinson, leads him back to the second-hand bookshop where he originally purchased it. The book and missing pages from it are eventually returned, but not before the story touches on English academia and eventually the Incan ruins of South America.

Sayers, Dorothy L. *Lord Peter Views the Body.* London: Gollancz, 1928. (★) There are several short stories dealing with Peter Wimsey and his book collecting, "The Undignified Melodrama of the Bones of Contention" and "The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste" being two examples.

_____. "The Professor's Manuscript." In *The Delights of Detection* edited by Jacques Barzun. New York: Criterion, 1961. This story was originally published in *In the Teeth of the Evidence* (1939).

Schier, Norma. *Murder By the Book.* New York: Zebra, (1979). An antiquarian bookseller in Aspen, Colorado, is murdered. His daughter goes about to find his killer. A sealed section at the end reveals the murderer. The reader is invited to answer questions about the crime before opening this section—perhaps as a reward for suffering through the wretched prose style. A paperback original.

Schorr, Mark. *Red Diamond, Private Eye.* New York: St. Martin's, (1983). Simon Jaffe is a New York City cab driver by day and an ardent pulp fiction reader and collector by night. Then one day he leaves his job, sells his collection, and becomes Red Diamond, Private Eye, the hardboiled dick.

Schwartz, Alan. *No Country for Old Men.* (New York): New American Library, (1980). Eric Burns researches a book on American left-wing poets of the 1930s. His subject brings him into contact with a still active Nazi plot. There is much information on research, government grants, and publishing here.

Sharp, David. *I, the Criminal.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1933. A professor steals a book from a friend's library to teach him a lesson. The friend is killed by a burglar that evening. The British Museum librarian is upset by the loss, but before the professor can return the book it is stolen by the burglar/murderer.

Shaw, Howard. *Death of a Don.* New York: Scribner's, (1981). David Ashe is a radical leftist professor at Oxford's prestigious Beaufort College. Rules state that he has this position for life, but strange events indicate that he is responsible for stealing a prized document from the library, leading a radical demonstration, and murder. Perhaps the rules will be changed.

Sherman, Richard. *A Kindred Spirit.* London: Faber and Faber, 1951. A successful writer of detective fiction becomes infatuated with a rental library and quickly becomes the worst kind of bibliomaniac.

(Shmavonian) *Catalogue Three, Rare Books.* Berkeley: Sarkis Shmavonian, 1981. This catalogue includes a section of 95 bibliomysteries. It is the first antiquarian booksellers catalogue we were aware of to feature this sub-genre.

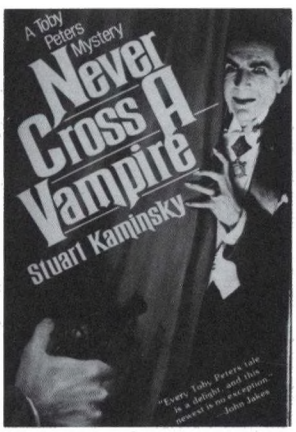
Silverberg, Robert. *The Book of Skulls.* New York: Scribner's, (1972). An involved plot in which a brilliant

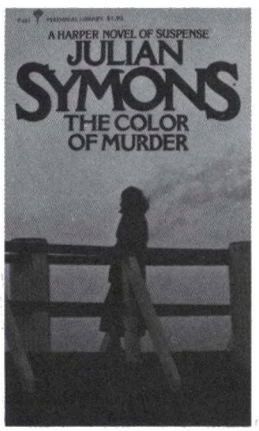
young scholar, Eli, discovers and deciphers a strange book that suggests that there is a way to preserve the body against the ravages of age. It requires a trial of four candidates. Eli and his friends go to the Arizona desert, find a sect called the Keepers of the Skulls, and begin their trial. It ends in murder.

Sims, George. *Deadhand.* London: Gollancz, 1971. A wild and crazy party in London leads Ralph Neville on a chase

him into bankruptcy. The detective is Reverend Randollph, an ex-professional quarterback turned priest.

Stade, George. *Confessions of a Lady-Killer.* New York: Norton, (1979). Victor Grant's wife leaves him after attending a consciousness-raising seminar. This triggers Grant into a career change. He becomes an avenger of people he feels have defaced society, and sets about to murder them. Included are several authors and a publisher. Grant was manager of the Columbia University bookstore.





after a girl he met there. There is also a letter that arrives from a wartime friend who was recently killed in a boating accident. Behind these seemingly unrelated events is a German diary dated 1945.

_____. *Hunters Point.* London: Gollancz, 1973. Ed Buchanan follows a killer to San Francisco and becomes involved with the student protest movement there.

_____. *The Last Best Friend.* London: Gollancz, 1967. A rare book dealer in London, Ned Balfour, investigates the death of his friend and becomes involved with the English art world.

_____. *Rex Mundi.* London: Gollancz, 1978. Harry Gilmour, a middle-aged antiquarian book dealer, investigates a murder he witnessed while on vacation in Greece. His inquiries link the murder to a heresy incident in the Middle Ages.

_____. *The Sand Dollar.* London: Gollancz, 1969. An antiquarian book dealer, Nicholas Howard, is on his way back from delivering an expensive piece of erotica to a new customer, a homunculus with decadent tastes, when he befriends a girl who seduces him and then asks him to help locate her friend.

_____. *The Terrible Door.* London: The Bodley Head, (1964). The author's first book. Robert Seldon, a rare book dealer, becomes involved with an eccentric American collector in a search for the missing Ibiza letters from a well-known collection.

Smith, Charles Merrill. *Reverend Randollph and the Unholy Bible.* New York: Putnam's, (1983). This story involves a previously unknown edition of the Gutenberg Bible, printed by Gutenberg just before his creditors drove

Stang, Joanne. *Shadows on the Sceptered Isle.* New York: Crown, (1980). Elizabeth Kendall meets her ex-lover in an antiquarian bookshop on Marylebone High Street in London. Elizabeth, with her interests in Arthurian legends, is to film a television documentary at his ancestral home. History—both England's and Elizabeth's—become involved in the present, as she leaves the protection of libraries and museums for this adventure.

Starr, Kevin. *Land's End.* New York: McGraw Hill, (1979). A complex narrative about San Francisco's history. A central character is Sebastian Collins, a winemaker, scholar of the Baroque, and leader in making the city a neo-classic center for the book and arts. The workd of libraries and collecting is represented, as are literary figures such as Jack London and Robert Louis Stevenson.

Starrett, Vincent. *The Adventure of the Unique Hamlet.* Chicago: Walter M. Hill, 1920. Considered by many to be the first piece of Sherlockiana, the story involves the search for a book.

_____. *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, (1960). A reprint of "The Adventure of the Unique Hamlet" is included in this collection.

_____. *221B: Studies in Sherlock Holmes.* New York: Macmillan, 1940. Containing "The Adventure of the Unique Hamlet."

Stern, Richard Martin. *Manuscript for Murder.* New York: Scribner's, (1970). Ellen Wilson flies to New York from London to deliver a manuscript to Martin and Fielding Publishing Co. It details a three-million-pound train robbery which occurred in England just two days before. Warren Fielding goes looking for the messenger, and there is a climactic scene on the wild Scottish Highlands.

Steward, Barbara and Dwight. *The Lincoln Diddle.* New York: William Morrow, 1979. A story in which Edgar Allan Poe solves the mystery of Abraham Lincoln's assassination.

Steward, Dwight. *The Acupuncture Murders.* New York: Harper & Row, (1973). Sampson Trehune, a professional book appraiser, is a gourmet, has a special interest in murder, and is totally deaf. He is asked to participate in an experiment for curing deafness by acupuncture, after which he finds a dead body.

Stout, Rex. *And Be a Villain.* New York: Viking, 1948. A publisher of an outrageously expensive horse-racing sheet drops dead during an appearance on a radio show. This novel marks the first appearance of Wolfe's Moriarty, Arnold Zeck.

_____. *Murder by the Book.* New York: Viking, 1951. The body of a man with a list of names in his pocket washes up from the river in Manhattan and a young girl is killed in an automobile accident. They both are connected to a publishing company and a manuscript for a novel from a person who doesn't seem to exist. Nero Wolfe helps his client and the police solve the crime.

_____. *Plagio Sangriento.* Buenos Aires: Acme, (1960). First Argentine edition. A foreign language edition of *Plot It Yourself* with a translation by Gregorio Rubio.

_____. *Plot It Yourself.* New York: Viking, 1959. There is a plot to accuse America's leading publishers and writers of plagiarism and in doing so blackmail them into not appearing in court. They of course come to Nero Wolfe for help. As usual, Wolfe solves the crime and Archie Goodwin does all the work.

Straus, Ralph. *Pengard Awake.* New York: D. Appleton, 1920. The English book collector Sir Robert Graeme travels in America and meets John Pengard, an antiquarian bookseller, in his shop in Chicago. It is obvious that some deep mystery is making Pengard's life miserable. Sir Robert is drawn to this psychological mystery.

Strevens, Robert. *Murder in Manuscript.* London: Rich and Cowan, (1948). Stephen Conway keeps a promise to a dead army buddy to show Alexander Dean, the renowned playwright and mystery writer the manuscript of his play. When Conway arrives after the war, he finds Dean murdered in his study. Dean's unpublished manuscript is connected with the murder.

Strong, L. A. G. *All Fall Down.* London: Collins, (1944). A nasty, curmudgeonly book collector is found at his desk, dead, crushed by his book collection and book shelves that fell on him from behind the desk. One of the most enjoyable novels in the collection.

Swarthout, Glendon, *Skeletons.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1979. A writer of children's books investigates the murder of a popular Southwestern writer with the help of a local librarian.

Swinnerton, Frank. *Death of a Highbrow.* London: Hutchinson, 1961. A mystery about the literary avant garde fifty years after they were beginning their literary struggle in London. Gerald Stanhope reveals to a questioner what happened to his life when he and Tom Curtal were young. Much about publishing.

Symons, Julian. *Bland Beginnings.* New York: Harper, (1949). An important novel based on the Thomas J. Wise affair. Two Carter and Pollard-like scholars find several forgeries in nineteenth-century pamphlets by using scientific methods. Their research leads directly to the implication that England's foremost book collector is intrinsically involved.

_____. *The Colour of Murder.* London: The Crime Club, (1957). A happily married young businessman meets Sheila Morton at the local library. She is simply a girl who can't say no. Their affair is broken suddenly when a murder takes place.

_____. *A Manuscript Article on L. A. G. Strong.* 2¼-page AM. The article deals with Strong and his novel *All Fall Down.*

_____. *The Modern Crime Story.* Edinburgh: The Tragara Press, 1980. An interesting nonfiction essay on the crime novel, indicating modern trends in the genre.

_____. *A Three-Pipe Problem.* New York: Harper & Row, (1975). The final case for Sherlock Holmes, involving murders committed with a karate chop. The case takes Homes into an adult bookshop of sorts.

Targ, William and Lewis Herman. *The Case of Mr. Cassidy.* New York: Phoenix Press, (1939). Subtitled "A Murder Mystery about a Chicago Book Collector," it involves a twist of plot when Mr. Cassidy is found murdered in his library and his first edition of Edgar Allan Poe's *Tamerlane* is not stolen.

Taylor, Andrew. *Caroline Minuscule.* New York: Dodd, Mead, (1983). Dr. Gumper, a leading expert on the Caroline Minuscule calligraphic script, is strangled. The text he was working with proves to be the first clue in a treasure hunt for a cache of diamonds. This is Taylor's first novel.

Taylor, L. A. *Footnote to Murder.* New York: Walker, (1983). Marge Brock accepts a research job working for a true crime writer and discovers a series of murders that occurred in various parts of the world that she and her friends had been in at the same time that the murders took place. Much library research.

Taylor, Phoebe Atwood. *Going, Going, Gone.* New York: W. W. Norton, (1943). Why did the woman throw sixty books into the lake after buying them at a country auction on Cape Cod? And why was another chest of books worth $3,000? An Asey Mayo mystery.

_____. *Proof of the Pudding.* New York: Norton, 1945. An iffy book to include here. Part of the plot has to do with primary source material a person is using to write an unwanted biography.

Thayer, Lee. *Murder Stalks the Circle.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1947. This is the first detective novel to deal with the Wise forgery. Set in Hartford, Connecticut, Peter Clancy, an insurance investigator, investigates a fire in the prestigious Elizabeth Circle area.

Thomas, Dylan, and John Davenport. *The Death of the King's Canary.* New York: Viking Press, (1976). A literary detective story about the death of the poet laureate, written as a light-hearted, but barbed, *roman-à-clef.* It was published after Thomas's death because the remarks made about Eliot and Auden were considered very offensive.

Thomas, Murray. *Inspector Wilkins Reads the Proofs.* London: Herbert Jenkins, (1935). Clifford Belling attempts to write a thriller based on a real case and does his research by attempting to solve the murder. He is helped by Inspector Wilkins. A marvelous, vivid dust jacket.

Thomas, Ross. *If You Can't Be Good.* New York: William Morrow, (1973). Decatur Lucas uses many libraries to track down research on Senator Robert F. Ames, who is mysteriously implicated in a $50,000 bribe.

Thorndike, Russell. *The Master of the Macabre.* London: Rich and Cowan, (1947). An overworked author is driven from his London flat by ghosts. He attempts to escape to his cottage on Romney Marsh but is stopped on the way by an automobile accident and forced to stay at an old palace owned by "The Master of the Macabre," who shows the author his vast library of strange manuscripts and curios.

Tilton, Alice. *Beginning with a Bash.* New York: W. W. Norton, (1972). Martin Jones went into an antiquarian bookshop to escape the cold of a Boston winter. Inside he finds Professor John North dead among the piles of books. The police arrest him. The bookshop's owner, Dot Peters, asks Leonidas Witherall, who looks remarkably like William Shakespeare, to help solve the crime. This is the first of the Witherall novels, first published in England in 1937.

Train, Arthur. *The Lost Gospel.* New York: Scribner's, 1925. A Presentation Copy to "Mrs. Roosevelt." An invoice from Argosy Book Store has a typed note from Louis Cohen stating that "We did buy many books from the Eleanor Roosevelt library, and it is quite possible that this one came from that source." The story is about the discovery of a fifth gospel of the life of Christ.

Treat, Lawrence. *Crime and Puzzlement: 24 Solve-Them-Yourself Picture Mysteries.* Boston: David R. Godine, (1981). Containing "Murder in a Bookstore." The puzzles consist of a picture, a brief description of a crime, and specific questions the reader is to answer. Clues are everywhere, and answers are provided at the end of the book.

Trill, Matthew. *Murder on Paper.* Montreal: Howard Smith Paper Mills, n.d. (*c.*1936). A murder of a printing company president begins this rather technical murder mystery which was issued in serial form by the Howard Smith Paper Mills in their sales booklet "Paper on Parade." This is Chapter Six only. We were unable to find other issues. The mystery was apparently not printed elsewhere. Not in Hubin or the National Union Catalogue.

The Union Jack. *The Book of Death!* London: The Amalgamated Press, 1929. A complete Sexton Blake detective story wherein Sexton meets a new nemesis, Miss Death, in a fight over a book.

_____. *The Clue of the Missing Volume.* London: The Amalgamated Press, 1929. A Sexton Blake novel involving murder and a missing book. Many different writers wrote Sexton Blake stories, as was common for pulp fiction of that day.

Upfield, Arthur W. *An Author Bites the Dust.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1948. Set in Australia, the detective Napoleon Bonaparte enters the world of publishing and *belles-lettres* to find a murderer in their midst.

Vale, G. B. *The Mystery of the Papyrus.* London: Methuen, (1929). Professor Entwhistle has put together a large collection of Egyptian artifacts. He is found murdered, and a valuable papyrus manuscript is missing. This is the only edition of Vale's first mystery, Scarce.

Valin, Jonathan. *Final Notice.* New York: Dodd, Mead, (1980). A psychopath has been cutting pieces of the female anatomy out of art books in the Hyde Park Library of Cincinnati. The tough-guy private eye, Harry Stoner, teams up with a group of little-old-librarian types and tries to capture him before he tries his hand at flesh and blood. A well-written novel.

Van Greenaway, Peter. *The Medusa Touch.* New York: Stein and Day, (1973). A novelist, John Morlar, is found murdered by a bronze bust of Napoleon. The police become aware of amazing coincidences between Morlar's disaster novels and subsequent events in real life. The police are equally intrigued with the Secret Service's attempt to buy all the copies of Morlar's published books.

Van Gulik, Robert. *Poets and Murder.* London: Heinemann, (1968). A story of ancient China in which Judge Dee solves a series of murders which involve the court poet and a beautiful poetess whose function is to

criticize poetry and develop calligraphy. A manuscript proves to be a key to the solution.

Van Rindt, Philippe. *The Tetramachus Collection.* London: Macdonald and Jane's, (1977). A crippled Polish priest reads a collection of papers housed in the innermost depths of the Vatican's library. Only six men have had access to it, but the priest believes he should let the world know. They detail the Vatican's association with the Nazis during the Second World War. He steals the papers and many people try to recover them, even if it means killing the priest.

Viney, Albert. *The Ballet of Moments Unborn.* London: Andrew Melrose, n.d. (*c.*1945). A young stowaway is found to be wanted in England for patricide, murder, and arson. His escape is arranged by Ting Ching-wei, a famous Chinese bibliophile. He wants the boy to locate the Mattatias diary for him. The diary claims to be an account of the armed "March on Jerusalem" sought by the Tings for over a thousand years. Included is mention of Shakespeare's autobiography.

Von Conta, Manfred. *The Deathbringer.* London: Calder & Boyars, 1971. An owner of a lending library goes to a psychiatrist for help in dealing with a mild case of bibliomania. In treating his minor illness, the therapist turns the bookseller into a murderer. Published in Germany as *Der Totmacher.*

Wallace, Edgar. *The Door with Seven Locks.* London: Hodder, 1926. (★) A strange tale that begins when "sallow-faced Dr. Stalletti, of evil repute, stole a book of biology from a public library."

Wallace, Irving. *The R Document.* New York: Simon and Schuster, (1976). A group of politicians are attempting to impose a police state in the U.S.A. The "R Document" is the key to understanding this plot, and Christopher Collins, the Attorney General, sets out to find it and reveal its secrets.

_____. *The Seven Minutes.* New York: Simon and Schuster, (1969). American political leaders try to suppress a pornographic book which reports to tell the thoughts of a woman having sex. A freedom of speech novel.

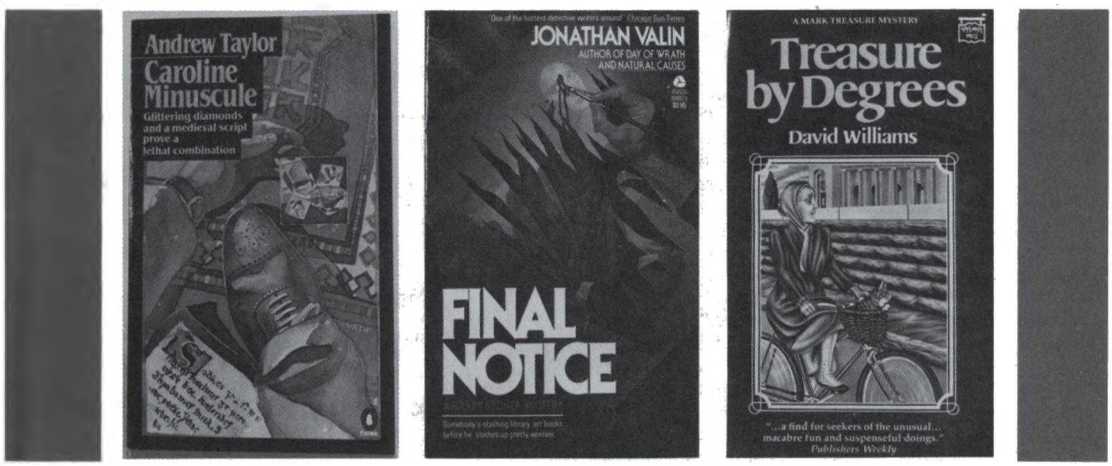
Wells, Carolyn. *Murder in the Bookshop.* Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, (1936). A wealthy book collector is found murdered in the back room of a New York antiquarian bookshop. He had broken into the shop with his private librarian after the shop had closed. The bookseller not only finds a corpse but also discovers that a rare Button Gwinnett book is missing. This is one of the classic tales of the genre.

_____. "The Shakespeare Title-Page Mystery." In *The Dolphin.* Number 4, Part 2. Illustrated by Hans Mueller, the story involves a copy of the rare first edition of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* which found its way into America during the dark days of the bombing of London.

Weston, Carolyn. *Rouse the Demon.* London: Gollancz, (1976). A police procedural involving a Manson-type killing. A writer and expert in hypnosis helps investigate the case. He has been researching addicts he was treating with hypnosis. Much about publishing.

Weston, Garnett. *The Hidden Portal.* New York: Doubleday, 1946. An unusual mystery novel about dark deeds and buried treasure. A journal leads the participants onward.

Wilcox, Collin. *Doctor, Lawyer...* New York: Random House, (1976). A police procedural in which several prominent San Francisco citizens are murdered. The villain tries to arrange a payoff in the San Francisco Public Library using the classification system as a means for communication.



Williams, Charles. *War in Heaven.* London: Victor Gollancz, 1930. A fantasy/mystery in which a gentleman is murdered in a publishing office. The protagonist must find the solution in an ancient manuscript about to be published.

Williams, David. *Treasure Preserved.* New York: St. Martin's, 1983. Louella Brassett was an eccentric, meddlesome woman who was poking through the musty family papers of Sydney Marshford in the archives of the Tophaven Public Library in order to stop a firm from tearing down a building with unique architectural work. She is killed and Mark Treasure is assigned to find out if it was accidental or murder.

_____. *Unholy Writ.* New York: St. Martin's Press, (1976). Historic Mitchell Hall was about to be sold by Sir Arthur Moonlight. He has second thoughts and tries to undo an agreement for the property. He is unable to do it when it is discovered that part of the furnishings include a manuscript copy of one of Shakespeare's plays.

Williams, Lisa Wall. *Libraries and Librarians in Murder-Mystery-Suspense Fiction, 1931-1980: A Content Analysis.* Chapel Hill: 1981. A master's thesis submitted to the School of Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Williams, Sydney. *The Drury Club Case.* New York: Penn, 1927. (★) Two gentlemen construct a murder case in the library of The Drury Club. The setting is Cape Cod and Boston.

Wills, Garry. *At Button's.* Mission, Kansas: Andrews and McMeel, 1979. The book begins with a graphic murder in the foyer of the New York Public Library. Gregory Skipworth, a scholar of eighteenth-century matters, travels to Cambridge and New Orleans to uncover the solution to this bizarre crime.

Wilson, Colin. *The Glass Cage.* New York: Random House, 1966. A series of murders in London leaves the police with no clues except for quotations from William Blake's poems scrawled on walls near the victims' mutilated bodies. Damon Reade, England's leading Blake scholar, investigates the murders. He meets an interesting collector of Blake's books and drawings during his wanderings.

_____. *The Schoolgirl Murder Case.* New York: Crown, (1974). A rare book dealer and his two Swedish, blond, twin assistants figure prominently in a complex murder. A fine and erotic book.

Wilson, Gahan. "The Manuscript of Dr. Arness." In *Mad Scientists: An Anthology of Fantasy and Horror* edited by Stuart David Schiff. Garden City: Doubleday, (1979). Also contains the bookish "Casting the Runes" by M. R. James.

Wiltz, Chris. *The Killing Circle.* New York: Macmillan, (1981). A rare book dealer, Stanley Garber, disappears. In his possession was a complete set of William Blake's works in first edition, which belonged to a wealthy collector. The collector hires Neal Rafferty to find the missing books. The book is set in New Orleans.

Winn, Dilys. *Murderess Ink.* New York: Workman Publishing, 1979. Contains "An (Overdue) Tribute to the Librarian" by Charles A. Goodrum.

Witting, Clifford. *Murder in Blue.* London: Hodder and Stoughton, (1937). John Rutherford, the proprietor of an English country bookshop, and his assistant, George Stubbings, a mystery-story buff, encounter murder in their own village. The author's first novel. The American firsts do not have the Scribner "A" but are still first editions.

Wogan, Charles. *The Horror at Wardens Hall.* London: John Long, (1948). A story involving murder, a mysterious book, and the London bookselling community.

Wood, Barbara. *The Magdalene Scrolls.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1978. Professor Ben Messer identifies strongly with newly found scrolls he is studying. With a strong mixture of fantasy and mystery, Messer is transported back in time to solve a mystery.

Wood, Sally. *Murder of a Novelist.* New York: Simon & Schuster, 1941. (★) Tony Bayne was a bestselling novelist. One of his manuscripts was the reason for his untimely death. An abridgement from the Simon and Schuster first edition of 1941.

Woods, Sara. *They Love Not Poison.* London: Macmillan, 1972. Books are the key to solving a puzzle involving hidden seventeenth-century gold-plated booty, a black-market ring, and the death of a woman from arsenic poisoning. All this faces Woods's hero, Antony Maitland, when he is discharged from the service in 1947.

Woolrich, Cornell. *Angels of Darkness.* New York: The Mysterious Press, 1978. A collection of short stories which includes "The Book That Squealed." With an introduction by Harlan Ellison.

Wren, Lassiter, and Randle McKay. *The Baffle Book.* Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1928. A series of solve-them-yourself mysteries that includes "The Problem of Napoleon's Signatures."

_____. *The Third Baffle Book.* Garden City: Doubleday, Doran, 1930. A continuation of this popular series. This issue contains "The Stolen *Endymion.*"

Wren, M. K. *Curiosity Didn't Kill the Cat.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1973. The first of the Conan Flagg novels, about the adventures of this half-Irish, half-Indian bookshop owner along the Oregon coast. The story deals with unusual bookstore customers with mysterious tastes in literature and a fleet of Russian trawlers which are anchored just beyond the harbor.

_____. *A Multitide of Sins.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1975. Isadora Canfield finds the body of her senator father in circumstances that could or could not be murder. Then a second body is found with Isadora standing over it holding a smoking gun. Conan Flaff, a licensed private eye and operator of a "fusty, anachronistic bookshop" on the Oregon coast, finds the truth about the murders.

_____. *Nothing's Certain But Death.* Garden City: Doubleday, 1978. Conan Flagg was the innocent recipient of a friend's errant punch during a barroom brawl. The punch was meant for an IRS agent who is found dead on the beach the following morning. Flagg investigates the matter to save his friend's life.

Yorke, Margaret. *The Small Hours of the Morning.* New York: Walker & Company, 1975. Cecil Titmuss, a deputy librarian of Felsbury, has his secure life threatened when his wife suddenly embarks on a clandestine affair. Someone sees them, there is a string of violent robberies, and finally murder. The author worked for libraries and bookshops in England.

