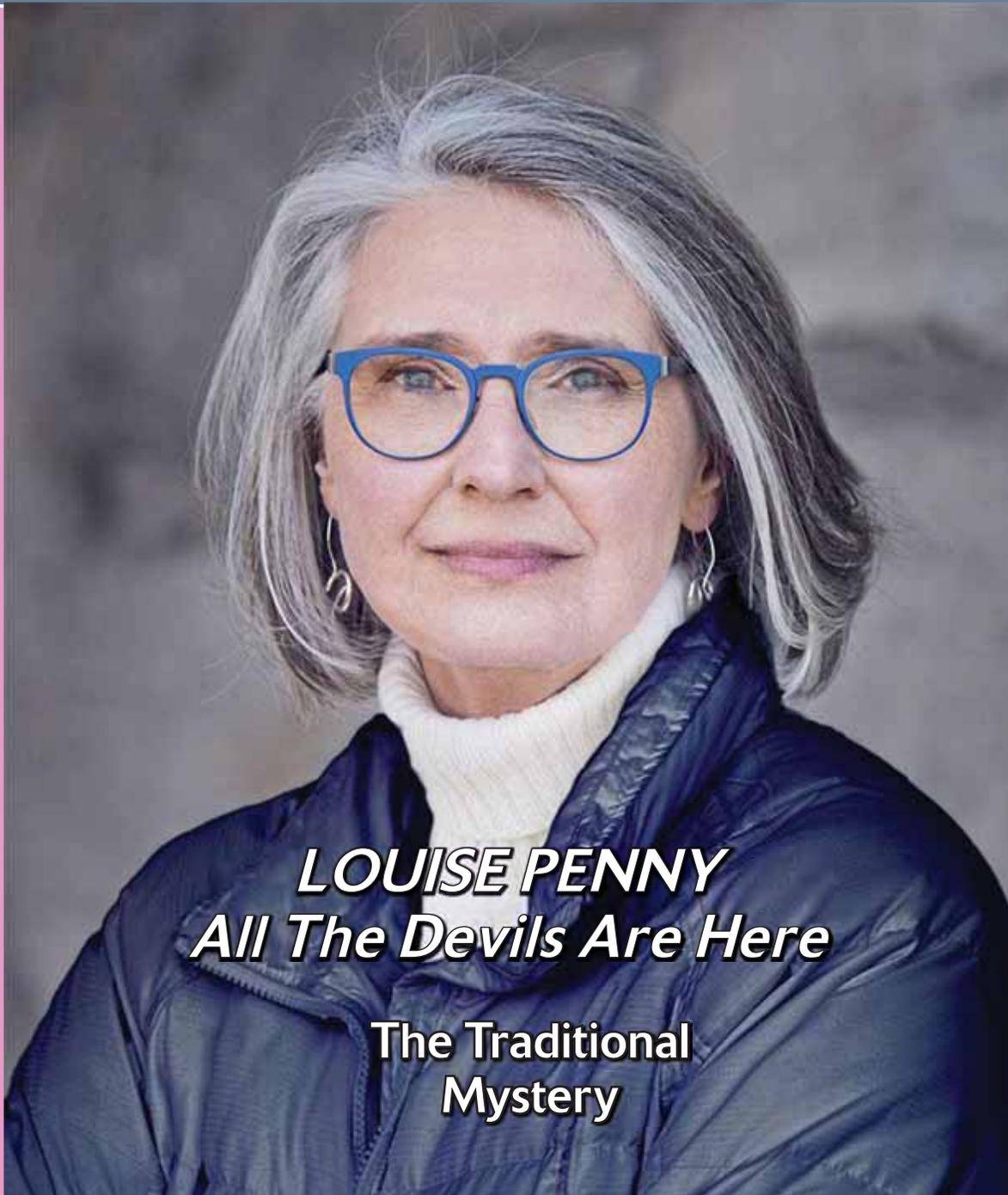


Deadly Pleasures

Mystery Magazine



LOUISE PENNY
All The Devils Are Here

**The Traditional
Mystery**

Rating: B

Just following the riots in Los Angeles after the beating of Rodney King, Jung-Ja Han, a Korean woman, argues with a sixteen-year-old black woman and kills her. In an apparent miscarriage of justice, Han receives no jail time. Now decades later, Han is shot as she is leaving the pharmacy she works at. Undoubtedly, the crime is related to the prior shooting but who actually did it. The book follows the younger generation of both Han and the young black girl as they deal with the latest shooting.

The book has had a lot of buzz. It is well written with some reasonably realistic characterizations but in many ways, the plot dragged. The reaching out between the two families, I did not buy at all. It was extremely unrealistic, IMHO. Some call this book an instant classic. I will say it is quite forgettable. And somewhat dull. It is also a fourth novel and should not be eligible for the Creasey Dagger.

