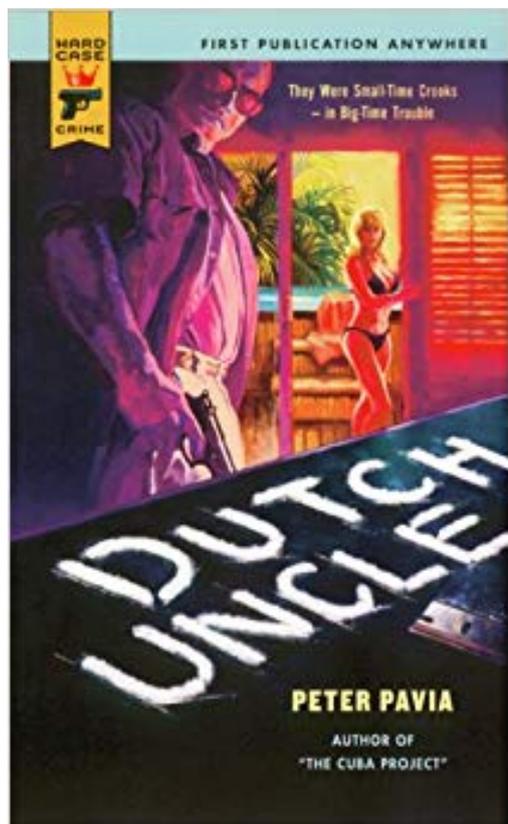


Dutch Uncle (Hard Case Crime (Mass Market Paperback)) by Peter Pavia



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Despite his determination to stay straight, ex-con Harry Healy is desperate for money and agrees to make one simple delivery for drug dealer Manfred Pfiser, only to find himself caught in the middle of a deadly robbery scheme involving a former cellmate, an aging high-school baseball star, a murderous sociopath, and a beautiful beach bunny. Original.



Reviews of the Dutch Uncle (Hard Case Crime (Mass Market Paperback)) by Peter Pavia

Beanisend

Hard Case Crime has issued a lot of books by well-known authors, but this one is by a relative unknown in the hardcore crime fiction world. Peter Pavia is a writer for the NY Post and other publications, but, as demonstrated by this novel, he can also write fiction and should definitely be encouraged to produce more.

Florida is a frequent locale for crime stories, but the fact that Pavia uses Florida as his locale doesn't mean he's a copycat. This tale stands on its own merit. It takes the reader to a more recent world of Miami Beach, a world of endless beaches and wannabe models looking for an agent to set them up, a world of parolees who can't land a real job, a world of cocaine dealers and addicts, a world of ripoffs and backstabbers, and Barroom brawls, and the pounding beat coming from dozens of nightclubs.

This book, Dutch Uncle, is the real deal. Harry came down to Florida with a seemingly rich girlfriend who he never hears from again after a bar brawl lands him six months in County. Upon getting out, he thinks about playing it straight but he needs the cash a few quick deliveries for the Dutch Uncle, Manfred, can pay off. Harry didn't bargain on getting caught up in murder.

Leo set him up with this deal but Leo has his hands full with Vicki who doesn't like to wear clothes and never leaves the house and two good old boys he sends to do his dirty work.

As the body count grows, the police start focusing on Harry and Leo. Detective Martinson is a character in his own right and Lili Acevedo is like Angie Dickinson returning as Jennifer Lopez in tight beige suits.

Pavia gets the cool beat of Miami Beach just right.

Terrific reading and truly a worthwhile addition to the Hard Case Crime series.

Zadora

Harry Healy is a small-time crook who has just made bail. He's broke, so he reluctantly agrees to be a drug courier for a Miami Beach Dutch businessman (the titular uncle). Things immediately go wrong, of course, and he finds himself being framed for a crime. The book details his efforts to elude police, the goings-on of various low-life criminals who framed him, and the police working on the case.

Peter Pavia's "Dutch Uncle" is entry #12 in the Hard Case Crime series; it was written expressly for the series (as opposed to the re-releases from genre masters that the series also includes) and published in 2005. It's the tenth I have read, and so far, I'd have to say that it's the weakest. The major problem is that it's an overly busy book, with a multitude of characters who come and go and really don't add much to the story. The main character is particularly vague and bland, which is a shame given how important a strong central character is to this sort of crime book. The writing is ok, but not as colorful as I expect from the series. The Hard Case Crime books are always fun to read, and I did find this one somewhat enjoyable; however, there simply are far better entries in the series.

Note: This review is for the Kindle version. The transfer to e-book has been done with care, and I found no obvious errors. It includes a linked table of contents.

Clonanau

So I'm sorry to say DUTCH UNCLE really wasn't all that memorable (the way a Camry isn't really all that memorable after you've been staring at Lamborghinis all day and getting more than an eyeful). Like the Camry in a lot filled with Lamborghinis, this book seemed to have potential, a voice, and displayed brief inklings of success. But I was lost in a sea of characters who didn't really feel all that different from one another and backstory that proved jarring at times. Instead of whispering back and forth between the present and the past, I felt like I was in a boat and about to be tipped over.

Like any good hard-boiled tale, the men packed more than a few punches, and the violence bubbled up to the surface. As for the women, they actually seemed to have a bit of sass and strength, and it proved to be a rather pleasant surprise. And it made my ensuing disappointment all the worse, as I

found myself forgetting passages and entire chapters as soon as I had finished them. Had I not enjoyed all the other Hard Case Crime novels, I might have given up on this one sooner, and just cut my losses, even as I kept waiting for potential to mirror up with reality. In the end, it just didn't quite seem to pan out.

Robert Downs

Author of Falling Immortality: Casey Holden, Private Investigator

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