Zaroulis, N. L. *The Poe Papers.* New York: Putnam's, 1977. Written in a style reminiscent of Poe, this mystery concerns the romantic letters between Edgar Allan Poe and Mrs. Nancy Richmond, which are in the possession of Richmond's daughter. A young scholar, obsessed by Poe, plots to steal the letters. □

TAD at the MOVIES

By Thomas Godfrey

It should come as cause for celebration to the readers of these pages that the largest grossing film at the time of this writing is a crime fiction "suspenser." Its plot premise works familiar ground: a Detroit cop sees his close friend blown away as they step outside his apartment. Earlier, the friend, an ex-con who has recently been working at a posh West Coast art gallery, flashed some bogus German bonds. His own force writes the murder off as just another gang slaying, but the cop is not satisfied. He takes several weeks' vacation and goes to Los Angeles himself to investigate.

What removes **Beverly Hills Cop** from consideration as a pure mystery-suspense adventure is the participation of *Saturday Night Live* alumnus Eddie Murphy as the cop Axel Foley. The plotline is little more than a basis for showcasing his talents, and it is his strengths as a star, rather than the story, which have made it such a success.

The story itself might have counted for more if the intended star, Mickey Rourke, had stuck with the project. Instead, he elected to make *The Pope of Greenwich Village,* so the film was redesigned around Sylvester (*Rocky*) Stallone. It was only when the producers balked at Stallone's rewrite that the project became Murphy's. He had, by then, built quite a following with *48 HRS.* and *Trading Places*. The money people were ready to take a chance.

Director Martin Brest (*Going in Style*) has recounted in published interviews how much of the restructuring of the film for Murphy was done right on the set. He just stood back and let Murphy perform. The resulting comedy is fresh and lively, but this did not help the plot, which falls flat. Most of the complexities of the story are dealt with as simply as possible. If necessary, they are simply ignored.

The other characters are two-dimensional, treated less like people in a drama than straight men for Murphy. They have no more credibility than the stock "types" Groucho Marx used to humiliate in the 1930s. Murphy's appeal is similar to Marx's—less verbal, perhaps, but still insulting the established order of the day and getting away with it because most of the audience would like to be doing the same thing.

As with Groucho, the movie-makers have insisted on "humanizing" Murphy's character by having him do good deeds for good people to show he's really a good guy at heart. It all but ruined Marx in his last films, such as *Love Happy,* in which the heart overwhelmed the cheek. Luckily, Murphy has the energy to punch through the bogus sentimentality so you can still enjoy his inventive humor undiminished.

So what if what starts out as a fairly challenging mystery ends up as muddled TV chase-and-shoot formula? The plots of the best Marx Brothers films were usually a mess. So were W. C. Fields's and the "Road" pictures. Since Murphy's comedy work is in the same league, how can we ask more?

City Heat builds on the basic attraction-antagonism between private investigator and police investigator so basic to detective fiction mythology. As Clint Eastwood plays the police lieutenant, we expect we will see more of him than the average cop in this type of picture. And we do, though the film still belongs to Burt Reynolds's Sam Spade-inspired private eye.

This was meant to be the teaming of two big box office names. If they were expecting chemistry on the order of Paul Newman and

Reynolds and Eastwood in *Heat:* No *Sting*

Robert Redford in *The Sting* and *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid,* they've miscalculated. There's no reaction at all.

Reynolds plays Mike Murphy in a style reminiscent of his days guest-hosting for Johnny Carson on *The Tonight Show.* He makes the mistake of kidding his character along before it has a chance to develop, playing for laughs that just aren't there. Eastwood is better—loose, for him, ready to support Reynolds when necessary and roll with the punches of the script which at one point has him parodying his spaghetti Western bounty hunter.

But that's the trouble. The film doesn't seem to trust its own material. It is constantly digging its celluloid elbow into your ribs, reminding you that it is a Burt Reynolds (BURT REYNOLDS!)-Clint Eastwood (CLINT EASTWOOD! TOGETHER!!) film in a way that kills any involvement you might develop in the story itself. I'm not sure why, because there is potential in the end-of-depression tale of how Reynolds's partner steals some ledgers and double crosses two mobsters who later get rid of him and come after Reynolds looking for the missing books. There's some fine work too from Richard Roundtree (*Shaft*) as the sleek dude-partner, and a nice performance from Jane Alexander as their secretary (and Eastwood's love interest), taking a break from the more serious-minded characters she's portrayed lately and relaxing into a nothing-special part. It must be a reflection of her skills as an actress that her scenes with Reynolds and Eastwood alone are their best. In particular, she draws a supple, almost romantic quality from the latter which I cannot remember seeing from him before.

Actor-turned-director Richard Benjamin (*My Favorite Year*) may yet develop a deft hand behind the camera, but this would not seem to be his kind of film. The pacing is uncertain. The only time he works up any genuine suspense is when you expect someone is about to be killed. Otherwise, the film is just a hodge-podge of scenes that don't add up to anything solid, a few moments of graphic violence, some bad jokes, bits of thoughtful romance, then joky fights and shoot-outs. Only in the last half-hour does it become clear that this was meant to be a sort of *Road to Chicago,* warmed over Hope-Crosby material for the undiscriminating.

A gratuitous final scene between the two stars seems to hint at a sequel. Let's hope I'm wrong.

LOOKING BACKWARD:

★★★ **The Mad Miss Manton** (1938) Barbara Stanwyck, Henry Fonda, Sam Levene. D: Leigh Jason

Neat little comedy-mystery about a dizzy socialite who discovers a body while walking her dog down Park Avenue at 3 A.M. The body disappears and no one believes her, including newsman Fonda, who is tired of seeing her name in the pages of his paper.

She gets the last laugh by organizing her coterie of equally squirrely debutants and solving the crime, which has more than its share of red herrings.

Stanwyck and debs in *Manton:* Before the Black Widows

What impresses most is Stanwyck's warmth and femininity as the amateur detective. It's a measure of her versatility that this cuddly creature-on-the-case could be as equally convincing as black widows such as *Double Indemnity's* Phyllis Dietrichson and Martha Ivers (she of *The Strange Love*) during the 1940s.

Fonda has a bit too much straw in his vocal cords to be fully convincing as a big-city editor, but with this reservation, he's fine.

The dizzy debs are a little hard to take after a few scenes. Jason has them performing *en masse* like a girls' chorus, and they lack the saving grace of outrageousness and true eccentricity that Preston Sturges used so well on behalf of the idle rich in *The Palm Beach Story*. (Remember the Ale and Quail Society?)

Still the mystery is good and there's Stanwyck. . . .

★ ★ ½ **Three Girls on the Town** (1942) Joan Blondell, Binnie Barnes, Robert Benchley D: Leigh Jason

Screwball comedy about a corpse that turns up in a hotel during an undertakers' convention. Folks get panicky and keep the body on the move, only later stopping to wonder how he got that way. Richard Carroll's screenplay has the right idea, though genuine wit eludes it.

Its success owes much to Jason's snappy pacing, and the performances of some fine farceurs such as Blondell, Barnes, and Janet Blair as the Banner sisters Faith, Hope, and Charity (in charge of hospitality at the convention), humorist Benchley as the addled hotel manager, Una O'Connor as a frightened chambermaid, Lloyd Bridges and Larry Parks as confused reporters, Charles Halton as a sour coroner and Eric Blore as a drunk conventioneer with the key to the whole thing.

Certainly not art, but definitely a few laughs.

★ ★ **Desperate Chance for Ellery Queen** (1942) William Gargan, Margaret Lindsay, John Litel D: James Hogan

Or the case of the fugitive husband.

By this point in Queen's short career at Columbia Pictures, the detective might just have well have been called Mike Shayne, Boston Blackie, or Alfred E. Newman for all the scriptwriters made of him. William Gargan, a perfectly acceptable second lead of pronounced Flatbush Avenue origin, had taken over the role, making him even less like the character in the Queen books of the period than before. It's hard to believe Gargan's detective even reads books, let alone writes them. Who came up with him for the part, anyway?

Here he and his secretary Nikki Porter look into the matter of a banker supposedly dead for years who is seen alive and functioning in San Francisco. After some very stock wartime scenes of that city, Queen and Porter are there toenail deep in some not-too-mysterious business about embezzled money suddenly making the rounds.

As there's not much to deduce (out of character for Ellery Queen), we get lots of gunplay and chase sequences peppered with incongruous bits stolen from old vaudeville routines. (A customer collects two tires from a hatcheck girl during a nightclub scene.)

Gargan does what he can, most of it out of character. (Frankly, I couldn't imagine him even *owning* a book.) Lindsay is pert. Litel is

Gargan as Ellery Queen: Failing the Literacy Test

(mostly) silent. Charley Grapewin plays Inspector Queen like a dyspepsic Harry Truman.

The desperate chance must refer to the producers' hope of getting the series renewed. It wasn't. There was one more and Columbia dropped it to concentrate on the Boston Blackie, Whistler, and Crime Doctor productions. □

TAD ON TV

By Richard Meyers

SLOPPY SECONDS

It is January 1985 as I write this, and the networks seem to be on a suicide mission: to destroy themselves by replacing their failed "new season" fare of September 1984 with even worse "second season" fodder. No one seems guiltier of this than ABC. They replaced the brainless *Hawaiian Heat* with the equally moronic *Street Hawk*.

What's the matter with these people? Didn't they learn anything from the pathetic "by-the-numbers" approach of the former, failed show? Recently, I heard the president of ABC attribute *Hawaiian Heat's* demise to a lack of chemistry between the two leading characters. In truth, the lack of chemistry was between the public and the show—between the writers and reality of any sort.

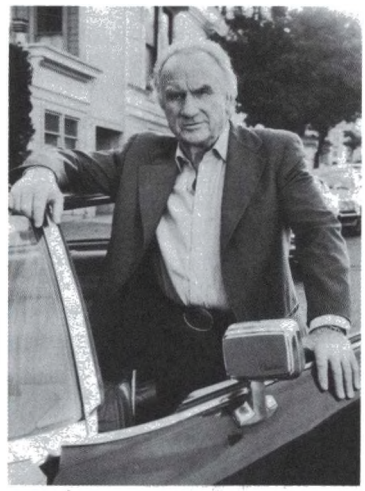
So what so they go and do? **Street Hawk**, that's what. Talk about pandering! The math for this show could read as follows: *Knight Rider* plus *Blue Thunder* equals *Street Hawk*. To paraphrase Johnny Carson: "It takes brains to spin off a series from a success, but it really takes guts to spin off a series from a failure." In this case, it's a marginally successful series and an already extinct TV adaption of a hit movie.

For the record: Rex Smith—who started as a pop star/lightweight TV actor, then gave himself some credence as the star of New York producer Joseph Papp's new theatrical version of *Pirates of Penzance*—plays Jesse Mach (hey, subtle name there, guys), a cocky, obnoxious motorcycle cop. He's meant to be a headstrong, wisecracking motorcycle cop, but the difference between the two is any real wit and intelligence.

This is the kind of guy who'd rather be out betting his fellow officers that he can jump four squad cars with his bike than answering an officer-in-distress call. (Really, that's what happens in the pilot. And they honestly want the public to cherish this bozoid? That's what the filmmakers think is "cute"?) This is also the kind of show which shows a police van turning over and mashing the front cab in slow motion, then has the driver and passenger crawl out of the miraculously restructured cab just "shaken" in the very next shot!

I'm sure everyone can guess how I feel about the show by now, but I must go on. One, because reading catty criticism can be fun, and two, I only have two shows to review this time out.

So, to thicken the consommé-thin plot, the government wants this jerk to ride their top-secret project, the Street Hawk—a motorcycle which can shoot lasers, go three hundred miles an hour, and jump tall buildings in a single bound. All right, now, we have a ridiculous concept, right? Logic would dictate that, to make this ludicrous idea palatable, it has to be handled in the most realistic way possible—correct? No chance.



Jack Warden stars in *Crazy Like a Fox.*

Everything—character and story—is patchwork-quilted just so it can hold together. After rejecting the government's offer in a snotty manner (just so we the viewers can love him even more than we already do), his best friend is killed and he is run down by a big, black four-wheeled vehicle. When he awakens, his knee is mashed, but the government still wants him.

Amazingly, they just happen to have a super secret, not-available-to-the-public operation that will fix his knee. This way, he can still make believe he's lame so he can use his new job in the police's public relations department as a cover for his assignments on, and as, the Street Hawk. Those missions: any crime-fighting he wants to do—just to test the motorcycle. Its inventor has a dream, you see. Stirring music, glow in the actor's eyes: "To have a Street Hawk in every precinct garage in the country!"

Dallas help us. Not heaven, mind you, but *Dallas*—the number-one television show in the country, which *Street Hawk* is blessedly scheduled opposite. Hopefully, J. R. and the gang will mop the Nielson streets with the cop show, because this is "Moron TV," folks. It is not quite an embarrassment, but it is a monument to the sort of philistine thinking that has caused overall television viewing to dip several percent, and ABC, in particular, to have its lowest ratings in twenty years.

CBS is presently number one in the ratings, and, as a quick review of these columns will tell you, it's little wonder. They have been the most consistent producer of high-quality mystery fare, and this second season is no exception. **Murder She Wrote** has grown on me, I must say, as it progresses. And it seems to have grown on everybody else, too. It is now a regular in the top ten.

I have little doubt that the credit belongs to co-creator/producer Peter Fisher, who seems aware of my reservations. The mysteries are valid, for the most part, and the guest casts are so star-filled that it's hard to guess whodunit using the "whoever is the most famous guest star did it" theorem. Even though Jessica Fletcher has to deal with a corpse every week, her personal morality is strong and getting stronger. But beware: the second her murder investigations simply become exercises in curiosity or plain puzzle-solving, I'm gone.

CBS was quick and clever to capitalize on *Murder She Wrote's* popularity by introducing a new mystery series to follow the Angela Lansbury vehicle on Sunday nights. At first, I had my hopes. Dependable veteran actor Jack Warden was starring as San Francisco private eye Harry Fox in **Crazy Like a Fox.** At last, a realistic private eye! Not a glossy pretty boy along the lines of the Aaron Spelling school (*Vega$, Matt Houston*).

But then I had my doubts. The pilot episode was interesting but a bit shakey in a few telling instances. The series concept has the freewheeling detective constantly putting his "button-down" lawyer son, Harrison Fox, Jr., into dangerous predicaments. Unfortunately, the pilot episode makers mistook irresponsibility and inconsiderateness as endearing traits. Harry Fox, Sr. came off looking pretty lousy.

Still, there was something about the show that made me want to give it another chance. Maybe it was the plot, which was an actual

mystery, and actually pretty clever. And, of course, maybe it was the cast. In addition to Warden, there was the watchable John Rubinstein playing the lawyer. Much to my pleasure, the first actual episode of the series ironed out my reservations.

Harry Fox was no longer obnoxious. He was still a little bit inconsiderate, but within believable constraints. Furthermore, his interest in truth and justice smoothed out his rougher edges. He was now a "real" crusty, old-fashioned knight in tarnished armor. Meanwhile, Rubinstein seemed to have conspired with the producers to make his character also more believable.

In the pilot, there didn't seem to be any reason for Harrison the lawyer to let his father ruin his life. In the second episode, there were subtle acting and writing devices which made that situation acceptable and even enjoyable. When, in the second episode, Harry shouted out a window to his son to "Stop that man!" there was a moment during which Harrison looked as if he were going to say, "Forget it, pop!" and then another moment when his expression read, "Why am I doing this?" All in all, fine acting on both stars' parts.

So, even though my own button-down mind keeps shouting that *Murder She Wrote's* Jessica Fletcher shouldn't be able to shrug off corpses week after week, my sense of disbelief keeps telling it to shut up so I can enjoy both it and its new successor, *Crazy Like a Fox*. I now look forward to seeing both each week. □

The Radio Murder Hour

By Chris Steinbrunner

This column will deal with topics starting with the letter N—two N's, in fact. The first is Nero Wolfe.

Happily enough, as this year marks the fiftieth year of the publication of his first case —*Fer-de-Lance* in 1934—the Radiola Company (Box C, Sandy Hook, Conn. 06482, $5.95 + postage), in its fine crime series of old radio shows, has issued a record of *The New Adventures of Nero Wolfe* with the wonderful Sydney Greenstreet—shockingly, the first name is misspelled on the album cover—as Rex Stout's giant creation.

Across the late '40s, several actors had portrayed Wolfe before the microphone, including Santos Ortega—who was sort of a specialist, also doing *another* fat detective, Peter Salem—and silent film actor Francis X. Bushman. But no one was more born to the role than Sydney Greenstreet. His guffaws and wheezes were an actual presence in your speaker. One could sense the portly form making deliberate movement (or no movement at all) amongst the rows of orchids. You required no suspension of disbelief at all to know that this was a big man. Greenstreet, whose active screen career had been slowed by illness, accepted radio work as a weekly Wolfe in 1950—and brought perfection to the role.

Even the introduction to the program sets a very accurate stage. An announcer informs us we are entering "the most famous brownstone house in New York City," as we hear the dutiful Archie beg his boss to accept a case; a woman has been found stabbed inside a famed men's club. But Nero is more interested in his greenhouse; why should he bother?

Because, pleads Archie, the firm needs money. "C-a-s-h. You need it to live on!"

"Well, Archie, you've actually learned to spell!"

"And *you* better learn to count—we're *broke!*"

A familiar crisis in the Wolfe household. But the unworried announcer cheerfully sweeps us into the drama, calling Wolfe "the cordulant, corpulent, beer-drinking gourmet who also happens to be a genius!" The episode, "The Case of the Careless Cleaner," is not one of their all-time best investigations, but it does have a few surprises, and the deep, affectionate camaraderie between the hard-breathing Nero and the affable, efficient Archie is very audible. Radiola is to be commended for issuing this treat for the anniversary year (the record's flip side is an Ellery Queen broadcast)—the company does good work.

The second N for your consideration is Nils Nordberg, the Norwegian radio mystery producer. Aside from being a Sherlockian of international note, having been investitured as "The Norwegian Explorer" by the Baker Street Irregulars, Nils regularly supplies Norway State Radio in Oslo with excellent, diverse detective and suspense programming —and I need not add that in Europe mystery radio is far more advanced than it is here in drive-time radio America.

Your columnist first met Nils some years ago in a police launch traveling up the Thames—with London Constable Donald Rumbelow, the Jack-the-Ripper expert, pointing out famous murder sites along the shore. The launch had been provided by a British publisher for a cruise and a buffet lunch, one of the events of the First International Crime Writers Congress. Seated next to each other, we began talking about radio mysteries and science-fiction films, and Nils remarked that he had just read a book on the latter topic which he could recommend highly, a nonfiction work called *Cinema of the Fantastic*. Your columnist could exclaim in shock that he had written that book. Naturally, we became good friends.

On a recent visit to America—on a grant to study our radio drama—Nils discussed his start in European radio and his current projects. He has always been fascinated by the medium and remembers as a youngster being thrilled by episodes involving English detective Paul Temple pursuing the secret villain called "the strange Mr. Gregory." One of his first scripts for Norway Radio was a serial adaptation of John Dickson Carr's *The Burning Court* (with its two levels of solution at the end). It has become a perennial favorite. He has also done much with the works of Chandler and Christie, as well as such newer crime fiction as *Report to the Commissioner*. And there is Sherlock Holmes.

Nils provided the introduction to the first Holmes collection published in Norwegian and has done many Holmesian adventures on the air. For the climax of his production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, as the fearsome creature streaks after Sir Henry across the moor, Nils spent nearly eight hours of studio time creating the effects! He has also translated and performed many of the John Dickson Carr radio scripts included in *The Dead Sleep Lightly*, obtaining permission from the estate.

On this recent trip, Nils provided an astounding demonstration of a new device called Kunstkopf Bi-Naural Stereo, currently being used in experimental mystery radio both here and in Europe. "Kunstkopf" is the German word for artificial head, the process having been developed in Germany. An actual styrofoam head, life-sized, with stereo microphones attached inside where the ears would be, is placed in the middle of a radio studio, with the actors moving around it as they speak their lines, and sound-effects engineers playing to the head as well. When played—and it can only be heard on stereo headsets, though the headsets need not be adapted in any way—the audio comes from behind, above, below, and either side of the listener. The effect is mind-boggling!

Its use to date has been limited, although dramas have been produced at university stations and PBS-broadcast over ordinary stereo radios which have headset plug attachments. For suspense programs, they work stunningly well. One heard was an adaptation of Stephen King's "The Mist," a chilling story of horrors in a fog. The other was Ray Bradbury's "Kaleidescope"—in which astronauts from an exploded spaceship plummet into the endless void of space, desperately remembering images of home. Two difficult assignments for radio dramatization, but done with incredible dimension.

International mystery radio appears not only to be holding its ground, it is *thriving*.□

THE CASE OF THE TWO

By Robert and Louise Barnard

Of course you have read *The Moving Finger*? Naturally you have. Vintage Christie, and one of the best titles of that vintage period.

Ah yes, but which *Moving Finger* is it you have read?

Because there are two, and they are very different indeed. Some idea of the scale of the differences can be suggested by the fact that there are at least two characters, admittedly minor ones, in the British version who do not appear in the American one, and who therefore are not listed in Randall Toye's exhaustive *Agatha Christie Who's Who,* or are listed incorrectly. It would seem worthwhile, therefore, to have a closer look at these two very different texts. I have used for convenience the currently available Dell and Fontana paperbacks for the purposes of the comparison, and most of the references will have to be to pages in those editions, since the chapter divisions seldom correspond. The British text is the one that begins "When at last I was taken out of my plaster"; the American text is the one that begins: "I have often recalled the morning when the first of the anonymous letters came."

It is in the opening pages of the book that the differences are greatest, and the opening sentences just quoted suggest how the differences occurred. In the American version, the writer is concerned to arouse interest right from the beginning by broaching the subject of the anonymous letters at once. The British version is content with a slower, more expository opening, one which tells us how the narrator came to find himself in the sleepy village of Lymstock. The first six and a half pages of the British text are compressed into three and a half decidedly shorter pages in the American version. It is only when the first letter arrives in the English version (Fontana p. 11) that things begin going along parallel lines in both texts. Though so much is missing in the American text—of background, atmosphere, and so on—the compression and re-arrangement of the early material in the English text has been done with a great deal of skill, suggesting it was done by Christie herself. At times what she has done amounts to a précis of the English text, at other times she hops here and there in her determination to compress:

> Joanna fingered the cards with something like awe. "I didn't know," she said, in an awestruck voice, "that people really *called*—with *cards*."
>
> "That," I told her, "is because you know nothing about the country."
>
> Joanna is very pretty and very gay, and she likes dancing and cocktails and love affairs and rushing about in high-powered cars. She is definitely and entirely urban.
>
> "At any rate," said Joanna, "I look right."

In that passage we begin with an exchange from the top of page 8 in the British version, skip for the passage about Joanna's character to further down the page, then go on to page 9. On the opening page of the American version we begin with a new sentence, already quoted, then go on to a paragraph from page 11 of the British version ("It arrived at breakfast . . ."), then we have a paragraph which is an expansion of an earlier sentence on page 11, then we have material from page 10, followed by material about the crash from page 5. The thing to emphasize is that, however skillfully the compression is done, a great deal is lost, particularly of village atmosphere and of filling in of the central characters' backgrounds.

From the point in the English version where the first anonymous letter arrives, the texts follow much the same course, but with three kinds of difference:

(i) omissions, large and small, virtually all of them affecting the American version, making what is already Christie's shortest novel even shorter for American readers.

(ii) changed chapter divisions.

(iii) alterations in the text, sometimes caused by the omitted material, sometimes in the interests of "decency," sometimes totally incomprehensible.

The most important of the changes, obviously, are the omissions, and sometimes these are indeed grievous. Of the smaller omissions I shall say nothing, for they would become nothing but a tedious catalogue, but the principal longer omissions need to be itemized:

(1) from the conversation between the narrator and Megan Hunter (Fontana p. 19–20, Dell p. 20–21) a section of rather over a page is omitted in which the two discuss school, and especially Shakespeare.

(2) A series of smaller omissions in the conversation with Mr. Pye and in the description of him (Fontana p. 24 onwards, Dell p. 25 onwards). The longest is about sixteen lines, but all the omitted material helps vividly to individualize Mr. Pye.

(3) In the description of the bridge party at the Symmingtons' (Fontana p. 29 onwards, Dell p. 30 onwards), two and a half pages are omitted, involving much information about the Symmingtons, the character of Colonel Appleton (who disappears

entirely from this scene in the American version), and reflections on bridge players. A really grievous cut.

(4) In the conversation between the narrator and Joanna immediately afterwards, large cuts amounting to a page and a half.

(5) From the beginning of English Chapter 4, American Chapter 2, (Fontana p. 34, Dell p. 34) there is an omission of about five pages, involving Mrs. Baker, mother of Jerry and Joanna's maid Beatrice. In it she reveals her conviction that the letter writer is the village witch, Mrs. Cleat. Christie seems originally to have decided to omit mention of Mrs. Cleat entirely from the American version, but this was not possible. Mrs. Baker thus disappears entirely from the American version. Another grievous omission.

(6) In the conversation between the narrator and Megan immediately following this (Dell, p. 34), there is an omission of about two-thirds of a page (about Megan's stockings).

(7) The end of this section (Fontana P. 42–43, Dell p. 37) has three-quarters of a page of English text telescoped into four lines.

(8) Large omissions in the introduction and description of Mrs. Dane Calthrop (Fontana P. 43–44,

MOVING

Dell p. 37). Very damaging, since she was clearly one of Christie's favorite characters.

(9) Considerable omissions, and some rewriting, in the section (Fontana p. 46–48, Dell p. 41–42) in which Partridge announces that Mrs. Symmington has committed suicide.

(10) An omission of about three-quarters of a page in the section where Jerry and Joanna take Megan home with them (Fontana p. 54–55, Dell p. 49–50).

(11) Fontana p. 56–61, Dell p. 51–53. The conversation between Aimée Griffith and the narrator (immediately after the inquest in the American version, the morning after in the British) is highly telescoped and rewritten for the American edition, with very damaging effect.

This is the last of the major omissions, but it should already be clear that, with the smaller ones, they add up to quite an amount of text. It should be clear, too, what has happened. When I first heard of the discrepancy between the two texts (I am grateful to Janet Morgan, Christie's biographer, for the information) I thought the reason might be wartime conditions—that publication had been held up in Britain due to lack of paper, and that the earlier version Christie had sent to the States had been revised later for publication in Britain. But in fact,

FINGERS

the rewriting of the first pages, and the extent of the omissions in the first third of the book, surely make it clear that what American readers have been foisted off with is a magazine version—probably one prepared by Christie herself, but nevertheless an emasculated text, and one geared to the needs of the magazine market (it must grip from the first, pleasant irrelevancies must be cut out, and so on). This magazine publication probably affected the two other kinds of change I have pointed to.

