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### **3AKTDZ - GRANT FITZGERALD**

Bertha Cool was in a flap. The distinguished Mr Homer Breckinridge had been waiting twenty minutes for Donald Lam to make an appearance, and around Mr Breckinridge was the heady aroma of C-A-S-H. Then Donald appeared and in no time found himself hired to investigate an insurance claim. 'Such nice, safe, respectable work', purred Bertha, 'and it's up for grabs.' But it didn't take Donald long to find out he was anything but safe and that he was the one up for grabs ...

At the time of his death, Erle Stanley Gardner was the best-selling American author of the 20th century, creator of crusading attorney Perry Mason and the hardboiled detective team of Cool and Lam, stars of 29 novels, and one that's never been published until now. Lost for more than 75 years, THE KNIFE SLIPPED is a glorious return to the heyday of private eyes and shady dames, of powerful criminals, crooked cops, blazing dialogue, and delicious plot twists.

Perry Mason's keen eye for the ladies gets him an earful of intriguing information from pretty women applying for a very odd job. Seems a mysterious Mr Hines is advertising for a young brunette, and he's very specific about what he wants ... right down to her exact measurements. The looker who lands the gig gets to live in a posh apartment, wear fine clothes and collect a generous salary. Struggling model Eva Martell is thrilled when she gets the job, but her Aunt Adelle doesn't like the scenario one bit, and asks Mason to punch a few holes in Hines's story and see what leaks out. But when someone punches a hole in Hines - with a bullet - the masquerade becomes foul play with a murderer lurking in the wings.

Daphne Beckley comes to Donald Lam to find out what really happened to her husband. He has disappeared and his life insurance

contains a double indemnity clause in the event of an accident, meaning Daphne is in line for a windfall. However, if he is still alive, she wants a divorce and alimony. It is up to Donald Lam to discover if she is the jilted wife of a philandering husband, or a beautiful, very wealthy widow.

Death gave its warning in the form of a luscious brunette. She walked into the office of Donald Lam and Bertha Cool, calmly announced that her employer was about to be killed, and paid them a healthy fee to keep the boss alive. For Cool this case meant cold cash. For Lam it meant warm curves. But before long it meant murder ...

Major Doug Selby, Madison City's ex-DA is at the Madison Hotel on leave. When a Kansas lawyer called Roff drinks a coffee laced with cyanide Selby becomes involved. A mystery blonde and Carr, the defence counsel, complicate the mystery further.

Try anything once : Carleton Allen, son-in-law of a millionaire tycoon and nervous of publicity, explains to Bertha Cool and Donald Lam that he's mixed up in a first-class scandal. He's spent the night with a blonde while his wife was away, and that same night at the motel a man was murdered. Donald doesn't believe the story, but the large retaining fee is too great a temptation to Bertha. So, once again, the intrepid partnership is off on a dangerous mission involving blackmail - and murder.

From the world-famous creator of "Perry Mason," Erle Stanley Gardner comes another baffling case for the Cool & Lam detective agency Erle Stanley Gardner was not just the creator of PERRY MASON - at the time of his death, he was the best-selling American author of all time, with hundreds of millions of books in print, including the 29 cases of the brash, irresistible detective team of Bertha Cool and Donald Lam. Gardner was also one of the most ingenious plot-spinners in the field, coming up with stunning twists

and reveals... and THE COUNT OF 9 is Gardner at his twistiest. Hired to protect the treasures of a globe-trotting adventurer, Bertha and Donald confront an impossible crime: how could anything be smuggled out of a dinner party - least of all a 6-foot-long blowgun - when the guests were X-rayed coming and going? But that's nothing compared to the crime they face next: AN IMPOSSIBLE MURDER...

Who was that masked woman? That's the question plaguing the perpetually inquiring mind of Perry Mason. No one loves a good mystery more than Mason--but being asked to represent a client who's concealing her identity, not to mention the particulars of her case, has given even the legendary legal eagle a case of ruffled feathers.

Meet Donald Lam, he's a private detective or at least, he is by the end of the book. A more unlikely looking P.I. you'll never meet, as he is constantly reminded. At 5 and a half feet tall and 127 pounds, he's simply not intimidating at all. But what he lacks in brawn he more than makes up for in brains, a fact that is not lost on his new employer, Bertha Cool of the B.L. Cool Agency, was sharp enough to spot. Now, Bertha Cool is also not the most likely head figure of a detective agency, although physically impressive she most certainly is. She's sixty-something with grey hair, sparkling eyes and a grandmotherly expression. She weighs in at over 300 pounds and is described as having the majesty of a snow capped mountain and the assurance of a steamroller. When Lam gets the job he is put to work immediately because if there's one thing Bertha Cool believes in it's getting her money's worth. His first job is to serve divorce papers on Morgan Birks, husband of Sandra Birks who claims he has been abusing her. It seems a straightforward enough job, and it is. But it's only after the papers have been served that the real fireworks begin. It's in the moments of confusion that quickly follow a seemingly successful job

that Lam's genius is uncovered as he works his way through deduction after deduction and then comes up with a brilliant solution that is as impressive in its cunning as it is in its simplicity. As the first book of a series of 29, it provides a terrific start combining an interesting duo with a clever mystery. With the promise of many more such stories to follow, it's bound to leave you begging for more.

