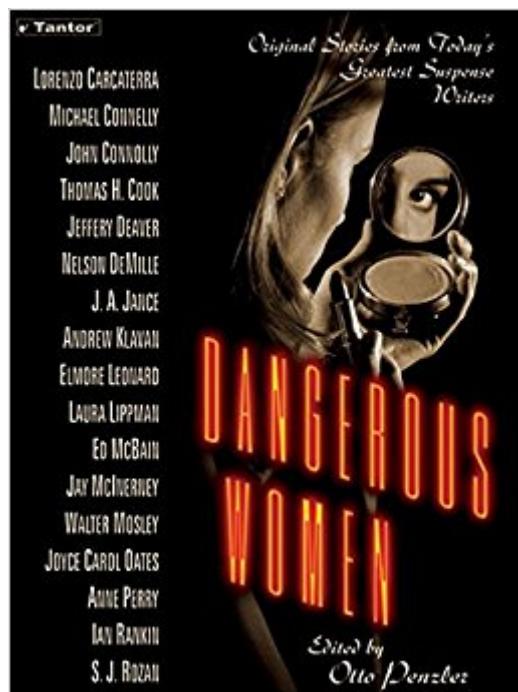


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# Dangerous Women: Original Stories From Today's Greatest Suspense Writers



## Synopsis

Award-winning editor Otto Penzler presents a collection of short and sizzling masterpieces of kisses and kiss-offs, gams and gats, published for the first time anywhere. In "Third Party," Jay McInerney takes you on a wild ride through the Paris night with a party girl built for speed and sin. "Rendezvous," Nelson DeMille's first short story in twenty-five years, plunges you into a Vietnam jungle where the bloodiest scourge of this man's army is no man at all. back in the U.S.A. of "Louly and Pretty Boy," Elmore Leonard introduces a Depression-era teenage gun moll who loves Pretty Boy Floyd more than she likes knocking off filling stations. and Michael Connelly's colorful and ironic "Cielo Azul" shows how a nameless woman left dead on a Los Angeles hillside can be the most lethal prey of all. These and a bevy of other very bad girls cast their criminal spells through the powerful voices of Lorenzo Carcaterra, Joyce Carol Oates, John Connolly, Thomas H. Cook, Jeffery Deaver, J. A. Jance, Andrew Klavan, Laura Lippman, Ed McBain, Walter Mosley, Anne Perry, Ian Rankin, and S. J. Rozan in stories as irresistible as the antiheroines that blaze through their pages. "I'm not usually given to superlatives, but DANGEROUS WOMEN may be the best, most varied, and colorful mystery anthology of all time." -Janet Evanovich "Otto Penzler knows more about crime fiction than most people know about anything, and proves it once more in this brilliant anthology." -Robert B. Parker "Wow, what memorable dames! What terrific short stories! DANGEROUS WOMEN is a winning collection." -Susan Isaacs