The changes in the division of the book into chapters probably does not strike most readers as important, and certainly does not affect the forward drive of the book, but obviously the American divisions must be episode divisions, and should be discarded in favor of the English ones.

The changes in the text are quite fascinating. Here it is clear that what we are dealing with is not Christie herself but an editor, and the changes reflect some of the worries and inhibitions of a magazine editor in the nineteen forties. For example, when Jerry takes Megan to London for her ugly-duckling transformation, Mary Grey the dressmaker is "being firm with a stout Jewess" in the English version, where she is merely a "woman" in the American one. This is in line with Dodd Mead's policy with such references, and a very understandable policy it is too. On the other hand, when four lines down Mary Grey says "My God, I do," this becomes in the U.S. version "I most certainly do!" Not so understandable. Similarly "For God's sake" becomes "For Heaven's sake"; "I wish to God" becomes "I wish"; "Good God" is simply omitted. Quite unforgivable is the fact that the narrator's "Oh, hell" becomes "Oh, gee!" But perhaps the oddest of this kind of change occurs in the mutilated section which introduces Mrs. Dane Calthrop. When she says of Lymestock that "There's any amount of adultery here," this proved too strong meat for the editor, who changed it to "wrongdoing" (genteelly vague). And when she remarked of her husband that "Caleb has absolutely no taste for fornication," this had to be softened to "flirtation" (pleasantly vague this time, but surely even vicars ought to be allowed a little flirtation?)

Other changes are less comprehensible. Why has the old bore Colonel Appleton, who is omitted from the American version in his first and longer appearance, become Colonel Appleby when he comes in briefly at the end of the novel (the name under which he appears in Toye's book)? Why has "she just thought it 'queer'" become "She just thought it

'queer', shall we say?" Was there something suspect about the word in America at the time? Why was Florence's time as parlourmaid to Miss Barton reduced from fifteen years to nine? Why did Mr. Pye's hands quiver with "excitement" rather than "sensibility"?

Here, for the moment, consideration of the mangled text that Americans have had since the book came out may rest. I have no desire to start a fashion for textual analysis of her books. The purpose of this article has been the simple, evangelical one of making American readers of Christie aware of what they have been missing: large chunks of one of her best books omitted, other parts not as Christie would have wanted them in book form. The consequences to the picture of Lymstock the village, of the community living there, to many of the characters, especially the narrator, Megan, Mr. Pye and Mrs. Dane Calthrop are severe. Dodd Mead, I believe, has recently changed hands, and it would be pleasant if the new owners saw it as their moral duty to present to those American readers a proper text of one of Christie's most popular books, and if Dell, her paperback publisher, followed suit. Since the new regime at Dodd Mead are, I gather, fastidious about oaths and profanities, I suppose it is vain to hope that Christie's "Good God's" will be restored. But surely they could remove the horror of a young English gentleman in 1940 saying "Oh, gee!" And I would have thought there was everything to be gained, morally, by restoring to the Reverend Dane Calthrop his disinclination to fornication. □

CURRENT REVIEWS

Role of Honor by John Gardner. New York: Putnam, 1984. $11.95

John Gardner has done a superb job of transporting Ian Fleming's James Bond into the '80s. This was especially apparent in his preceding Bond epic, *Icebreaker* (1983), in which Gardner challenged Fleming's creation with paramilitary-oriented themes.

Gardner's interest in his latest Agent 007-continuation thriller, *Role of Honor,* is computer technology, specifically of the war games variety. Dr. Jay Autem Holy, an American computer expert who reportedly perished in an airplane crash, has suddenly resurfaced in England. Now acting as a free-lance agent, Bond penetrates Holy's high-tech network—only after receiving a crash course in computer science in Monte Carlo from Holy's alluring "widow," Percy.

Offering locales stretching from Oxfordshire to the South of France to Geneva, Gardner's plot integrates the elements of an elusive Arab electronics magnate, a fanatical U.S. Army general, a world power conference, and the threatened expansion of the new S.P.E.C.T.R.E.

Role of Honor is generally a satisfying, entertaining James Bond novel, replete with all of the Bondian trappings readers have come to expect by this time. But Gardner's fascination with computer lore supercedes the plotting to such an extent that several of the supporting characters lack sufficient development. But not Agent 007. And that's what counts in this colorful thriller.

—Andy East

* * * * *

No Part in Your Death by Nicolas Freeling. New York: Viking, 1984. $13.95

It is interesting to speculate how lasting Freeling will be. He is obviously a favorite of most critics. Undoubtedly, some teachers of detective fiction courses laud his psychological probings and stylistic individualism. To prove this scholastic excellence, the advance blurb quotes from the *Publishers Weekly* review: "A rich, dense, beautifully written and insightful novel..." Possibly that is true, but it he readable? At one time, Crofts, Arthur Reeves, and many others were highly thought of. Now they are generally considered period pieces, only of interest to the devoted student of detective fiction. Freeling may well be establishing himself as the next generation of period interest.

Let's take some of that "rich, dense, beautifully written" prose. Apropos of almost nothing else, Freeling throws in this astounding revelation: "Might one mention along the way that enormity in today's Europe, nice food at a modest price? One may not say 'unheard-of' (others tell one of this remarkable experience) but why seems it to happen only to others?" The entire book is polka-dotted with such insight and parenthetical phrases (one also notes parenthetical sentences and paragraphs). Anyone who can speed read the train of thought must be a genius.

Any mystery worth its puzzle has a plot, right? So Freeling obligingly provides us with three of them. One after the other, just as if we were reading three novelettes instead of a novel. But this must be a novel because the three plots are connected. Someone dies in each of them. And Henri Castang wanders around (in each), wondering what part he had in each death. What more unity could an "insightful" novel provide?

Maybe Crofts's popularity will return.

—Fred Dueren

Double by Bill Pronzini and Marcia Muller. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984. $13.95

One nice thing about Pronzini is that he's willing to try something different. Knowing the rules and conventions of the private eye novel, he will play with it and give it life rather than hold it in reverential rigidity. He previously collaborated with Collin Wilcox, and this time teams his Nameless Detective with Marcia Muller's successful Sharon McCone.

The two San Francisco P.I.'s meet at a convention in San Diego. Fairly soon, Nameless stumbles across a small boy who is mistreated by his mother. They disappear the next day, and all the hotel staff deny they ever stayed there. Then a school friend of McCone's (now the security chief at the hotel hosting the convention) falls to her death from one of the tower windows. The two detectives both begin working on their cases, sharing information, clues, and chores as their separate problems merge into one.

At first the alternating chapters, narrated by McCone and Nameless, are confusing. Their style and manner is not all that different. But by the midway point the characters and action begin to jell, and it becomes one of the better P.I. books of the year.

—Fred Dueren

* * * * *

Getting Away with Murder by Anne Morice. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984. $11.95

When Tessa Crichton, the popular British stage actress, and her police superintendent husband Robin find that, for the first time in years, their vacation times congrue, the question arises as to what to do with three week's leave from their respective jobs: "One way out of it, which each of us made a stab

at, was to transform it in some fashion into a busman's holiday, although it was not immediately clear whose bus we should be traveling on." As it turns out, the two buses (of theatre and detection) travel similar routes—and even collide—by novel's end. The point of departure for each is Mattingly Grange, a West Country Georgian manor house fitted out as a vacation hotel, near enough to an amateur theatrical production of *As You Like It* featuring a friend of Tessa's as well as to the National Hunt meetings at Chissingfield, the site of one of Robin's unsolved murder cases.

The murder was that of one Pauline Oakes, who worked for a firm of real estate agents and who had a phobia about race courses, as her jockey father died as a result of a track accident. When Pauline was found at the race course, ten days after her death due to a freak series of snowfalls and freezes, the enquiry proved fruitless: "Pauline appeared to have no enemies, no broken or unbroken love affair; no one in her circle with a history of violence and there had been no previous attacks of that nature within living memory." At the time, Robin chalked up the death as having been caused by one of "two or three hundred nameless, faceless potential suspects" among the race-goers, but the unsolved crime haunts him and motivates him while on his busman's holiday to pursue, in his own quiet way, inquiries among the available list of suspects who were "locals."

Tessa accounts for a widening of this list of suspects, for, in the classic pattern exhibited in those mysteries in which both spouses detect, her perspective on the case is an intuitive counterpart to Robin's rationality. To Tessa's inquisitive mind, suspects abound: horse trainers Jock Symington and Denzil Godstow, inn proprietors Jake and Louisa Coote, wealthy guests Averil and Charles Fellowes, actor Jimmie Featherstone, and retired thespian-turned-horse-breeder Anthony Blewiston. The interconnections among all of the suspects are truly awesome—and all have mysterious events in their pasts—and the reader wishes for the opportunity to say, like Tessa, "Oh, blind fool that I am! I see it all clearly now." Tessa's histrionics aside, *Getting Away with Murder* offers a diverting puzzle, plenty of false leads, and the British humor of understatement. Moreover, as is to be expected with Morice, British commonplaces come in for scrutiny and witty comment, be they class distinctions, vagaries of weather and geography, or hostelry conditions. Morice's latest is, in fact, a very "civilized" read.

—Susan L. Clark

* * * * *

The Black Mask Boys by William F. Nolan. New York: Morrow, 1985. $16.95

The first cliché: the tough private eye was created by Hammett, humanized by Chandler, psychoanalysed by Macdonald, and brutalized by Spillane. "Cap" Shaw was the editorial genius who midwifed the birth, and *Black Mask* the place where the baby flourished until it was old enough to go between hard covers.

The second cliché: the rest of the *Black Mask* writers are really not worth reading. Erle Stanley Gardner is the guy who wrote all those Perry Mason courtroom TVers with Raymond Burr, Horace McCoy wrote that great movie about dime-a-dancers that had Gig Young in it. As for Nebel and Whitfield and Daly and Cain—well, they were sort of just... *there*...

> [T]he light was directly on his face, so I let him have it there—someplace about the center of that ugly map of his.
>
> There ain't much to that sort of shooting; you just kind of see a hole for a second; a tiny speck of red, and then the face fades out of the picture. So I just step over him as he rolls down the stairs.

Spillane at his post-war '40s fantasy-of-violence best—or worst? No. Carroll John Daly's "Three Gun Terry," the world's "first tough detective story starring the world's first wisecracking, hardboiled private investigator." It appeared in the May 15, 1923 issue of *Black Mask,* beating Hammett's Continental Op out of the starting block by five months. ("Arson Plus" under Hammett's Peter Collinson pseudonym appeared in the October 1 issue.)

Spillane didn't brutalize the private eye tale; he merely brought it back to the roots from which it had sprung before Hammett introduced the reality of his years as a Pinkerton agent into the genre. In later years, in fact, Daly complained of Spillane: "I'm broke and this guy gets rich writing about *my* detective." Daly, unlike Spillane, was a true Walter Mitty, writing of blood and gore and shattered bones, but in real life so timid he rarely stepped outside his modest White Plains row house to sniff the evening air.

In this exceptional anthology of *Black Mask* fiction, Bill Nolan explodes many other accepted myths: *Black Mask* was already six years old and Hammett had been selling to it for three years when Joe "Cap" Shaw became editor; the magazine lasted fifteen years after Shaw left. He was a singular, but not seminal, influence on the genre. Hammett at 49 stories, and Chandler at eleven, were far from dominating the magazine: Daly had 63, Frederick Nebel 69, Raoul Whitfield 90, and Erle Stanley Gardner a whopping 104! Each year, Gardner sold as many as a hundred stories—a million published words—to scores of the two hundred pulp magazines appearing weekly in the '20s and '30s. He didn't write his first Perry Mason novel until he was 43 years old.

In *The Black Mask Boys,* Nolan's scholarship is impeccable, his organization of material flawless, his choice of stories outstanding. He gives us a capsule history of the magazine and introduces each writer and each story so that by the end we feel we have an intimate knowledge of this most important of the pulps from which sprang that native-American art form, the hardboiled detective story.

Wherever possible, Nolan uses the writer's first story published in *Black Mask;* failing that, he picks representative but usually unanthologized stories which let us judge at first-hand the work of writers we have usually only read *about.*

I had discovered Paul Cain's *Fast One,* for instance, shortly before reading Nolan's book. I found Cain's novel shockingly good—it first appeared in serial form in *Black Mask*—and was delighted to have this assessment confirmed by the Cain story Nolan chooses, "Gundown."

Not quite as surprising to anyone who has gone back to the first Perry Mason novels, or the first Donald Lam/Bertha Cool novels under Gardner's A. A. Fair pseudonym, is the quality of the Gardner story, "Hell's Kettle." These early novels, like Gardner's *Black Mask* fiction, are slam-bang action affairs which make the later Mason novels seem pale shadows by comparison. Equally compelling is Frederick Nebel's "Rough Justice"—although we can see his debt to Hammett quite clearly despite the fact that the writing is much less polished than Hammett's.

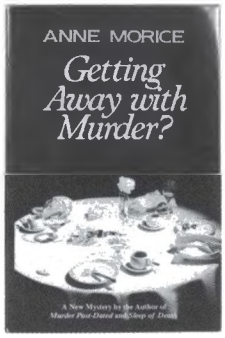
Surprising in another way are the stories by Raoul Whitfield and Horace McCoy. Whitfield was a lifelong friend and drinking companion of Hammett's, but his work has none of the dead-pan realism or bone-deep toughness of Hammett's prose. He seems always to be forcing the violence on us, aping toughness of spirit rather than feeling it. And McCoy, author of the stunning *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?* never took his pulp work seriously, and it shows: he emerges here as a pulp hack who really doesn't believe in the story he is telling. As a result, neither do we.

I know there is a whole school of literary criticism which holds that the author's life is immaterial to the fiction that he writes, but for me, one of the best features of *The Black Mask Boys* is the really quite thorough biography which precedes each writer's story. Just as my understanding of the deadly fencing match which ends *Hamlet* is enhanced by knowing that Shakespeare once had to post a bond not to engage in sword-play in the fields beyond the London Wall, so my reading of these "tough-guy" writers is illuminated by the knowledge that, while Daly was a hopeless fantasizer, most of the others were genuinely active men of remarkably varied backgrounds.

Hammett, of course, was an ex-Pinkerton; Gardner a brilliant attorney for twenty years, a champion of the underdog just like Perry Mason. Whitfield and McCoy were fighter pilots in World War I, both of whom saw combat duty in France, as did Raymond Chandler as a foot-soldier in the trenches below. Nebel was reading Schopenhauer at age fifteen and living in the remote Canadian north woods by seventeen; Paul Cain was an enormously successful screen and television writer, a mystery man also known as Peter Rurik but whose real name was George Sims. And Cap Shaw was a ranking fencer, the national champion in sabers, and winner of the President's Medal for his work with foil and epée.

The Black Mask Boys is that rare find, a work of original scholarship which is also a delight to read. It blends criticism, biography, statistics, and fiction into a unified whole which somehow evokes the rough-paper magazine from which it springs. Nolan's work belongs on every serious mystery reader's shelf, whether he be casual fan or dedicated student.

—Joe Gores



Bluegate Fields: A Victorian Murder Mystery by Anne Perry. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984. $13.95

Bluegate Fields is Anne Perry's sixth Victorian period murder mystery involving her series detectives Thomas and Charlotte Pitt. Thomas, an inspector on London's police force, who exercises the linguistic and behavioral restraint of his age, at first does not "mention the matter" of the nude, teenaged corpse which has washed up against the sluice-gate of the portside slum of Bluegate Fields, precisely because he wants to spare his wife the details: that the body was that of young aristocrat Arthur Waybourne and that it had been "homosexually used" and afflicted with "a disease" (read: syphilis). But these are precisely the details upon which Charlotte—and her sister Emily, Lady Ashworth, and Great-Aunt Vespasia Cumming-Gould—thrive, and they do so initially out of gossipy concern and finally out of social accountability to diminish Victorian society's support of sweatshop conditions that foster the economic necessity of a variety of evils, including child prostitution.

When it is apparent to Pitt, over the course of his official investigation, that "footpads and hooligans" had nothing to do with Arthur Waybourne's murder, his scrutiny turns to the teen's associates, particularly those who might have plied him with his last and decidedly upper-class meal of pheasant and sherry truffle. The Waybourne family, and the Swynfords, to whom they are related and whose children shared Arthur's tutor, initially tolerate Pitt's questions because of the scandal that would ensue if co-operation were denied, but subsequently they apply pressure to Pitt's superior, Chief Superintendent Dudley Athelstan, to discontinue the investigation for fear of subsequent scandal. "Pitt was already aware of how the whole social caste would close its ranks against such an inquiry." A victim to take the heat—to put the need into current, rather than Perry's Victorian, terms—is required. Accordingly, the "fall guy" charged with the murder of young Arthur is his tutor, one Maurice Jerome, an ascetic man neither Pitt nor Charlotte can come to like but for whom they feel morally responsible to keep from being unjustly convicted and then, after the inevitable conviction, to save from execution.

While Pitt does exhaustive and exhausting legwork all over London—and mostly in the seamy neighborhoods—Charlotte dusts off her connections to high society, borrows dresses from her sister, and works on solving the mystery from the inside out, interrogating Arthur's relations and associates. Because she is well-born, because she possesses the sparkling combination of a forthright manner and an ability to tell selective truths rather than to dissemble, and because she is a beauty, Charlotte charms both children (at interminable family gatherings where the pianist who is " 'the thing' this month" sounds "like a maid dropping a whole load of knives and forks") and adults (her cousin Dominic provides her access to a salon that is—gasp!—"a place of assignation," where she meets one of the murder suspects). In the end, both Pitts work together to clear the case, with Thomas's refusal to "know his place" and Charlotte's to know hers standing them in good stead against the hidebound, slippery double-whammy of nobility and toadying bureaucratic authority. Their co-operative, although not always harmonious, alliance speaks both to the nineteenth-century concept of the division of male and female "spheres" and to a twentieth-century detective novelist's adherence to and playfulness with genre, class, and sex-role expectations.

Accordingly, Perry's Charlotte is feisty and her sister Emily decisive: "We may not have a vote or pass any laws in Parliament, but we can certainly make the laws of society and freeze to death anyone who wants to flout them for long, I promise you!" And Thomas continually runs up against the obduracy of those who make and uphold those laws of Parliament that deny living wages to the lower classes and cause them to resort to criminal means to gain what one teenaged prostitute succinctly expresses in the courtroom: "My tastes are very simple. I expect they're much the same as yours. I like to eat at least once every day. I like to have clothes that keep me warm, and don't stink. I like to have a dry roof over my head and not have to share it with ten or twenty other people! Those are my tastes—sir!" And this teenager, Albert Frobisher, dies in the same manner as did Arthur, showing that tragedy, like basic human needs, knows no one social class.

There is much to recommend in *Bluegate Fields*. In the matter of class, Perry shows herself attuned to nineteenth-century realities as well as being aware of her class-conscious literary forebears in British detective fiction. Like Sayers's Lady Mary Wimsey, who is married to Inspector Parker, Charlotte has married "beneath" her, and, like Marsh's Roderick Alleyn, whose aunt is referred to as the Dowager Duchess, Charlotte has the surprising and gutsy Vespasia Cumming-Gould to open society doors for her. Anglophiles will also enjoy the "Upstairs, Downstairs" flavor of some of *Bluegate Fields's* proceedings, as well as the glimpses into a Dickensian-colored subworld of the poor and incarcerated. This detective novel is leisurely paced, a rendering of the Victorian Age designed for mystery readers who have had access to the conventions of detective fiction since then. To be sure, Wilkie Collins makes for far better reading, but it must be recalled that Collins contributed significantly to Sayers's understanding of her craft, just as Sayers and her fellow Golden Age of Detective Fiction practitioners have left their mark on Perry.

—Susan L. Clark

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Jerusalem Inn by Martha Grimes. New York: Little, Brown, 1984. $15.95

If the detection here seems to be of second-level brilliance, it is only because the novel has so much to offer altogether as the hero goes about his work. Martha Grimes writes dialogue with color and wit, spoken among fresh characters who are absorbing to follow.

The basic story deals with an intelligent Scotland Yard man whose winter holiday is dismal, lonely, and cold. Suddenly, he is faced with a dramatic professional challenge by the murder of a woman he just met and wanted to see again. Many later scenes, though not directly related to the crime and the investigation, are far from mere digressions but emerge as well-crafted components in a blend that results in a satisfying book.

There are enough literary conventions to make things comfortable, and a setting custom-designed for lovers of mystery fiction. The title refers to a pub in the North of England, an important location for much of the action. It is December 20 when the story opens, and, following a dinner at which all the suspects are present, the final scene is at the Jerusalem Inn on Christmas Eve. Richard Jury is the man from Scotland Yard in this fifth volume about his adventures, conceived and executed in the company of his friend, Melrose Plant, whose less-than-beloved Aunt Agatha is also nearby, and will be recalled from the earlier books.

The supporting cast is not neglected, and they supply atmosphere and laughter in liberal amounts. One little man named Dickie would be a perfect role for Peter Sellers from his *Goon Show* days. Dickie responds with, "A leek, mate," when Jury gives him a lift and asks what he has propped on his knees. Later, Dickie carries the leek into the pub and places it on the bar alongside his money, offering to buy the detective a drink. The leek is a prize winner, and Dickie still has it for

company a few days later on Christmas Eve, now adorned by a red ribbon.

Another pub regular who must be mentioned is Nutter, described as "always ready to exacerbate any difficulty" by having a brawl. Melrose Plant and his friends are bound for a weekend in the country but stop at the Jerusalem Inn because of a storm. Nutter is engaged in a fight just as Melrose arrives, in time to see a patron thrown out the front door, only to shake off the snow and go back for more action. The weather makes the pub a far nicer place to be than the Flying Spur, the name of Plant's car, so the travelers decide to join the crowd.

A charming element of the book is its portrayal of two young girls. Jury meets the first when she speaks to him from a tree, and the other seems always to be around the Jerusalem Inn because her mother works there. Conversations with the children have an authentic flavor, showing how the process of becoming acquainted with a little person can require one to watch magic tricks, exchange jokes, and play a guessing game in which the child wins the prize candy. When Jury later tosses a bag of sweets into the branches, observing that trees in this part of the country talk, Detective Sergeant Wiggins thinks his superior has gone crazy. Then the tree says, "Good-bye and God bless," giving the Sergeant something to think about.

As for a connection with the plot, it really isn't giving anything away to mention that his encounters with the girl at the pub eventually help Richard Jury solve the mystery.

Try as they may, the children cannot steal this novel from the major characters, all of whom are adults. One to remember is, in addition to being a suspected killed, a member of the aristocracy. He attends a fine school and plays the oboe, terribly. He would prefer, however, to be plain Tom Whittaker, use the oboe case to carry a pool cue, and sneak off for snooker.

It is too early to know if Tom is the criminal, but he certainly has a crafty mind, to say the least. He explains how to develop a reputation for being intelligent: "I made myself an authority on Mesopotamia; that way they think I must know a lot about everything else. It's amazing, really, how much people think you must know if you know about something nobody else much cares about."

Tom has also discovered a way to practice his game in spite of having his Aunt order the butler to keep the billiard supplies locked up. He disguises himself and joins the regular tours of the estate gardens. "The guides wouldn't know me from Adam anyway." Then he hides in a closet until the others leave and has a free hour in the game room until it is time to escape via the French door.

Martha Grimes offers a considerable amount of bright, uncommon reading, all in the context of a proper mystery. It is good to know that still another Richard Jury mystery is coming this year.

—Martin Fass

Jerusalem Inn by Martha Grimes. New York: Little, Brown, 1984. $15.95

Grimes's series detective Richard Jury is on his way to Newcastle to visit his cousin for Christmas when he meets Helen Minton, a woman he could easily love. Yet "a meeting in a graveyard was not the best way to begin an attachment," and, accordingly, "the next time he saw her she was dead." Jury's subsequent busman's holiday, as is Grimes's pattern, runs parallel to that of his longtime friend and collaborator, Professor Melrose Plant, who, with his house party and cross-country skiing compantion, the teenage Marquess Tommy Whittaker, has literally stumbled over a dead body in the snow. Jury and Plant—Jury judges and Plant is, as it were, always "planted" and taking root at the scenes of Grimes's crimes—find the parallel murders intermingled, and the reader is treated to a classic plot initially evocative of those current during the Golden Age, except that Grimes here calls on the Oedipus story, held by some to be one of the finest crime investigations, for her inspiration in *Jerusalem Inn,* as well as upon the Christmas story itself: both are about special children, and children are *Jerusalem Inn's* fundamental mystery.

Grimes takes the Christmas story's overt thematic trappings and creates Jerusalem Inn, a "working man's pub" in the North of England, where Plant seeks refuge in a blizzard when he is on his way (with tiresome Aunt Agatha and newly unengaged Vivian Rivington) to a Yuletide holiday houseparty at the Seainghams' estate at Spinney Abbey. While Grimes's previous pubs have been at best picturesque (*The Man with a Load of Mischief*) or interestingly squalid in an urban way (*The Anodyne Necklace*), the Jerusalem Inn is unabashedly a country, and indeed North Country at that, dive, where brawls occur, pool sharking goes on as a matter of course, and a mentally retarded boy keeps things tidily swept up. That child, Robin Lyte, and his counterpart from the peerage, Tommy Whittaker, show that there *is* room at this inn for all who seek it, including Plant (Tommy's companion on those nights his Aunt Betsy has locked up the billiard room) and Jury (who works to understand why Helen Minton was nosing about such a lower-class, out-of-the-way place).

The plot of *Jerusalem Inn,* it must be admitted, slouches a bit, perhaps because Bethlehem is not on the author's itinerary, but Grimes's bent for characterization saves the mystery novel. And the Jerusalem Inn is not the only locality for interesting people to gather, as Spinney Abbey is also snowed in, and the houseparty includes, as a sample: anorexic Grace Seaingham, her arts-reviewer husband, *au courant* novelist Beatrice Sleight (*her* sleight-of-hand speciality is a yearly *roman à clef* that exposes the pasts of English peerage families), painter Edward Parmenger ("who put Melrose in mind of Heathcliff"), the third Lady Assington (married to the prominent physician and not far removed from her shop-girl origins), and Lord Assington himself, who displays uncomfortable familiarity with the drug that poisoned Helen Minton. Grimes's pen in this, her fifth Richard Jury mystery, is as acerbic as ever, particularly when the narrative point of view shifts from the somewhat melancholy Jury to Melrose Plant: "Snow, snow, snow. Lady Assington had announced it as 'ever such an adventure,' as if they were all being asked to rub sticks together to make a fire and live on whale blubber, when actually they were being sustained by crackling logs, cigars, Grand Marnier, and Sambuca."

