



Murder in Canton: A Judge Dee Mystery

Robert van Gulik

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Brought back into print in the 1990s to wide acclaim, re-designed new editions of Robert van Gulik's Judge Dee Mysteries are now available.

Written by a Dutch diplomat and scholar during the 1950s and 1960s, these lively and historically accurate mysteries have entertained a devoted following for decades. Set during the T'ang dynasty, they feature Judge Dee, a brilliant and cultured Confucian magistrate disdainful of personal luxury and corruption, who cleverly selects allies to help him navigate the royal courts, politics, and ethnic tensions in imperial China. Robert van Gulik modeled Judge Dee on a magistrate of that name who lived in the seventh century, and he drew on stories and literary conventions of Chinese mystery writing dating back to the Sung dynasty to construct his ingenious plots.

Murder in Canton takes place in the year 680, as Judge Dee, recently promoted to lord chief justice, is sent incognito to Canton to investigate the disappearance of a court censor. With the help of his trusted lieutenants Chiao Tai and Tao Gan, and that of a clever blind girl who collects crickets, Dee solves a complex puzzle of political intrigue and murder through the three separate subplots "the vanished censor," "the Smaragdine dancer," and "the Golden Bell."

An expert on the art and erotica as well as the literature, religion, and politics of China, van Gulik also provides charming illustrations to accompany his engaging and entertaining mysteries.

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