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Arts & Fun/Books

Section

Special Rex Stout Issue

After 68 books, Nero's creator is still going strong

Triple Zeck

A Nero Wolfe Omnibus

By Rex Stout

Viking, 502 pages, \$8.95

Reviewed by Nelson Polsby

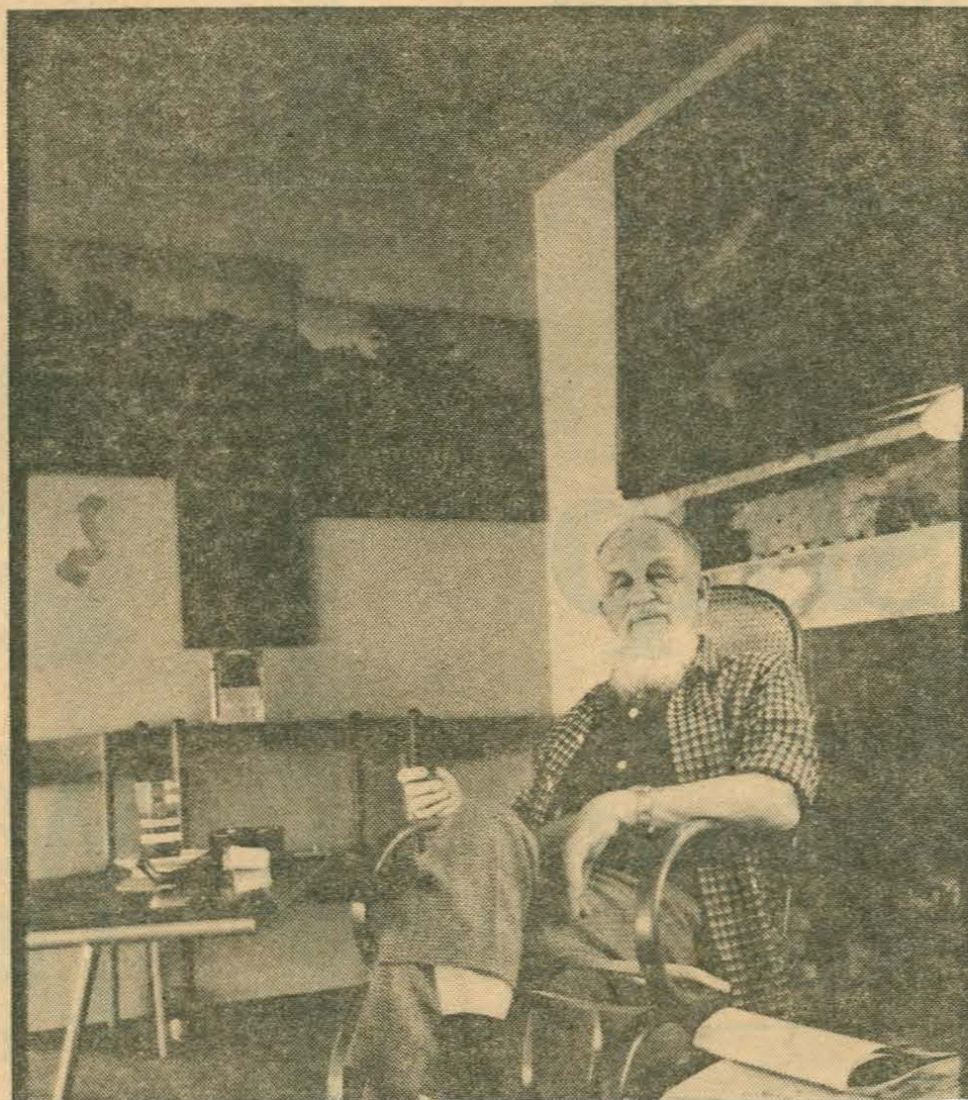
If any reader doubts that Arnold Zeck is the worst fiend Nero Wolfe, the fat detective, has ever encountered, he should pause to consider three pieces of evidence:

(1) Zeck caused a machine gunner to be stationed in the building across the street from Wolfe's brownstone for the purpose of shattering the glass greenhouses on Wolfe's roof, thereby exposing Wolfe's prize-winning orchid collection to the unwholesome rigors of New York City air.

(2) Zeck caused Wolfe to leave the house on business.