My Pick**MY LOVELY WIFE**

by Samantha Downing

The Winner**THE MAN ON THE STREET**

by Trevor Wood



Rest In Peace



It's been a tough year in the world of mystery fiction, both at home (the loss of *DP* Reviewer Sally Sugarman) and the community at large. For me personally I was shocked the most by the recent passing of **Parnell Hall**. A fixture at

**Parnell Hall**

mystery conventions, Parnell has always been considered one of the good guys of the mystery fiction world. He passed away from Covid 19, which he apparently caught in the hospital where he had a successful lung transplant.

Here is one story about Parnell that is vivid in my memory: Around the year 2000, I caught a taxi with Parnell Hall and Harlan Coben to take us to the airport (from Bouchercon). I sat in the front seat and they sat in the back. They started talking about their careers and the upshot was that because they wrote mysteries infused with a lot of humor, they didn't think that critics and fans took them seriously enough. Harlan said that he was going to try a new tack to become a better-selling author. It was the very next year in 2001 that **TELL NO ONE**, Harlan's breakout book, was published and the rest is history. I've often wondered what could have happened if Parnell (a gifted writer himself) had followed a similar tack. Parnell never achieved best-sellerdom, but he was a solid midlist writer, with a talent for deft plotting.

A death of great significance to the

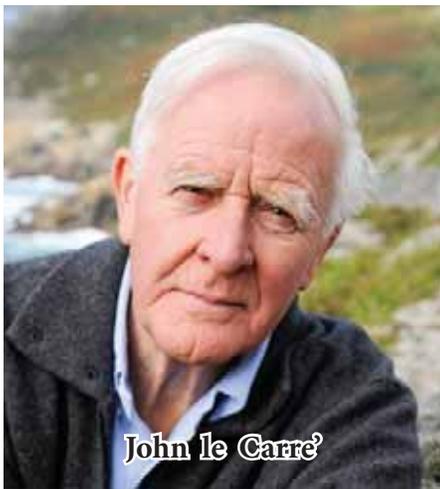
world of espionage and international thriller fiction is that of the legendary **John le Carré**. Here is a short tribute to him written by Steele Curry.

On December 12, 2020, David Cornwell, better known by his penname John le Carré, died, having authored 25 novels and one memoir. He started his career as a spy for Britain's MI5 and then MI6 before his first novel, *Call for the Dead*, was published in 1961, introducing his readers to the spymaster George Smiley, the central character in five of le Carré's novels and a supporting one in four.

While most of le Carré's novels featured the world of espionage, they all brilliantly portrayed the themes of moral ambiguity, treachery, betrayal and institutional corruption. A strong element of the author's popularity, however, was based on the quality and style of his writing highlighted by complicated plotting, descriptive characterizations, the way he conveyed the mood and atmosphere of his settings, and a sophisticated treatment of the frailty of personal relationships.

For le Carré, perhaps unconsciously Smiley served as a metaphor for Britain's decline as a world power during the Cold War – a lonely, steadfast, dowdy, vulnerable being with streaks of brilliance. Obviously, the opposite of Ian Fleming's James Bond.

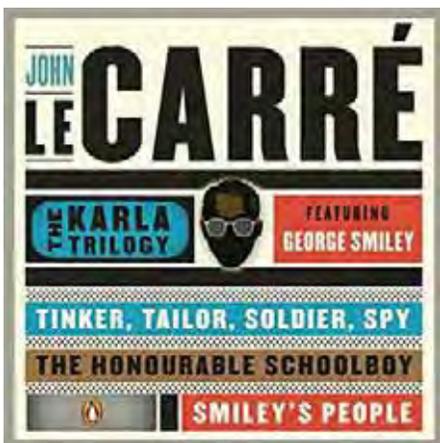
Since the early 1960s, I've obsessively devoured le Carré's novels as soon as they were published. Some I've gone back and read a second time. I believe that le Carré's finest novels are his *The Quest for Karla* trilogy – **TINKER, TAILOR, SOLDIER, SPY** (1974)*, **THE HONOURABLE SCHOOLBOY** (1977) and **SMILEY'S PEOPLE** (1980) – that chronicled Smiley's battle with the Russian spymaster Karla at the height of the Cold War. It is likely that these three



John le Carré

books will stand the test of time as the pinnacle of espionage-related fiction by a British author.

Of all of le Carré's novels, I disliked **A PERFECT SPY** (1986), a loosely fictionalized account of his sociopath, drunk, duplicitous, loser of a father. Plowing through 463 pages devoted to a total cad is just not my idea of reading pleasure. Tellingly, le Carré regarded this as his best novel. In the end, the author paid for his father's funeral but didn't attend it.



