

OTTO PENZLER PRESENTS
AMERICAN MYSTERY CLASSICS



SUMMER 2019



AMERICAN MYSTERY CLASSICS

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Praise for the first six titles in the American Mystery Classics Series

Ellery Queen,
The Chinese Orange Mystery

“One of the most bizarre puzzles in crime fiction.”

—*Publishers Weekly* (Starred)

“The unbridled ingenuity of its central puzzle has never been surpassed.”—*Kirkus*

Mary Roberts Rinehart,
The Red Lamp

“Showcases [Rinehart’s] extraordinary gift for sustaining high levels of tension.”—*Publishers Weekly* (Starred)

“Genteel yet creepy . . . [readers] will relish the author’s precise yet evocative language.”—*Booklist*

Dorothy B. Hughes,
The So Blue Marble

“The debut by one of the great American suspense writers will suck you in even as it makes you keep asking, ‘Did I just read that?’”—*Kirkus* (Starred)

“Established [Hughes’s] expertise in the psychology of fear.”—*Booklist*

Stuart Palmer,
The Puzzle of the Happy Hooligan

“The Withers novels are . . . full of wit, always mixed with an engaging mystery. . . . Welcome back, Mr. Palmer.”—*Booklist*

Craig Rice,
Home Sweet Homicide

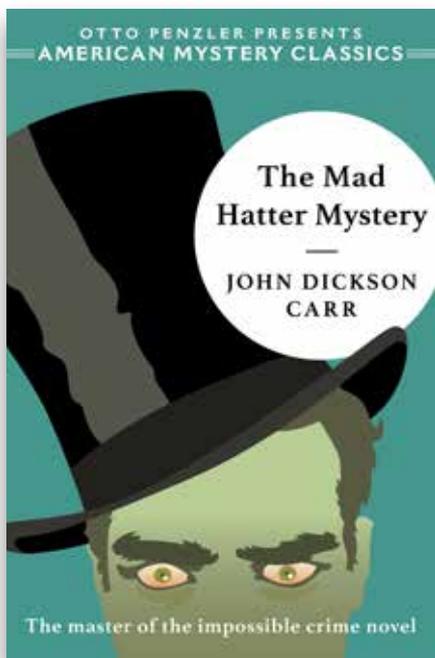
“A genuine midcentury classic.”
—*Booklist*

“Well-drawn, eccentric characters bolster this frolicsome and frequently funny book.”—*Publishers Weekly*

Clayton Rawson,
Death From a Top Hat

“One of the all-time greatest impossible murder mysteries.”
—*Publishers Weekly* (Starred)

“This classic gem is a witty, occult-drenched crash course in locked-room mysteries.”—*Booklist*



John Dickson Carr

The Mad Hatter Mystery

A Dr. Gideon Fell Mystery

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

A murdered man in a top hat leads Dr. Gideon Fell to a killer with a sick sense of humor

At the hand of an outrageous prankster, top hats are going missing all over London, snatched from the heads of some of the city's most powerful people—but is the hat thief the same as the person responsible for stealing a lost story by Edgar Allan Poe, the manuscript of which has just disappeared from a well-known collection? Unlike the manuscript, the hats don't stay stolen for long, each one reappearing in unexpected and conspicuous places shortly after being taken: on the top of a statue, hanging from a lamppost, and now, in the foggy depths of the Tower of London, on the head of a corpse discovered with a crossbow bolt through the heart. When the dead man is identified as the nephew of the troubled collector, amateur detective and lexicographer Dr. Gideon Fell discovers that the connections underlying the bizarre and puzzling crimes may be more intimate than initially expected.

Reissued for the first time in decades, the second novel in the Dr. Gideon Fell series (which can be read in any order) finds the iconic character investigating one of the most extraordinary murders of his career. A baffling whodunnit with menace at every turn, *The Mad Hatter Mystery* proves Carr to be the “unexcelled master of creepy erudition, swift-moving excitement and suspense through atmosphere” (*New York Times*).

“Every sentence gives a thrill of positive pleasure. [*The Mad Hatter Mystery*] is the most attractive mystery I have read for a long time.”

—Dorothy Sayers

“Very few detective stories baffle me nowadays, but Mr. Carr’s always do.” —Agatha Christie



JOHN DICKSON CARR (1906–1977) was one of the greatest writers of the American Golden Age mystery, and one of the only American authors to be included in England’s legendary Detection Club. Though he was born and died in the United States, Carr began his writing career while living in England, where he remained for nearly twenty years.