(3) In order to accomplish Zeck's undoing, it became necessary for Wolfe to go on a diet.

All of these remarkable events and much more are contained in *Triple Zeck*, a repackaging between hard covers of three classic Wolfe chronicles dating from the late 1940s, when Rex Stout was at the height of his inventive powers. In the light of Stout's longevity and fertility as a writer of Nero Wolfe stories—68 of them in 40 years—there should be sufficient late-arriving Nero Wolfe fans amply to justify the publication of this collection. I regret only the cheesiness of the binding, which will probably cause the book to fall apart long



And now a word or two with the master

By Timothy Dickinson
and Rhoda Koenig

It may disappoint his millions of readers, but Rex Stout does not live in a West 35th Street brownstone topped by a greenhouse filled with orchids. He lives in Brewster, N.Y., the home of one of his lesser known detectives, Tecumseh Fox. Nor does Stout's appearance live up to his name, or to the seventh of a ton carried about by Nero Wolfe; he is short and slender, with a straggly white beard that resembles Ho Chi Minh's.

The resemblances to Wolfe, however, are many. Stout's favorite color is yellow; he is an enthusiastic and excellent cook; and altho he does not cultivate orchids, his house and grounds contain 187 species of iris and more than 100 kinds of other flowering plants. He shares Wolfe's love of order: His bedroom is a model of shelves, hooks, closets, and compartments that would delight Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot, that passionate geometrician who wishes that eggs could be cubic. His small study contains translations of the Wolfe novels (in 28 languages), books on orchids, and *Practical Fingerprinting*, but emphatically not a copy of Webster's *Third*, which Wolfe, in *Gambit*, shredded and threw on the fire, enraged that it countenances the use of "infer" to mean "imply."

before I shall have the pleasure of lending it to my grandchildren, and that, Viking Press, is no way to treat a classic.

And make no mistake, the Wolfe series has classic dimensions. This is true not merely because of its sheer bulk, or that of its hero. Wolfe's adventures are unadulterated chronicles of detection, meant to be read straight thru, for amusement. Stout drops no brand names, indulges in no ethnic stereotyping, provides no torrid digressions into sexual monkey business. It is probably significant that there is no Nero Wolfe television series. There is, in short, a purity about the enterprise that is tremendously appealing.

What makes Nero Wolfe a great detective? Three things. First, his chronicles resonate beautifully with some of the hallowed traditions of the genre: Wolfe himself is a character patterned after Mycroft Holmes, Sherlock's fat brother. He unmasks criminals in soul-satisfying climactic confrontations with the entire cast of characters present; there is the theme of rivalry with the local homicide detectives, things like that.

Second, Wolfe has a number of valuable props and quirks that give him some life of his own: He has a somewhat mysterious life history, for example, including hints of early work in the Intelligence service of the Austro-Hungarian empire, ferocious prejudices about food and people, compulsive habits that carry over from year to year and book to book.

Third, and I suppose most important,

Nelson Polsby's forthcoming book of essays, Political Promises, contains many mysteries and few solutions.



Photo by Jill Krenn

Wolfe does not merely stumble upon clues; he leaves that for the police and for his barefoot empiricist assistant, Archie Goodwin. No, like the systematic, if eccentric inquirer into human behavior that he is, Wolfe frames and pursues hypotheses, armchair work, to be sure, but absolutely necessary to bring coherence into the contrived confusion that clever criminals leave behind them when they do their work. And this makes Wolfe enormous fun to watch as he sits there doing his detections.

Readers should be warned, however, that owing to the presence of that extraordinary menace, Arnold Zeck, in this omnibus, Wolfe is driven to vary his methods quite drastically in one of these stories. Curiously, the active Wolfe is by no means as plausible a figure as the familiar sedentary genius.

Most Wolfe stories are about murder, and these are about murder and blackmail. Zeck, a chieftain of organized crime, crosses Wolfe's path primarily because of his activities as a wholesale extortionist. It

stands to reason: High-priced detectives and extortionists are likely to prey upon the same clientele. In two out of these three stories, Zeck appears only as an offstage threat; in the third, finally, Wolfe is forced to deal with him directly. This provides a nice dramatic structure to the collection as a whole.