But the focus, in the final analysis, is on children, as Christmas is both a children's feast and a celebration of *a* child, and Grimes hones in, in her plotting on birth and relationship, as do the myths she recasts. Her more immediate predecessors are writers such as Sayers, whose *The Nine Tailors* gives a nice model of a crime of family relationship and a younger teenager touched by death. Lord Peter Wimsey's relationship to Hilary is a bit more avuncular than the Earl of Caverness's (alias Melrose Plant) to Tommy, but the resemblance, buttressed by alarming holiday weather (in Wimsey's case, the flooded fen) remains. Children are the human resistance thrown out against physical discomfort and even disaster, quite often the human flotsam and jetsam which remains after adult storms at sea. And, for Grimes and her fictional foremothers, the exterior warring weather so often mirrors interior familial dispute. Once Jury and Plant sort out *their* individual family struggles (Plant with the tiresome Aunt Agatha and Jury with his desolate childhood), calmer weather will no doubt be in sight. In *Jerusalem Inn,* Grimes holds out that hope on the metaphoric level, while, for Jury and Plant, neither sees a successful love relationship appearing, Messiah-like, on his individual horizon.

—Susan L. Clark

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Death of a Butterfly by Margaret Maron. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984. $11.95

Death of a Butterfly wears its symbolism unabashedly. First of all, the murder victim,

Julie Redmond, is supposed to be seen as a type of butterfly, sporting brightly colored clothes and flitting from man to man. Then the detective assigned to the case, Lieutenant Sigrid Harald, is to be seen as a woman about to emerge from a cocoon of self-imposed repression into a new, beautiful existence, exchanging her drab clothes and constrained outlook for a brighter view of herself and those around her. Finally, there is the added symbolic dose of new life itself—the wife of one of the suspects gives birth—as well as the optimistic, next-generational figure of Eliza Fitzpatrick, a fifteen-year-old girl-becoming-a-woman and Nancy Drew spinoff who sees Sigrid as a role model of a strong career woman.

In fact, *Death of a Butterfly* can be read both as a chronicle of a murder investigation and as an exposition of some of the roles open to women, so that among those involved in the case are grandmothers (Eliza's), mistresses (Sue Montrose, secretary and lover of George Franklin, one of Julie's former boyfriends), career women (Jill Gill, a botanist who invites Sigrid to a lepidoptery lecture), women who work in the home (Sigrid's partner's wife), and surrogate mothers (Luisa Cavatori, who loves Julie's son more than Julie herself does). Throughout, the author raises implicit questions about what ingredients are necessary for women's happiness, and that is to this mystery's credit.

The problem with *Death of a Butterfly* is not that it also asks questions involving personal decisions and ethical issues facing women, for first-rate mystery fiction does so and has done so as a matter of course, but that author Maron's ability to draw characters is sorely wanting. The protagonist is a case in point. Maron tends to create one-dimensional figures, so that attempts to flesh out Sigrid's work existence with glimpses into her private affairs invariably fail: she's as dull off the job as she is on, and she is no less off-putting at leisure than at work. In fact, Sigrid is so self-conscious of her role as one of the few female detectives on New York City's police force that she spends most of her time putting other people down, as well as off, and it's impossible for Maron to sustain the fiction that this ugly duckling is really a swan in disguise, despite attempts to surround Sigrid with all these people who like her: adoring teenagers, older artists and intellectuals, hotel doormen, and half of New York's ethnic population. The reader is supposed to be equally charmed by this woman, and the problem is that Maron has set Sigrid up not to be charming—or even approachable.

There is an essential element in mystery fiction that requires the reader to have empathy with some figure—be that person victim, detective, criminal, witness, or narrator—and that convention is violated in *Death of a Butterfly,* with the result that it's a poor example of the genre and an even poorer use of the growing sub-genre of the "police procedural with a female detective." Still, Maron is to be commended for having attempted the task, but the difficulties in creating believable female characters are not easily surmounted, both because of the dictates of the genre—the tough-talking cop is traditionally male—and because of the dangers inherent in buying into female stereotypes—writers have traditionally been comfortable in allowing males, and very few females, to be individuals and not types *per se.* It's the stereotyping, in the final analysis, that's the most irritating about *Death of a Butterfly,* the notion that "good" characters metamorphose into "bad" ones and "bad" into "good," as well as the idea that all ugly ducklings change into beautiful swans. A more skillful writer—and particularly one who could make more of the stereotypes Maron draws (P. D. James? Cross? Sayers? Marsh?)—could better effect the changes Maron half-rings on her theme, and the reader might actually come to like Sigrid.

—Susan L. Clark

* * * * *

No Part in Your Death by Nicolas Freeling. New York: Viking, 1984. 233 p. $13.95

Henri Castang, police commissaire, would have been glad to ask John Donne, whose answer was more explicit and more certain: "Any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind." But the same question—what part do we have in others' deaths?—nags at Castang throughout Nicolas Freeling's most recent novel, *No Part in Your Death.*

Far from a typical fictional French policeman, Police Commissaire Castang is too busy to spend the time of an entire novel on one case. Hence the book incorporates three episodes in which Castang becomes involved, personally and professionally. The book's three parts are unified further by the chance remark of a harried waitress in Munich, where, in the first episode, Castang attends an international police convention. " 'Hab' kein Schuld an Ihr' Tod—I've no part in your death,' " she says, a "readymade expression" that she flings at Castang without thought. But "the arrow stuck in Castang; barbed, remained there. In years to come he would remember the scene in every minute detail."

In Munich, too, a young mother of questionable mental health begs help of Castang's wife Vera and, later, Castang when she is threatened with involuntary hospitalization. Castang helps as much as he can in a city in which he has no jurisdiction and less influence. Munich's political and legal machinery kicks into action, tangling Castang in its gears and raising, for him and for us, questions of personal freedom and of political guilt by association—topics much discussed, in the abstract, at the police convention. When death occurs, suddenly and unexpectedly, Castang is himself absolved of responsibility by the murderer. But the incident haunts the commissaire and stays with him long after his return home.

Home for several weeks, Castang and Vera visit friends, Roger and Marlene Riderhood, an unlikely but long-married British couple living in France. Freeling sketches these two wonderfully, as always in the voices of his other characters—in this case, Castang and Vera. Roger, they say, is a complex, eccentric man, a successful writer who works in the Riderhoods' riverside home, hence is always under foot and is sometimes difficult to live with; Marlene is a simple direct woman, a good homemaker who reads very little and is bored with her empty nest, the children all away now. "There are things wrong here," Castang tells Vera. "The jokes are getting edgy."

Things do indeed go wrong, first with nature. When a bad autumn storm causes flooding, a distraught Roger calls Castang at work just before the phone lines go: Marlene is missing and presumed dead. Accident? suicide? murder?—it is Castang's responsibility, this time, to answer these questions and, along the way, to find Marlene's body. Along the way, too, Freeling treats us to a brilliant interrogation of the suspects, delightful to read, by Castang's superior and friend, Divisional Commissaire Adrien Richard. Richard's solution to the puzzle of Marlene's death is an unorthodox one, especially for detective fiction. His answers to Castang's unspoken question—who had a part in this death?—are just as strange but just as satisfying, to us and to Castang.

Another friend and colleague, Chief Inspector Geoffrey Dawson of the British CID, involves Castang in the deaths of a young French couple in Britain. Dawson, whom Castang met in Munich, is "feeling fidgeted" about the most obvious solution to his investigation, suicide, and enlists the Frenchman's help. More than just another pair of deaths for Castang to "take part" in, this last episode shows us Castang in the field again, competent and happy, and introduces an odd group of citizens who claim as one of their personal freedoms the right to bear arms, to protect themselves, to do violence to others.

Readers who missed *The Back of the North Wind,* Freeling's last Henri Castang novel, will need a few pages to get used to Freeling's unconventional and, at first, disconcerting style: dialogue interspersed with paragraphs that are stream-of-consciousness descriptions of people, objects, and places written strictly from characters' points of view. Without intrusive stage directions (he thought, she thought) Freeling presents his characters' reactions to other people and to circumstances and to philosophical questions. Much of this musing is of course Castang's, and as the novel progresses we see him change, see him grow:as a friend, as a husband and father, as a professional, and as a human being who wonders, after all, what part he has in these deaths he encounters.

By the end of the novel, we know Castang as well as he does himself. We care what happens to him and to Freeling's other characters. This is why Freeling's approach, absolutely suited to his characters and plots and so different from that of most mystery novels, works so well.

Those who have never read Freeling's books at all may have to adjust, too, to his deceptively leisurely pace. Reading *No Part in Your Death* is a pleasure not meant to be rushed; if the beginning is a bit slow, well, it is meant to be. No racing off at breakneck speed into violence and adventure for Freeling, nor for Castang either. But this is one of the strengths of the novel: that the author, through his characters, takes time to think about things that happen. Their reactions are all perfectly human, too, and make for absorbing reading. We empathize with them; we get involved.

At the novel's end, Castang is glad to admit a part in the deaths he has encountered because, paradoxically, they have made him realize how large a part he has in life. We are glad that he does and are glad to have shared even a small part of the lives in this book.

Skillful writing, carefully though-out plots, interesting and consistent characters drawn true-to-life: these are the best reasons to read *No Part in Your Death*, and to read others by Nicolas Freeling as well.

—Mary Frances Grace

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Murder on the Air by Ralph Warner and Toni Ihara. Nolo Press (950 Parker St., Berkeley, CA 94710). 230 ppgs. $5.95 trade paperback.

Ah, California. Are you ready for this? The chief homicide detective visits an attractive female suspect in a dual murder case. After asserting her innocence, she invites him to relax in her hot tub and partake in some high-performance *cannabis*. He replies: "Lead the way, I'm in homicide, not horiculture." Naturally, no sooner do cop and suspect wind up in bed together than the detective's partner, a gorgeous Japanese-American female, comes calling, and we suddenly have the matter of mixed affections to complicate the investigation.

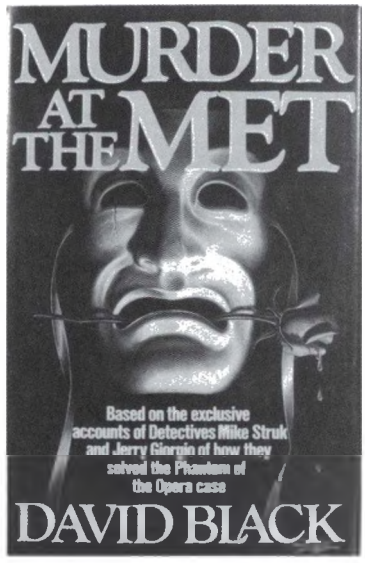
Is that the way they do it in Berkeley? One would certainly like to think so, because it makes this book all the more interesting.

The case which confounds our radical heroes concerns a radio talk show host and his guest, a controversial anti-nuclear crusader, who are literally blown to bits by powerful shotgun blasts fired from outside the studio. Which man was the killer gunning for, and why? The investigation turns up no lack of suspects, but somehow the pieces don't mesh together. The clue that leads to the killer turns into an almost-too-rapidly-moving (but nonetheless dramatic) ending, and the book proves satisfying in another unorthodox way: we find ourselves almost sympathizing with the killer and despising his intended victim.

Murder on the Air has a few rough edges in the dialogue, which seems to lack the genuine idiom of the West Coast *à la* the 1980s. Still, writers Warner and Ihara, although obviously new at the game, manage to come up with a strong background and entertaining plot. Especially refreshing is having an Asian-American female cop, who does surprisingly well in the character of violent-crimes investigator. But best of all is that quirky, radical Northern California lifestyle which tilts the book's perspective more toward Cyra McFadden (author of *Serial*) than Hammett or Ross Macdonald.

Nolo Press appears to be a small-scale publisher with very limited distribution, specializing in legal self-help books. *Murder on the Air* is the only novel in their catalogue. Their address is included because they accept direct-mail orders.

—Mark Schreiber



Murder at the Met by David Black. New York: The Dial Press, 1984. $15.95

Black records a real-life police procedural mystery, one that captured national media attention in 1980 when the nude, bound, and gagged body of Metropolitan Opera violinist Helen Hagnes Mintiks was found in a Met airshaft a day after her unexplained disappearance during a concert intermission. The search for the murderer that Black gives the reader is "based on the exclusive accounts of Detectives Mike Struk and Jerry Giorgio of how they solved the Phantom of the Opera case." Accordingly, Black is careful to place Mike's and Jerry's testimony in quotes, as well as that of the convicted killer, technician Craig Crimmins (significantly called "Crimmie" by his backstage fellow workers), and leave undocumented testimony in a dialogue format unincumbered by quotation marks. Yet, despite the documentary style, the reader routinely forgets—and then, with a jolt, remembers—that *Murder at the Met* is not a piece of fiction but rather a chronicle of the outcome of the horrible fate that met a talented young artist who happened to be "in the wrong place at the wrong time."

In fact, Mike labels the Mintiks murder a "classic one" because the "classic" features which Black stresses are also linked to past artistic performances displaying man's inhumanity to man. For Jerry, his life is a series of happenings punctuated by current dance tunes ("Come Go with Me," "To the Aisle"), and for Mike, the tunes are always second-fiddle numbers because he sees Jerry as "upstaging" him, as always trying to "grab the glory for himself." The friction between Mike and Jerry initially hinders but ultimately helps the progress of the investigation, for they turn their different styles to good use in their version of the classic "tough cop"/"nice cop" duo.

Only part of *Murder at the Met* treats the actual hunt for Helen's killer. Much of the book is given over to Crimmins's two-year trial, during which his defense attorney, Hochheiser, gives a "bravura performance" in which he "betrayed his belief that Craig was innocent and Helen was on trial." Hochheiser focuses on the circumstances under which Crimmins confessed to having followed Helen into an elevator, abducted her, twice attempted to rape her, and eventually pushed her off the opera house roof into an air shaft. Hochheiser attempts to cast Mike and Jerry as types of rapists who forced Crimmins to "go with them" just as Crimmins threatened Helen. Crimmins's trial, as Black describes it, becomes quite a show, with the media eagerly following and commenting upon each development. The typical New Yorker's distrust of the police, coupled with the disparity between Helen's and Craig's backgrounds (Craig comes from a working-class family in one of the boroughs, and Helen grew up in rural Canada and married a European), makes for a classic confrontation between the world of the street and the world of art, the city and the country, America and things foreign.

for the detection fan. Black is once again in fine form—the *New York Times Book Review* has twice included him in its "Best Books of the Year" category—and he makes compelling the problem the cops face so that they attempt to play "ethical pick up sticks" not only in solving Helen's murder but also in bringing the killer to justice. The Metropolitan Opera House has so many levels, corners, and crannies: "Corridors forked and forked again or ran parallel, leading to halls that seemed not adjacent as they should have been but in different parts of the theater. The floor plan of the building appeared to defy logic, as though in designing the Met the architect had thrown in the fourth and fifth dimensions, making Moebius-strip hallways and Klein-bottle closets." The building becomes a metaphor for the Helen Hagnes Mintiks case, and looking over Mike's and Jerry's shoulders as they map out the problem makes for fascinating reading.

—Susan L. Clark

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Slow Dancer by W. R. Philbrick. New York: St. Martin's Press. $13.95

Mandy O'Hare lives life according to the dictum: "Go thou forth with trust funds into the world and consume vast quantities of drugs." As the daughter of Alfred ("Pudge") O'Hare, Jr., the frontrunner in the Maine Congressional Republican primary (and him-

self the son of the formidable Alfred, Sr., one-time governor of Maine), Mandy has always been given what she wants. And she's run with a very fast crowd. When she is found stabbed to death after a one-night stand at the Sea Breeze Motal, it is no surprise to her relatives or to Connie Kale, the sole female private investigator in Rivermuth, Maine. Mandy and Connie go back a long way, back to the days when Connie was the golf course greenskeeper's daughter and Mandy the daughter of the course's owner. In between Mandy's and Connie's adolescence (when Mandy tried every forbidden thing she could and Connie mostly watched) and Mandy's death, Mandy managed to seduce Connie's husband (now ex-husband) and Connie started and abandoned a promising career on the Ladies Professional Golf Association circuit.

Connie is drawn into the circumstances surrounding Mandy's death not only because she pays her respects at the funeral but also because she is privy to information given her by Rivermuth police investigator Richard Stein, who has some romantic interest in her. The patriarch of the O'Hare clan, Alfred, Sr., hires Connie at the funeral, so that she can find out as much as possible about Mandy's death, because he wants to know and therefore anticipate what "Pudge's" political opponents will use in their attempt to discredit his candidacy. Connie hasn't far to look to find much that could embarrass O'Hare politically. Mandy, it seems, was found dead in bed when her companion of the evening, male stripper Tony Steel, awakened in the morning after an evening's overindulgence in cocaine, cognac, and sex. Steel is adamant about his innocence, and the likely suspects uncovered by Connie and the police department include: Bo Bernardi, Mandy's estranged husband (who is having a fling with Mandy's sister Kitty); John Maxfield, another male stripper with whom Mandy has been having an affair; nosy family doctor Sutcliffe, who's treated Mandy for an unwanted teenage pregnancy; various other members of the O'Hare family; and drug empire figures of Rivermuth's seamy underworld. Author Philbrick's skill shows in his abilities to manipulate a large cast of suspects—and victims, as there are multiple murders in *Slow Dancer*—and keep events and dialogue credible.

But where Philbrick excels is in his characterization of Connie Kale, the tall, tough-talking, and surprisingly vulnerable heroine of *Slow Dancer*. Connie, in fact, is what Nancy Drew would have been if Nancy could ever have matured: she, too, is motherless, with a father who attempts to live his life through her (Johnny Hale was a golf pro before he turned greenskeeper, and he very much wishes that Connie would go back to the golf world that she gave up four years ago, just as lawyer Carson Drew is often commenting on Nancy's legal prowess), and she, like Nancy, needs males to rescue her from crises. Like that prototypical "girl detective," Connie involves herself in situations which are beyond her control. And finally, the people she meets in the course of her investigation are just as bizarre in their own way as were the 1930s- and 1940s-style "bad guys" Nancy encountered. There is, for example, Dr. Nervo, a four-hundred-pound ex-wrestler who fronts for a slimy Rivermuth mobster. Nervo wears "custom-built overalls": "You know how many square feet of orange poplin they is in these overalls? Why it's no less than three hundred and sixty two, that's how many. That is six feet even from shoulder to toe and the same around the waist. Fella in here the other night tole me I looked like the biggest, meanest tangerine in the world." "You are," Connie said, "an extremely large man."

But at the same time, Connie's literary heritage goes back to that of the hardboiled detective, so that there are parodistic Chandleresque, Hammetlike turns of phrase: "He marched into another room, neatly swiveling his hips to clear a Boston fern that was almost big enough to shade Liechtenstein." And present, too, is the "mean streets" mindset that requires the detective to pose existential questions in an appropriately jaded form, so that Connie ponders why she has chosen her second career of private investigation: "It was that sense of moral danger, the implied risk of coming up as corrupt as the crime you were investigating, that made the work interesting. Call it the thrill factor. Not a roller-coaster thrill, it was more like falling in slow motion, a kind of skydiver dream where you keep dropping, getting closer and closer to what you hope will be the truth, and all the time you're falling you have your hand on the cord, waiting until the last possible instant to pop open and yank yourself back up, awake, alive again." All in all, *Slow Dancer* is a thoroughly good "read," and Connie a heroine who well deserves further acquaintance. The mystery, well plotted and ironically written, seemingly effortlessly holds one's attention, so that the reader can never contend, as does one of Connie's antagonists: "Nobody likes a wise guy. And nobody at all likes a wise-guy woman, okay?"

—Susan L. Clark

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McGarr and the Method of Descartes by Bartholomew Gill. New York: Viking, 1984. $14.95

In Northern Ireland, where "history is genealogy," a young university graduate named Paddy Geer is mistakenly arrested, incarcerated, and brutally tortured in a late-1960s military action called "Operation Demetrius," the ostensible purpose of which is to "capture and intern without trial the leadership of the Irish Republican Army." Geer, a Catholic, has returned from London to Belfast to visit his mother, and he wonders over the course of his week-long ordeal at the hands of the brutish British soldiers why he, a photojournalist, has been targeted for such oppression. When released, Geer, initially numb and later coldly bitter, never joins the I.R.A., but he exacts "retribution for the meagerness of a life that could be brought to a grim, bathetic close on the kick of a trooper's boot." He lays careful plans over the course of the next fifteen years to avenge the fate of his mother, kicked to the floor by a soldier in such a manner that a rib punctured her lung and she died.

Paddy's personal retaliation against the British—and he is teamed with a sophisticated set of mates who know all there is to know about paramilitary maneuvers, electronic technology, and cover-up techniques to be employed following criminal procedures—is countered by the investigative skills of Ireland's police, headed by silent, whiskey-drinking series detective McGarr. In the final analysis, the true battle of wits is waged between Paddy's years of hatred and underground networking and the sharp but relatively untested skills of McGarr's most junior subordinate, Ruth Brigid Honora Ann Bresnahan, a woman characterized by her trust in logic and her knowledge of computers. Put in larger terms, *McGarr and the Method of Descartes* is a conflict between those who choose violence, "the chance of a permanent solution preferable to the slow death of everything," and those who abhore the mentality that feeds the Irish question, the idea that tension must be maintained, an idea supported, as McGarr's assistant suggests, by the Catholic Church, which needs enemies in order to maintain its hold over the populace: "I'm not blaming the Church—mind—which must plump for its own interests, but could it be they've been a mite too successful? From the cradle through school and marriage to the grave, we've allowed one institution and one alone to tell us how to think. Life, work, duty, guilt, and death." Ultimately, logic, and not emotions, triumphs. As such, *McGarr and the Method of Descartes* is at its heart an optimistic novel, for it suggests repeatedly that cooler heads can prevail and that disunity exists not just because the monolithic unity offered by Ian Paisley's interpretation of the Protestant Ethic or the Irish Republic's support of Rome proves at the end to be lacking, but also because a basic tolerance of the various members of the family of man is wanting.

The Irish Question, as is the case with the situation of two Germanies and two Koreas, is a complex one, and Gill's rendering of the situation, in the appropriate guise of a mystery novel, speaks to its inherent intricacies. Both sides, oddly enough, enjoy the fight: the Catholics in Northern Ireland because they, embattled, live the survivor mentality, and the Protestants, superior in numbers, because they can vent on others energy that they prefer not to devote to the draining economic and social problems that plague the country. And finally, McGarr's Republic of Ireland staff can warm to the fight, in a restrained and technologically-dependent fashion, and can confront its own enemies—those criminals, countrymen, and friends—who involve themselves in this fast-paced caper of Paddy Geer's, one that leaves

a bank officer dead and nearly fells the prime minister. Like Gill's earlier efforts, this suspense novel is rich in atmosphere, dialect, and characterization.

—Susan L. Clark

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The House that Jack Built by Eileen Dewhurst. Garden City, N.Y.: The Crime Club, 1984. $11.95

Colleen Dewhurst's seventh mystery novel draws inspiration, as well as complexity, from the infinitely expandable children's game phrase: "This is the house that Jack built...this is the _____ that goes in the house that Jack built." Dewhurst's title, *The House That Jack Built,* refers directly to the popular British TV serial of the same name, which attempts to show "what happens to one middle-class family between the end of the war...and the mid-sixties. Jack Lester is a private builder struggling at the beginning of the serial to build himself a house in the face of all the restrictions still applying in 1945. But how long will he be able to afford to live in it?" Dewhurst's title, however, speaks on a fundamental level to the idea of the house as a metaphor for mind, to the maze of rooms, secret and not-so-secret, that exist in the minds and pasts of both victims and suspects: the actors, actresses, writers, and production staff of the most popular and longest-running English soap opera of them all. The very expandability of this "house"—and a house of cards it is at the novel's end, where a murderer's plans, like those of poor Jack Lester, collapse—allows for the multiplicity of motives and suspects whom Dewhurst produces.

The narrative heart of *The House That Jack Built* centers around Sue Halliday (Sue Lester on the series because she was literally handed as a babe-in-arms to Jack and Jane Lester), and the narrative consciously muddles Sue's stage and private lives. In fact, it's a case of life imitating art, for the planned series of accidents slated to befall the Lesters onscreen occurs first offstage. One actor takes a nasty fall downstairs, having slipped on a honey-slathered threshold; a second becomes ill after eating; and a third, if what the script-writers predict comes about, is going to be killed. And Sue is the logical suspect, for wasn't she recognized, famous face that she is, buying honey in Harrod's food department and purchasing chocolates in a small shop in Hampstead and having them sent to the cast member who suddenly becomes ill?

The reader knows that Sue is innocent, having been privy to the blackmailing phone calls that she has been receiving on a regular basis. Sue, with all of a sixteen-year-old's first sexual stirrings and need for privacy, has written down in a diary her intense feelings about Ralph Boyd, the actor who plays Sue Lester's first boyfriend, Paul Saunders. When the diary is stolen from her handbag, Sue has no recourse but to look with suspicion on everyone around her: her fellow cast members, including the handsome Ralph, her remote, thoroughly professional mother, and even the TV talk show host who interviews her on what it is like to grow up on the tube. The blackmailer's threats play, moreover, on Sue's distrust of others: "The only person she could be certain of was herself." The result of a young life spent in the public eye is a person who is easily maniulated when what little privacy and spontaneity she possesses is removed.

Dewhurst builds her literary edifice, this gripping novel, brick by brick, and the reader has the enjoyment of suspecting literally everyone with whom Sue comes into contact. It's breathless reading, as well as an authentic treatment of a teenager's mind, even a teenager with as unusual an upbringing as Sue Halliday has had. The building of a personality is paralled in the building of Jack's house, and the reader sees, by the end of the mystery novel, that, as least as far as Sue goes, that foundation has proved to be sound. The house of suspicion which she has built in her mind can tumble down without doing serious damage to her.

—Susan L. Clark

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The Rainy City by Earl W. Emerson. Avon, 1985.

Introducing Seattle-based private eye Thomas Black, *The Rainy City* is an excellent debut for a writer who is certain to bring freshness to the P.I. genre. Thomas Black is an ex-cop who retired after being forced to kill a teenager who was trying to kill him. As a result, he finds it very difficult to consider using a gun on anyone ever again.

Black owns a two-bedroom, wood-frame house with a bachelor apartment downstairs which he rents to a student. The student turns out to be a female, Kathy Birchfield, who indulges herself in playing dress-up. In one scene, she is dressed as a clown, replete with red nose, in another she is made up like a streetwalker, all for the simple reason that she likes to do it. The relationship between Black and Kathy is where the freshness lies, and it's a big part of this book. They are friends, and have never had sex, although they have slept in the same bed twice—once in this book after Kathy is tied up, threatened, and has her apartment trashed.

Black becomes involved with a search for a missing person, Melissa Nadisky, a friend of Kathy's about whom Kathy has had one of her "premonitions." Initially, Melissa is painted as the shy, quiet type, but while searching for her Black starts unearthing a multi-faceted personality, not the least of which is the kind of girl who feels it is her duty to spead her legs for any man who comes along—although she and her husband have had relations only three times during their years of marriage.