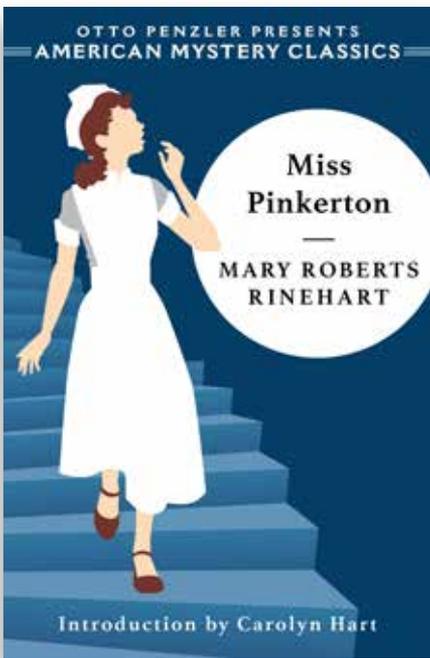
John Dickson Carr is revered today as one of the all-time greatest

authors of locked-room mysteries. Under his own name, the Carter Dickson pseudonym, and several other pen names, Carr wrote more than seventy novels and created numerous series characters in the process. His most famous character, Dr. Gideon Fell, was based on author G. K. Chesterton and appeared in twenty-four novels.

OTTO PENZLER, the creator of American Mystery Classics, is an award-winning publisher, critic, anthologist, and editor of mystery fiction best known as the founder of the Mysterious Press (1975), MysteriousPress.com (2011), and New York City’s Mysterious Bookshop (1979).

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MAY 2019 • 5.25X8 • 264pp.



Mary Roberts Rinehart

Miss Pinkerton

A Hilda Adams Mystery

Introduction by
Carolyn Hart

After a suspicious death at a country mansion, a brave nurse joins the household to see behind closed doors

Miss Adams is a nurse, not a detective—at least, not technically speaking. But while working as a nurse, one does have the opportunity to see things police can't see and an observant set of eyes can be quite an asset when crimes happen behind closed doors. So, sometimes, Detective Inspector Patton rings Miss Adams when he needs an agent on the inside. And when he does, he calls her "Miss Pinkerton" after the famous detective agency...

Everyone involved seems to agree that mild-mannered Herbert Wynne wasn't the type to commit suicide but, after he is found shot dead, with the only other possible killer being his ailing, bedridden aunt, no other explanation makes sense. Now, with the elderly woman left uncared for, Patton sees the perfect opportunity to employ Miss Pinkerton's abilities. When she arrives at the isolated country mansion to ply her trade, she soon finds more intrigue than anyone outside could have imagined—and more terror as well.

Reissued for the first time in twenty years, *Miss Pinkerton* is a suspenseful tale of madness and murder, which served as the basis for a 1932 film of the same name. Its titular character appeared in several of Rinehart's most popular novels.

“[Rinehart’s] literary distinction lies in the combination of love, humor and murder that she wove into her tales. . . . She helped the mystery story grow up.”

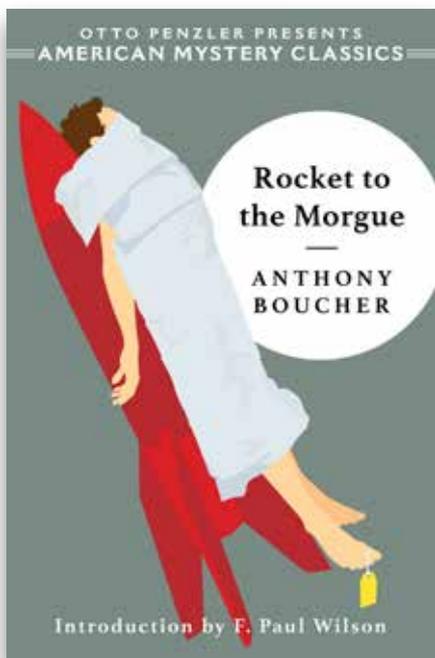
—*The New York Times*



MARY ROBERTS RINEHART (1876-1958) was the most beloved and best-selling mystery writer in America in the first half of the twentieth century. Born in Pittsburgh to the owner of a sewing machine factory, she wrote fiction in her spare time until a stock market crash sent her and her husband into debt, forcing her to lean on her writing to pay the bills. Her first two novels, *The Circular Staircase* (1908) and

The Man in Lower Ten (1909), established her as a bright young talent, and it wasn't long before she was a regular on bestseller lists. Among her dozens of novels was *The Bat* (1932), which was among the inspirations for Bob Kane's Batman. Today, Rinehart is often called the American Agatha Christie, even though she was much more popular than Christie during her heyday.

CAROLYN HART is a Mystery Writers of America Grand Master and the author of sixty novels, including twenty-seven titles in the Death on Demand series, which follows a bookseller-turned-sleuth in a South Carolina mystery bookstore. Her work has received numerous accolades, including Agatha, Anthony, and McCavity Awards.