In the first story, I am bound to say, no matter how intellectually satisfying is Wolfe's solution to the murder of Cyril Orchard (poor fellow, he drank a soft-drink laced with cyanide during a radio talk show), I doubt that a jury would have convicted the culprit. The fact is, Wolfe sometimes loses interest in a case once he gets the right answer. But any reasonably competent defense lawyer could have littered the trail that led to Orchard's killer with reasonable doubts, extenuating circumstances, and puzzling coincidences, and in my opinion would have gotten his client off.

I strongly urge that readers consider the question themselves, and at their earliest opportunity.

Like Wolfe, Stout is a voracious and opinionated reader ("Montaigne was a great man"; "I doubt very much if any Italian ever wrote anything worth reading"). He admires Conan Doyle, but with reservations ("Oh, he created great characters, of course: Sherlock Holmes is probably the most widely known fictional character in the world. But as a storyteller Conan Doyle was a joke"). And he has nothing but good to say about Jane Austen ("Anyone can put you in suspense having you wonder is he going to kill her, or is she going to sleep with him, but she has you on the edge of your chair wondering if Mr. Woodhouse is going to remember to put his goddam shawl on").

We sat in the living room of High Meadow, a sprawling house modeled on a palace Stout saw in Tunis. He designed and built the house—as well as all the furniture in it—in 1930. The style is thirties avant-garde, which has since settled down to being *haymish*. Stout poured Sauvignon Blanc and benignly offered both of us cigars.

After a brisk preliminary rally (on the rarity of Scots Quakers, the state of a mutual friend's eyesight, the connection between inflation and Federal Reserve policies), he was, with great difficulty and many dashes for the undergrowth—"The point of interviews is for me to find out something about these people who come to see me"—persuaded to talk about himself and his work. We succeeded only because we outnumbered him.

Rex Todhunter Stout was born on Dec. 1,
Continued on page 4

Timothy Dickinson and Rhoda Koenig are on the staff of Harper's magazine.

And now, after 68 books, a v

Continued from page 1

1886, in Noblesville, Ind., into a Quaker family of 11. They later moved to Kansas, where, at five, he was more than a match for the local school system.

"The teacher asked me one day what was the color of the ocean. Well, I hadn't done the lesson, and I said 'pink.' She let me know what she thought of that answer. Well, for a year I read everything I could find about the ocean, and at the end of it I showed that teacher a list of all the colors the ocean was—'wine-dark' and so on. So she apologized to me. She said, 'Now I see why you said "pink." You thought the ocean could be any color.' Ha."

After two weeks at the University of Kansas, Stout decided he wasn't going to learn anything there and enlisted in the Navy, in 1906, "to see the color of the ocean," an ambition hard to satisfy in the corn belt.

invested his money in the stock market. The next year, of course, brought what Stout calls "the economic disillusionment," and things did not look cheerful. But matters improved soon enough. Stout met and married Pola, and, in 1934, with the appearance of *Fer-de-Lance*, he became the literary agent for that promising new writer, Archie Goodwin. As far as anyone can tell, he seems to have lived happily ever after.

Stout, claiming not to be on speaking terms with his unconscious, literally waves away all questions about the origin of Nero Wolfe.

"I don't know where he came from. Absolutely no idea. You know, I think it's a waste of time for writers to be talking about their own writing. I was once in the same house for a week with Joseph Conrad. He must have said 349 things about writing, and not one of them made any sense. I will tell you this, tho. Louis Adamic gave me the idea of making Wolfe a Montenegrin, because the men there are famous for being lazy. He said you can't get a Tsernagore to do anything."

Stout sympathizes with this trait. "I've never done 10 minutes' research for a story in my life. If I had to, I think I'd go into some other line of business. You know that stuff about bulls in *Some Buried Caesar*? I knew a guy who owned a breeding farm. And Pola (a fabric designer with a studio on Park Avenue) told me about the fabric business for *Red Threads*. I've never rewritten a page, never made an outline. I just start off with a single sheet of paper with the characters' names, their ages, and what they do. I always finish up the book in 39 or 40 days. When Edna Ferber sat down to write a novel, she'd first write a 2,000-word outline, then a 10,000-word synopsis. Hell, I'd rather earn a living digging ditches."

Altho Archie Goodwin seems to be irresistible to all women under 80, nothing more carnal than kissing ever goes on in any of the Wolfe novels, and that usually in the line of duty. That's how Stout intends to keep matters, too. "I feel if you start getting serious about sex, then you have a sex story."