In some ways, this is also an infuriating book, but that is to the author's credit. He has created characters you can sympathize with, and characters you'd like to take hold of and shake some sense into. He shakes them up himself, adds a jigger of murder, an old family secret, and comes up with a whale of a tale.

This book is to be followed by another called *Poverty Bay* and, I understand, at least one other. With luck, they'll all be this good, and there'll be more to come.

—Bob Randisi

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Embrace the Wolf by Benjamin M. Schutz. Bluejay Books, 1985.

At first glance, this might strike you—it did me—as another book about a super-macho "Spenser"-type P.I., but upon closer inspection you find much, much more. Of course, there are similarities—including the existence of a sidekick who will take off the head of anyone the P.I. points to—but these are forgiveable.

The book introduces Washington, D.C.-based P.I. Leo Haggerty and—like Emerson above—Schutz has a knack for creating characters. In fact, he "mentions" several characters I was looking forward to meeting—Shafrath Brown, Wardell Blevins, and "Donna Summer's sexier sister"—none of whom put in an appearance, which hooks me for the next book.

Haggerty is hired by the mother of the little Saunders girls, who were kidnapped five years earlier. Her husband has never recovered from the incident and is now on the trail of a man he believes to be guilty. Haggerty must get to him before he does something violent. In the process of looking for him, Haggerty steps into the middle of a case of rape, rescuing the girl and forcing himself to play babysitter, constantly on guard for an attack by the perps of that incident, while continuing his search for the little girl's father.

Although the bulk of the book is written in first person from Haggerty's point of view, there are the odd chapters which are third-person, describing movements of Saunders and of the kidnapper. I found these chapters somewhat jarring and not as well done as the Haggerty chapters. In general, however, this is an exciting, well-written, and fast-paced first novel, the first of five already signed for. The next one will be called *All the Old Bargains.* I think you'll find this superior to any other Washington, D.C.-based P.I. novel you might have read over the past few years.

—Bob Randisi

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True Crime by Max Allan Collins. St. Martin's Press, 1984.

The first novel to feature private eye Nathan Heller, of 1930s Chicago, was *True Detective,* which was presented the PWA Shamus award as Best Hardcover Private Eye Novel of 1983. In this, what Collins calls the "companion volume" to the earlier novel, if the author has not succeeded in telling a better tale, he has certainly matched the quality of the other.

It is 1934 in Chicago, the final year of the Chicago World's Fair. Nathan Heller is hired by traveling salesman John Howard to follow his wife and discover if she is cheating on him. Soon enough, Heller discovers that, although the woman does indeed have a boyfriend, she is not Mrs. John Howard, and that in fact there is no John Howard. In addition, the man with whom "Mrs. Howard' has been keeping company may very well be the notorious John Dillinger.

Against his will, Heller is dragged into an apparent police and FBI (although it was not known as the "FBI" then) plot to murder Dillinger in front of the Biograph Theater. In connection with this plot, he becomes involved with G-Man Melvin Purvis and gangster Frank Nitti.

In addition, Heller is hired by a farmer to find his runaway wife—a wife who has now become a moll in a gang that includes Baby Face Nelson, Pretty Boy Floyd, and Ma Barker and her sons, a gang of which Heller, undercover now, also becomes a member until he discovers a kidnap plot that will be front page news. With all this, Heller finds time to romance the famous fan dancer Sally Rand, who was a sensation dancing naked with bubbles and fans.

Once again Max Collins blends fiction with historical fact and comes away a runaway winner with what may be the best P.I. novel of the year—again!

—Bob Randisi

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Cousin Once Removed by Gerald Hammond. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984. $10.95

This is a novel with plenty of cleverness plus a combination of other ingredients, special enough at first glance to appear as more than just an ordinary piece of fiction. Interest is easily sustained through its brief scenes to keep the pages turning, even if it seems in retrospect to be hardly memorable, with little detection and barely a trace of mystery.

Gerald Hammond is a British writer who lives in Scotland, where the story is set, and it is redundant for the dust jacket to tell about his wide-ranging interest in firearms and its associated sports. Almost every character in the book has a connection with guns, from buying and selling to stealing and collecting. Everyone is hunting and shooting, and perhaps it is only for the element of surprise that, when the hero is wounded, it is not by a bullet but by an arrow fired from a crossbow. This incident provides the opportunity for still further exposition about weapons and for the information that an arrow from a crossbow is properly identified as a bolt and one with a square shaft is actually known as a quarrel.

There are long passages about cleaning and repairing, the art of finding antiques and refurbishing them, friendly chatter on all sorts of topics, and the extended history of a duel that figures in the plot. In essence, guns are vital to the progression of this novel.

Keith Calder, the leading character, has already been featured in four earlier books. Because he spends only a part of the time in his gunshop, he is said to have survived in a lusty life filled with adventure. (The four previous novels all have the word "game" in their titles.) He is an authority on more than weapons and ammunition, with the fund of knowledge that supports his performance as a detective.

Calder has a reputation as a womanizer, having reformed only recently now that he has both a wife and child. Without knowing the specifics of the other novels about him, however, some of his current behavior is puzzling. When he comes across a woman urinating in the woods, this man of the world is described as having "the shock of his life." On the other hand, he recovers sufficiently in the next second to aim the camera he happens to be carrying and shoot her picture, even before the woman has a chance "to retrieve some of her modesty."

The plot of this novel is basically the framework, and it is the embellishments which deliver the interest. There is more to follow in the dialogue between Calder and his bright spouse, Molly, and in Calder's stratagems and pranks than in the puzzle of who wants the guns and why, and the nature of the scandal that certain people are trying to hide while others do their best to publicize it.

The most colorless person in *Cousin Once Removed* is Calder's partner, Wallace James. He is easily neglected in thinking about Hammond's book, but one can imagine the author giving star billing to this character one day. Wallace puts into practice the values of honesty and integrity, and he almost succeeds at standing up to the ego and chutzpah (if we may apply that word to a Scotsman) of Keith Calder.

—Martin Fass

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Emerald by Phyllis Whitney. New York: Doubleday & Co.

Emerald is a novel of suspense and romance that is much better than the average fiction of this genre.

Carol Hamilton, seeking refuge for herself and her five-year-old son Keith, turns up at the home of her great-aunt, Monica Arlen, a mysterious and reclusive former movie star. Carol has driven across the United States to Palm Springs in an effort to escape her powerful and savage husband, Owen Barclay.

Throughout the years, Carol has corresponded with her great-aunt, but, until arriving at her desert home, she has never met her somewhat eccentric relative. Indeed, although the exchange of letters has been steady, and Monica has put her through college, she has never received a single invitation to visit. But, with apparently nowhere else to turn for help, Carol is forced to grasp at this thin thread of familial affection in an effort to save herself and her son.

In this strange, quiet desert town, friendless and frightened, Carol finally meets her vulnerable and shadowy aunt and is confronted with a new and scary mystery: Monica seems simultaneously to want her and not want her.

What is the answer to this paradoxical conduct? Why is Monica's behavior so erratic? Why did she become a recluse? What is the truth behind her ongoing feud with Saxon Scott, her equally famous former leading man? (Saxon and Monica have not spoken since their last film, *Mirage,* 36 years ago.)

Monica finally agrees to let Carol write her biography, forcing Carol to investigate her aunt's strange life ever more deeply. As little bits and pieces of that life are pulled together, a fragile image of a once great screen actress is constructed, and it is as delicate as the iris that Monica once used as her symbol.

While delving into the arcane and fascinating mysteries of the past, Carol is suddenly again confronted with the present in the form of Owen and his thugs, against whom she must protect herself and her son in an attempt to give him some childhood moments devoid of fear. Keith's childhood has been emotionally damaging due to the constant threats to himself and his mother, and it is only since finding the sanctuary of the desert that he has begun to laugh again.

Emerald is a mystery within a mystery, and, if some of the characters seem a trifle unrealistic, we nonetheless care about their

fates and are genuinely atingle when the succession of small surprises ultimately leads to its razzle-dazzle shocker of an ending.

—Carol Innan

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Double by Bill Pronzini and Marcia Muller. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984. 294 pp. $13.95

Networking has its advantages, as San Francisco sleuths Sharon McCone and the "Nameless Detective" find when they discover one another at a private eye convention down in summertime San Diego.

That encounter is the beginning of a beautiful friendship, not only for these two very human (and therefore very credible) characters, but also for readers who enjoy well-plotted mystery novels which invite them to match wits and play along.

The tandem of McCone and "Nameless," formerly solo sleuths, is the good news about *Double*, a novel in which Bill Pronzini and Marcia Muller have merged the distinctive personalities and differing investigative techniques of their well-known snoops. The result is a team every bit as memorable as Nick and Nora Charles, Pam and Jerry North, or Perry Mason and his Della, and maybe even better.

Make no mistake, the McCone-"Nameless" combination is one that clicks. The comedic interplay of this bright new partnership is as welcome as its competent inquiry into the case at hand. And a challenging case it is, with its intricately-linked pattern of murder, blackmail, corruption, deception, missing persons, and vices too unnatural to be described in a family publication.

When security chief Elaine Picard plunges to her death off a tower of the hotel hosting the private eye convention, Sharon is determined to find out whether the lady jumped of her own accord or was pushed. She busies herself interviewing possible suspects, probing secrets, and obtaining an assortment of intriguing clues that include a college sorority paddle, a gorilla named Fred, and (of all things) a grammatical error in the French language. Seemingly ordinary clues at first, these later tell her (and us) a great deal.

Nameless is equally active, tackling the case of a little boy and his mother who have mysteriously vanished from a hotel bungalow, loaning Sharon his expertise, and rescuing her from occasional tight spots such as a visit to the slammer and a harrowing desert ordeal wherein she is stalked by the murderer. Whatever leads he and Sharon turn up are promptly shared with the reader. The clues are fairly played, and the investigation is conducted in the persistent and methodical manner befitting two astute members of the private eye profession.

With nary a fale note or wasted word, *Double* builds steadily in human interest and puzzling suspense. Told in the first-person voices of the sleuths themselves, the novel permits Sharon and "Nameless" to alternate as storytellers united by common crime-solving purpose and a growing affection for one another.

It is a marriage made in detective heaven as the family-oriented, crisply confident, solve-it-any-way-you-can McCone adjusts herself to the lonely, brooding, beer-quaffing, play-it-by-the-rules "Nameless." She gives him the perky companionship he needs, an investigative sidekick on whose fact-gathering she can depend, and even a new nickname of "Wolf" (short for the classic "lone wolf" operative in whose heroic gumshoes the unheroic but sturdily competent "Nameless" treads). He gives her the respect of an equal and the solicitude of a father, thereby encouraging her freedom and talent as an intrepid private investigator willing to run all the risks.

There are nerve-wracking moments, as when Sharon is trapped in a "torture dungeon" with a corpse for company, and several side-splitting ones, as when "Nameless" is scouted by Mama McCone as a possible suitor for daughter Sharon's hand ("She needs a nice *mature* man who'll take care of her, keep her out of trouble").

The real chemistry here, however, is the pair whose concern for one another, tolerance for each other's quirks, and relentless pursuit of the truth makes for such an appealing detective duo that Muller and Pronzini are bound to feel a little lonely as solo novelists. Their fans are already looking forward to the next McCone-"Nameless" adventure to come from the joint typewriter of two storytelling pros who know how to combine characters, compound plots, and double our pleasure. —Howard Lachtman

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A Cadenza for Caruso by Barbara Paul. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1984. 146 pp. $11.95

Are any prominent historical figures immune from artificial resurrection at the hands of today's mystery writers? Just how many "heretofore unknown" cases of murder and mayhem are there? The last few years have seemingly unearthed a veritable treasure trove of such incidents. Stuart Kaminsky's string of Toby Peters adventures involve many of Hollywood's brightest stars. Both Dashiell Hammett and Edgar Allan Poe have been depicted as becoming personally embroiled in criminous matters. And the Master himself? The recent rash of newly discovered cases has Sherlock rubbing elbows with such divergent personalities as Theodore Roosevelt and Count Dracula.

For those keeping count, the latest addition to this growing genre is Barbara Paul's *A Cadenza for Caruso*, which has opera's ruby-throated tenor involved in both murder and blackmail. The year is 1910. We've been provided a front-row seat with which to observe the ongoing rehearsals of the New York Metropolitan Opera's first world premiere. A dazzling array of talent is at hand. Composed by Giacomo Puccini, *La Fanciulla del West* features Toscanini conducting, David Belasco staging, and Enrico Caruso (among others) performing. But, although a smash opening is anticipated, the company's spirits

are noticeably dampened—for all are aware of the recent scandal surrounding Puccini and his family. Seeking catharsis, Puccini informs Caruso of his tragic circumstance and subsequent blackmail. Spurred by their developing friendship, Caruso decides to confront the blackmailer himself. But the effort goes unrewarded. Upon finding Luigi Davila fatally stabbed in his apartment, Puccini comes under immediate suspicion. With both motive and opportunity, Lt. O'Halloran is ready to bring down the curtain on the case. But, convinced of his friend's innocence, Caruso turns bloodhound in the hopes of tracking down the real killer.

Up to this point, we've been treated to an engaging narrative generously laced with biting backstage color and humor. But here *Cadenza* starts to unravel. Instead of maintaining the novel's focus, the second half degenerates into second-rate burlesque. Caruso becomes Clouseau: Bumbling, stumbling, and generally riding a banana peel, our hero transforms into an incompetent buffoon. What detection occurs in the final chapters is woefully bereft of substance and meaning. The dénouement is a stage-door rehash of the classic British "everyone in the drawing room" scenario. And only Caruso's physical gymnastics in the final scene saves the end from total disappointment.

This is not to imply that the novel is an unpleasant reading experience. As a period piece, it's highly entertaining. The operatic in-fighting and idiosyncratic behavior of various characters is particularly well handled. "Cadenza" is even contextually defined for those reluctant to pull Webster's off the shelf. But still, one is left wanting more. Perhaps the novel's abbreviated length needs fleshing out. As such, *A Cadenza for Caruso* is like eating a bowl of fettucine without the alfredo. Tasty, but lacking.

—Steven Ritterman

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RETRO REVIEWS

Challenge to the Reader edited by Ellery Queen. New York: Frederick Stokes, 1938. vii + 503 pp.

The first detective-story anthology edited by Ellery Queen, *Challenge to the Reader* is also one of Queen's most gimmicky. Determined to be original, to get out something "that would possess a unique central idea to hold it together, to differentiate it from any other anthology ever published," Queen first rejects several proposals put forward by his friend J. J. McC., and then tells him: "I'll change the familiar names of the detectives to ones of my own invention, and I'll challenge the reader to deduce who the detective is in each story. The only alteration of the original text will be this disguising of the detective's name."

Regular readers of detective fiction won't find the great majority of the 25 challenges very difficult. (How can anyone not detect Father Brown behind Vicar Wells in "The Honour of Israel Gow" or Hercule Poirot behind M. Apollodore Pimpant in "Triangle at Rhodes"?) But the going gets pretty rough when Queen includes such authors as Thomas Hanshew, T. S. Stribling, and Gelett Burgess, whose popularity has declined radically since the 1930s, and second-line detectives of first-rate writers, such as Horne Fisher of Chesterton's *The Man Who Knew Too Much*.

The stories themselves are well chosen and uniformly entertaining. It is difficult to believe, furthermore, that as late as 1938 no anthology included such major pieces as "The Honour of Istael Gow," Doyle's "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax," and Hammett's "A Man Called Knott." And, while readers are not likely to revise their lists of top ten or twenty stories on the basis of stories like Anthony Wynne's "Footsteps," G. D. H. and Margaret Cole's "Walker's Holiday," and Octavius Roy Cohen's "Scrambled Yeggs," they may well want to search out more of the exploits of Dr. Hailey, Supt. Wilson, and Jim Hanvey.

A final treat is the opportunity to encounter in an unexpected place more of the acumen that marks Ellery Queen's comments about detective fiction. Consider his remarks about Margery Allingham: "You [J. J. McC]'ll hear considerably more about Miss Allingham before you grow tired of solving bafflers. . . . She's very well known in England, and over here she's edging into the inner circle with only sheer merit as her letter of introduction," or his brilliantly concise description of the ingredients of Chesterton's greatness, "paradox. . .mysticism, ingenuity, fantastic overtones, and characteristically practical and clever answer[s]."

—William Reynolds

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Murder Pie edited by J. L. Ranken and Jane Clunies Ross. Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1936.

Murder Pie is a collaborative novel produced by sixteen Australian writers in imitation of "a book [almost certainly *The Floating Admiral*, which the Detection Club published in 1931] by several of the foremost writers of detective fiction in Great Britain." Following the rules set forth in Dorothy L. Sayers's introduction to *The Floating Admiral:* "[E]very writer had to pick up the story where it left off; deal with the clues left by his or her predecessors; and nothing extraneous must be introduced merely for the sake of complicating matters."

The plots rush off in so many directions that it is hard to believe that any two authors had the same solution in mind. (Some give the impression of not having any idea where things were going). Having modeled so much of their novel on *The Floating Admiral*, it is unfortunate that the co-editors did not adopt its policy of including a series of notes in which authors detail their understanding of the story and outline the solutions they worked toward.

The novel, like similar collaborative works, is primarily of curiosity value; but it provides some interesting glimpses into Australian society of the late 1930s with its concern for drug rings and Communist spies and into a few authors' ideas about psychology as it was then taught and practiced. Some of the prose is labored, and a few of the contributors had not mastered the more polished narrative techniques of better-quality English and American detective fiction. But Professor Walter Murdoch does manage to inject some humor into his chapter, "A Calculated Crime," while in "Death Ride," the penultimate chapter, Ethel Turner neatly kills off all the characters involved with two of the novel's three murders, leaving her successor to wrap things up without their testimony.

A fair judgment would seem to be that *Murder Pie* is not as good as *The Floating Admiral* but succeeds better than *Double Death* (1939), the Detection Club's second collaborative novel. Perhaps the editors should have included four-and-twenty writers in their pie and sought for royal patronage in that manner.

—William Reynolds

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Tell Death To Wait by Anita Boutell. Putnam, 1939.

Tell Death To Wait is a solid accomplishment by the author of the stupendous *Death Has a Past*, which this reader promises to review after re-reading it in the near future.

Here we have a Cotswold manor setting. During a twelve-hour period, eight literati are gathered for a weekend of fun and games. One of the eight is murdered, and another, a youngish female poet, plays detective perforce. Fearing ruinous scandal, the remaining six attempt to convince our heroine to report the death as an accident. This attempt, whether it succeeds, and how the detectress determines the killer, is the storyline for our purposes.

This is a short novel, written in a stream-of-consciousness mode which avoids H.I.B.K. In fairness, the detection level is not high (neither is the anxiety level), and the most important clue is gimmicky. Nonetheless, the action is continuous and the writing is superb. What sex there is, is implicit, as befitting an enlightened woman writer of the '30s.

Standard detection references to this fine author are almost nonexistent. Hubin lists her mystery output at a mere four. I have three and am missing only *Cradled in Fear*.

Attention Booksellers! Finally, having read this book back-to-back with Jonathan Latimer's contemporary *Headed for a*

Hearse, I refute with renewed vigor the conventional wisdom that hardboiled fiction is *per se* more realistic than the genteel kind. Certainly, of these two samples, the Boutell wins by many a length.

—T. J. Shamon

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Headed for a Hearse by Jonathan Latimer.

This story concerns the adventures of series P.I., the alcoholic William Crane, to prove the innocence of a wealthy Chicagoan on death row for a locked room murder. The story employs a valid gimmick which should have been obvious to all concerned early on, but then there would have been no excuse for runs all over Chicago sampling a variety of booze.

The volume in my possession is called a photoplay edition, with stills from the movie, and the novel smacks of a written-for-the-movies motivation. There is the obligatory wisecracking sidekick and a gratuitous tough "broad." The violence is unessential to the plot.

This reader grew up in a large American city during the 1930s, and thus when he compares the so-called realism of the hard-boiled school, as exemplified by this novel, with remembered associations, this book seems as unreal as many of the Hollywood productions of the time. Not recommended.

—T. J. Shamon

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A Severed Wasp by Madeleine L'Engle. New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1982.

In 1982, Madeleine L'Engle's novel *A Severed Wasp* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux) was published. In it, Madame Katherine Vigneras, pianist—the one-time Katherine Forrester—has retired from her concert tours to a New York brownstone. And she, a nominal Roman Catholic, is asked by a friend of her youthful, mildly Bohemian days to give a benefit concert for the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine, an actual Episcopal church in New York City. Her friend is Felix Bodeway, whose youthful life was more casual than hers and who is now a retired Episcopal bishop. He is raising money for a tower of light, done by laser beams, over the cathedral. This seems an odd conception, and I have no idea as to whether or not the actual cathedral is planning such a thing. At any rate, the tower itself is not significant in the novel.

What is significant is that, as Madame Vigneras is drawn into the circle in the cathedral close, a persecution of her begins. An anonymous phone call to her brownstone accuses her of bisexuality and another, just of lesbianism—as far as it gets before she slams the phone down. And she learns that Bishop Bodeway has been receiving similar calls for two years. On what seems to be the day after the second phone call—but the book is not completely clear in its time transitions at that point, so it may be later, after Madame Vigneras's shift to an unlisted number has been in effect for a short while—she receives in the mail an unsigned get-well card with a used condom in it. Still later, her apartment in her brownstone is entered with a picklock, things are knocked over, and a painting of herself and her long-dead son is slashed.

This is the extent of the actions against Madame Vigneras. No doubt, in a genre filled with murders, it seems little enough. But this is a novel with realistic characterization, and these events are felt more fully than many killings in light-weight romances. And, of course, this book can be placed in the general tradition of Dorothy L. Sayers's *Gaudy Night.*

I see no reason why critics of mysteries (unlike reviewers) cannot reveal the criminals' identities, but in this case I see no need to. Perhaps it is enough to say that the person is motivated by fear of exposure—and hence tries to drive certain people away from the cathedral. Not just Bishop Bodeway and Madame Vigneras are phoned. Dr. Mimi Oppenheimer—Jewish by background, non-believing in practice—who is a friend of the wife of the dean of the cathedral, also receives phone calls. Somewhat different in motivation but tied to the general situation at its two-year-old beginning is an episode in which one of the dean's daughters—who was taking ballet—was struck by a car and lost a leg. That the criminal's career ends not in arrest but in confession—religious confession—is not outside the genre: G. K. Chesterton's "The Invisible Man" and "The Chief Mourner of Marne" (two Father Brown stories) and Anthony Boucher's "Coffin Corner" (a Sister Ursula story) also end this way.

The plot, in an old distinction made by Anthony Boucher, is that of a whodunit, not of a puzzle ("What Kind of Mystery Story Appeals to Today's Public," 1956). That is, the identity of the criminal is gradually revealed, in this case through conversations (people like to confide in Madame Vigneras), rather than being solved. This is not to say that there are not some straightforward clues in the book. For example, in the first chapter, a boy, Topaze, who seems a street urchin at that point, says that his sister knows "who goes to St. Martin's chapel to make confession to who." But often the information is gradually produced. For instance, Dr. Oppenheimer has traced the phone calls she has received to the cathedral but had not done anything about that fact (other than changing her phone number to stop the calls); she reveals the cathedral connection to Madame Vigneras at an appropriate moment in a conversation. Near the end of the book, a good use of a red herring appears: a nun's comments on the jealousy of the dean's daughter who has not found a talent yet—her brother and her crippled sister are musical—suggest a possible motivation for anger and spite.

Madame Vigneras is the detective, so to speak, in the novel. And L'Engle has tied her to her role with an interesting motif in the volume. Several times the reader is told that she is reading a mystery at bedtime. This is pulled together in a conversation between Dr. Oppenheimer and Madame Vigneras about the slashed painting. The latter says, "And you think it's all connected—the phone calls—last night—" "Elementary, my dear Watson," the former replies. By itself, that allusion should make Dr. Oppenheimer the investigator, but slightly later she comments, "I'm no detective. Unlike you, I do not amuse myself with English murder mysteries." This is more a fictional motif, identifying the detective, than an imitation of reality—for in reality the reading of mysteries does not create detectives.

I have not found *A Severed Wasp* reviewed as a mystery, although doubtless I may have missed (or simply not registered) a review. Certainly the book was not *widely* reviewed as a mystery, and this is not surprising since what L'Engle is actually doing is something else. C. S. Lewis once commented about romances—not love-romances, but fantasy- or adventure-romances—that their plots were often a mesh in which to catch something more fugitive, a mood, a psychological state ("On Stories," 1947). So here, L'Engle has used the mystery pattern with its structured plot resolution to hold some novelistic, not romantic, things. Madame Vigneras relives much of her past life in her memories, working out the pain in some of them. The details about clergy's lives—mostly Episcopalians but one Roman Catholic—show many human frailties mixed with some spiritual and organizational strengths. A subplot about a young ballet dancer pregnant with her first child, as well as many aspects of the main plot, explore the varieties of human sexuality. And one major theme is how artists, particularly musicians, grow through pain—or fail to grow.

A Severed Wasp may not be a major novel; probably it isn't. But it seems, within its narrow limits of the world of music and the world of the Church, to be an honest novel. Probably it is artificial in the amount of confessional talk which is offered to Madame Vigneras, although she is true to her European years in doing little—almost no—confessing of her own. Is the mystery plot also an artifice? No doubt, but, if Lewis is right, the correct question may be how much novelistic truth L'Engle has caught through her device. It seems a goodly haul.