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**Starred Review.** Mystery maven Penzler has gathered 17 stories from top writers for an all-original suspense anthology with results that are about the same as if a master chocolatier had assembled a new sampler box: everything of high quality but with enough variety to appeal to all tastes. All the contributors are true to their own very familiar voices. Ed McBain's "Improvisation," a chilling story of two young actresses who commit murder to learn what it feels like, is cut-to-the-bone sharp. In the haunting "Cielo Azul," Michael Connelly allows both detective Harry Bosch and profiler Terry McCaleb to brood, as only they can, about a murder victim never identified. In "Dear Penthouse Forum (A First Draft)," Laura Lippman uses an original format to showcase a truly frightening woman with a most unusual collecting mania who preys on men in airports. S.J. Rozan's "The Last Kiss" features a dangerous woman who's all the more dangerous because at first she seems so sympathetic. Jeffrey Deaver's "Born Bad" is a brilliant double play, with tight characterizations and an unforgettable plot twist. It's a joy to watch these talented authors, who also include J.A. Jance, Elmore Leonard, Walter Mosley and Joyce Carol Oates, embrace the short story form and produce magic. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Mystery guru Penzler (prolific editor, bookseller, and founder of Mysterious Press) has convinced 17 contemporary mystery writers to submit never-before-published short stories for this anthology. The lineup includes plenty of heavyweights: Ed McBain, Anne Perry, Elmore Leonard, Joyce Carol Oates, and Ian Rankin. Penzler's introduction showcases the entire squad and provides a witty look at dangerous women in mysteries past, such as Philip Marlowe's Brigid O'Shaughnessy and Conan Doyle's Irene Adler. The stories, just about all of which feature a woman gleefully luring a hapless male to destruction, often rely on abrupt power shifts, as in McBain's "Improvisation," which begins with a seductress in a bar saying, "Why don't we kill somebody?" Oates sustains suspense through a pathological love letter in "Give Me Your Heart," and Laura Lippman's "Dear Penthouse Forum (A First Draft)" delivers a twisted O'Henry ending. The cumulative effect is more than a little poisonous--best to take these small ampoules of crime one at a time. Connie FletcherCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

One of the best collection of short stories by some of the masters of the genre. Each story is wilder than the other & I have not found one that was not pure gold.

With a few exceptions, I am disappointed in this collection of shorts. Great concept but what a bunch of lousy submissions apart from Jeffery Deaver's 'Born Bad'. The book is worth it just for this story. Did these, for the most part well known and highly regarded writers, do a quickie favor for the editor? It would appear so. The average reader will be able to guess at the ending about a paragraph into the story. Second, the "dangerous women" seem to be stuck on sadism against men originating in lack of or too much of - you got it, sex. And finally, apart from one or two selections, the shorts derive their plot line from mainly noirish elements...cops, tough guys...bleak urban landscapes, and yes...dangerous femmes fatales...give me a break. You want dangerous women? See Barbara Stanwyck in Double Indemnity or read the novel by James Cain.

no comment

Saw "Dangerous Women" short stories listed on Nelson Demille site. Was excited to see many of my favorite authors listed; Dever, M Connelly, DeMille(of course)...thought it was good chance to brief on other's style, etc. Good 'bathroom read'...if you are a guy.

Here's the concept. Ask seventeen well-known authors to submit original works about "dangerous women" and see what happens. They are all good sized stories and are easy to read. Few are mind-blowing enough to make your head spin. A worthwhile collection nonetheless. My two favorites in the collection are Rendezvous by Nelson DeMille and Louly and Pretty Boy by Elmore Leonard. DeMille is a new name to me. But, apparently, he has a large body of work. Rendezvous is a Vietnam war era story about a lost patrol under fire from a woman sniper. It is one terrific war story and one I just couldn't put down. Interestingly, DeMille himself fought in Vietnam so the story is based on real life research. Elmore Leonard recently left us for good and our literary world is poorer for his loss. He tells a Bonnie and Clyde era tale about a young teenage girl who falls for Pretty Boy Floyd. Louly and Floyd are two characters out of Leonard's The Hot Kid as is Lawman Carl, the subject of The Hot Kid. Improvisation By Ed McBain is a story about pickup lines in bars and talk willowy blondes who suggest killing someone as a way to pass the time. Cielo Azul By Michael Connelly is another standout. It features Connelly's detective Harry Bosch and an unsolved murder that continues to haunt him. Other selections in this book include Give me your heart by Joyce Carol Oates, Karma by Walter Mosley, Dear Penthouse forum (a first draft) by Laura Lippman, What she offered by Thomas H. Cook, Her lord and master by Andrew Klavan, Mr. Gray's folly By John Connell, and a thousand miles from nowhere By Lorenzo Carcaterra.