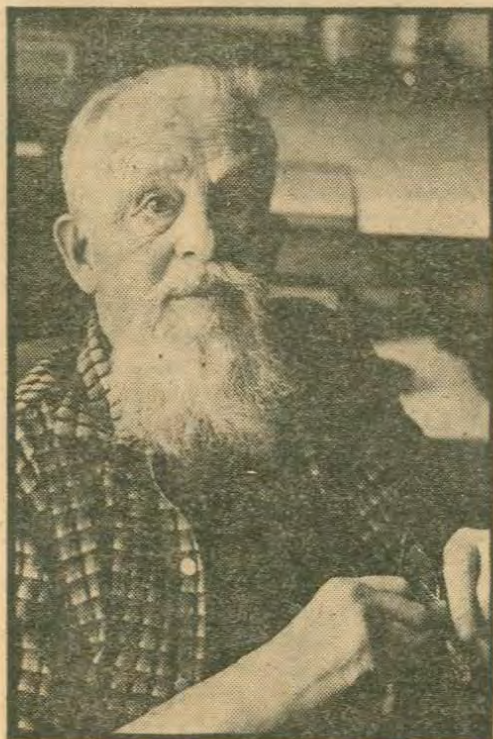


Photo by Jill Kremenitz

But instead of shipping with the Great White Fleet, he ended up on Theodore Roosevelt's yacht, putting his extraordinary gift for figures to use in keeping the ship's books. There wasn't much ocean, and Stout bought his way out after two years, with the enormous sums he won playing bridge with officers.

Once ashore, Stout roamed thru 36 of the United States, taking temporary jobs, and then spent several profitable years writing short stories for the magazines—stories he has totally forgotten and firmly refuses to reread. He went on to invent and operate a school savings banking system, which he sold to 400 school boards, and traveled for two years in Europe and North Africa.

In Paris he lived for two years at 44 Blvd. Henri IV, at the same address as Rabelais. ("It wasn't the same building, but just to know that I was living on the same spot made me feel important.") It was in Paris, also, as he has often said, that he met Oscar Wilde.

But wasn't he only 13 years old when Oscar Wilde died? we asked. The question didn't slow Stout down for a moment. "That's absolutely right," he agreed, his benevolent smile turning to a wicked chuckle. "I've told that story to interviewers for years, and not one of them told me I was a damn liar. Someone should have."

With half a million dollars to show for his business efforts, Stout in 1928 took the sage advice of the president of Bankers Trust and

serious about sex, then you have a sex story. That's all right if that's the kind of story you're writing, but sex just interferes with what my stories are about. Of course, I don't say Archie doesn't carry out his intentions between chapters."

Stout also has no idea of letting Wolfe and Archie wander from the printed page. The only time he became annoyed during the

*"Come, mark them down with a big black zero
Who don't love Archie, Rex, and Nero."*

—Phyllis McGinley

interview was when we asked why none of his novels had been made into a movie.

"Because I hate the goddam medium. I haven't seen a movie in 30 years. There were two Nero Wolfe pictures, one with Edward Arnold, the other with Walter Connolly, and they were both so awful I wouldn't have any more, tho the movie and TV people have made me I don't know how many offers. I hate the TV, too. I think the telling of stories in pictures is the worst invention of the 20th century. It's going to stultify and finally abolish the human imagination. All I watch on TV are the baseball games and political conventions. Conventions are the funniest damn show there is."

We didn't give up. "Still, wasn't there someone you would have liked to see play Nero Wolfe? What about Orson Welles?"

"Oh, he asked, all right. So did Syndey Greenstreet. But no, no, I just couldn't see it."

word or two with the master

"And was there no one you could see as Archie? What about the young Gary Cooper?"

"Gary Cooper?" Stout glared at us. "Who's that?"

We gave up.

Lawyers are so often the objects of Wolfe's scorn and suspicion that it is a good bet to tag any attorney in a Wolfe novel as the guilty party. Stout claims that this fact reflects no animus toward the profession ("Some of my best friends, et cetera"). He did, however, have a memorable run-in with one of them, the then-Congressman Hamilton Fish, at an election rally in 1940.

