

Gun in Cheek: An Affectionate Guide to the "Worst" in Mystery Fiction

Bill Pronzini



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"This is fabulously funny stuff." ? John D. MacDonald.

Welcome to the very best of the very worst in twentieth-century mystery writing. Author Bill Pronzini takes a good-natured look at the genre's "alternative classics" in a retrospective of unintentionally hilarious crime fiction. Populated by the usual private eyes, arch-villains, amateur sleuths, and *femmes fatales*, these tales offer uniquely amusing reading that's as memorable in its own way as the works of the great mystery writers. In addition to their pure entertainment value, these excerpts and witty appraisals of the "worst" in mystery fiction provide a historical perspective on the development and mores of modern-day crime stories. Featured writers include not only many unsung heroes of pulp fiction but also authors who were popular in their day. Pronzini presents background on the field's subgenres and publishers as well as incisive commentary on the social attitudes reflected by the stories. Advanced and dedicated devotees will appreciate the comprehensive bibliography, which will steer them toward — or away from — these neglected gems.

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