**Anthony
Boucher**

***Rocket to the
Morgue***

A Sister Ursula Mystery

Introduction by
F. Paul Wilson

*A Golden Age mystery set in the Golden Age of
science fiction*

Legendary science fiction author Fowler Faulkes may be dead but his creation—the iconic Dr. Derringer—lives on in popular culture. Or, at least, the character would live on if not for Faulkes’s greedy heir Hilary who, during his time as the inflexible guardian of the estate, has created countless enemies in the small community of the genre. After being stabbed nearly to death in a room with only one door, which nobody was seen entering or exiting, Foulkes fears for his life and requests police protection. When more potentially-fatal encounters follow, it becomes clear to Detective Terry Marshall and his assistant, the inquisitive nun, Sister Ursula, that death awaits Mr. Foulkes around every corner. They’ll have to work overtime to thwart the would-be murderer—and to do so will require a plunge into the strange, idiosyncratic world of science fiction in its early days.

With characters based on Anthony Boucher’s friends at the Mañana Literary Society, including Robert Heinlein and L. Ron Hubbard, *Rocket to the Morgue* is both a classic locked room mystery and an enduring portrait of a real-life writing community. In print for the first time in over thirty years, the book is a must-read for fans of mysteries and science fiction alike.

“*Rocket to the Morgue* made me very happy”
—F. Paul Wilson

“An intriguing look into the beginnings of science fiction as we know it today”—The Heinlein Society



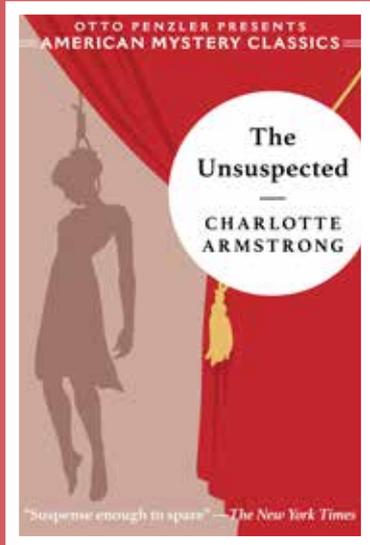
ANTHONY BOUCHER (1911-1968) was an American author, editor, and critic, perhaps best known today as the namesake of the annual Bouchercon convention, an international meeting of mystery writers, fans, critics, and publishers. Born William Anthony Parker White, he wrote under various pseudonyms and published fiction in a number of genres outside of mystery, including fantasy and

science fiction. In the early 1940s, he was a member of the Mañana Society, a group of writers who met at Robert A. Heinlein’s house and the inspiration for *Rocket to the Morgue*. He was also a member of the Baker Street Irregulars, a Sherlockian fan group which informed his later title, *The Case of the Baker Street Irregulars*.

F. PAUL WILSON is an American author primarily working in the science fiction and horror genres. He has written twenty-three novels and numerous short stories in the Repairman Jack saga, his longest running series. He is perhaps best known for his novel *The Keep*, which was adapted for film in 1983.

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Charlotte
Armstrong

*The
Unsuspected*

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

March 2019

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ISBN 978-1-61316-122-7

5.25"X8" • 264pp.

*To catch a murderous theater
impresario, a young woman takes a
deadly new role...*

The note discovered beside Rosaleen Wright's hanged body is full of reasons justifying her suicide—but it lacks her trademark vitality and wit, and, most importantly, her signature. So the note alone is far from enough to convince her best friend Jane that Rosaleen was her own murderer, even if the police quickly accept the possibility as fact. Instead, Jane suspects Rosaleen's boss, New York theater impresario Luther Grandison. To the world at large, he's powerful and charismatic, but Rosaleen's letters to Jane described a duplicitous, greedy man who would no doubt kill to protect his secrets. If Rosaleen stumbled upon one such secret, it could have led to an untimely demise—and Jane risks a similar end when she takes a job with Grandison's company, tangling with one of Broadway's deadliest actors in a desperate play for the truth.

A playwright before she turned to crime fiction, Charlotte Armstrong drew from her experience in the theater for her fourth novel, *The Unsuspected*. The book inspired the 1947 film of the same name.

“The mistress of day-lit terror.”
—*The New York Times*

“Expertly handled.”—*New Yorker*

CHARLOTTE ARMSTRONG (1905-1969) was an American poet, dramatist, and author of mystery short stories and novels. Born and raised in the mining region of Michigan's Upper Peninsula, she moved to New York and received a B.A. degree from Barnard in 1925. Though she wrote a few novels before *The Unsuspected*, the title was her first to achieve outstanding success.

Perry Mason seeks the link between a poisoned kitten and a mysterious voice from the past

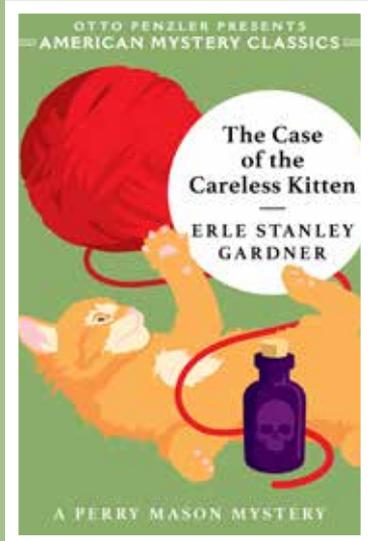
Soon after Helen Kendal receives a mysterious phone call from her vanished uncle Franklin, long presumed dead, urging her to make contact with criminal defense attorney Perry Mason, she finds herself the main suspect in the murder of an unfamiliar man. Her kitten has just survived a poisoning attempt—as has her aunt Matilda, the woman who always maintained that Franklin was alive in spite of his disappearance. Though it's clear that all these mysterious occurrences are connected, and that their connection will prove his client's innocence, the links in the case are too obscure to be immediately recognized, even by Mason's brilliantly deductive mind. Risking disbarment for his unorthodox methods, he endeavors to outwit the police and solve the puzzle himself, enlisting the help of his secretary Della Street, his private eye Paul Drake, and the unlikely but invaluable aid of a careless but very clever kitten in the process.