"Fish got up and said, 'I have been accused

of friendship with what are called the Nazis. (Mr. Stout's voice became orotund and Fishlike) I hereby defy anyone to prove it.' Well, he couldn't have given me a better cue if I'd asked for one, because I had with me a package of statements he'd made about the Nazis. So I yelled, 'I've got the proof right here. Do you want me to come up and read it to you?' He gave me a dirty look and pointed at me there against the back wall. (Here Mr. Stout got erect and pointed at the chaise longue like a vengeful prophet) He pointed at me and said, 'There's the most dangerous man in America, Rex Stout.' "

The enemy of society sat down again. "More wine?" he asked.

The fattest, classiest, brainiest detective of them all

By Robert Goldsborough

With all due respect to Sherlockians, devotees of Hercule Poirot, and addicts of Ellery Queen, Philip Marlowe, Sam Spade, Charlie Chan, Lew Archer, and Travis McGee, the greatest fictional detective of them all is none of the above. That honor must go, fingerprints down, to the phlegmatic man-mountain who dwells in an ancient brownstone on Manhattan's less-than-fashionable West Side. He is, of course, Nero Wolfe.

Why is Rex Stout's gargantuan genius Number One? For those—call us "Nerophiles" if you must—who have been dedicated followers of his triumphs for the better part of the four decades since his print debut, the quick-reaction answer might well be an unsatisfactory, "Because he is."

But the question demands reply. My own feeling is that Wolfe belongs on top for the most basic of reasons: He simply has got more brains than any of the others.

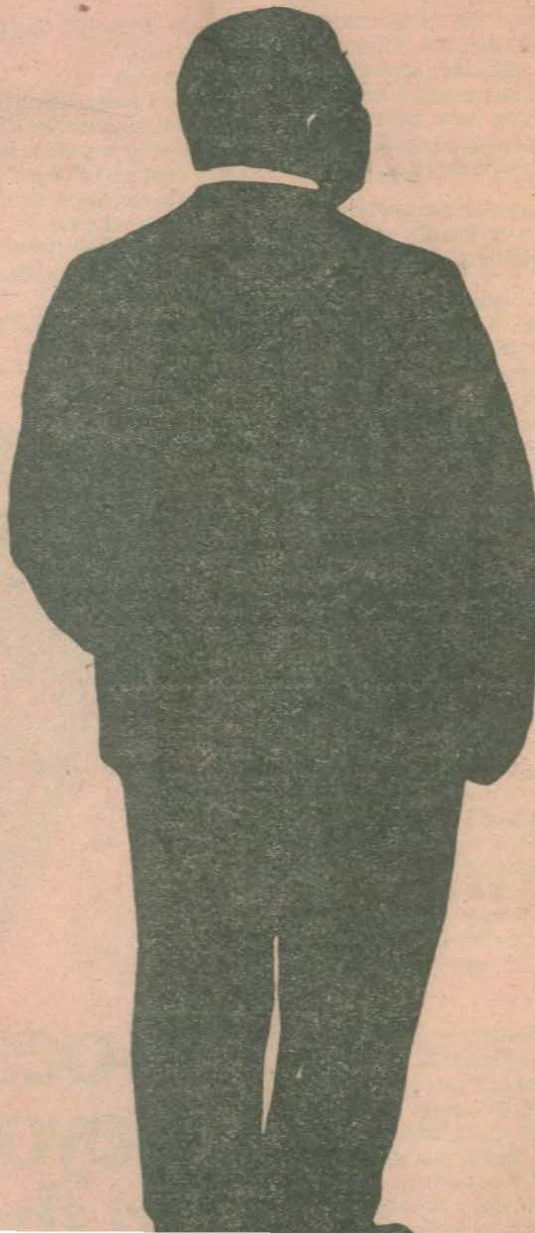
How else do you explain the fact that all the rest, even the moderately sedentary Poirot, find it necessary on occasion to place themselves in mortal peril at some

*"I have been a fan of Rex Stout since the days when his beard was only so long and I had some hair on the top of my head. Very good stories he was writing at that time, but something told me he could do still better. . . . Then I read *Fer-de-Lance*, and I felt like a watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken, as the fellow said. I instantly registered him as my favorite author, and I would rather fight than switch."*

—P. G. Wodehouse

godforsaken place in hopes of hunting down or flushing out a master criminal?