—Joe R. Christopher

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THE 1985 EDGAR AWARDS

★★

BEST NOVEL

THE BLACK SERAPHIM by Michael Gilbert (Harper & Row) *nominee*

★BRIARPATCH by Ross Thomas (Simon & Schuster) **WINNER**

CHESSPLAYER by William Pearson (The Viking Press) *nominee*

EMILY DICKINSON IS DEAD by Jane Langton (St. Martin's / A Joan Kahn Book) *nominee*

THE TWELFTH JUROR by B. M. Gill (Scribner's) *nominee*

BEST FIRST NOVEL

A CREATIVE KIND OF KILLER by Jack Early (Franklin Watts) *nominee*

FOUL SHOT by Doug Hornig (Scribner's) *nominee*

SOMEONE ELSE'S GRAVE by Alison Smith (St. Martin's / A Joan Kahn Book) *nominee*

★STRIKE THREE, YOU'RE DEAD by Richard Rosen (Walker) **WINNER**

SWEET, SAVAGE DEATH by Orania Papazoglou (Doubleday Crime Club) *nominee*

BEST PAPERBACK ORIGINAL

BLACK NIGHT IN RED SQUARE by Stuart H. Kaminsky (Ace) *nominee*

★GRANDMASTER by Warren Murphy and Molly Cochran (Pinnacle) **WINNER**

THE KEYS TO BILLY TILLIO by Eric Blau (Pinnacle) *nominee*

THE SEVENTH SACRAMENT by Roland Cutler (Dell) *nominee*

WORDS CAN KILL by Kenn Davis (Fawcett Crest) *nominee*

BEST SHORT STORY

"After I'm Gone" by Donald Westlake (*Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, June 1984, and LEVINE, Mysterious Press, 1984) *nominee*

"Breakfast at Ojai" by Robert Twohy (EQMM, September 1984) *nominee*

★"By Dawn's Early Light" by Lawrence Block (*Playboy*, August 1984, and THE EYES HAVE IT, Mysterious Press, 1984) **WINNER**

"The Reluctant Detective" by Michael Z. Lewin (THE EYES HAVE IT, Mysterious Press, 1984) *nominee*

"Season Pass" by Chet Williamson (*Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*, October 1984) *nominee*

ROBERT L. FISH MEMORIAL AWARD:
Bill Crenshaw

BEST FACT CRIME

★DOUBLE PLAY: THE SAN FRANCISCO CITY HALL KILLINGS by Mike Weiss (Addison-Wesley) **WINNER**

EARTH TO EARTH by John Cornwell (The Ecco Press) *nominee*

EVIDENCE OF LOVE: A TRUE STORY OF PASSION AND DEATH IN THE SUBURBS by John Bloom and Jim Atkinson (Texas Monthly Press) *nominee*

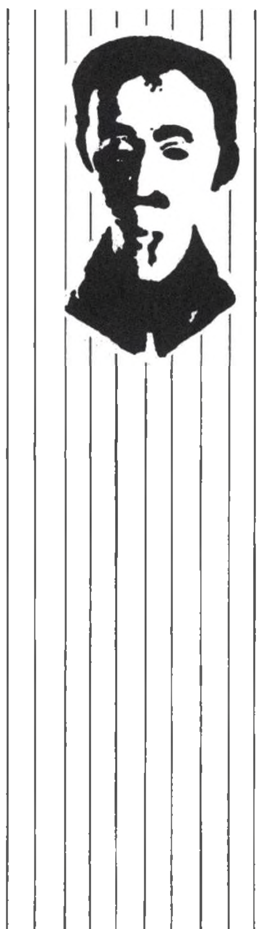
THE MOLINEUX AFFAIR by Jane Pejsa (Kenwood Publishing) *nominee*

MURDER AT THE MET by David Black (The Dial Press) *nominee*

GRANDMASTER:
Dorothy Salisbury Davis

READER OF THE YEAR:
Eudora Welty

ELLERY QUEEN AWARD:
Joan Kahn



BEST CRITICAL / BIOGRAPHICAL WORK

INWARD JOURNEY: ROSS MACDONALD edited by Ralph B. Sipper (Cordelia Editions) *nominee*

THE JAMES BOND BEDSIDE COMPANION by Raymond Benson (Dodd, Mead) *nominee*

★NOVEL VERDICTS: A GUIDE TO COURTROOM FICTION by Jon L. Breen (Scarecrow Press) **WINNER**

ONE LONELY NIGHT: MICKEY SPILLANE'S MIKE HAMMER by Max Allan Collins and James L. Traylor (Bowling Green State University Popular Press) *nominee*

ROSS MACDONALD by Matthew J. Bruccoli (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich / HBJ Album Biographies) *nominee*

BEST JUVENILE NOVEL

CHAMELEON THE SPY AND THE CASE OF THE VANISHING JEWELS by Diane R. Massie (Harper & Row / Thomas Y. Crowell) *nominee*

THE GHOSTS OF NOW by Joan L. Nixon (Delacorte Press) *nominee*

THE ISLAND ON BIRD STREET by Uri Orlev, translated from the Hebrew by Hillel Halkin (Houghton Mifflin) *nominee*

★NIGHT CRY by Phyllis R. Naylor (Atheneum) **WINNER**

THE THIRD EYE by Lois Duncan (Little, Brown) *nominee*

BEST MOTION PICTURE

BEVERLY HILLS COP, story by Danilo Bach and Daniel Petrie, Jr.; screenplay by Daniel Petrie, Jr. (Paramount)

THE LITTLE DRUMMER GIRL, screenplay by Loring Mandell from the novel of the same title by John le Carré (Warner Bros.) *nominee*

★A SOLDIER'S STORY, screenplay by Charles Fuller from his play *A Soldier's Play* (Columbia) **WINNER**

TELEVISION

Best Telefeature

CELEBRITY, written by William Hanley from a novel of the same name by Thomas Thompson (NBC) *nominee*

FATAL VISION, written by John Gay from a book of the same name by Joe McGinnis (NBC) *nominee*

★THE GLITTER DOME, written by Stanley Kallis from a novel of the same name by Joseph Wambaugh (HBO) **WINNER**

Best Episode in a Television Series

★"Deadly Lady" from MURDER, SHE WROTE, written by Peter S. Fischer (CBS) **WINNER**

MIAMI VICE Pilot written by Anthony Yerkovich (NBC) *nominee*

"Seven Deadly Eyes" from MICKEY SPILLANE'S MIKE HAMMER, written by Joe Gores (CBS) *nominee*

Special Television Award given to "The Silent Shame," an NBC News report on child abuse crimes written by Mark Nykanen (NBC)

The awards were presented at the fortieth annual EDGAR ALLAN POE AWARDS Dinner on May 10, 1985 at The Sheridan Centre in New York City.

This Pen for Hire

Diary of a Reviewer

By Raymond Obstfeld

May 23, 1984
Got off the phone with Michael Seidman, editor of *The Armchair Detective.* I pleaded my case: "Michael, I don't want to just review paperback originals, I don't want to just review spy novels, I don't want to just review any single category. I want to be able to roam about a little, review the books I would naturally choose to read *as a writer.* I'm a full-time professional writer; I would think that what I chose to review may be as significant as the review itself. Whatta ya think?" Three thousand miles of static sizzled between us. Finally he said, "Sure, go ahead."

May 25, 1984
Went to B. Dalton to buy *Armaggedon Rag* by George R. R. Martin (Poseidon Press). I'd read a rave review of it in an obscure newspaper. It's a suspense novel about some '60s rock-and-roll group. I'm writing a book with a similar setting, so I figure I'll read it, just to make sure I don't do anything in my novel that he's already done in his. As I stand in the aisle examining the cover, I'm hesitant to buy it for two reasons: (1) It's hardback and costs $15.95; (2) I don't like anybody with two middle initials. I pick up the book, carry it around the store while I look at other books. After half an hour I decide to wait until it comes out in paperback. I put the book back. I buy a *People* magazine and leave.

May 26, 1984
I feel guilty about not buying *Armaggedon Rag.* I'd tried to convince myself that I get plenty of free review copies in the mail and should just review them. But them I remind myself that somebody's got to actually *buy* these guys' works. And since the publisher didn't send me a copy, I'll do my bit for the publishing industry (hoping all along that the zen of my gesture will eventually rebound back to me, helping the sales of my own books). I drive over to B. Dalton and shell out $15.95. I rush home, eager to read my prize.

June 3, 1984
Life intruded, and I was unable to start *A.R.* until this evening. The rerun of *The Rockford Files* was over, I shut off the TV with my whistle switch, stole a pillow from Patty while she slept, and began reading. Slow going. I drift off after a few pages.

June 4, 1984
I come back from three grueling hours of racquetball, sink into a tubfull of steaming water, and open *A.R.* I become annoyed at the protagonist, an investigative reporter for an underground newspaper who is hired to look into the murder of the former manager of a legendary rock group. There are more murders, eventually culminating in a supernatural confrontation between the good and evil within the reporter. It's an ambitious novel, attempting to poke around through the psyche of the '60s through the reporter's own trip among his past friends while he investigates the murder. But the book is all bark and no bite. Sandy, the reporter, is a wimpy, self-indulgent whiner. Seems to me he misses the '60s because that was a good hiding place for his kind of immature whimpering. He never captures the spirit of commitment or tribal energy of that time. Without a sympathetic guide, the novel fizzles. Sandy's observations and revelations are all rather trite, like his relationships with other characters.

I turn the last page and toss the book on the floor, my fingers and toes swollen from the hot water like Cabbage Patch dolls. I lather up with some strange purple soap Patty picked up at some swap meet and promise myself to be more selective when purchasing hardcover books.

July 12. 1984
Bought a copy of **Dreamland** (Avon) by Newton Thornburg at Crown Books. I'd read his *Cutter and Bone* a few years ago, a flawed but powerful novel the cool, chipped style and burnt-out characters of which impressed me so much that I recommended the book to several friends. Here was a suspense writer with emotional depth. I bought an issue of *Science Digest,* paid for both, and drove home. Halfway there I remembered I was out of cat food. Rather than face those pleading stares, I turned around and drove to the nearest grocery store that carried 9 Lives brand (the only one they'll eat).

July 13, 1984
Today in the mail I get a package from Avon. *Dreamland* is one of the books. Why wasn't I more patient? I could return it, but I know I'll keep forgetting to take the book and the whole process will depress me. I'll keep it and give it to a friend.

I start the book. Good opening pages. This is how a novel should begin. Intriguing protagonist, A Man With A Past. Taut dialogue. I'm already involved because of the style. The suspenseful plot is a bonus: Crow, a disillusioned man in his thirties, drives home to visit his father, a retired detective who still does a little piece work. While driving, Crow picks up a young Lolita-type hitchhiker. Meantime, Crow's dad is hired by an ex-CIA buddy for a small job. It's a set-up and dad is murdered. There's some talk about CIA and wealthy pawnbrokers, but all of that really doesn't add up to much in the plot. In fact, the plot is terribly contrived and not very convincing at all. I'm willing to overlook that flaw because the characters are intriguing. And because the style is still strong.

July 14, 1984
The characters are no longer intriguing. Crow fights his attraction to the young girl but acts like such a jerk in doing so that I lose respect for him. Then he gets involved with another woman, a wealthy aloof type. Their relationship is a bit pathetic, their need is so juvenile. Worse, it's a snooze.

And the style has become sloppy. The prose is now flabby, shapeless. It could have been written by anyone, not the Newton Thornburg of *Cutter and Bone.* It seems rushed. Plot coincidences pile up. I've counted four so far, any single one of which most professional writers would have avoided.

I finished the novel out of respect for the author, but it is disappointing. The ending is meant to be rousing, but it is too late. It is lifeless, like the characters, because we are no longer committed to them. He had me on the hook and he let me get away. I'll probably read his next book, but I'll be a lot more patient about buying it.

August 24, 1984
Going to the beach today for some windsurfing and volleyball. I want a nice involving

novel to take with me. I look through the intend-to-read-soon pile next to my bed, hundreds of books in neat piles against the wall. Two copies of **A Cold Mind** (Pocket Books) by David L. Lindsey. As usual, I was in a bookstore, saw the cover, remembered I'd read a couple of encouraging reviews, and bought the book, only to have a review copy arrive a couple days later.

It's eight o'clock in the morning and already 85° out. The beach will be burning. A book with the word "cool" in it sounds good.

After volleyball (won the first game, lost the second), everyone heads into the water. I grab a Pepsi and settle in with my book.

There's an acknowledgement page to some detectives and the Houston Police Department. Good sign. This one will be authentic. The next page has two quotes, one from Erich Fromm, the other from Solzhenitsyn. Heady stuff. This book is going to be serious.

First chapter is a grabber. A couple of cops stumble on a berserk woman. Suspenseful, well written. The second chapter introduces the protagonist, Stuart Haydon, Cop With A Past. I like his no-nonsense attitude and his intriguing background. He's a bit stiff and humorless, though. Like the novel, he takes himself too seriously.

Someone's shaking icy water on me. I look up; Patty's flinging ocean water at me from the ends of her fingers. I put the book away.

August 25, 1984

My favorite reading position: immersed in a tubful of hot water. *A Cold Mind* and I are goinf to pass the next couple of hours together in peace.

Uh-oh. The promising opening has stiffened up into arthritic slowness. I can see each plot movement in painful slow-motion; I can hear the bones creak. I turn to the inside of the jacket and read two pages of blurbs that rave about the novel, most concluding that you can't put it down. I want to put it down.

I don't. I keep reading. It doesn't get any better. Haydon is just too damn serious. He has no personality. His cops are the same way: they have characteristics but no character. This is a standard police procedural with the standard looney murderer killing hookers.

Later that night I finish the book. It never got any better.

September 2, 1984

My agent sent over a copy of **One Police Plaza** (Crown) by William J. Caunitz. She raves about it: "It's not the most polished writing ever, but I couldn't put it down. Somehow it is really involving. I found myself carrying it with me everywhere." But before I can start the book, Patty has it and is reading away.

September 4, 1984

"You seen that book Sandy sent over?" I ask Patty. "It's in my racquetball bag," she replies, turning the page of a review novel that just arrived that day. "You finish it?" I ask. She nods. "Well?" She puts down the book. "I really liked it. A lot. Really kept me reading, more than most books I've read lately."

Now I'm really excited. I too have been disappointed by the books I've been reading lately. They haven't held my interest. They usually start with promise, but then go stale. Finally I have a live one.

I start it tonight. I have no difficulty putting it down.

September 5, 1984

I was disappointed last night in the opening, but I decided to start fresh today. Right from the first page. Maybe I'd had too much Dryer's blueberry cheesecake ice cream last night and that had influenced my reading.

I start the novel over.

It's boring. The prose style is sloppy. The characters are hard to tell apart, a bunch of cops talking tough and acting dumb. No one is very likable. There are internal politics and a dead priest to add some flavor, but it's all broth and no matzoh balls. If you manage to keep the infantile characters separate, you still have trouble working up much enthusiasm for the plot. It's all very standard. The only attribute is that it's written by a real New York detective and therefore is an authentic insider's account. But I want more from a book than that. Authenticity doesn't cut it for 369 pages.

October 11, 1984

Saw Ross Thomas's new novel, **Briarpatch** (Simon and Schuster) today at Brentano's. Ross Thomas novels always inspire me to write better. Without hesitation I picked it up and paid my $15.95. Also bought an issue of *American Film*.

Tonight I debate whether or not to start the book or save it for later. I've been writing every day on a screenplay, an adaptation of one of my novels. I'm reading a lot of screenplays for inspiration and instruction. I don't want to waste Ross Thomas's excellent prose style on this. I should wait until I'm back to work on another novel.

I put the book aside. Within five minutes, Patty has grabbed it.

October 13, 1984

I can't wait any longer. I root through Patty's racquetball bag. Beneath the damp socks and T-shirts I find my missing history of Vietnam book, my Raymond Carver stories, Elmore Leonard's *Stick,* and *Briarpatch*. She's taken the jacket off, a nasty habit that is right up there on the annoyance level with using my toothbrush. When I buy a hardback book, I want the damn jacket on at all times.

I climb into the tub, the water so hot it stings. I read.

The first page has me smiling with anticipation. Now *this* is writing. The first chapter is wonderful. A little contrived, but otherwise excellent. The second chapter slows a little and I start to get concerned. It seems too passive, too wordy. Christ, if I can't count on Ross Thomas, I can't count on anything.

And then it happens. The novel blooms forth with its suspense, subtle humor, sophisticated tone, and involving characterization, and I remember that this is the feeling that keeps me reading books. Keeps me wading through medicore books to find the one like this; the one that makes you curse any interruptions, that keeps you turning pages. That makes you care.

The plot is a straightforward mystery: Dill, an investigator for a Senator, returns to his hometown for his sister's funeral. She was a homicide detective, blown up in her car. She also seemed to have too much money for a cop. Dill pokes around while also doing some investigating for his Senator boss. The plot winds and twists from there, each curve a delight to follow. But the main excitement is our involvement with the characters, especially Dill. The understated style is all the more powerful because of its control.

This is the kind of book that not only reminds me of why I like to read, but why I like to write.

November 30, 1984

I'm thinking back on the books I've reviewed. I feel bad that I only liked one out of five. I feel bad that the authors might read unkind words about their efforts. I think of their hurt feelings, imagine them turning to wives, lovers, friends, and cursing my name. Worse, now they won't read *my* books.

Maybe they'll claim I didn't read their book properly. The bathtub, the beach, the bed after an exhausting day. These aren't places to read seriously. But those are the conditions under which most people read: after a tough day at work, in bed, in the tub. At the beach on a weekend.

Now I'm thinking about the readers of this review. I worry about them thinking I'm some hard-to-please literary Scrooge, treating kind words as if they were hard-earned cash. "That guy doesn't like anything!" they'd say.

Not true. I liked one book out of five. And there was merit in one other. I think those are wonderful odds. That I only have to wade through four clunkers to get to one gem doesn't bother me. It's pretty much the same with movies, and it's better than records.

And there's the realization that the glow from that one book dims the memory of the others. □

CRIME HUNT

Real Life Cases

By T. M. McDade

The Creasy Case

In murder mysteries, the author creates a group of characters, all of whom have the opportunity and motive to murder the victim. In real life, while we come upon cases with the problem reduced to a lone suspect, the solution can be no less difficult to come by. Like the "miniature" problems in chess in which a very small number of pieces is used, the case frequently presents its own kind of puzzle.

About 10:30 P.M., June 23, 1922, Edith Lavoy, a 25-year-old grade school teacher in Freeport, New York, died in her apartment there. The cause of her death was a .25-calibre bullet which entered her right temple, two and one-half inches in front of and two inches above the opening of her right ear. The course of the bullet was inward, backward, and upward; she died within minutes of being shot. The only person in the room when the shot was fired other than Miss Lavoy was William M. Creasy, her fiancé, whose gun was the fatal weapon. Either he had shot her or she had committed suicide. The resolution of that question was the sole problem in the case.

Miss Lavoy was a native of upper New York State, where she was graduated from the Potsdam Normal School and had taught at the Gloversville School for two years. In the spring of 1920, she had joined a correspondence club and had written to Creasy at his home in Fort Thomas, Kentucky. The tenor of the letter tells us something about the lady and also of the deportment of those times, now irretrieveably lost.

Dear Sir:

As you have been recommended to me by the Standard Correspondence Club, Grayslake, Ill., as a gentleman matrimonially inclined and desiring lady correspondence with that object in view, and under recommendation of J. W. Schlosser, who sent me your description, I beg permission to open correspondence. If this meets with your approval I will be pleased to hear from you in return. Thanking you in advance.

I am yours respectfully,
(Miss) Edith E. Lavoy

Creasy, than aged 29, was a sheet-metal worker building railroad cars. His education was limited. He had previously been married but had had a judicial separation which he seems to have equated with a divorce. A little over five-feet-six-inches in height and of medium build, he was of fairly ordinary appearance. The correspondence between them went off well, but being so far apart they did not meet until October 1920, when Creasy made the journey to Freeport from Kentucky. There he saw a not unattractive girl an inch or two shorter than he, of a plumpish 130 pounds, and each seems to have been taken with the other. He visited her again in Freeport in January and April 1921 and in August went to her home in Tupper Lake, New York, where he met her parents, and their engagement was announced.

After this, they did not meet again until February 22, 1922, in Freeport, when they mutually agreed to postpone their marriage until the next year. Their considerable correspondence continued amicably, but in April Creasy admitted for the first time that he had been married and divorced and suggested that they cease corresponding. In reply, she asked him to come to Freeport, which he did on May 1. There they walked in the woods and even engaged in target practice with a pistol Creasy carried. The records of the case are ambiguous about this weapon. All the parties, witnesses, police, and lawyers referred to it as a revolver. It was in fact a .25-calibre automatic pistol. While returning from this walk, Creasy drew the gun when a dog seized his coat, but he was restrained by the girl, who took the weapon, and when he departed for home the gun remained with her.

The gun was mentioned several times in their correspondence, and on June 1 he telegraphed her: "Edith, I would feel better satisfied if you would send me the gun you have so often promised. You know why." His anxiety to obtain the gun may have arisen from her letters, which were increasingly despondent and several times expressed a wish that she "could die and end it all." Nevertheless, she did return the gun to him.

When a strike closed Creasy's shop in Kentucky, he decided to move to Montreal, and, taking his things with him, he stopped off en route in New York from which he went to Freeport, taking a room in a boarding house on June 22. He visited Lavoy at her school, where they lunched together. That evening, he visited her in her room in a boarding house where she shared a sitting room and bedroom with another teacher, Mildred Simser. Creasy remained until 10 P.M. and then left for his own room.

The following evening, Creasy again called at Lavoy's room, where he sat with the two roommates until Simser retired to the bedroom at 9:30 P.M. For what happened after that, we have only the testimony of Creasy, who said that he had taken off his jacket, with the gun in his pocket, and hung it on a chair in the sitting room. Then he and the girl lay down on the sofa, she on the inside near the wall, he outside. A short while after lying down, Lavoy got up and went to the bathroom for a glass of water, which they shared. At his request, she also got some cigarettes from his jacket. She returned to the sofa, lying on her left side, he on his right facing her. He claims to have dozed off when he was startled by a shot and, getting up, saw blood running across her forehead. Creasy immediately went into the bedroom and said to Simser, "My God, Edith has shot herself." Simser, who had been awakened by the shot, later testified that immediately "the door opened and Billy stood at the foot of the bed calling me." Creasy then woke another teacher across the hall and went downstairs to the landlady, Miss Smith. A telephone call summoned two surgeons, who arrived within three or four minutes of the shooting.

These doctors later testified that Miss Lavoy was lying on her left side with her right arm across her body, her face turned toward the left and the gun lying on the sofa underneath her right hand, between hip and waist line. The shell of the fired bullet was near the center of the room. There was nothing to indicate that any struggle had taken place; neither her clothing nor the pillows of the sofa were disarranged.

Creasy was interrogated at great length, first by a police doctor early on the scene and later by detectives and the district attorney. His story was consistent throughout, with no damaging admissions, although he made one strange statement which proved to be untrue. In answer to a question, "Did you have sexual intercourse with Edith Lavoy?" he answered, "Yes, I might have had." It was a strange answer to make in any case, and it proved doubly puzzling when the medical autopsy report disclosed that the deceased was a virgin. Whether the answer had been given because, as Creasy later claimed, he did not understand the question or for some other reason never appeared.

The district attorney was convinced that Creasy had shot the girl because she refused to marry him. The matter was presented to a Grand Jury, and Creasy was indicted for murder. His case came on for trial at Mineola, New York on September 18 and ran for over twelve days, during which time the State called 35 witnesses and introduced 62 exhibits, the trial record filling about 1,500 printed pages.

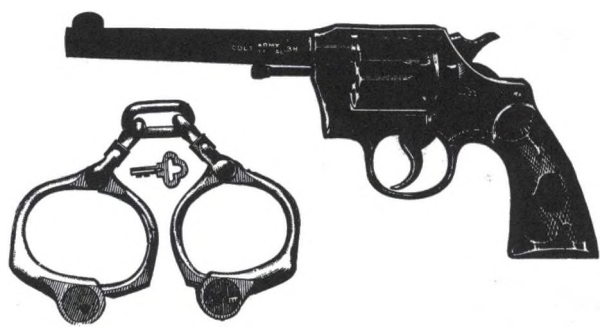
In brief, the case for the State was that Creasy had shot the girl either in rage or frustration because he was in love with her and had been rejected. Some of her letters to

him were read to the jury, and two long statements made by the defendant to the police were put in evidence, although these did not seem to be particularly incriminating. Police officers and a doctor testifying as experts claimed that the wound was not a contact, which they said would have been expected in the case of a suicide. By contact wound they meant one inflicted with the weapon touching the body when fired. They were also allowed to testify from their knowledge as gun and wound experts that in their opinions the girl did not commit suicide. Police science had not yet perfected the tests which could tell if a hand had recently fired a gun. There was really no hard evidence that Creasy had fired the fatal shot; the evidence was entirely circumstantial.

Letters from the deceased to Creasy and others give a conflicting story of her feelings and permit of different interpretations. On May 22, she had written her sister Eva, "I have been trying to throw Billie over, but haven't quite succeeded yet. But the quicker I can do it the happier I will be." Yet on June 9, she wrote Creasy that "you are not friendless as long as I live. I am your true blue sincere friend." Her letters to Creasy seem to belie the sentiments she expressed about him in letters to others. One undated letter purportedly found by a detective in Creasy's trunk was admitted in evidence after the handwriting had been identified as Lavoy's by her principal, Miss Schoonmaker. It read in part:

Dear Billie,

Your letter rec'd today and I have no words in which to tell you how surprised and shocked I am to know of the state you must be in doing the things you are doing. . . . When you are calmer and yourself again you will realize how honest I have been with you—do you think it quite right to blame me for that very honesty. Can love be forced? Would you want a wife that did not love you? . . .



This letter, signed with the letter M, was the only evidence suggesting that the engagement had been broken by Miss Lavoy. Of the more than 150 letters written by Lavoy to Creasy which were introduced in evidence, this was the only one which the defense claimed was not written by her and had not been received by him. Moreover, while almost all the letters which had been kept by Creasy were in the original envelopes, there was none for this letter.

The defense considered this letter so important that they called a handwriting expert, Loren C. Horton, who had testified at the Becker, Thaw, and other famous murder trials. It was Horton's opinion that Lavoy had not written the letter. Significantly, the State did not cross-examine Horton, but, after he had testified, in rebuttal they recalled Miss Schoonmaker to the stand, who now testified that Miss Lavoy had asked her help to write a letter to Creasy and that she had prepared a draft of such a letter and Lavoy had returned her draft. The defense learned that the State had shown the letter to Carvalho, a handwriting expert of international reputation, and that he had not only told the prosecutor that Lavoy had not written it but that it was in the hand of Miss Schoonmaker. Later, Schoonmaker admitted to him that it had been written by her.

Creasy himself testified over two days and endured a long and painful cross-examination of his personal life and his relations with Lavoy, but there were no serious admissions nor was any part of his story really shaken. Though the evidence did not seem overwhelming, the jury had no trouble convicting Creasy of murder in the first degree, and the sentence of death was later passed upon him.

During the next nine months that Creasy waited in the Sing Sing death house, Henry Uterhart, his attorney, turned his efforts to other tactics. In April, he moved for a new trial on the ground of newly discovered evidence, producing an affidavit from Carvalho identifying the writer of the questioned letter and Miss Schoonmaker's admission that she had written it. Rejected here, he turned to the Court of Appeals, the court of ultimate resort in the state. On May 9, he argued his case in Albany, and on July 13 the Court rendered an opinion, five of the judges voting for a new trial because of errors below. Two judges dissented.

The Court gave five reasons for the reversal, any one of which might have been sufficient to require a new trial. The first had to do with the admission into evidence of Exhibit 32, the disputed letter. It pointed out that the prosecution, after learning that the

letter was not in Miss Lavoy's hand, made no effort to inform the Court nor to have the exhibit stricken from the record. The Court said: "This was error so fundamental, so substantial, that a verdict of murder in the first degree ought not to be permitted to stand."