Reissued for the first time in over twenty years, *The Case of the Careless Kitten* is one of the most highly praised cases in the iconic Perry Mason series, which need not be read in any particular order.

“[Erle Stanley Gardner’s] Mason books remain tantalizing on every page and brilliant.”

—Scott Turow

ERLE STANLEY GARDNER (1889-1970) was the best-selling American author of the 20th century, mainly due to the enormous success of his Perry Mason series. For more than a quarter of a century he wrote more than a million words a year under his own name and numerous pseudonyms, the most famous being A.A. Fair.



Erle Stanley
Gardner

*The Case of the
Careless Kitten*

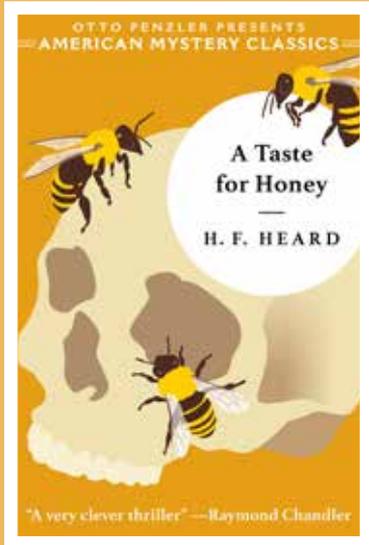
A Perry Mason
Mystery

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

March 2019

Paperback, \$15.95
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Hardcover, \$25.95
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5.25"X8" • 264pp.



H. F. Heard

A Taste for Honey

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

March 2019

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Hardcover, \$25.95
ISBN 978-1-61316-120-3

5.25"X8" • 264pp.

In the countryside of Victorian England, a recluse and a beekeeper team up to catch a cunning villain

In a quiet village far from the noise of Victorian London, Sydney Silchester lives the life of a recluse led by two passions: privacy and honey. He gives up the former only when his stores of the latter run low. But when his honey supplier is found stung to death by her hive, the search for a new beekeeper takes Sydney to Mr. Mycroft, a brilliant man who has retired to Sussex to take up precisely this occupation, and who shares many traits with the great detective Sherlock Holmes. Upon hearing of the tragic death of the village's other beekeeper, Mycroft, himself no stranger to crime-solving, immediately senses the bloody hand of murder. But what villain would have the mad intelligence to train an army of killer bees? With Sydney at his side, Mycroft embarks on a life-threatening search for the perpetrator of this most diabolical crime.

Hailed by author, critic, and famed Sherlock Holmes scholar Christopher Morley as the only worthwhile continuation of the Holmes novels, *A Taste for Honey* is an engaging and terrifying mystery that proves enjoyable even to those with little to no knowledge of Doyle's characters.

“A very clever thriller.”
—Raymond Chandler

HENRY FITZGERALD HEARD (1889-1971) was born in London, studied at Cambridge University, then turned to writing essays and books on historical, scientific, religious, mystical, cultural, and social subjects, signing them Gerald Heard, the name under which all his non-fiction appeared. He moved to the United States in 1937, after which point he published several mystery novels, even while continuing with spiritual work that included his founding a meditation center in the Southwest.

Three well-heeled villains terrorize New York's high society in pursuit of a rare and powerful gem

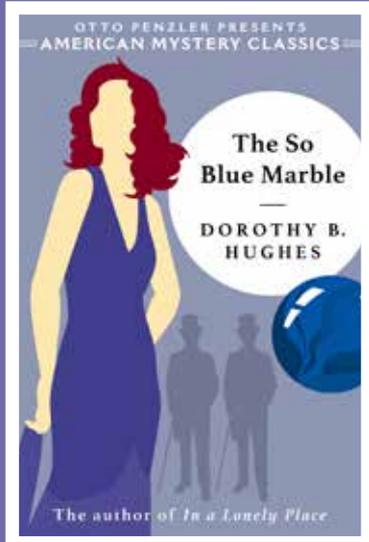
The society pages announce it before she even arrives: Griselda Satterlee, daughter of the princess of Rome, has left her career as an actress behind and is traveling to Manhattan to reinvent herself as a fashion designer. They also announce the return of the dashing Montefierro twins to New York after a twelve-year sojourn in Europe. But there is more to this story than what's reported, which becomes clear when the three meet one evening during a walk, and their polite conversation quickly takes a menacing turn. The twins are seeking a rare and powerful gem that they believe is stashed in the unused apartment where Griselda is staying. Baffled by the request, she pushes them away, but they won't take no for an answer. When they return, accompanied by Griselda's long-estranged younger sister, the murders begin...