Holmes, for instance, ventured onto the lonely, dangerous moors at night to track the terrible Hound of the Baskervilles; and did he not almost cash in his chips while battling the evil Moriarty on a precipice overlooking the falls of Reichenbach?



(4) An office-study with thousands of well-thumbed volumes and a desk chair befitting a behemoth.

(5) A smooth-running all-male household, which evoked this grudging salute from Clara Fox in *The Rubber Band* (1936), possibly the finest Wolfe novel: "This house represents the most insolent denial of female rights the mind of man has ever conceived. No woman in it from top to bottom, but the routine is flawless,

"I never go anywhere without Nero Wolfe. In Rome last month, Monday it was the Vatican and Before Midnight; Tuesday, the Capitoline museums and Too Many Clients; Wednesday, the Villa Borghese and The Doorbell Rang. When I find I've read one before, I just go on reading."

—Kingsley Amis

the food is perfect, and the sweeping and dusting are impeccable."

It is in this tightly controlled environment, and almost always in his office, that Wolfe has built his reputation as a genius among sleuths. And how has he done it? For one, by having a superbly trained set of eyes, ears, and legs in the person of Archie Goodwin, who can report hour-long conversations verbatim to Wolfe, and whose instincts about women—and his appeal to them—complement Wolfe's self-confessed greatest knowledge gap.

The free-wheeling Goodwin makes it possible for Wolfe to solve the most complex of murder problems while remaining hearthbound. Just as Wolfe is smarter than other detectives, so too is his hand-picked aide the clear mental superior of Dr. Watson, Poirot's sometime

"I have never met Rex Stout, but he is an extraordinarily encouraging and comforting colleague in my imagination. He is a Populist dream come true—a master craftsman, marvelously his own boss and even more marvelously enraged or elated by failures or successes in the exercise of the widest, deepest sorts of American justice."

—Kurt Vonnegut Jr.

No lonely moors or Swiss precipices for Nero Wolfe. While Hercule Poirot is sniffing out murder on the Blue Train and Travis McGee is playing life-and-death games at sea off the Florida coast, and Philip Marlowe and Lew Archer are dodging bullets in decadent southern California, Wolfe is puttering with his orchids, drinking beer by the case and supervising gourmet meals in the shadow of the Empire State Building. In fact, it is a rare occurrence for him to even leave the house.

Wolfe *hates* to leave home, even for a cab ride across Manhattan—cars terrify him. And why should he want to leave? In his abode, he has created an environment that approaches his idea of Eden:

(1) The entire top floor devoted to orchid-growing, where he spends precisely four hours daily (9 to 11 a.m., 4 to 6 p.m.) nursing 10,000 orchids with his gardener, Theodore Horstmann.

(2) A well-stocked larder and Fritz Brenner, one of the finest chefs in the land, who under Wolfe's watchful and critical eye prepares such delights as *Rognons aux Montagnes*, filets of beef with sauce Abano and Hungarian *petits poissons*, and clams hashed with eggs, parsley, green pepper, chives, fresh mushrooms, and sherry.

(3) A superb wine cellar and an endless supply of beer (domestic).

Robert Goldsborough is the Tribune's Sunday editor.

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Nerophile Quiz

During the last 40 years Rex Stout has written hundreds of thousands of words about Nero Wolfe—his idiosyncrasies, his acquaintances, his lifestyle, his milieu. A serious student of the Wolfe stories should be able to cope well with the following quiz. A perfect score is 35. If you score 30 or better, you rate an invitation to dinner with Wolfe; a score of 20 to 29 earns you a 10-minute visit to the orchid rooms; 10 to 19 lets you inside the front door long enough to shake hands with Goodwin and peek thru the office door at Wolfe; if you get less than 10, go to your local library, check out no fewer than five Nero Wolfe books, and spend a few weeks refreshing your memory. Answers on page 5.

1. Archie Goodwin's home state is _____. (3 pts.)
2. In *Might As Well Be Dead* (1956) one of Wolfe's frequently employed operatives was killed. He was _____. (4 pts.)

