

# Insight

12-13 May 1973

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, Saturday-Sunday, May 12-13, 1973

## Watergate figure authored long list of detective thrillers over 30 years

# 'Sexpionage' and Howard Hunt

By Donald Zochert

"She seemed to uncoil from the depths of the chair. I heard her girlish creak as it came to rest on the table and then her hands slipped behind my neck. Her lips were as warm and full as I had imagined them to be. Her body strained against the ribbing caulk until she found a position she liked and then her weight was on me. Her breath warmed and I heard her slippers drop against the carpet.

"The sound of the telephone froze us both. Her eyes opened and her head threw back. 'The hell with it,' she murmured. 'It's probably only my husband.'"

Steve Bentley, hard-boiled CPA, was in another scrape. Morgan Verma, a beautiful, nymphomaniac actress married to one of the most powerful men in the country, was in his sights.

And the telephone was ringing.

The wife of Howard Hunt Jr., former special agent for the Central Intelligence Agency, convicted Watergate conspirator, former of State Department, ambassador, admitted spy, and author of more than 20 thrillers, as his and coauthor this highly suspenseful

IN WATERGATE HAS A SON Peter Ward, CIA agent, the hero of the novel "The Verma Probe."

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

It was Howard Hunt Jr. who helped me...

...from "The Towers of Silence," "Festival for Spies," "The Verma Probe," "Diplomat," "The Coven," "The Sorceress," "The Mongol Mask" and "One of Our Agents is Missing."

And it was the beginning of his literary career. In the 1940s he wrote the first Howard Hunt "East of Eden" novel, "The Mongol Mask," set in London.

His books, which will be found in public libraries, have been out of print. Even though his publishers, Doubleday, Putnam, Lippincott, Lowery, and Random House, were Signet, Weibright and Lyle.

TWO OF HIS MASCULINE... found what he built...

...said his re...

...of all these suspense...

...sleuth. Hunt created Bentley under the pseudonym of Robert Dietrick.

And the crisp, suave CIA agent Peter Ward — the man of many faces who figures in the "sexpionage thrillers" turned out by David St. John — was named by the prestigious "Publishers Weekly" as "more sophisticated than James Bond — a very likeable super-agent."

Steve Bentley's stamping ground is Washington — "a great town," he says. "If you've got the stamina of a Cape Buffalo and the wealth of a Punjab prince.

Bentley has to settle for stamina.

Only an empty room now, I wiped clammy sweat from my forehead and slumped onto the dressing stool. For a while I rested my head on folded arms and then I sat up slowly and stared at the mirror. The same shock-redened eyes, the same sap-disordered hair, the same blood-drained face I had come to know and tolerate. My mind cleared slowly."

CIA AGENT PETER WARD hangs out around Washington too — Georgetown — but only to sip Canadian Club and stuff Middleton's into his pipe. Usually he's off and around the world, tracing Chi-Coms, Castro agents, men in gray overcoats and beautiful women who have been taken advantage of.

Peter Ward has stamina AND the wealth of a Punjab prince. And all sorts of tricks up his sleeve.

In "Festival for Spies," he uncovers "an unspeakable and unscrupulous Communist scheme" to pull Cambodia into the control of China. "Even Peter, who has seen many things in the course of his career as a spy, is revolted at the very thought of it," remarks his publisher.

In "The Verma Probe," Peter encounters a calypso beauty whose specialty was "a Martinique beguine that blistered the pain of the steel drums to whose rhythms she danced."

IN ANOTHER CAPER — "One of Our Agents is Missing" — he discovers a beautiful Nipponese belle who's simply murdered in the bath.

In "The Sorceress," he saves the daughter of a notorious Canadian diplomat from the clutches of the Communists. First he takes care of the diplomat. "So many people are busy building bridges to Moscow and Peking," he com-

# Hunt

5-13-73  
Chicago  
Daily News

plains, "our cloister has been ignored." Then he takes care of the daughter. He yawned and felt a body nuzzle against his.

Hunt's earliest work is more conventional (he was a Guggenheim Fellow in creative writing after World War II), fancied up with learned lines from William Cullen Bryant and Pliny the Elder.

He dropped the poetry in his more recent works, much of it published in paperbacks which themselves drop out of sight after a few months. But he proves himself sure-handed in the genres of private eye and espionage thrillers. One of his publishers boasted that more than 2 million Steve Bentley thrillers had been sold.

**E. HOWARD HUNT'S OWN LIFE** is as exotic and mysterious as that of many of the fictional characters he has created.

His long-time literary agent, Maxwell Wilkinson, of Shelter Island, N.Y., plainly does not want to discuss it. "Oh, for God's sake!" Wilkinson spouts. "Are you kidding me around? I know very little about it, Goodby!"

But another of his publishers provides this background.

He was born Oct. 9, 1918, attended Brown University, and served in the U.S. Naval Reserve from 1940 through 1942. He was a writer for "The March of Time" and a war correspondent for Life magazine until enlisting in the Army Air Corps in 1943. By the end of the war he was in the OSS, and ended the war as an OSS officer in China.

His assignment followed, after which he served two years on the staff of Ambassador W. Averell Harriman in Paris.

Yet another publisher reports his service in Europe, the Far East and Latin America for the Central Intelligence Agency, and retires him to the south of France.

**BUT THERE IS STILL ANOTHER** biographical account of E. Howard Hunt, author, and it appears in a multivolume reference work entitled "Contemporary Authors." There he is listed not as E. Howard Hunt, but as Robert Anthony Dietrich.

Under this pseudonym, which passes for his real name, he lists another of his pseudonyms — Gordon Davis. And he makes it a tie for Robert Dietrich, close but not quite the same as that of E. Howard Hunt.

Robert Dietrich says the boy was born Oct. 9, 1918, was E. Howard Hunt. But Dietrich was born in 1928, not 1918. Hunt thus made himself 10 years younger, a prerogative of women, mystery writers and CIA agents emeritus.

Dietrich was born not in Buffalo, N.Y., like Hunt, but in Washington, D.C., where he could learn about stamping early.

He served not in the OSS and the CIA, but in the Internal Revenue Service, and then began his own private practice as a tax consultant, not unlike hero Steve Bentley. "He's an accountant and a tax adviser, not a snip-dick and a market dick."

He served not in the Navy, Reserve or the Air Corps, but in the U.S. Army Infantry, and "to, and behold" was awarded the Bronze Star.

But wait, E. Howard Hunt IS Robert Dietrich. Or is he?

This spy business seems to be catching. Like tough guy Steve Bentley, told his favorite nymphomaniac lotress.

"Let's say the mood changed. Mood's a fragile thing. Morgan, Life generally. Once stretched it's not quite the same again."

For that, he got a slap in the face.