Drenched in the glamour and luxury of the New York elite, *The So Blue Marble* is a perfectly Art Deco suspense novel in which nothing is quite as it seems. While different in style from her later books, Dorothy B. Hughes's debut highlights her greatest strengths as an author, rendered with both the poetic language and the psychology of fear for which she is known today.

“Readers new to this forgotten classic are in for a treat.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

DOROTHY B. HUGHES (1904–1993) was a mystery author and literary critic. Born in Kansas City, she studied at Columbia University and published poetry before turning to mystery fiction. Several of her novels were adapted for film, including *In a Lonely Place* and *Ride the Pink Horse*. In 1978, the Mystery Writers of America presented Hughes with the Grand Master Award.



Dorothy B.
Hughes

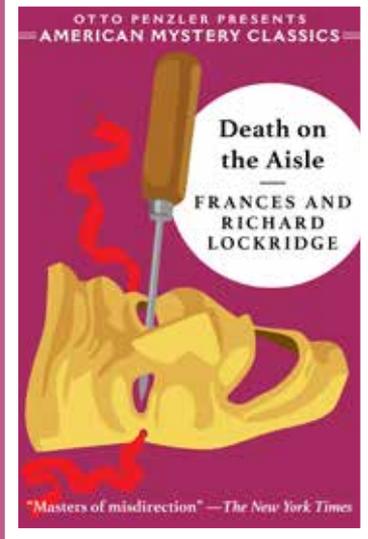
*The So Blue
Marble*

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

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Frances
& Richard
Lockridge

Death on the Aisle

A Mr. & Mrs. North
Mystery

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

March 2019

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ISBN 978-1-61316-118-0
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5.25"X8" • 264pp.

*Broadway may be a graveyard of
hopes and dreams, but someone's
adding corpses to its tombs...*

Mr. and Mrs. North live as quiet a life as a couple can amidst the bustle of New York City. For Jerry, a publisher, and Pamela, a homemaker, the only threat to their domestic equilibrium comes in the form of Mrs. North's relentless efforts as an amateur sleuth, which repeatedly find the duo investigating murders and sundry other crimes. So when the wealthy backer of a play is found dead in the seats of the West 45th Street Theatre, the Norths aren't far behind, led by Pam's customary flair for murders that turn eccentric and, yes, humorous. Alongside Lieutenant William Weigand of the New York Police Department, they'll employ illogical logic and bizarrely tangential suggestions to draw the curtains on a killer.

A light mystery set in a classic Broadway locale, *Death on the Aisle* is lent verisimilitude by author Richard Lockridge's career as a theater critic. Though it is the fourth novel in the saga of this charming, witty couple, the series can be enjoyed in any order, with each installment depicting its own self-contained story.

**"Masters of misdirection."
—The New York Times**

FRANCES AND RICHARD LOCKRIDGE were two of the most popular names in mystery during the forties and fifties. Inspired by Richard's series of non-mystery stories for *The New Yorker* about a publisher and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. North, the Lockridge husband-and-wife duo collaborated successfully to write twenty-six mystery novels about the couple, which, in turn, became the subject of a Broadway play, a movie, and series for both radio and television.

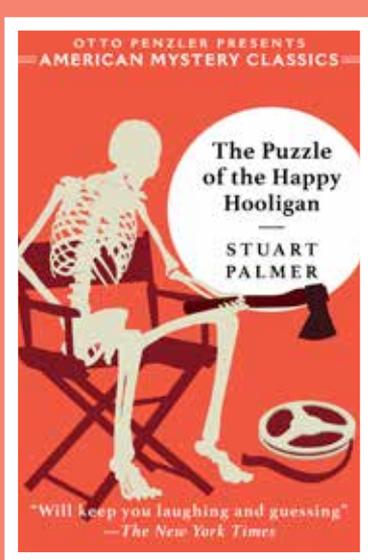
After a screenwriter is murdered on a film set, a street-smart school teacher searches for the killer

Hildegard Withers is just your average school teacher—with above-average skills in the art of deduction. The *New Yorker* often finds herself investigating crimes led only by her own meddlesome curiosity, though her friends on the NYPD don't mind when she solves their cases for them. After plans for a grand tour of Europe are interrupted by Germany's invasion of Poland, Miss Withers heads to sunny Los Angeles instead, where her vacation finds her working as a technical advisor on the set of a film adaptation of the Lizzie Borden story. The producer has plans for an epic retelling of the historical killer's patricidal spree—plans which are derailed when a screenwriter turns up dead. While the local authorities quickly deem his death accidental, Withers suspects otherwise and calls up a detective back home for advice. The two soon team up to catch a wily killer.