The second error noted was in permitting three prosecution witnesses to testify, over objection, that in their opinion the wound was not self-inflicted. The Court said that this was equivalent to permitting them to testify that the defendant was guilty. "The fact that Miss Lavoy came to her death by the bullet wound in her head while she and the defendant were alone in the room was not disputed. The sole question was whether defendant or she fired the fatal shot. . . . This was the ultimate fact that the jury had to determine and they were just as competent to do so as were the so-called experts."

The third point considered as error was the refusal of the trial judge to charge the jury as requested by the defendant's counsel: "I ask your Honor to charge that since defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, the jury are bound to commence their consideration of. . . the case by a presumption that Edith Lavoy committed suicide and did not come to her death at the hands of the defendant." This point is a most interesting one, for, as the Court noted, there is a presumption in law that one does not take one's own life. Noting that this rule has usually been applied in insurance and accident cases in civil trials, it had never been applied in a capital case. Said the Court: "Certainly the presumption as to the living is greater than as to the dead, and every presumption is to be indulged in as to the former as against the latter. The dead need no presumption; the facts as to them are fixed upon which time has placed an unchangeable and immutable end; the living do. To refuse [the request to charge] was equivalent to denying the defendant the mantle of protection the law gave him and allowed the jury to commence its deliberations without a presumption in favor of his innocence. This was wrong."

Another error was to admit in evidence a letter which Miss Lavoy had sent to a man friend, the Court stating that its contents could only be prejudicial to Creasy. Another error mentioned was the district attorney quoting's Creasy's statement that he had had intercourse with the deceased when the prosecutor knew at the time that the statement was untrue. For these and other minor errors, a new trial was ordered. The effect of this good news was to have Creasy released from the Sing Sing death house and returned to the Mineola jail.

The new trial, which did not come until January 1924, was no rerun of the first. In an abbreviated version, the State put in all of its case in three days, aided by Creasy's attorney, who did not repeat his unending cross examinations of the first trial. The *New York Times* found a "thrill at the Creasy trial" when Uterhart lay on the couch in front of the jury to demonstrate that the wound could have been self inflicted. The defense also put in all of its evidence in three days, concentrating on the 150 letters which Lavoy had sent to Creasy to show her later despondence and a disposition to kill herself. A Dr. Weston testified as an expert and concluded from the evidence that the wound could have been self-inflicted.

In charging the jury, the judge said, "I have never seen a case better presented than this case. You should be able to reach a verdict." They could and did. Unusual for our own time, but a common practice in the nineteenth century, the jury considered the case all night, reaching its verdict at 4:30 A.M. Creasy was acquitted. From the first vote of nine to three for acquittal, the result was never in doubt. Strangely enough, Mildred Simser, the roommate who had been asleep in the adjoining bedroom when the fatal shot was fired and who had testified for the state at each of the trials, was the first to congratulate Creasy, jumping from her chair to kiss him when the verdict was read. Creasy's father was in the courtroom, and the next day both left for Kentucky.

It is interesting to compare Creasy's case with that of Mrs. Harris, who was convicted in 1981 of murdering Dr. Herman Tarnower, the Scarsdale diet doctor. Although there was no dispute in that case that Mrs. Harris had shot the doctor, it was for the jury to decide whether she had deliberately killed him or whether he had been shot while struggling to prevent her from committing suicide. Here too, motive or lack of it played a big part, and, as in Creasy's case, the gun belonged to the defendant. As a woman is more likely to be acquitted than a man, why then did she fail to get off in this instance? Apparently because the jury did not believe Mrs. Harris's recital of the shooting and her inability to explain why she had fired five shots. These cases share the same problem of a defendant who was the sole witness and only likely suspect in a killing. Where positive proof is denied by the nature of the setting, a judgment either way can be found.

An equally notorious case in which the facts are almost identical to that of Creasy was the death of Smith Reynolds, heir to the Reynolds tobacco fortune in 1932. He was shot through the head by his own pistol, and his wife, blues singer Libby Holman, was charged with his murder. She never went to trial, the charge being dropped for lack of evidence. The initial investigation, a crude affair, had failed to cover the most elementary steps. A recently published book, *Libby Holman: Body & Soul* by Hamilton Darby Perry, provides a good analysis of that botched case, though one need not agree with his conclusion that Reynolds was murdered.

These cases illustrate only some of the problems arising in cases posing questions of suicide or murder. Where the blame for the killing is narrowed to one suspect or the victim herself, the jury must decide whether the deceased or the surviving occupant was the killer. □

PAPER CRIMES

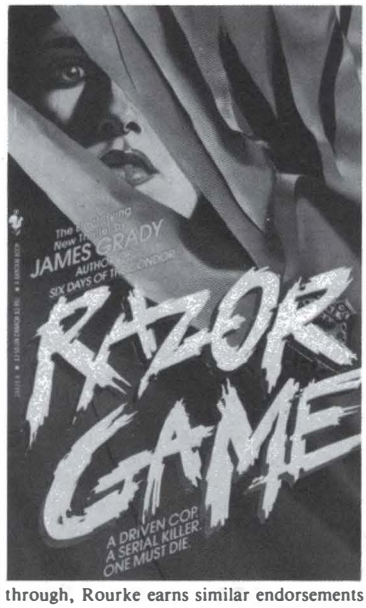
By David Christie

Razor Game by James Grady (Bantam, 1985), $3.50. **Knight Must Fall** by Theodora Wender (Avon, 1985), $2.95.

Razor Game, a fine and enjoyable suspense novel by James Grady, deals with a policeman's unorthodox seatch for a mass murderer. Devlin Rourke, a maverick detective sergeant on the Baltimore police force, is not so much contacted as abducted by Salvatore Matella, the secretive leader of organized crime in America. Matella assigns Rourke a job: to track down the Reaper, a psychopath who travels from city to city, murdering a prostitute and later a child in each location. The Reaper kills each victim only after placing an advertisement, comprising Biblical passages, in a local newspaper. Each victim has his or her throat cut with a razor.

Matella is interested in the case because his grandson was a victim of the Reaper, and he believes that the killer will strike next in Baltimore because one of the advertisements has appeared in the *Star*, that city's newspaper. He considers Rourke "the best homicide detective in Baltimore" and therefore the most likely man to find the Reaper. He's also realistic enough to know that Rourke, as a police officer, will refuse to work with an underworld figure, and so arranges blackmail: Rourke, it turns out, is fond of using cocaine. Metella promises further that if Rourke fails in his assignment for any reason, "I'll crush you like a cockroach on a concrete floor."

Various other people and agencies become involved in the case, and, before he is



through, Rourke earns similar endorsements coupled with threats from them. They include high-ranking members of the Baltimore police department; the FBI, in the person of an unusually imposing agent with a special antipathy to Matella; and the principal crime reporter for the *Star*. Rourke is hampered as well by an entirely hostile lawyer who leads an organization called the Baltimore Better Government Committee.

Part of what is enjoyable about the novel is the way Rourke plays against the expectations of these various factions. Matella expects him to locate the Reaper, but not to turn to the FBI for help; that agency expects him to be interested principally in apprehending Matella; his police superiors do not suspect his connection to organized crime; and the crime reporter knows that something big is up but does not know what. One grows to respect Rourke's judgment: by telling each of his contacts just enough, he secures the co-operation he needs from all of them, and, by refusing to tell them more, he prevents them from interfering with one another and with him. Grady is very good at creating a sense of danger inherent in keeping these forces in balance and of the strain, and skill, with which Rourke does so. Grady also shows that Rourke's sympathy for the Reaper's victims is more pronounced than that of the people with whom he works.

A respect for Rourke balances the reader's opinion of him, for Rourke is capable of acting selfishly and manipulatively. His unsavory side is evident in the way he treats Biz Grey, a prosecutor in the district attorney's office. Rourke and Grey begin on good terms, but, in the course of his investigation, he imposes on her often enough to turn her against him. He has reasons for his impositions—a need to protect himself by contacting his various sources from a telephone and an office, hers, that can't be traced to him. But she is justifiably angry, feeling that he has made her "the kind of convenient person whose only function is to be there, and who can be replaced by any moron." He is not particularly villainous, but he is hard to deal with, sometimes insensitive.

Thus Grady has given the reader everything necessary to evaluate Rourke, who is essentially decent and very skilled at what he does, but whose life is apparently so wrapped up in his job that he sometimes uses innocent people badly to get his job done. On the whole, one is inclined to view him favorably, if only because the novel is written from his point of view. Here, then, is the novel's one significant fault: Grady creates two unnecessary characters whose only apparent purpose is to enhance one's opinion of Rourke. One is Jeffrey Stern, the lawyer in charge of the Baltimore Better Government Committee, whose antagonism to Rourke is so hysterical that the reader is almost compelled to approve of Rourke: any enemy of Stern is a friend of mine, so to speak. The other is Barbara Austin, the mother of one of the Reaper's victims. In the course of his

investigation, Rourke has called all of the victims' next of kin; once contacted, Austin chooses to come to Baltimore in hopes of helping to find the Reaper; once she's in Baltimore, she and Rourke fall in love. So far so good, but she is determined to explain her attraction to him and so analyzes him and herself in language that reads like a list of reasons why the reader should approve of him. Both Austin and Stern seem excessive, and Austin's manner of speaking seems almost unnatural as well.

There are other, minor faults. Grady is occasionally sloppy in his choice of words, as when he writes: "They stood at his apartment door, he with his blazer in hand... her clad only..." Moreover, there are enough typographical errors that one cannot easily forgive Bantam for the job it did in producing the book.

Even so, there is a good deal more to like than not to like about *Razor Game*. Not only is Rourke a complex and well-realized character, but he also proves himself to be as good a detective as everyone says he is. The killer he attempts to track is particularly elusive; Rourke is able to assemble only a few pieces of evidence, which tend eventually to support a conclusion he reaches rather than to lead him to that conclusion. Nor does routine police procedure help much. (Because Rourke leads the investigation and can command others to follow up leads, Grady is able to include enough detail about that procedure to make it seem authentic, but not enough to make it seem tedious.) Rather, the solution depends on two sparks of Rourke's intuition that allow the few facts to fall into place to reveal the identity, not only of the Reaper, but also of his next victim. Those revelations send Rourke off on a tense chase to find the intended victim before the Reaper does. Grady creates a mystery with a clever solution, one that frustrates Rourke for a time but which eventually he alone can solve.

Despite some faults, *Razor Game* is a pleasure to read.

Edward George Earle Bulwer-Lytton was a Victorian novelist whose popularity was once surpassed, it is said, only by that of Charles Dickens. Although Bulwer-Lytton has been largely forgotten over time, the opening line of one of his books—"It was a dark and stormy night"—remains instantly recognizable. A contest named for him, sponsored by the English department at San Jose State University, purports to recognize the quality of his work by challenging writers to create the worse possible opening sentence for a novel.

It's unfortunate that Theodora Wender's *Knight Must Fall* fails to qualify for the Bulwer-Lytton Contest, for the novel is so plainly bad that it would be certain to win. But, alas, Bulwer-Lytton calls for intentionally bad writing, and one has every reason to suppose that Wender wrote as well as she could. Moreover, the contest sponsors insist upon judging individual sentences. Although Wender's opening line—"Mrs. Pepper! What's balling?"—is pretty bad in that it is meant to be funny but is merely nondescript, one needs to read the whole book to realize just how insipid it is.

Wender provides the rudiments of a standard mystery formula. Henderson Neville Knight, the much-despised president of Turnbull College in Western Massachusetts, is murdered. Because he offended so many people in his lifetime, there are a slew of suspects to be investigated, all conveniently close at hand. The investigation is taken up by a pair of amateurs: English professor Glad Gold and Alden Chase, the acting chief of police of Wading River, the town in which Turnbull is located. (Technically, Chase is a professional, but, as Wender makes clear, he is so wet behind the ears that he knows little more about what he's doing than Gold does.) What the two lack in expertise, they are supposed to make up for in cleverness, and, in the course of working closely with each other, they fall in love.

But Wender is guilty not so much of failing to add anything to a stock situation as she is of simply abandoning it. Perhaps she felt it is so familiar to her readers that they would know what's supposed to come next without being told. Perhaps she simply grew bored with it. Hard to say. But aside from an occasional assurance from Chase that he is making progress through "routine police work," and an occasional expression of concern from Gold that the murderer may be one of her friends, there is no investigation. Instead, more or less out of the blue and toward the end of the book, a man just about hits Gold over the head with the killer's identity; she misunderstands the significance of what he says, and the book continues. A little later, Gold and Chase suddenly know what the killer is, make an arrest, and then fill in the reader on the facts that led to their conclusion but have been withheld until their explanation.

Knight had announced before his death that he intended to resign his presidency to take a new job, and a committee of college trustees, faculty, and students had been formed to find a replacement. Many of the long stretches of *Knight Must Fall* that are not concerned with catching Knight's killer are given over, regrettably, to the dreary deliberations of this committee. Why on earth this is supposed to be entertaining is impossible to say.

Other stretches are given over to portraits of the various characters and reveal only that Wender has no special gift for characterization. She attempts to set up several of her cast as suspects, but, because she is unable to render any quality other than cuteness, none of the suspects seems convincingly desperate enough to commit murder. The faculty of Turnbull College are meant to be seen as charming and witty, each in his or her own way, and they are particularly fond of telling each other jokes. Invariably, their jokes are not funny, they are not charming, and one feels confident that the faculty of San Jose State would make far better company than the faculty of Turnbull. Gold, as one of the protagonists, receives more attention than her colleagues but does not come off any the better for it. Chase, as a local boy, is supposed to seem unsophisticated but sharp; he comes off instead as a bland bumpkin.

Their romance has all the spark of a turnip. At one point, Gold criticizes a candidate for the college presidency for saying "presently" when she should have said "at present," and "different than" when she should have said "different from." This criticism leads her to wonder if Chase would understand these linguistic distinctions, and to ask herself: "Is it proper to sleep with a man before you even know whether or not he says 'different than'?" No doubt this is supposed to illustrate how charmingly offbeat she becomes when she thinks of him, and Chase has similar moments. Rather than succumb to her charm, however, one wonders why anyone so pedantic would not realize that the phrase *or not* is implicit in the word *whether* and therefore need not be stated.

The cover of *Knight Must Fall* identifies the book as "a Professor Gold/Police Chief Chase mystery" and so leads one to speculate that Wender and Avon intend it as the first in a series. Let's hope not. □

By Edward D. Hoch

Minor Offenses

Once again, I must lead off this column with anthologies, because it's really been a fine season for them. Last time, I mentioned several anthologies of original stories, and to these we can add *Fingerprints,* the first collection of stories by the recently-formed Crime Writers of Canada. Published by Irwin Publishing of Toronto, the trade paperback contains seventeen stories by CWC members. Only three of these, by Margaret Millar, James Powell and Elaine Slater, are reprints. The other authors include CWC award-winner Eric Wright, Ellen Godfrey, Tim Heald, and even the Czech writer Josef Skvorecky, now living in Toronto, whose short story collection *The Mournful Demeanour of Lieutenant Boruvka* (London, 1973) deserves publication in this country. *Fingerprints* is a good collection, and I hope it's the first of many.

Three other anthologies which appeared in the closing days of 1984 all contain "classic" stories of a sort. *The Penguin Classic Crime Omnibus* (Penguin Books, $5.95), edited by Julian Symons, contains 25 stories by most of the best writers from Poe to the present. Carr, Chesterton, Christie, Doyle, Ellin, Faulkner, Graham Greene, P. D. James, Ellery Queen, Ruth Rendell, Sayers, and Simenon are all here, along with many more. Interestingly enough, Symons has chosen lesser-known works to represent most writers, and he has prefaced each story with a few incisive paragraphs pointing out the individual authors' strengths and weaknesses. The result is a thoroughly enjoyable volume which belongs on every mystery reader's shelf.

A really massive anthology which has to take top honors in the field for 1984 is *Great Detectives,* edited by David Willis McCullough (Pantheon, $19.95). This is the sort of book you'd want with you on that desert island if you were limited to just one. Subtitled *A Century of the Best Mysteries from England and America,* this volume is just that. It leads off with Israel Zangwill's novella *The Big Bow Mystery,* the first real locked-room story in the modern sense, and continues with sixteen fine short stories and two excellent novels. The stories include all three of Sam Spade's short cases by Dashiell Hammett, available together for the first time in forty years. Sayers, Chesterton, Christie, Chandler, and Queen are here too, as is William Faulkner – fast becoming a regular in mystery anthologies. The volume even includes the first American publication of P. D. James's "The Murder of Santa Claus," written as a contest serial (with the solution withheld) for a British newspaper during Christmas of 1983. Thought the mystery is a fairly ordinary one, it's good to have it all in one piece, complete with solution. *Great Detectives* also includes the novelette version of Ed McBain's *Sadie When She Died* and two complete novels. Ross Macdonald's *The Chill* (1964) has his most surprising solution and is considered one of Lew Archer's best cases. Ruth Rendell's *Death Notes* (1981; British title: *Put On By Cunning*) is one of the three or four best Inspector Wexford books. My only grumble with this superb anthology is that a few unfortunate types creep into McCullough's otherwise fine story introductions, mainly in the form of misspelled names and incorrect dates. Otherwise, I can recommend the book without reservation.

Classic fiction from the old *Black Mask* pulp magazine is collected in *The Black Mask Boys,* edited by William F. Nolan (Morrow, $16.95). Nolan introduces the volume with a brief history of the magazine and its editors, then reprints stories and novelettes by eight masters of hardboiled fiction: Hammett, Chandler, Erle Stanley Gardner, Horace McCoy, Carroll John Daly, Frederick Nebel, Raoul Whitfield, and Paul Cain. Each story is preceeded by a brief biography of the author and followed by a complete list of the author's appearances in *Black Mask.* The result is a comprehensive and enjoyable volume for readers of tough crime fiction at its best.

Looking to the recent magazines, we find a very good tale of bank robbers and skillful police work in Michael Gilbert's "A Very Special Relationship" in the February issue of *Penthouse.* I must admit that Gilbert is not an author one would expect to find in a magazine such as *Penthouse,* but I for one was happy to see him there, with a good solid story. The April issue of Ellery Queen's *Mystery Magazine* features the first American publication of Reginald Hill's prize-winner, "The Worst Crime Known To Man," mentioned here a couple of issues back.

Signet Classics has published a new selection of Conan Doyle's stories, *The Sherlock Holmes Mysteries,* to tie in with a current PBS television series. The sixteen stories, from various Holmes collections, are introduced by Frederick Busch.

Looking ahead to fall, St. Martin's Press will be publishing Bill Pronzini's *Graveyard Plots,* a selection of more than twenty of his best stories and novelettes. Included is an Edgar nominee and several stories chosen for annual "Best" collections, as well as two "Nameless Detective" novelettes written since publication of Pronzini's "Nameless" collection *Case File* in 1983. □

DIAL N FOR NONSENSE

By Louis Phillips

Brief review of John Dall's performance in Alfred Hitchcock's film version of *Rope:*

Dall
Dull

* * * * *

When theater critic George Jean Nathan reviewed the American opening of *Dial 'M' for Murder,* his review was headlined:

EVANS TO TINKER TO CHANCE

* * * * *

Mystery questions I never get any answers to:

1. Did Rohmer play Sax?
2. Was Dorothy Quick?

* * * * *

Speaking of John Dickson Carr, fans of his might want to look at the excellent profile of the writer which appeared in the September 8, 1951 issue of *The New Yorker.* When Carr was asked if he ever feared running out of material, he replied: "I've had exactly a hundred and twenty complete plots outlined, for emergencies, since I was eleven years old." I wonder how many of those youthful plots Carr had recourse to throughout his career?

* * * * *

BREAKFAST AT THE
MYSTERY WRITERS GUILD

Egg-Shaped Thing by C. Hodden Williams
Toasted Blonde by C. Reeve
Coffee in the Morning by G. Greenaway
Milk of Human Kindness by E. Farrars

I wonder if readers would like to concoct other mystery meals?

* * * * *

Murder and Poetry

Twilight Walk, a psychological thriller by A. B. Shiffin, ran for only eight performances at the Fulton Theatre back in the early 1950s, but in that play a killer of young women quoted a little-known poem by Charles Kingsley—"The Sands of Dee":

'O Mary, go and call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands of Dee!
The western wind was wild and dank with foam,
And all alone went she.

All Alone Went She seems to be a good title for something.

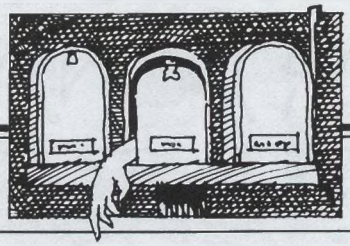
What they should have written:

Lady Chatterly's Lover by Helen Gardener

New transportation for the readers of *The Armchair Detective:*

The John Dickson Carr — It's a mystery how you get there.
Arthur Train — Keeps you on the wrong track. □

LETTERS



From Bob Randisi:

TAD 17:4 was good, except for the rather fawning "dialogue" with Robert B. Parker.

Bill DeAndrea's "Foreign Intrigue" was interesting and informative. Is this the first report we've ever gotten in this country of the Silver Dagger Awards? Maybe MWA or someone should send somebody there each year as a representative to cover it.

I read the Steven R. Carter piece on "Teaching Detective Fiction" with interest as I have recently begun to think that this is something I might like to do.

In general, I enjoy Ray Obstfeld's reviews, but not his literary embellishments. I prefer straight reviews, not without personal comment, but with a column as long as his has been he could certainly cover more books.

Particularly enjoyed this edition of "Tad on TV" by Rick Meyers.

The letter page was disappointing, and not only because you tore into me like a dog gnawing on a bone. I refer to the continued dearth of letters in the pages of TAD.

As for my opinion of Westlake's speech—the one he did at Bouchercon—it stands. Several people present at the Bouchercon—not the least of whom was Edward D. Hoch, in his article on the con in the same issue, 17:1—recall Westlake as saying that the private eye story was "dead." That was at the 1983 Bouchercon. The speech printed in TAD 17:1 is from 1982, and in it he states, in the very last chapter, that the private eye story is certainly not dead. (Something must have happened during that time to change his mind.) I agree, then, with the last paragraph of the printed speech, but disagree with his Bouchercon speech. Similarly, James Ellroy, on his panel, stated unequivocally, that the "private eye story is dead, let's bury it." Whether it is fresh or repetitive, it certainly ain't dead! I for one enjoy reading an old-fashioned P.I. tale, but I also enjoy reading the more innovative P.I. authors—Bill Pronzini, Loren Estleman, and Arthur Lyons, three of the very best around today—and I enjoy reading the odd period P.I. novel—Max Collins's *True Detective* and *True Crime*. If, as you state, Westlake was referring to the reduction of the genre to an almost no-frills absurdity, does that mean that Pronzini-Estleman-Lyons-Block and, yes, even Randisi are interchangeable? That they are so devoid of style as to be indistinguishable from each other? Of course, there are carbon copies of Hammett, Chandler, and Macdonald out there, but that's true of any genre. Are they all dying because of it?

Of course, I did not mean that Westlake and Ellroy are condemning the form only to promote their own, and, by all means, if you don't have anything to say in the genre stay away from it, but don't try and bury it!

Mike Nevins, in his letter, cites James Crumley as a blazing exception to Westlake's strictures. That is true, but there are others, those I mentioned above as well as the marvelous Denson novels by Richard Hoyt. There are *too* many to be able to condemn the genre.

I wish the speech you had printed were the one he gave at the Bouchercon. It may be generally the same, but there are differences, such as the obvious one I pointed out—the difference between calling a genre "alive" and "dead." I won't comment on the speech in 17:1 any further, but I might comment again on that one, if it should find its way into print, or even rebut it.

And I don't think that any conclusions can be drawn should no formal rebuttal be forthcoming, just as I don't conclude that mystery fandom is waning simply because there are fewer letters being sent to TAD than there used to be. They have obviously found other outlets.

* * * * *

From Robert A. W. Lowndes:

It was good to see "Who Was Hiram Grewgious? A Further Study of Identity in Charles Dickens' *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*" by Apryl Lea Denny Heath in the Fall issue of TAD. I should have to re-read that fascinating unfinished masterpiece to be certain whether or not I agree with her thesis, but so far as memory serves I'd say it was plausible.

I'd be interested in seeing opinions from TAD readers as to what Dickens's intentions were, setting aside the various essays at finishing the novel that have been published. I can't comment on any of them, not having read them.

The most important clue we have, I think, is that Dickens intended to surprise the reader at the end, and really believed that he would do so. And I cannot believe that it would have been a *deus ex machina*—so there's a good chance that we have some suggestions hinting at that ending in the material which the author completed. It's not important whether the "surprise" is something that has been done many times since.

Remember that Dickens's friend and fellow author, Wilkie Collins, had given us a surprise in *The Moonstone*. The protagonist, who had been accused of taking the jewel, actually had done so—not knowing that he had. The reader believes in his innocence partly because the author makes it clear that he is telling the truth as he knows it.

My guess, then, would be that Dickens's plan was to invert that gimmick. To have Drood's murderer turn out to be John Jasper, who is a chief suspect from the time of Drood's disappearance—if not before—won't do. But to have Jasper *believe* that he had killed Drood and disposed of the body as planned—and there are definite suggestions of how he has planned that disposal—and, at the end confess, lead the police to where he believes the remains are, and be nonplussed to find that they are not there: that would surely be a surprise. Jasper believes that he did all that, because he intended to do it and set out to do it. He failed due to an opium-resultant blank period (to which we have learned he is susceptible) but does not realize that his seeming memory of success is false.

My further guess is that Drood may have been assaulted, but was not killed—but his actual fate is of secondary importance.

* * * * *

From Ray Stanich:

While reading Bill Nolan's article on Hammett, I was intrigued by the questionable age of Lilian Hellman. Since I have been a student of biorhythm, I wondered if it could possibly show some light on this question.

I made her cycles for the time of her death based on birthdates of 1902-3-4-5-6-7.

The cycles for a birthdate of 1905, 1906, and 1907 show that she couldn't have been born in these three years. The same applies to 1903, which leaves either 1902 or 1904 as the year of her birth. Of the two, 1902 appears to be the most likely. This would make her a good three to five years older than the quoted dates.

In many instances, in my 25 years of practicing biorhythm, the cycles are more clear-cut for deaths caused by natural causes. In this case, unfortunately, it isn't that clear-cut.

Actually, I could make a full-time hobby of checking the cycles of all past notables for their deaths to prove their real ages, but I just don't have the time. But it is an intriguing thought.

I'm sending along the plotted cycles to Bill Nolan for his perusal.

