



The First Golden Age of Mystery & Crime MEGAPACK™: Fletcher Flora

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The Golden Age of Mystery & Crime MEGAPACK™ series focuses on unjustly forgotten mystery writers from the 1960s and before. Fletcher Flora is a perfect example. Beginning in the 1950s, Flora wrote a string of 20 great novels -- mysteries, suspense, plus three pseudonymously as "Ellery Queen." He also published more than 160 short stories in the top mystery magazines. In his day, he was among the top of his field. This volume collects 26 of his classic mystery and crime tales for your reading pleasure. Included are:

THE TWO-FACED CORPSE

AS I LIE DEAD

I'LL KILL FOR YOU

LONG WAY TO K.C.

HEELS ARE FOR HATING

MURDER OF A MOUSE

POINTS SOUTH

TWO LITTLE HANDS

HANDY MAN

LOOSE ENDS

THE WITNESS WAS A LADY

SHE ASKED FOR IT

TUNE ME IN

THE SPENT DAYS

BONUS BOY

MRS. DEARLY'S SPECIAL DAY

SIX REASONS FOR MURDER

HOW? WHEN? WHO?

THE SATIN-QUILTED BOX

MY FATHER DIED YOUNG

WAIT AND SEE

OBITUARY

THE HAPPENSTANCE SNATCH

COUSIN KELLY

REFUGE

SOMETHING PRICELESS

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The First Golden Age of Mystery & Crime MEGAPACK™: Fletcher Flora Details

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Author : Fletcher Flora

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From Reader Review The First Golden Age of Mystery & Crime MEGAPACK™: Fletcher Flora for online ebook

David Searle says

Average but Interesting

The stories in this book are not brilliant but are readable and offer historical interest from an academic perspective. The Dashiell Hammett MegaPack is much better than this one and the stories have a similar feel so that may be a better option if unsure.

Bobby Underwood says

Born in Kansas in 1914, Fletcher Flora had the misfortune of arriving too late in the pulp cycle to receive his due, but it doesn't lessen the startling number of memorable short stories he penned for magazines and digests such as *Manhunt*, *Ellery Queen*, *The Saint*, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, *Verdict Detective*, *Alfred Hitchcock*, and a few lesser known ones. He had been a teacher before enlisting in the US Army during WWII, where he was injured by shrapnel which would give him problems throughout his lifetime. By the 1950s he was writing for the pulps, or what remained of them as they waned in favor of digests, to which he transitioned.

He broke into novel form in 1954 with the lesbian-themed *Strange Sisters*, possibly attempting to find a soft spot in the market. The title for his inaugural entry in this sub-genre of pulp had been used before, giving Fletcher's a boost in sales which gave him some recognition. He would go on to write some solid noir and crime novels, often filled with irony and black humor, and a twist. He even penned a couple of *Ellery Queen* novels, and collaborated with Stuart Palmer on his *Hildegard Withers* series. But his bread and butter continued to be the short story, of which there are a slew compiled in this terrific collection.

If you're a fan of noir and crime, and pulp, this might be the best book bargain you'll ever find on Kindle. It isn't free, but it's less than a dollar for 26 stories culled from the aforementioned magazines and digests. I only ran across two which I didn't care for, despite being well written. There are a few here that I consider minor masterpieces, and it's those I'll focus in on first; their inclusion alone makes picking this up seem like grand larceny!

AS I LIE DEAD, first published in *Manhunt* February 1953, is a noir gem. From the opening scene on the beach as Tony and his golden-haired, brown-eyed and sexy cousin Cindy dream of Acapulco we know this isn't going to end well. For someone. The murder is swift, taking place from the outset, but then they are approached by Evan, who lives in the lodge across the lake, and blackmail enters the picture. But he's rich, and doesn't want money, he wants Cindy. Murder, incest, blackmail and jealousy, and a twisty noir ending make this one a story you won't soon forget. —

“He was strong, in spite of his fat belly. It didn't look like he was ever going to die.”

In *I'LL KILL FOR YOU*, a man is following a woman and walks in on her standing over a body. Did she kill him? Is he just helping her out of a jam because of her cold beauty? Another great noir ending.

MY FATHER DIED YOUNG is a mesmerizing story which begins with a man exhuming his father's body. The backstory of why he's doing it takes up the narrative, and is enthralling. Even though the reader has begun to suspect by the time we get to the ending, the twist is still fantastic.

WAIT AND SEE might just be the most cold blooded and chilling story of the lot, despite the fact that it isn't about ghosts, and not a single act of violence is perpetrated on anyone. Two sisters, one of them dying, an allergic little boy and a fortune to inherit...

In REFUGE, a woman is terrified that her wealthy husband is going to kill her, but can get no one to believe her; not her father, and not the police. Her mother went bonkers. Is it all in her mind? She finally turns to her old sweetheart Roger as her last hope. Surely he'll believe her?

TWO LITTLE HANDS is a flat-out masterpiece. Step-brother Jake is the after-the-fact narrator, explaining to us how the terrible thing was all his fault (though we don't know yet what it is). It's all about his feelings for his flirtatious — and more than a bit bent — step-sister, Ivy, and how she teases him and the simple but sweet Obie, who thinks he's Ivy's boyfriend. Enter one Gunner to tease them with, and a simple suggestion leads to the explanation. Sad and memorable.

Since you can click on the Look Inside feature on Amazon and obtain the titles of the other stories here, I won't list them all, but suffice it to say they're all well written, and some, like Murder of a Mouse and Cousin Kelly nearly as good as the aforementioned. In researching Fletcher Flora I discovered many other short story titles of his which sound intriguing, and I'm hoping there will be another Megapack forthcoming at some point. You can't go wrong with this for the price. A must have for those who enjoy these types of stories, and an inexpensive way for those uncertain about the genre, to find out if they do.