At once a pleasantly complex locked room mystery and a hilarious look at the foibles of Hollywood, *The Puzzle of the Happy Hooligan* finds Palmer, a screenwriter himself, at his most perceptive. In print for the first time in over thirty years, this riotously funny novel shows why Hildegard Withers was among the most beloved detectives of the Golden Age American mystery novel.

“Will keep you laughing and guessing from the first page to the last.” —*The New York Times*

STUART PALMER (1905–1968) was an American author of mysteries. Born in Baraboo, Wisconsin, Palmer worked a number of odd jobs—including apple picking, journalism, and copywriting—before publishing his first novel, the crime drama *Ace of Jades*, in 1931.



Stuart Palmer

The Puzzle of the Happy Hooligan

A Hildegard Withers Mystery

Introduction by Otto Penzler

October 2018

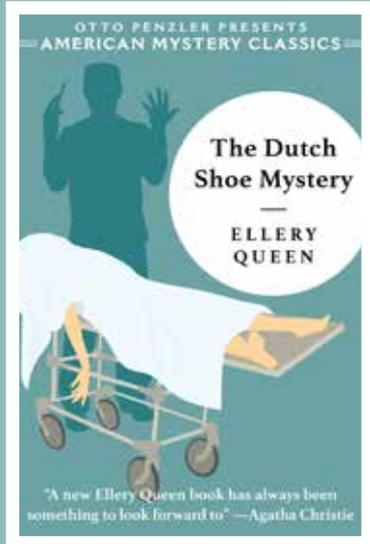
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Hardcover, \$25.95

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5.25"X8" • 264pp.



After a wealthy woman is strangled in a hospital full of friends, Ellery Queen seeks her deadly enemy

When Ellery Queen, described by the *London Times* as “the logical successor to Sherlock Holmes,” is invited by his friend, a doctor, to witness an operation, he accepts the offer in hopes of furthering his capabilities as an amateur detective, but soon ends up testing those same skills. The patient who is about to undergo the delicate procedure is Abigail Doorn, the richest and most famous woman in America; the doctor who will perform it is her protégé, one of the leading surgeons on the East Coast. It will all take place in the main operating theater of the vast hospital that she founded.

Relatives and friends, and even some enemies, wait with bated breath to learn the outcome of the operation. The institution is hushed, the audience seated, the theater ready. The surgeon calls for his distinguished patient, and the doors swing open. A still form covered in a white sheet is wheeled into the theater. But when the sheet is removed, it reveals Ms. Doorn’s corpse, strangled to death with a picture wire. Who among the attendees was ruthless enough to carry out this gruesome operation? It’s up to Ellery Queen—and his most perceptive readers—to uncover the clues and find out.

“Ellery Queen is the American detective story.”

—Anthony Boucher

ELLERY QUEEN was a pen name created and shared by two cousins, Frederic Dannay (1905-1982) and Manfred B. Lee (1905-1971), as well as the name of their most famous detective. Born in Brooklyn, they spent forty-two years writing the greatest puzzle-mysteries of their time, gaining the duo a reputation as the foremost American authors of the Golden Age “fair play” mystery.

Ellery Queen

The Dutch Shoe Mystery

An Ellery Queen
Mystery

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

March 2019

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5.25”X8” • 264pp.

A topsy-turvy crime scene sends Ellery Queen on a puzzling quest for the truth

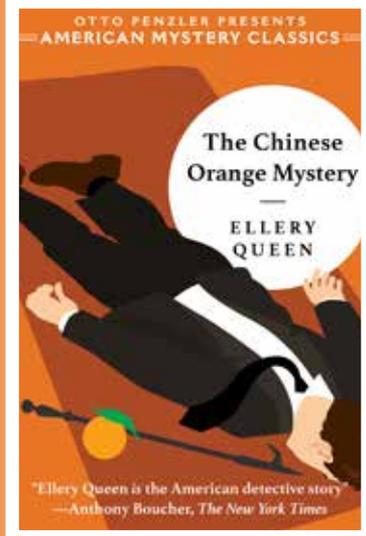
The offices of foreign literature publisher and renowned stamp collector Donald Kirk are often host to strange activities, but the most recent occurrence—the murder of an unknown caller, found dead in an empty waiting room—is unlike any that has come before. Nobody, it seems, entered or exited the room, and yet the crime scene clearly has been manipulated, leaving everything in the room turned backwards and upside down. Stuck through the back of the corpse’s shirt are two long spears—and a tangerine is missing from the fruit bowl. Enter amateur sleuth Ellery Queen, who arrives just in time to witness the discovery of the body, only to be immediately drawn into a complex case in which no clue is too minor or too glaring to warrant careful consideration.

Reissued for the first time in over thirty years, *The Chinese Orange Mystery* is a “fair-play” mystery in which readers have all the clues needed to solve the crime. In 1981, the novel was selected as one of the top ten locked room mysteries of all time by a panel of mystery-world luminaries that included Julian Symons, Edward D. Hoch, Howard Haycraft, and Otto Penzler.