This is a highly enjoyable collection of crime fiction by 17 influential authors. Not all are known as crime writers, such as Joyce Carol Oates and Jay McInerey, but Elmore Leonard and Ian Rankin certainly are, and along with these the book also has other great names that fans of the genre would know. Each story is very different, with the only common theme being that there's a dangerous woman of some sort involved. Many of these stories are psychological, most are ironic, and nearly all involve a murder. And nearly all of them pull it off, too, although there are a few duds. After Otto Penzler's brief intro, where he provides brief bios for the authors, Ed McBain gets the ball rolling with "Improvisation", a creepy tale of an Iraq War vet who meets a dame in a bar who proposes a murder for kicks... I could tell two pages in what was going to happen, but it was a fun/gruesome tale anyway. *Cielo Azul* by Michael Connelly is a real detective tale about a guy who cracks a murder case, somewhat formulaic but well-told anyway. Joyce Carol Oates' "Give Me Your Heart" is about a woman scorned by the professor she had an affair with, and is written in an intriguing way that makes you wonder just how insane the first person narrator really is, and how deep her revenge has run: does revenge mean taking the phrase "give me your heart" literally? Nonetheless, it is very much a bitter emotional trauma that may not be for every crime fan. "Karma" by Walter Mosley is an interesting and convoluted revenge set-up involving a corrupt gumshoe that reads like a hardboiled detective tale should. Great, even if the ending doesn't quite make sense. "Dear Penthouse Forum (A First Draft)" by Laura Lippman is a wicked feminist goof on that American literary tradition, the fake sexual confession to Penthouse magazine's Forum. It's metafictional, of course, but also deeply twisted blend of "fact" and "fiction"... all in an actual fictional setting (we hope!); one of many brilliant twist endings in this tale. Nelson DeMille's "Rendezvous" is an amazing story of a squad of US long-range reconnaissance troops in enemy territory in Vietnam in 1972 up against a devious female sniper. The tale is brilliant and gripping, loved it! Thomas H Cook's "What She Offered" is a deeply sad tale of a suicidal woman who needs someone to be with. Andrew Klavan's "Her Lord And Master" is an amazing tale of "did he or didn't he", with the destruction of an American man by a black widow, and a supremely ironic ending. John Connolly's "Mr Gray's Folly" is about the battle between men and women, expressed on an ancient supernatural level. Like Oates' tale, tales like this don't quite fit into this collection of mostly hardboiled stories, but it's good fun anyway. "A Thousand Miles From Nowhere" is an intriguing tale of a 20-year chase, ending casually in an airport bar on a snow-bound night. The details come out slowly, but the climax is a killer. J.A. Jance's "Witness" is a short and slightly corny tale that turns the dangerous woman concept upside-down somewhat. Ian Rankin's "Soft Spot" is an intriguing detective fiction tale of a lonely man who works

in a jail censoring incoming and outgoing mail. I don't know where Rankin's mind came up with this as a concept for building a brilliant crime tale, but I'm glad he did! I definitely did not see that ending coming!! Jay McInerney's "Third Party" is a fun tale of a rich art gallery dealer soul searching in Paris when he hooks up with a rich Euro-trash couple. It's good, decadent fun, with a perplexing finale. "The Last Kiss" by SJ Rozan is another amazing "never-saw-it-coming" tale of a suicidal woman with a deep plan for revenge, and the lawyers in her life. "Sneaker Wave", by Anne Perry, has all the makings of a historical novel, and is about three sisters in the Oregon wilderness, a man, and some bad blood. Elmore Leonard's "Lousy and Pretty Boy" is a perfectly-told tale of a 15-year-old girl fed up with living on the farm who takes up with a member of Pretty Boy Floyd's gang in 1925. What happens next is pretty amazing. Leonard's a master at storytelling. "Bad Blood", by Jeffery Deaver, rounds out the selection with a twisted mother-daughter tale that is also a bit preachy. Aaaaahhh...I'll definitely be investigating a few of these authors in future, since most of them are new to me.

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