

STARK HOUSE PRESS

Newsletter, Volume 6, Number 1

January 2017

By now, if you are a Stark House Crime Club member, you've already received the January book, *Death and the Naked Lady / The Lady and the Cheetah* by John Flagg. The newsletter is supposed to come out first, but we jumped the gun. Sorry about that.

Which is not to suggest that the Flagg book doesn't deserve your full attention. We happen to be big fans of Flagg's retro espionage thrillers. We reprinted *The Persian Cat* as a Black Gat Book last year, and are now following up with this tasty treasure. We also located one of the author's rare short stories, written under his real name, John Gearon, called "Faces Turned Against Him." This creepy urban murder mystery appeared in the pages of *Suspense Magazine* back in 1951, the same year these novels were published by Gold Medal Books. It was the year that John Flagg really hit the scene.

These two novels are marvelously old fashioned, and we mean that only in the best way. The first book, *Death and the Naked Lady*, is set on an ocean liner that is making its way across the Atlantic to New York. There has been a murder in Paris the night before, and entertainer Mac McLean knows that he is the prime suspect. So, naturally, he tries to solve the mystery before the ship docks.

In *The Lady and the Cheetah*, a newspaper reporter is mistaken for an international man of mystery, and hired to find some missing letters. This time the story is set in Europe, starting in Paris and then moving over to Genoa for the exciting climax. The world was a bigger place back then. It was a post-World War II world, and Americans were still pitting their arrogant naiveté against the perceived Euro decadence. Flagg, born John Gearon, had traveled all over Europe after leaving school, and well knew the world he wrote about for Gold Medal.

James Reasoner—author, blogger and book collector—is also a fan of Mr. Flagg’s, and has graciously contributed an introduction to our new edition. If you aren’t a member of the Crime Club, we highly recommend you order a copy today. As Anthony Boucher of the *New York Times* said, this is “larger-than-life intrigue.” They just don’t write ‘em like this anymore.

John Flagg

**Death and the Naked Lady / Faces Turned
Against Him / The Lady and the Cheetah**

978-1-944520-16-8 \$19.95



The second book for this month will more than likely arrive sometime in early February. It is another reprint from the early days of James Hadley Chase, this time making two of his “Raymond Marshall” novels available: *Just the Way It Is / Blonde’s Requiem*. When we say that these are Raymond Marshall novels, we must acknowledge that both Chase and Marshall are pseudonyms of a fellow who was born as René Lodge Brabazon Raymond back in December 24, 1906, in Ealing, London. His dad wanted him to be a veterinary surgeon, but he loved books.

He worked in a bookshop, and even sold children's encyclopedias door-to-door. Eventually young René decided to try his hand at writing the kind of story he liked to read—gangster fiction. Of course, gangster fiction was more or less a fixture of the American scene, and Chase had never been to the States. So he did what many a young writer has done before, he imitated the fiction writers whom he admired.

One of these “imitations” was *Blonde's Requiem*, which was fashioned around a re-telling of Raymond Chandler's *Farewell, My Lovely*. A detective is hired to find some missing blondes, but instead finds only hatred and distrust from a town that has been rotten just a little too long. When Chandler found out about *Blonde's Requiem*, he didn't sue, but his publisher rattled their sabers in Chase's direction, and the book was withdrawn from the market. So this new edition by Stark House represents the first new print edition in over 70 years.

The other novel in the set is *Just the Way It Is*, originally published in 1944, the story of a corrupt town that is about to receive a serious house-cleaning when the wrong person begins investigating a mysterious land purchase. We love Chase's hard-hitting gangland fiction. We realize that it's derivative, but we get caught up in these damn stories every time we pick one up.

James Hadley Chase

Just the Way It Is / Blonde's Requiem

978-1-944520-26-7 \$19.95



This book will **not** be automatically shipped to Crime Club members. Members will

receive an email and given the choice whether to receive it or not. If you're not a member, this is one of the benefits of joining: you only automatically are sent the lead titles. Everything else is a matter of choice.

Join up today, and start receiving each of the new Stark House Crime books as they come out. February, which we will write about in a few weeks, is music month. We have a new book called *The Jukebox Kings* from popular contemporary author, Doug Allyn, set in the world of r&b; and a classic jazz noir from the early 1950s called *Angel's Flight* by Lou Cameron from Black Gat. More on those later....

The reviews are coming in on our December 2016 book.....

Shanghai Flame / Counterspy Express by A. S. Fleischman

“It's a fast-moving spy novel from the Cold War, with a couple of MacGuffins and lots of double-dealing... moves like an express train.”—Bill Crider, *Pop Culture Magazine*

“Fleischmann was a novelist with a knack for venomous webs of intrigue spiked by violence and sex. *Shanghai Flame* and *Counterspy Express* are speed demons of hard-ass fiction.”—Kristofer Upjohn, *Book Devil*

“It's hard not to enjoy a book for which you have the sense that the author had as much fun writing it as you are in reading it. Books like this one come straight from the days of the pulps, complete with femme fatales who do their best...”—Steve Lewis, *Mystery*File*

This being the beginning of a new year, we want to celebrate Stark House with one of our blowout Sales. This time, we're trying to make room for new books by offering a baker's dozen of fairly recent titles for \$5 each, plus shipping. If you want to order from this list, just send an email to griffinskye3@sbcglobal.net, and you will be billed via paypal. The books are all well stocked, and they're in mint condition. (Bookstores should feel free to order here, too! You will be billed the old-fashioned way.)

Here's the list:

- Ghosts & Gamblers by E. Phillips Oppenheim
- The Sun Worshippers / Yellowleg by A. S. Fleischman
- Cry Blood / Killer in Silk by H. Vernor Dixon
- The Bleeding Scissors / The Evil Days by Bruno Fischer
- Marilyn K./The House Next Door by Lionel White
- Lust Queen / Lust Victim by Don Elliott (Robert Silverberg)
- Kill Joy / The Virgin Huntress by Elisabeth Sanxay Holding
- Johnny Porno by Charlie Stella
- The Slayer of Souls / The Maker of Moons by Robert W. Chambers
- Fell the Angels by Catherine Butzen
- The Red Hot Typewriter: The Life & Times of John D. MacDonald by Hugh Merrill
- The Babysitter by Andrew Coburn
- Night of the Horns / Cry Wolfram by Douglas Sanderson



Cheers for the New Year!
Greg Shepard, publisher
Stark House Press



Bring back the mystery!