“Without doubt the best of the Queen stories.”

—*The New York Times*

ELLERY QUEEN was a pen name created and shared by two cousins, Frederic Dannay (1905-1982) and Manfred B. Lee (1905-1971), as well as the name of their most famous detective. Born in Brooklyn, they spent forty-two years writing the greatest puzzle-mysteries of their time, gaining the duo a reputation as the foremost American authors of the Golden Age “fair play” mystery.



Ellery Queen

The Chinese Orange Mystery

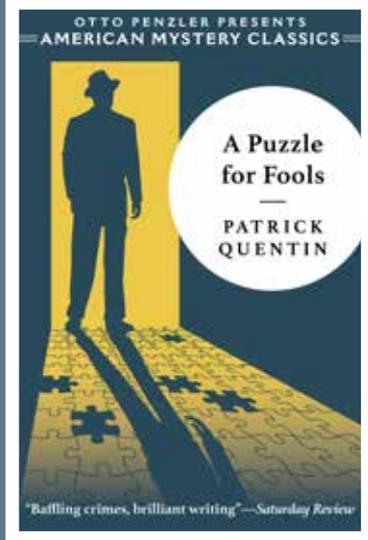
An Ellery Queen Mystery

Introduction by Otto Penzler

October 2018

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Patrick
Quentin

A Puzzle for Fools

An Iris & Peter
Duluth Mystery

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

March 2019

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A wave of murders rocks a sanitarium—and it's up to the patients to stop them

“Broadway producer Peter Duluth sought solace in a bottle after his wife’s death; now, two years later and desperate to dry out, he enters a sanitarium, hoping to break his dependence on drink—but the institution doesn’t quite offer the rest and relaxation he expected. Strange, malevolent occurrences plague the hospital; among other inexplicable events, Peter hears his own voice with an ominous warning: “There will be murder.” It soon becomes clear that a homicidal maniac is on the loose and, with a staff every bit as erratic as its idiosyncratic patients, it seems everyone is a suspect—even Duluth’s new romantic interest, Iris Pattison. Charged by the head of the ward with solving the crimes, it’s up to Peter to clear her name before the killer strikes again.

Reissued for the first time in over thirty years, *A Puzzle for Fools* is the atmospheric and complex mystery that first introduced Peter Duluth; the character and his love interest Iris went on to star in eight more novels, two of which were adapted for film.

**“Mr. Quentin is a craftsman of
the first class.”**

—*Times Literary Supplement*

“Baffling crimes, brilliant writing.”
—*Saturday Review*

PATRICK QUENTIN is one pseudonym of Hugh Callingham Wheeler (1912-1987), born in London, who eventually became a US citizen. Writing in collaboration with a revolving cast of co-authors under the Quentin, Q. Patrick and Jonathan Stagge names, Wheeler produced more than 30 mystery novels. He later gravitated to the stage and wrote, among other plays, the Tony award-winning *Sweeney Todd*.

A detective steeped in the art of magic solves the mystifying murder of two occultists

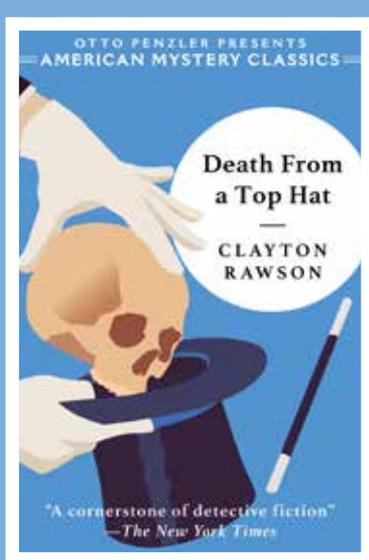
Now retired from the tour circuit on which he made his name, master magician The Great Merlini spends his days running a magic shop in New York's Times Square and his nights moonlighting as a consultant for the NYPD. The cops call him when faced with crimes so impossible that they can only be comprehended by a magician's mind. In the most recent case, two occultists are discovered dead in locked rooms, one spread out on a pentagram, both appearing to have been murdered under similar circumstances. The list of suspects includes an escape artist, a professional medium, and a ventriloquist, so it's clear that the crimes took place in a realm that Merlini knows well. But in the end it will take his logical skills, and not his magical ones, to apprehend the killer.

Reprinted for the first time in over twenty years, *Death from a Top Hat* is an ingeniously-plotted puzzle set in the world of New York stage magic, which was at its pinnacle in the early twentieth century. In 1981, the novel was selected as one of the top ten locked room mysteries of all time by a panel of mystery-world luminaries that included Julian Symons, Edward D. Hoch, and Ellery Queen co-creator Frederic Dannay.

“One of the all-time greatest impossible murder mysteries.”