From Perry Mason creator Erle Stanley Gardner - during his life, the best-selling American author of all time -- comes a lost classic of detective fiction featuring private eyes Donald Lam (once played by Frank Sinatra!) and Bertha Cool. "What I can say is that for those who like their crime fiction to be high-octane, this novel is a stunner." The Daily Mail HBO series Perry Mason, based on characters from Erle Stanley Gardner's novels, airs June 2020 starring Matthew Rhys in the titular role. HAS DONALD LAM GONE OVER TO THE DARK SIDE? From the world-famous creator of PERRY MASON, Erle Stanley Gardner - at his death the best-selling American writer of all time - comes another baffling case for the Cool & Lam detective agency. Return to the 1960s as a simple insurance investigation into a car accident puts Bertha Cool and Donald Lam on the trail of murder - and Donald hip-deep in danger when he poses as an ex-con to infiltrate a criminal gang. It's Gardner's twistiest caper ever, and a fitting conclusion to Hard Case Crime's revival of this classic (and long unavailable) detective series.

Donald Lam arrives at work one day to find an outraged police sergeant Frank Sellers stewing in the office of his senior partner, Bertha Cool. Sellers is close to cracking an armoured car robbery case, but in the course of his investigation, a telephone number for the Cool-Lam detective agency was found on one of his primary suspects - one Hazel Downer. The same Hazel Downer employs Donald Lam to find her husband who has run off with another broad, taking her fifty thousand dollars with him. Wasn't it fifty thousand dollars that haven't been recovered from the ar-

moured car job ... ?

COOL AND LAM RETURN - IN THE CASE OF A LIFETIME Erle Stanley Gardner was not just the creator of PERRY MASON - at the time of his death, he was the best-selling American author of all time, with hundreds of millions of books in print. Among those books were the 29 cases of the brash, irresistible detective team of Bertha Cool and Donald Lam. Last year, Hard Case Crime brought out the first new Cool and Lam novel in decades, THE KNIFE SLIPPED, lost for 77 years after Gardner's publisher refused it. Now, we're bringing you the book Gardner wrote to replace it, often considered the best in the series: TURN ON THE HEAT. Hired by a mysterious "Mr. Smith" to find a woman who vanished 21 years earlier, Donald Lam finds himself facing a sadistic cop, a desperate showgirl, a duplicitous client, and one very dogged (and beautiful) newspaper reporter - while Bertha Cool's attempts to cut herself in on this lucrative opportunity land them both hip-deep in murder...

SHE PLAYED THE ODDS - AND LOST! When the beautiful girlfriend of a notorious gangster vanishes, the last man to be seen with her needs an alibi - and fast. Enter Donald Lam of the Cool & Lam detective agency. But his client's story doesn't add up, and soon Lam's uncovered a mining scam, an illegal casino, and a double homicide... And a chance for an enterprising private eye to make a small fortune - if he can just stay alive long enough to cash in on it! The Return of the Legendary, Long-out-of-print Cool & Lam Mystery series

THE RIMLEY RENDEZOUS was a back-street bistro where a tired businessman could drop in for a pick-up, no questions asked. The cover charge was steep, Blackmail was the major part of the tab. It was a lucrative business—until a murderer cut into the profits...and left his weapon in Donald Lam's car. The famous team of COOL and LAM at their fast-moving, quick-thinking best. "Many enthusiasts like Erle Stanley Gardner even better in his disguise as A. A. Fair"

EMERALDS ARE FOR EVIL Shirley was sultry, sexy, smashing—a

sweet young thing to make a sugar daddy's mouth water. This luscious lass loved pretty baubles, so no wonder men showered her with jewels. But when a deluge of emeralds turned into a reign of terror, Shirley needed someone to bail her out. That brought Bertha Cool and Donald Lam into the act, as the indomitable detective duo discovered that emeralds could be a girl's worst enemy when they carried a price tag of murder...

One morning Barclay Fisher awakes in the apartment of a beautiful woman. He is threatened with blackmail - and he is pretty sure his wife will never understand. Hence his pitiful appeal to Bertha Cool and Donald Lam. Bertha smells money, and Donald heads for San Francisco. There he has quite a time with the glamorous 'other woman', a disconcerting and hilarious encounter with modern art, and a very nasty turn when he finds the body.

The first job was simple. Find the name of a man. He was to get the name of a man who provided the plot of a book. With just a few things to go on Donald Lam does exactly that - much to his frustration. He provides that information to his client - the name of the man, then acts surprised when his client really wanted more. Lam points out that if he was REALLY interested in the murder of the man, he made three big mistakes. The first was not telling him, so Lam could cover his back trail. The second was not telling him the man the police were interested in fit his description. The third was not leaving a phone number so Donald could warn him that the police might just be interested in a private eye who was looking up a famous murder case. Still, he was all business after that - pay him for the job. However, his partner accepts a second job - find out if it is safe for the client to come back since the death of the only man who could identify him in the murder case. It wasn't, but the man is arrested. Still, even Lam's job as a jury consultant to a law school friend of his wasn't the key to the case - it was Donald's own legal knowledge and ability to bait a trap. Maybe the real killer would never be prosecuted for it, but Donald's job was saving his client.