3. The three other freelance operatives regularly called into action by Wolfe and Goodwin are _____, _____, and _____. (2 pts. each)
4. Wolfe's doctor and lawyer are, respectively, _____ and _____. (3 pts. each)
5. The first Nero Wolfe novel, published in 1934, was _____. (2 pts.)
6. The one restaurant to which Wolfe pays an occasional visit is _____. (4 pts.)
7. Lon Cohen, a newspaperman who frequently supplies information to Wolfe, works for a New York paper called the _____. (3 pts.)
8. Archie's longtime girlfriend is _____. (2 pts.)
9. Fritz Brenner is a native of _____. (3 pts.)
10. Police Inspector Cramer's assistant is a sergeant named _____. (2 pts.)

companion, Capt. Hastings, and various other second bananas.

A man of the streets, Goodwin gathers information like a sponge, then plops it—and usually all the suspects as well—into the lap of his employer. Wolfe, who only works when the bank balance begins to dissolve, puts his mighty brain into its highest gear sparingly, usually about 4/5th of the way thru a book. The giveaway to this moment of moments is when the great man, always seated at his desk, closes his eyes and begins pushing his lips in and out, in and out . . .

If even Wolfe knows what goes on in his mind at these times, he isn't talking. He once said to a curious Goodwin: "Must I again demonstrate that while it is permissible to request a scientist to lead you back over his footprints, a similar request of an artist is nonsense, since he, like the lark or the eagle, has made none? Do you need to be told again that I am an artist?"

This artist is also the consummate ham, and at the crucial point of each story, the naming of the murderer, Wolfe has Goodwin assemble all the suspects—and the befuddled police—in his office for the revelation, to which he carefully and dramatically builds. His rewards for these invariably successful efforts are outrageous fees, which on occasion have reached six figures. And he does it all without stepping outside.

But then he is the greatest detective in the world.

Someone's in the kitchen with Nero

By John Hess

Over a dish of lamb kidneys one evening, Nero Wolfe maintained that if you knew what any society ate, you could deduce everything else about it—"culture, morals, politics, everything."

Easier clues are to be found, surely, in what we read.

Like any other dreams, our favorite detective tells us a lot about what we are, or at least what we'd like to be. The typical detective in fiction is either a hard-drinking mashochist or a dilettante snob. But 40 years ago, Chef Rex Stout refined these contradictory ingredients into a dish that flatters both our national character and our palates.

On the one hand, we have Nero Wolfe, the fat genius

"I know how much grinding effort it must take Mr. Stout to make his work seem so effortless. The homely fussy little details of the menage and the friction-tension of the long relationship establish and maintain dimensional characterizations with impressive skill."

—John D. MacDonald

been steadily subverted by marvelous fare. Plot and character do intervene, despite Wolfe's firm rule against talking business at table. However, Viking

"I have been a devoted reader of Rex Stout for many years. Imagine my delight in finding my own name in one of his recent books. . . . I use his cookbook too. He's a great cook."

—Amy Vanderbilt

Press recently peeled all that away and gave us Archie's asides about the food, with recipes to match, in *The Nero Wolfe Cookbook*, surely the most entertaining food book in years.

The credits reveal that, in spite of Wolfe's misogyny, the inspiration behind his cuisine was that of a woman, the late Sheila Hibben of *The New Yorker*.

Her recipes are open to debate. In my view, they are tainted with the "gourmet" plague that spoils our *haute cuisine*—that is, too much complication, too much use of fancy ingredients such as caviar and truffles, too much flour in the sauces. (In a private kitchen with a pro-

the reader? Indeed, the best of his diet is what Americans used to consider everyday food: scrambled eggs, omelettes, blueberry muffins, homebaked bread, corn on the cob, fritters, chowders, pancakes, shad roe, squirrel stew, corn pudding. . . .

Never, be it said, have our heroes succumbed to the fake "convenience" fad. One might object that they have Fritz to squeeze their oranges. But even when hiding out from a killer, Wolfe would—and did—find

"Rex Stout is among the half-dozen people to whom I wrote a fan letter. . . . Stout, a busy man, found time to answer it. I never met him, but he gives me the feeling of having known him a long time. . . . I've savored his books as tho they were a truly fine boeuf bourgignon. Mr. Stout, also a serious eater, will understand."

—Joseph Wechsberg

some way to put together a meal fit for humans.

In one murder story, the title of which I have forgotten, Archie comes upon Wolfe while he is tearing up a

cookbook page by page, because a recipe calls for discarding the bacon rind. A crime indeed, in these times when flavor is so hard to find.

I am sorry that Wolfe

"If he had done nothing more than create Archie Goodwin, Rex Stout would deserve the gratitude of whatever assessors watch over the prosperity of American literature."