—Publishers Weekly

CLAYTON RAWSON (1906–1971) was a novelist, editor, and magician. He is best known for creating the Great Merlini, an illusionist and amateur sleuth introduced in *Death from a Top Hat* (1938). In 1945 Rawson was among the founders of the Mystery Writers of America; he also served for many years as the editor of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*.



Clayton
Rawson

*Death From a
Top Hat*

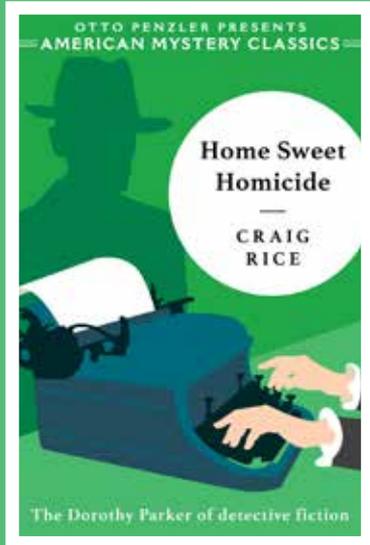
A Great Merlini
Mystery

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

October 2018

Paperback, \$15.95
ISBN 978-1-61316-101-2
Hardcover, \$25.95
ISBN 978-1-61316-109-8

5.25"X8" • 264pp.



Craig Rice

Home Sweet Homicide

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

October 2018

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Hardcover, \$25.95

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The children of a mystery writer play amateur sleuths and matchmakers

Unoccupied and unsupervised while mother is working, the children of widowed crime writer Marion Carstairs find diversion wherever they can. So when the kids hear gunshots at the house next door, they jump at the chance to launch their own amateur investigation—and after all, why shouldn't they? They know everything the cops do about crime scenes, having read about them in mother's novels. They know what her literary detectives would do in such a situation, how they would interpret the clues and handle witnesses. Plus, if the children solve the puzzle before the cops, it will do wonders for the sales of mother's novels. But this crime scene isn't a game at all; the murder is real and, when its details prove more twisted than anything in mother's fiction, they'll eventually have to enlist Marion's help to sort out the clues. Or is that just part of their plan to hook her up with the lead detective on the case?

The basis for the 1946 film with the same name, *Home Sweet Homicide* is the novel that launched Craig Rice to literary fame. The book, a comedic crime story that pokes fun at the conventions of the genre, finds "the Dorothy Parker of detective fiction" at her most entertaining.

"A genuine midcentury classic."
—*Booklist*

CRAIG RICE (1908–1957), born Georgiana Ann Randolph Craig, was an American author of mystery novels, short stories, and screenplays. In 1946, she became the first mystery writer to appear on the cover of *Time* magazine. Rice's writing style was unique in its ability to mix gritty, hard-boiled writing with the entertainment of a screwball comedy.

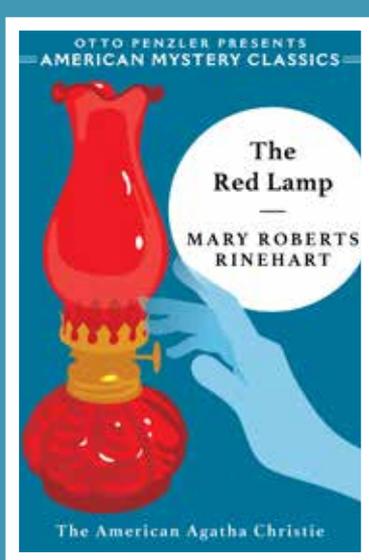
A professor tries to stop a murder spree, uncertain whether the culprit is man or ghost

An all-around skeptic when it comes to the supernatural, literature professor William Porter gives no credence to claims that Twin Towers, the seaside manor he's just inherited, might be haunted. He finds nothing mysterious about the conditions in which his Uncle Horace died, leaving the property behind; it was a simple case of cardiac arrest, nothing more. Though his wife, more attuned to spiritual disturbance, refuses to occupy the main house, Porter convinces her to spend a summer at the estate and stay in the lodge elsewhere on the grounds. But, not long after they arrive, Porter sees the evidence of haunting that the townspeople speak of: a shadowy figure illuminated by the red light of Horace's writing lamp, the very light that shone on the scene of his death. And though he isn't convinced that it is a spirit and not a man, Porter knows that, whichever it is, the figure is responsible for the rash of murders—first of sheep, then of people—that breaks out across the countryside. But caught up in the pursuit, Porter risks implicating himself in the very crimes he hopes to solve.

Written with atmospheric prose and tension that rises with every page, *The Red Lamp* shows the “American Agatha Christie” at the height of her powers.

“Fans of eerie whodunits with a supernatural tinge will relish this reissue.” —*Publishers Weekly*

MARY ROBERTS RINEHART (1876-1958) was the most beloved and best-selling mystery writer in America in the first half of the twentieth century. Born in Pittsburgh to the owner of a sewing machine factory, she started writing to pay the bills, and soon became one of the wealthiest writers in the world.



Mary Roberts Rinehart

The Red Lamp

Introduction by
Otto Penzler

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