Nero Wolfe and The Toff

by Jean-Marc Lofficier

Translations of nine of the titles:

Ici, Radio New-York = And Be A Villain
Un Roman a Tue = Murder By the Book
Ca Arrive Dans les Meilleurs Familles = In the Best Families
Trois Femmes et un Homme = Prisoner's Base
La Voix du Mort = The Silent Speaker
Double Piege = Not Quite Dead Enough
Les Compagnons de la Peur = The League of Frightened Men
La Cassette Rouge = The Red Box
Dans la Plus Stricte Intimite = contains "Omit Flowers" from Three Doors to Death and "Instead of Evidence" from Trouble in Triplicate. The French version turns the two separate stories into one continuous whole.
The success of the Saint books even encouraged Fayard in 1948 to start publishing French editions of the Nero Wolfe (a.k.a. "L'Homme aux Orchidées" -- The Orchid Man) novels by Rex Stout, and John Creasey's The Toff, rechristened The Prince. Before the war, Fayard had also published five New Adventures of Raffles by Barry Perown. Later, in the 1950s, they would release a French edition of The Saint Detective Magazine as well.

It is interesting to observe that Fayard deliberately copied the design of its famous Saint covers, using the haloed stick figure designed and trademarked by Leslie Charteris, in order to attract readers to its other series: the Nero Wolfe covers featured a rotund, orchid-bearing, stick figure, while those of the Prince bore a top-hat-wearing, monocled one. Considering Charteris' well-documented attempts to protect his trademark, it is remarkable that no attempts were made to stop Fayard from doing this.

In any event, and in spite of this clever bit of cover design, the Nero Wolfe and Prince series failed to attract the same, huge following than that of the Saint books. They were abandoned in 1950, after more than twenty Nero Wolves and fourteen Princes had been published. (It is also possible that Fayard simply lost the rights to publish them.)

Meanwhile, Fayard, having by then run out of original Leslie Charteris' Saint stories, embarked on an aggressive program to manufacture their own. From then on, the Saint would become, and remain until its own discontinuation in 1966, Fayard's premier crime/adventure series.

L'HOME AUX ORCHIDEES

[NERO WOLFE]

1 - L'homme aux Orchidées
2 - Ici, Radio New-York
3 - La bande élastique
4 - La sauce Zingara
5 - Les compagnons de la peur
6 - La cassette rouge
7 - Meurtre au vestiaire
8 - Double piège
Magazine 3
Le Saint Detective
Magazine 4

About Nero Wolfe & The Toff

About artist Regino Bernad

The Saint on French Radio

French-English Text Comparison

De Saint (The Dutch Saint)

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LE PRINCE (THE TOFF)

1 - Le Prince entre dans le bain
2 - Le Prince et la dame en noir
3 - Le Prince en uniforme
4 - Le Prince contre le marteau
5 - Le Prince contre Scotland Yard
6 - Le Prince en croisière
7 - Le Prince en perte de vitesse
8 - Le Prince et les barbus
9 - Le Prince découvre les Champs-Elysées
10 - Le Prince hors-la-loi
11 - Le Prince sonne l'hallali
12 - Le Prince joue avec Casque d'Or
13 - Le Prince, l'amour et les diamants
14 - Le Prince et les vestes rouges