From Jon Breen:

The Fall '84 issue is another good one. As I'm sure you must realize, the shortage of letters is at least partly due to the time-lag between an issue and the publication of comments on it. The two letters in 17:4 refer to 17:1. If letter-writers could expect their comments on a given article or issue to appear in the very next issue of the magazine, I imagine there would be more of them. I realize your present publishing schedule doesn't allow for this, but when it does, you may get more letters.

I've enjoyed Bill DeAndrea's reports from England, but I must pick up on his Mickey Spillane comments. Bill is tired of "gratuitous swipes" at Spillane. *I'm* tired of the implication that anyone not an admirer of Spillane's books must be motivated by jealousy or political differences rather than by literary taste. I have no doubt that Bill can "compare Spillane sex for sex and brutality for brutality with some of the darlings of those who continually snipe at him," but I think he misses the point when he assumes it is those elements alone that determine Spillane's general reputation as a writer.

Having heard Spillane speak at Bouchercon and heard him interviewed on TV or radio several times, I find him a very friendly and likeable man, gifted with much humor and displaying a commendable generosity toward his fellow pros. I've also seen some of his work as a TV and movie performer (not just the beer commercials) and would rank him high among actor-novelists. (At least on a par with Norman Mailer if not quite as good as Jerzy Kosinski.) He achieved a great success by striking a note with readers that was ready to be struck, and no one need begrudge him that success. Best-selling writers are not always the best writers, but they are always successful for a reason, never purely by accident. Still, big-money success does not necessarily equal quality. Is *The Dukes of Hazzard* better than *The McNeil-Lehrer Report* because more people watch it? Is Irving Wallace a better novelist than Donald E. Westlake because his books sell more copies?

I periodically try to read Spillane, mainly because people whose views I respect (for example, Bill DeAndrea, Max Collins, Otto Penzler, Kingsley Amis) believe him to be a good and important writer. I try to approach him with an open mind, ready and eager to be delighted and dazzled, but I continue to find him uninspired, trite, and only marginally readable. Even his allegedly compulsive narrative vigor doesn't exist for me. He's probably a little better than Carroll John Daly, but it seems to me ludicrous to talk about him in the same context as Hammett, Chandler, and Macdonald; Gault, Pronzini, and Estleman; and yes, DeAndrea and Collins. Lest you think I dislike Spillane's writing out of prudishness or political bias, I very much enjoy Richard S. Prather, who is at least as far right politically; Francis Selwyn, who is lots more kinky and explicit sexually; and any number of writers whose violence at times is just as detailed.

As for the H. R. F. Keating quote that Bill deplores, I can't help thinking he is willfully misreading it. Surely Keating would not contend that a favorable quote from Mickey Spillane would not help sell books (though possibly not as many in England of the '80s as America of the '50s). I think what Keating means by "kiss of death" is that anyone who shared Keating's low opinion of Spillane's own writings (and there are many such) would naturally be put off a writer whom Spillane celebrated as one of his favorites; that a quote from Spillane might mislead some potential readers of Fredric Brown and keep that excellent writer from at least part of his natural audience. Whether this is true or not, I think it's ill-advised to impute to Keating opinions he certainly doesn't hold.

One more point: Bill may be correct in finding Keating's remarks snide. But, when Keating refers to the "notorious" Mickey Spillane, he is pretty clearly engaging in fair critical comments on his works, not on the man himself. Yet Bill DeAndrea is engaging in personal insult when he refers to non-Spillane fans as "candy-ass academics and snobs."

* * * * *

From Bob Adey:

I've been meaning to write for quite some time to say how glad I am to note TAD's continuing good form since its return from its dreadful West Coast sojourn.

Otto Penzler's "Collecting Mystery Fiction" is in my view the most fascinating and important series that TAD has ever run—packed with the sort of illustration and detail that so many bibliographies lack. I hope that Otto will be able to find sufficient authors to keep it running for many more issues. The article in the Summer 1984 issue on collecting trends I found particularly thought-provoking. A friend of mine, incidentally, collects cracksman novels.

Perhaps I can sound a note of caution for any budding bibliographer. Bear in mind that, once you publish, the business of carrying or collecting the subject becomes far more complicated. The ones you didn't have are snapped up in front of your very eyes while others appearing in catalogues as "not in Adey" (for instance—and goodness knows there are enough of them) are also gone by the time you rush to the phone. And all the same time, friends are asking when you're going to publish an updated edition containing all those elusive new titles!

I also thoroughly enjoyed Bill DeAndrea's "Foreign Intrigue." Yourselves as others see you. I don't know either why we call them moggies. Very much looking forward to further episodes of our man in Putney.

✓ Thanks for the kinds words, Bob, and the advice to budding bibliographers. Incidentally, when can we expect an updated . . . ?

—Michael

* * * * *

From Maxim Jakubowski:

As much as I welcome William DeAndrea's kind comments on the Black Box Thriller series in TAD 17:4, could I make a few observations.

The criteria for the series were not, as is generally believed, to exclusively publish hardboiled fiction by dead Americans. It is purely coincidence that the first four should have been thus (Woolrich, Thompson, Goodis, and McCoy). The Brown collection which came next is not quite hardboiled fiction, surely? Behm and Charyn are happily alive. The rationale behind the series is purely to publish neglected crime fiction in a value-for-money format, and it just turned out that some of the most neglected material was hardboiled.

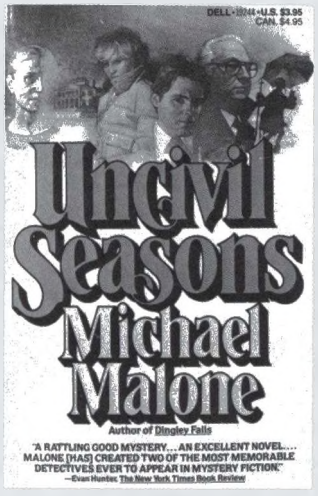
Future titles will, for instance, include such marginal authors as Davis Grubb, film director Samuel Fuller, and the nonfiction Father Brown detective stories of G. K. Chesterton. If the books are good, and in my view neglected, I will publish them. □

A CATALOGUE OF CRIME

By Jacques Barzun
and Wendell Hertig Taylor

S271 Barnard, Robert
Corpse in a Gilded Cage
Scrib 1984

The Spenders, a working-class couple from Clapham, have become Earl and Countess of Ellesmere by sudden inheritance, and they intensely dislike their new life at Chetton Hall. Each chapter of their discontent has the name of one of the rooms, an indication of the author's predictable resolve to squeeze the utmost humor from a situation that includes the differing tastes of the new aristocrats' offspring. Things turn tragic when the Earl is found dead in a niche. Supt. Hickory, aided by Sgt. Medway and WPC Hillier, gets busy, but the nice working out of the plot is accomplished by son and heir Philip rather than the police. The tale is social comedy, not detection, but worth reading nonetheless.



S237 Bulliet, Richard
The Gulf Scenario
St. Mart. 1984

Another academic, this time a historian at Columbia University, is exploiting his familiarity with a lively part of the world to spin tales of secrecy and violence. *The Tomb of the Twelfth Imam* and *Kicked to Death by a Camel* preceded the present business, all of them in the Muslim Middle East. The Gulf here is the Persian, and the action takes place chiefly in Pakistan, where a Cambridge don tries to prevent a nuclear coup. The performance is standard fare: perhaps by now our memories have stored up too many similar incidents and settings for our feelings to be enthralled. It will take a magician in the spy genre to Le-Carré the circle again, instead of merely Amberling.

S273 Grimes, Martha
The Dirty Duck
LB 1984

By her three earlier tales, Professor Grimes has acquired a band of devoted readers, and this fourth has even caused one reviewer to class her with "Agatha and Dorothy." This is an illusion created by academic dust-in-the-eyes. The scene of the present work is Stratford-on-Avon, where a woman tourist gets her throat cut after seeing *As You Like It*. Bits of Elizabethan verse and theories of Marlowe's death run through the haltingly told affair, cluttered with show-off and irrelevant details. Poor Superintendent Jury, who has to wade through the pedantry! And poor Agatha and Dorothy, whose clean artistry in no way resembles this tushery!

S274 Harrison, Ray
Death of an Honorable Member
Scrib 1984

The word "typewriters" on page one obviously refers to young women on their way to work in the City of London and this tells you at once that the book is a historical reconstruction, in the vein and the place used by this author in his earlier success *Why Kill Arthur Potter?* (No. xx). In this second tale, it is an MP who dies promptly, before the book starts, and occasions an inquiry by the bluff Sgt. Bragg and his younger aide of aristocratic lineage, Constable Morton. They make a good pair, amiable and efficient though markedly unlike, and they meet a variety of other engaging persons, including a young woman reporter. The tale and atmosphere of the late 1880s and early '90s are well done, language included, though at times Sgt. Bragg turns his good old dirty words to rather modern uses. But never mind: the melodramatic ending will surprise you into forgetting such small points.

S275 Lemarchand, Elizabeth
Suddenly While Gardening
Walker 1978

Detective Chief Superintendent Tom Pollard and Inspector Toye work at discovering the identity of a skeleton found in a conspicuous *kistvaen* on a moor in "Glintshire," on the Atlantic coast. The intriguing situation, thanks to further details, is cleared up less by inference from clues than by going about asking questions. In this task, the pair show competence rather than brilliance; the dialogue is efficient and the scenery picturesque, but one longs for a little humor: it would bring this specimen to the level of the author's best.

S276 McInerny, Ralph
A Loss of Patients
Vanguard 1982

Father Dowling has served as a quiet but successful investigator of crime in several entertaining pieces by this author. Here, to our loss, he is not much in evidence and the murder of the dentist, with extenuating—or excruciating?—circumstances, is not well enough wrapped in mystery: we know who, and this combination of defects makes the whole thing tedious.

S277 Malone, Michael
Uncivil Seasons
Delacorte 1983

Critical theory suggests that it is not possible to fuse the distinctive features of the novel with those of the tale of crime, and practice bears out theory. Malone has made the attempt once again and has succeeded only in producing a long and laborious story of misbehavior and murder in North Carolina. The narrator is a well-born reformed drunkard who chooses to be lieutenant of police in Hillston, North Carolina, in fulfillment of his anti-hero, anti-establishment animus. Actually, he uses his double privilege as he goes about unraveling two puzzles, the second being a subplot that brings in the minorities and the working class. Details are overabundant, and so are the well-worn expressions of self-disgust and social criticism.

S278 Walsh, Ray
The Mycroft Memoranda
André Deutsch 1984

From Dr. Watson's diary and letters and a few other sources, we learn how Sherlock Holmes identified Jack the Ripper and the reasons why he refrained from catching him. Purely as period stuff, it is not badly done—only a few slips in language—and one enjoys the bits cleverly woven in from the familiar tales, as well as the appearance of Doyle himself. But the whole lacks tension and

suspense and can only be called mildly entertaining.

Its existence, though, offers an opportunity for a quick round-up of Sherlockiana:

1. Last summer, American tourists could sign up for "The Oxford World of Mystery: Sherlock Holmes and Agatha Christie," one week of (presumably) wandering about the places named in the works of the ill-matched pair.

2. In the fall, at the Riverside Church in New York, a ballet was produced called *Holmes, Sweet Holmes,* with music drawn from Tchaikovsky. Mystery and clues cleverly danced in and solution effectively danced out.

3. It should have been noted much earlier—but how to bring it in?—that "the giant rat of Sumatra," which occurs in "The Sussex Vampire" and has often been thought mythical, has in fact been found and ticketed. It is two feet long and lives in the forests of the Sunda shelf.

4. A television production of *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* was made in the Soviet Union some months ago but had to be remade so as not to be ideologically harmful. It will now be shown. Fortunately, the *Memoirs* do not include Holmes's dangerous greeting to Watson: "You have been in Afghanistan, I perceive."

5. For a production of thirteen of the tales to be broadcast in this country, Bantam is shortly bringing out a paperback edition of those tales, with an introduction by Jacques Barzun.

6. High-tech buffs will want to get hold of a new guide to computers, *From Baker Street to Binary,* which interweaves Holmesian fragments with bits and bytes. It took three experts to do it: H. Ledgard, E. P. McQuaid, and A. Singer. □

THE PAPERBACK REVOLUTION

By Charles Shibuk

The New Year dawns, and the paperback revolution appears successful. Unfortunately, this "Paperback Revolution" falters.

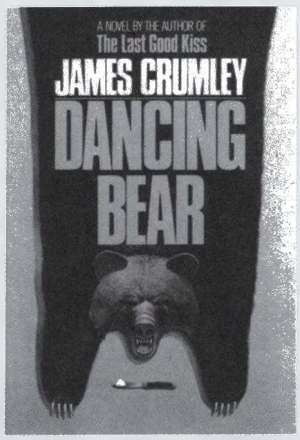
This column depends on review copies, but it appears to have fallen off the mailing lists of at least three publishers in recent months.

I'll try to make up for this deficiency by casting my net a little wider, but since personal experience has shown that many paperback publishers have no interest in establishing a review copy mailing list, and others are unable to maintain such a list for more than a month, the future would appear bleak for the continued existence of this column.

R. T. CAMPBELL (RUTHVEN TODD)

Series character John Stubbs is a professor of botony, and a Chestertonian figure inordinately fond of beer and given to a peculiar speech pattern. His assistant, Max Boyle, is tall, thin, and sometimes guilty of mild sarcasm and irritation with his employer. He's also overfond of buying and collecting books.

The **Bodies in a Bookshop** (1946) (Dover) are distinguished by being found in a locked room—that is only barred on the *outside*! Not a major rediscovery by any means, but a pleasant and engaging work that features some fair detection.



JAMES CRUMLEY

Dancing Bear (1983) (Vintage Contemporaries) is the best and most substantial first-person hardboiled private eye novel since Crumley's own *The Last Good Kiss* appeared in 1978. It's also the best mystery—by a wide margin—of the many 1983 releases perused by this columnist.

Dancing Bear is awash in alcohol, cocaine, and guns and presents an extraordinarily depressing view of the negative aspects of our civilization. Crumley's great skill has overcome all hazards, however, including a less than perfect plot line, and this novel manages to be both powerful and compelling.

ELLIOT PAUL

The Mysterious Mickey Finn (1939) (Dover) is beautifully set among a group of bohemian artists in post-World War One Paris, and tells an almost outrageous tale that starts with the unexpected disappearance of an American multi-millionaire. There is much humor (including wit, satire, and farce) and lots of running around to keep the reader entertained in this delightful concoction.

The Mysterious Mickey Finn was reportedly written to parody the S. S. Van Dine stories, but series character Homer Evans, an American living (and loafing) in Paris, is an unobtrusively intelligent and attractive person—unlike Philo Vance—who makes a more than satisfactory debut in this novel, which has remained unreprinted for over forty years. □

CHECKLIST

By M. S. Cappadonna

MYSTERY, DETECTIVE AND SUSPENSE FICTION PUBLISHED IN THE U.S. JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1985

Babson, Marian: **A Trail of Ashes.** Walker, 12.95

Bennett, John McGrew: **A Local Matter.** Walker, 12.95

Carney, Daniel: **Macau.** Donald I. Fine, 16.95

Clarke, Anna: **Last Judgment.** Doubleday, 11.95

Cohen, Anthea: **Angel of Death.** Doubleday, 11.95

Collins, Max Allen: **True Crime.** St. Martin's, 15.95

Collee, John: **Kingsley's Touch.** St. Martin's, 12.95

Delacorta: **Lola.** Summit. 9.95

Ellin, Stanley: **Very Old Money.** Arbor House, 15.95

Estleman, Loren D.: **Sugartown.** Houghton, 13.95

Gault, William Campbell: **The Dead Seed.** Walker, 12.95

Goulart, Ron: **A Graveyard of My Own.** Walker, 12.95

Greene, Graham and Hugh Greene, eds.: **Victorian Villainies.** Viking, 18.95

Greenwood, John: **Mosley by Moonlight.** Walker, 12.95

Hale, Hilary, ed.: **Winter's Crimes 16.** St. Martin's, 12.95

Halleran, Tucker: **A Coolr Clear Death.** St. Martin's, 12.95

Harrison, Ray: **Death of an Honourable Member.** Scribner's, 11.95

Hillerman, Tony: **The Ghost Way.** Harper, 15.95

Kelly, Nora: **In the Shadow of Kings.** St. Martin's, 12.95
Lee, Stan: **Dunn's Conundrum.** Harper, 15.95
Leonard, Elmore: **Glitz.** Arbor House, 14.95
Lewis, Roy: **Most Cunning Workmen.** St. Martin's, 10.95
Ley, Alice Chetwynd: **A Reputation Dies.** St. Martin's, 10.95
Lutz, John: **Night Lines.** St. Martin's, 13.95
Lyons, Arthur: **Three with a Bullet.** Holt, 13.95
Lysaght, Brian: **Sweet Deals.** St. Martin's, 13.95
McInerny, Ralph: **The Noonday Devil.** Atheneum, 15.95
McIver, N. J.: **Come Back, Alice Smythereene!** St. Martin's, 12.95
MacLeod, Charlotte: **Curse of the Giant Hogwood.** Doubleday, 11.95
McCollum, Robert: **And Then They Die.** St. Martin's, 12.95
Maxwell, A. E.: **Just Another Day in Paradise.** Doubleday, 14.95
Mitchell, Gladys: **The Rising of the Moon.** St. Martin's, 11.95
Morice, Anne: **Getting Away with Murder?** St. Martin's, 11.95
Moss, Robert: **Moscow Rules.** Random, 16.45
Oster, Jerry: **Sweet Justice.** Harper, 13.95
Page, Martin: **The Man Who Stole the Mona Lisa.** Pantheon, 13.95
Peel, Colin D.: **Snowtrap.** Doubleday, 11.95
Prescott, Casey: **The Asset in Black.** Arbor House, 16.95
Reeves, Robert: **Doubting Thomas.** Crown, 12.95
Robinson, Abby: **The Dick and Jane.** Delacorte, 14.95
Sherwood, John:**Green Trigger Fingers.** Scribner's, 11.95
Stark, Richard: **The Man with the Getaway Face.** Schocken, 13.95
Stark, Richard: **Point Blank.** Schocken, 13.95
Stashower, Don: **The Adventure of the Ectoplasmic Man.** Morrow, 10.95
Tapply, William G.: **The Dutch Blue Error.** Scribner's, 12.95
Thomson, June: **Sound Evidence.** Doubleday, 11.95
Tourney, Leonard: **Familiar Spirits.** St. Martin's, 13.95
Trenhaile, John: **Nocturne for the General.** Congdon and Weed, 15.95
Tripp, Miles: **A Charmed Death.** St. Martin's, 11.95
Wainwright, John: **The Ride.** St. Martin's, 11.95
Wallace, Dacid Rains: **The Turquoise Dragon.** Sierra Club, 12.95
Walsh, Ray: **The Mycroft Memoranda.** St. Martin's, 11.95
Warner, Mignon: **Speak No Evil.** Doubleday, 11.95
Wilcox, Collin: **Victims.** Mysterious Press, 14.95
Williams, Gordon: **Pomeroy Unleashed.** Arbor House, 14.50
Woods, Sara: **Defy the Devil.** St. Martin's, 11.95

Paperbacks

Block, Lawrence: **Tanner's Twelve Swingers.** Jove, 2.95
Boucher, Anthony, ed.: **Four and Twenty Bloodhounds.** Carroll & Graf, 3.50
Buckley, William F.: **The Story of Henri Tod.** Dell, 3.95
Candy, Edward: **Words for Murder Perhaps.** Ballantine, 2.95
Deighton, Len: **Berlin Game.** Ballantine, 4.50
Eberhart, Mignon G.: **The Patient in Cabin C.** Warner, 2.95
Garbo, Norman: **Spy.** Ballantine, 3.50
Gilbert, Michael: **Black Seraphim.** Penguin, 3.50
Innes, Michael: **Appleby and Honeybath.** Penguin, 3.50
Innes, Michael: **Lament for a Maker.** Penguin, 3.50
Lewin, Michael Z.: **The Silent Salesman.** Harper & Row, 3.50
Mann, Jessica: **No Man's Island.** Random (Vintage), 3.95
Mann, Jessica: **The Sting of Death.** Random (Vintage), 3.95
Morrell, David: **The Brotherhood of the Rose.** Fawcett, 3.95
O'Donnell, Peter: **The Impossible Virgin.** Mysterious Press, 3.95
Paretsky, Sara: **Deadlock.** Ballantine, 2.95
Rinehart, Mary Roberts: **The Circular Staircase.** Carroll & Graf, 3.50
Symons, Julian: **The Name of Annabel Lee.** Penguin, 3.50
Symons, Julian, ed.: **The Penguin Classic Crime Omnibus.** Penguin, 5.95
Taylor, Andrew: **Caroline Miniscule.** Penguin, 3.50
Thomson, June: **Case Closed.** Bantam, 2.95 □

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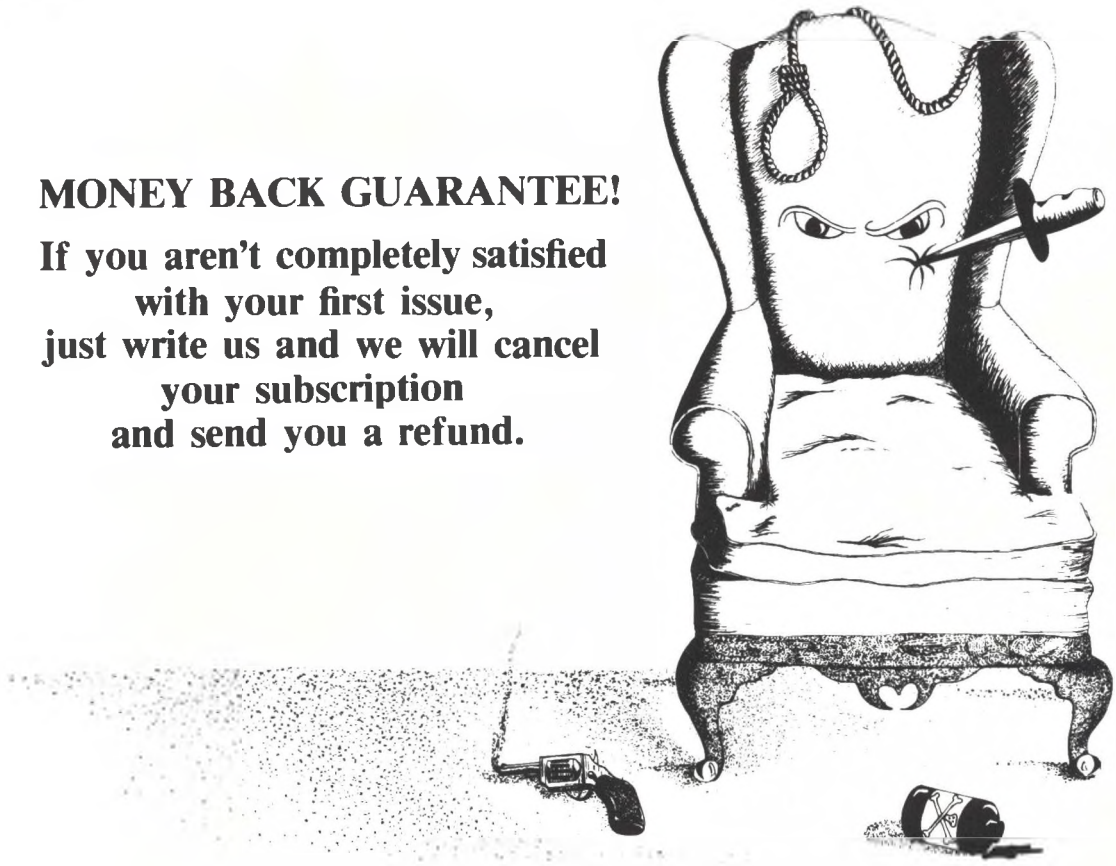

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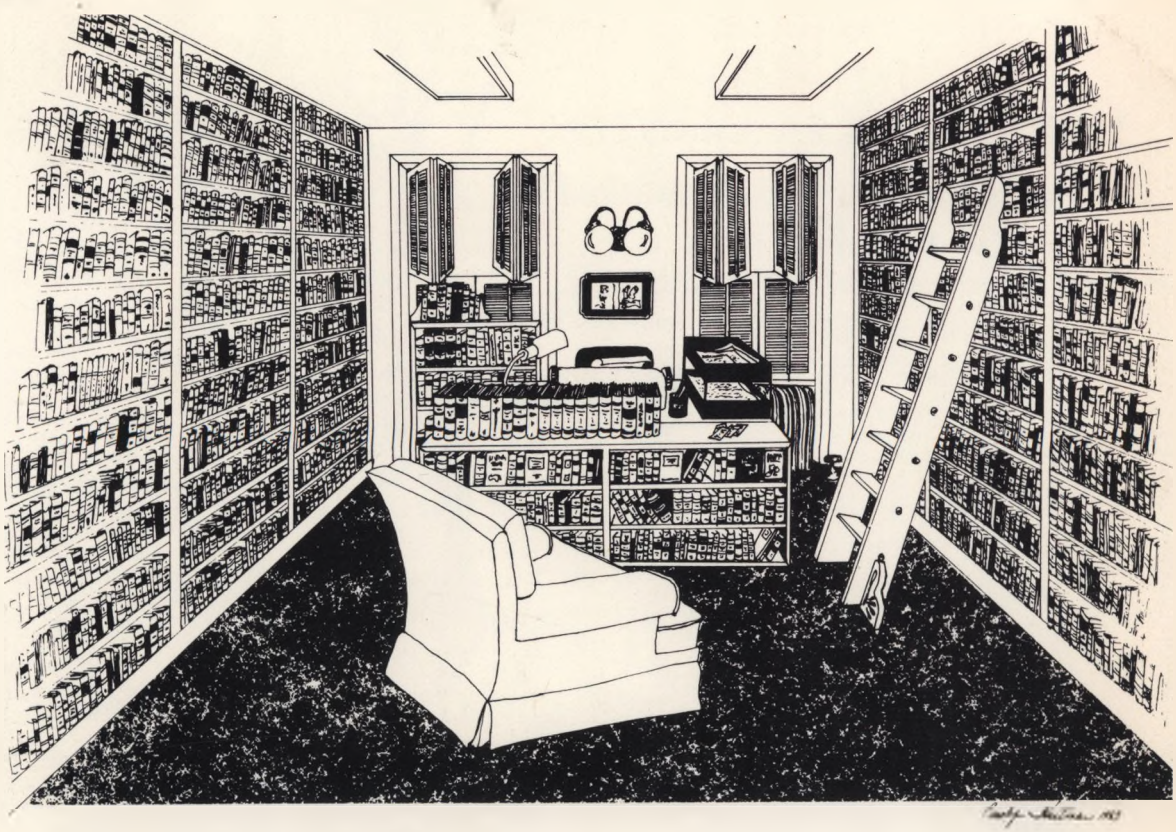

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