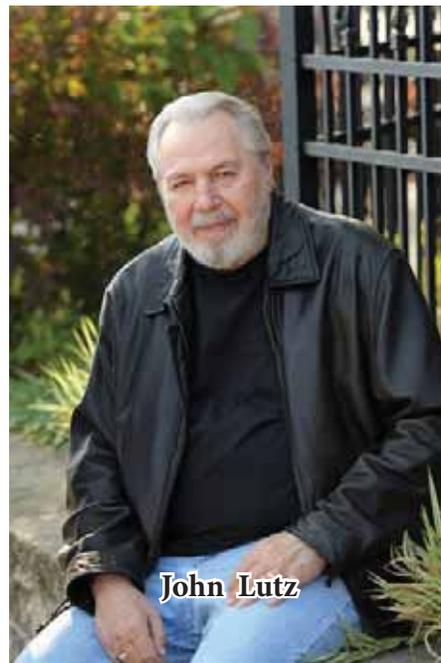
For readers unfamiliar with le Carré, after **The Quest for Karla Trilogy** I recommend you read **THE SPY WHO CAME IN FROM THE COLD** (1963), **THE RUSSIA HOUSE** (1989), **THE LITTLE DRUMMER GIRL** (1983) and **OUR KIND OF TRAITOR** (2010) but pass on **CALL FOR THE DEAD** (1961), **A MURDER OF QUALITY** (1962), **THE LOOKING GLASS WAR** (1965), **A SMALL TOWN IN GERMANY** (1968), **THE NAIVE AND SENTI-**

MENTAL LOVER (1971), **THE TAILOR OF PANAMA** (1996), **A DELICATE TRUTH** (2013), **A LEGACY OF SPIES** (2017) and **AGENT RUNNING IN THE FIELD** (2019). The other books are good entertainment but not that notable.

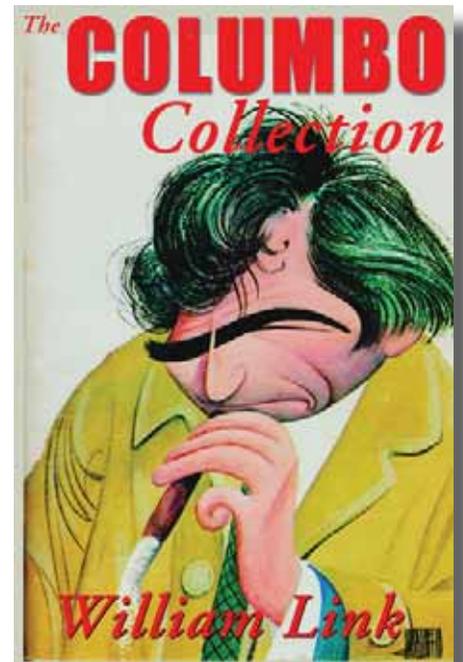
Unlike Len Deighton, le Carré didn't know when to quit writing. His weakest novels were his later ones when he had become embittered in his outspoken criticism of the U. S., the British political establishment and the war on terror.

Other Recent Deaths

John Lutz, who was a deft hand at all kinds of fiction that fits under the umbrella of "mystery," died recently at the age of 81. He was a past president of both Mystery Writers of America and Private Eye Writers of America, and won the prestigious awards from both organization (the Edgar and the Shamus). I remember him as a quiet, but distinguished presence at several Bouchercons. I was a fan of his Fred Carver private eye series of ten novels, all of which I greatly enjoyed. Fred is an ex-cop disabled by a hold-up man's bullet, who has turned to private investigating. The series is set in Florida and is a fine example of the best in male private eye fiction of the 1980s and 1990s.



John Lutz



MWA Grandmaster **William Link** is best known for his work done in partnership with the late Richard Levinson. Their biggest claim to fame was the creation of the TV show **Columbo**. The pair had a four-decade's long career in writing for TV. They also created the series of **Mannix** and **Murder, She Wrote**. In 2010, the publisher Crippen & Landru came out with **THE COLUMBO COLLECTION** of short stories.

Jill Paton Walsh, who is best known to mystery readers as the author who continued the Lord Peter Wimsey series with four additional novels, passed away recently at age 83.

Richard Lupoff, mystery and science fiction author left this mortal coil on October 20 at age 85.

He is best known among mystery fans for his Lindsey and Plum series which began in 1988 with **THE COMIC BOOK KILLER**.

Alanna Knight is a Scottish crime writer best known for her Inspector Faro novels (19) and her

Rose McQuinn series of seven novels. She passed away recently at the age of 97.