—Jacques Barzun

thinks wine is for women, and that Archie accompanies magnificent dishes with milk, coffee, or rye highballs. But I admire them for the dedication that sends Archie scouring the country, not only for clues but also for Georgia country ham, fresh-picked corn, farm sausage, game, poultry, lamb, and proper foods of all kind. It takes great detectives, or fiction writers, to find them these days.

If not at our own tables, then at the one on West 35th Street, we have been feasting for 40 years. Now, sipping our coffee and brandy in the library, a grateful burp would not be out of place. Or, as Nero would say: Satisfactory.

turned private detective to satisfy his eccentric appetites for food, orchids, and books. These obsessions being patently foreign and unmanly, Wolfe is dubbed a Montenegrin and assigned an all-American assistant. On the other hand, we have wisecracking Archie Goodwin, handy with his dukes but not belligerent, attractive to the ladies but discreet about it, appreciative of Fritz Brenner's cooking but ready to make do with a corned-beef sandwich in a drugstore while on the run.

In the real world, of course, our standard of eating has gone to hell, but in that dream house on West 35th Street in Manhattan, Archie and the rest of us have

"Stout can't help but be an inspiration to writers. Like Wodehouse, he continues to write into advanced old age with no noticeable fall-off in quality; what brighter possibility can any of us hope for? And in so doing, Stout gives the inimitable detective pair of Wolfe and Goodwin a longer life for the delectation of his myriad readers."

— Isaac Asimov

fessional cook like Fritz Brenner, there should not be any flour in the sauces.) And it is hard to agree with Archie that "the greatest duck dish of all" would contain cream, grated cheese, and pistachio nuts.

Wolfe reflects this weakness when he advises readers of the cookbook to fix these dishes "only for an occasion that is worthy of them." He himself eats well every day—why should not

John Hess is a former foreign correspondent and former food editor of The New York Times. His latest book is The Grand Acquisitors.

Nerophile Quiz Answers

1. Ohio
2. Johnny Keems
3. Saul Panzer, Orrie Cather, Fred Durkin.
4. Dr. Edward Vollmer, Nathaniel Parker
5. *Fer-de-Lance*
6. Rusterman's
7. *Gazette*
8. Lily Rowan
9. Switzerland
10. Purley Stebbins

Nero et al--a Rex Stout checklist

NOVELS

Forest Fire
Golden Remedy
How Like a God
Mr. Cinderella
O Careless Love!
Seed on the Wind
The President Vanishes

NERO WOLFE MYSTERIES

All Aces: A Nero Wolfe Omnibus
And Be a Villain
And Four to Go
A Right to Die
Before Midnight
The Black Mountain
Black Orchids
Champagne for One
Curtains for Three
Death of a Doxy
Death of a Dude
The Doorbell Rang
The Father Hunt
Fer-de-Lance
The Final Deduction
Five of a Kind: The Third Nero Wolfe Omnibus

Full House: A Nero Wolfe Omnibus
Gambit
The Golden Spiders
Homicide Trinity: A Nero Wolfe Threesome
If Death Ever Slept
In the Best Families
Kings Full of Aces: The Fifth Nero Wolfe Omnibus
The League of Frightened Men
Might As Well Be Dead
The Mother Hunt
Murder by the Book
Not Quite Dead Enough
Over My Dead Body
Please Pass the Guilt
Plot It Yourself
Prisoner's Base
The Red Box
Royal Flush: The Fourth Nero Wolfe Omnibus
The Rubber Band
The Second Confession
The Silent Speaker
Some Buried Caesar
Three Aces: The Sixth Nero Wolfe Omnibus

Three at Wolfe's Door
Three Doors to Death
Three for the Chair
Three Men Out
Three Trumps: The Seventh Nero Wolfe Omnibus
Three Witnesses
Too Many Clients
Too Many Cooks
Too Many Women
Trio for Blunt Instruments
Triple Jeopardy
Triple Zeck
Trouble in Triplicate
Where There's a Will

TECUMSEH FOX MYSTERIES

Bad for Business
The Broken Vase
Double for Death

MYSTERIES

Alphabet Hicks
The Hand in the Glove
Mountain Cat
Red Threads

NONFICTION

The Nero Wolfe Cookbook