

once collected and exhibited freaks. The afterimage—and so many of Mr. Rudd's stories return to mind with a greater impact than they made on first reading—is one of low-key horror. "The Man on the Trestle" is a story of pain, a wounded pilot's reaction to himself and the men around him. It is written from deep, deep within.

One must himself read Mr. Rudd to discover that special quality he brings to his work—a certain seemingly artless rearrangement and abridgment of life into neatly contained packages built somewhat along the lines of those cold capsules one sees advertised on television; you swallow them now and they explode later. If there is a complaint to be leveled against *My Escape from the CIA*, it is that the book contains but thirteen events. —HASKEL FRANKEL.



Bowlerized Burlesque: J. I. M. Stewart's *An Acre of Grass* (Norton, \$4.50) is a deliberately mannered novel, the narrator of which is an elderly novelist writing about a famous and even more elderly novelist who has just been buried in Westminster Abbey, but not before completing a last novel (called "An Acre of Grass"), which turns out to contain a vicious caricature of his wife, from whom it must at all costs be kept. The costs, in this case, are the fabrication, by the narrator, of a substitute novel ("An Acre of Grass," yes) to be palmed off on the wife.

Mr. Stewart, who produces detective novels under the name of Michael Innes, handles these intricacies with ease. And his narrator is persistently believable—a man who writes in a kind of Jamesian pastiche, properly convoluted and Latinate, coyly daubed with literary references, and now and again touched with a certain caustic humor. But, not surprisingly, the validity of this unflinching egotist's character is bought at the expense of all dramatic movement and any hint of humanity in the rest of the cast, although they are all achingly self-conscious.

Anyone trying to deal with the dark things that lurked beneath the mask of a great writer is up against Maugham's best novel, *Cakes and Ale*. Mr. Stewart isn't competing there, so it's rather puzzling to know why he should have spent so much care over the portrait of an old literary bore. For his own fun perhaps? Possibly, if you relish long donnish jokes, for yours too. —JULIAN GLOAG.



Criminal Record

The Conspiracy of Death. By George Redston and Kendall F. Crossen. Bobbs-Merrill. \$5. This veritable encyclopedia of West Coast crime also contains much material about Mafia-Syndicate operations elsewhere in the U.S. Frightening and fascinating.

Fifteen Clues: True Stories of Crime Detection. By Eugene B. Block. Doubleday. \$4.50. All but three of the cases here narrated are Midwest and Far West; two are French, one English; all are reasonably recent and (more important) not previously written to death. Police work is stressed, as indicated.

Spy: Twenty Years in Soviet Secret Service. By Gordon Lonsdale. Hawthorn. \$4.95. A trapdoor in a kitchen floor, film concealed in a talcum powder tin, documents hidden in a tank in a men's room: these are some of the orthodox tricks of the trade which this notorious Russian agent describes. (What is truth? Just like fiction.)

The Two Assassins. By Dr. Renatus Hartogs and Lucy Freeman. Crowell. \$5.95. This study of the lives of Lee Harvey Oswald and Jack Ruby and of the emotional stresses to which they were subjected is based largely on the record of the Warren Commission, with details from other sources added. A straightforward piece of reporting.

The Double Image. By Helen MacInnes. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$5.75. Yank historian turns amateur security agent after Paris hassle results in the murder of his old professor; scene now shifts to the Cyclades, where lethal violence ensues and peaceful coexistence is severely jarred. Author's thirteenth is usual smooth, fast-action job.

Bazzaris. By Don Tracy. Trident. \$4.95. This colorful chronicle of life and death among Florida's colony of Greek sponge-fishers is not strictly a roman policier (though two police chiefs are in the cast), but it has admirable pace, excitement, and verve, plus a fine sense of locality.

The Widow Watchers. By Frank Archer. Crime Club. \$3.50. Was plot to blow up a plane, overheard in a San Francisco bar, real or phony? Detective Joe Delaney wants to know, professionally and personally (his wife is flying to Hawaii). Zooms right along to a smash-eroo finish.

The Anxious Conspirator. By Michael Underwood. Crime Club. \$3.50. Raid on English counterfeiting ring develops sour note when informer who was supposed to "escape" is nabbed with rest of mob; two relevant murders are arranged in Austria. Ingenious baffler.

The Windy Side of the Law. By Sara Woods. Harper & Row. \$4.50. Englishman returning to London from Ceylon with alleged amnesia (real or feigned?) and suitcase full of heroin (real) is in king-size jam; so is his old friend Antony Maitland, barrister; there are violent deaths. Not up to author's previous high standard.

711—Officer Needs Help. By Whit Masterson. Dodd, Mead. \$3.50. Southern California cop who kills in self-defense is thrown off force; he sets out to fight way back, with startling results. Holds up nicely.

Coffin in Malta. By Gwendoline Butler Walker. \$3.50. The Coffin of the title is Inspector John Coffin of Scotland Yard, who flies to Valetta to solve a rather messy murder. Entertaining picture of island life gives story good support.

Salute from a Dead Man. By Donald MacKenzie. Houghton Mifflin. \$3.95. Industrial sabotage in London area is the theme of this dozenth work by a consistently competent hand. Bittersweet is the word for it.

Girl on the Run. By Hillary Waugh. Crime Club. \$3.95. Philadelphia private eye (why fare so far?) gets summons from New Hampshire village to trail female tagged for auticide; chase takes in Florida, Panama. (How's for getting back to that fine police chief Fred C. Fellows of Stockford, Conn.?)

Murder by 3's. By Patricia Moyes. Introduction by Anthony Boucher. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. \$5.95. Author's first omnibus includes her memorable *Dead Men Don't Ski* (1960), *Down Among the Dead Men* (1961), and *Falling Star* (1964), all reciting the detection disciplines of Chief Inspector Henry Tibbett, CID, not to mention his wife, Emmy.

Date with Death. By Elizabeth Linton. Harper & Row. \$3.95. Prankster strews gimmicks in path of Hollywood cops trying to untangle double murder; Sgt. Maddox carries the main load. Q&A all the way. —SERGEANT CUFF.