



The Monkey and The Tiger

Robert van Gulik

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A.D. 666 and A.D. 676

The Monkey and The Tiger includes two detective stories, "The Morning of the Monkey" and "The Night of the Tiger." In the first, a gibbon drops an emerald in the open gallery of Dee's official residence, leading the judge to discover a strangely mutilated body in the woods--and how it got there. In the second, Dee is traveling to the imperial capital to assume a new position when he is separated from his escort by a flood. Marooned in a large country house surrounded by fierce bandits, Dee confronts an apparition that helps him solve a mystery.

The Monkey and The Tiger Details

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From Reader Review The Monkey and The Tiger for online ebook

R. says

I was on a Charlie Chan kick a few years ago - the Warner Oland era Chan. That's right. A Nordic fellow playing the Orient's No. 1 detective. Van Gulik originally translated a 17th century Chinese detective novel featuring Judge Dee; he loved it so much he ran with it. Myself, I'm intrigued by the idea of some 17 c. Chinese dude putting the calligraphy pen to the rice paper and etching out whodunnits. Discovery of this series is based on chance - in the library and looking at the titles running across the top shelf. Being only 5'0" tall, this is no mean feat. I had to go get a chair to reach the volumes, and was loudly tsk-ed at by a librarian who thought I was a small child involved in horseplay. When she realized that it was a scowling, middle-aged dwarf, she apologized and left me to my leafing. My creepy leafing.

The author has a real affection for a time (long ago) and a place (China) in history, and it shines through in the small details. I admire that.

Lauri says

Kahelooline kogumik. Esimene lugu toimub suht kohe peale Hanyuani Järvemõrvu ja teine jälle karjääri lõpupoolle peale Naelamõrvu. Mõlemad olid päris kobedad. Hea.

Lelena says

Molto molto piacevole come trama e scrittura. Un libro garbato e misurato di un autore che non conoscevo e la cui biografia mi ha attirato come una calamita. Spero di riuscire a trovare gli altri suoi libri

Sharyl says

Robert van Gulik was not at all a familiar name to me, I'd never heard of any of his books, but after browsing the reading list of a local library mystery book club, I became intrigued. These mysteries are based on a collection of stories van Gulik found in a used bookstore in Tokyo, written anonymously in the eighteenth century. The central character is Judge Dee, a personality based on Di Renjie, a magistrate who lived around 630-700 A.D.

Van Gulik was a Dutch diplomat and scholar who translated that original book, then invented his own Judge Dee stories, being careful to preserve the style of the story telling and to correctly depict the time period.

The Monkey and The Tiger are two novellas that I found to be charming and entertaining. I do not read many mysteries, but I've read enough that I can say that these Judge Dee stories, which were published here in the late 1950's, seem to be unique, forgotten gems.

Hazza says

Judge Dee, what a character! Traditionally the head of regional justice in Tang dynasty China, with wide ranging powers, Judge Dee solves crimes that leave ordinary magistrates floundering, or mis-lead, or both, and his fame has grown. In this book there are two separate cases in two separate stories. In both cases Dee stumbles on them accidentally, instead of someone bringing a case against another. Dee's curiosity is piqued and he pursues his investigations by interviewing people and examining crime scenes. He is much like a private investigator who can nevertheless call on his side the powers of central government. The stories are pretty interesting if you have any interest in historical, or specifically Chinese, settings. The atmosphere conveys ancient China vividly, including some heavy handed government officials, wily rascals, seductive women, bitter grievances, upright citizens and many others making this a rich mixture of elements. Given that the stories are placed in history, about 1200 years ago, it seems inappropriate to use the mores of our modern society to bring critical focus on these stories. The stories move along with good pace, but have time for more reflective and delicate moments too, and they are very readable. Because of their special cultural angle they have a special place in my bookshelf. 3.5* overall!

Siti Aziz says

Great detective stories

Mary JL says

Robert Van Gulik discovered an 18th century Chinese detective novel, and translated it just after World War II. The historical person it is based on, Judge Dee, actually existed in about the year 700 AD--during the Ming Dynasty.

VanGulik liked the character so well, he set out and wrote a series of novels based on Judge Dee. They are very well written and really have a good feel for China in that time and place. This particular book has two of the Judge Dee short Stories--I highly recommend any or all of the books. I've read lots of mysteries but these stand out--I have seldom read anything quite like them

I especially recommend Judge Dee if you want to read something besides American or British mysteries. The style of these books is very different--which I find very refreshing..

Timons Esaias says

Slowly I'm working my way through the Judge Dee mysteries, but don't interpret that as implying that they are a labor. I love them, actually, and I'm doling them out to make them last.

This volume contains two novellas ("The Morning of the Monkey" & "The Night of the Tiger") both set in the part of Dee's career where he has been made an imperial officer, but before he's arrived at his post in the

capital. In the first story a gibbon drops a very fancy ring for Dee to collect, which leads to the discovery of a murder. In the second, Dee is nearly captured by bandits, and finds himself in a besieged country house, cut off from all rescue by floods.

Van Gulik started the series by translating actual Chinese mystery novels which used the historical Judge Dee as a character. Then he went on to create new Dee mysteries, often lifting devices and details from 16th century Chinese stories, to create stories that fit the modern taste, while also suggesting their ancient origin. The narrative style is simplified, to reflect their origin, and I have always liked that effect.

Janice says

This book is 2 shorter stories combined into one book. The first story deals with a group of vagabonds and a murder that is discovered when a Gibbon is swinging thru the trees and drops a bloody emerald ring in front of Judge Dee. The second story is one of my favorite, because it show Judge Dee on his own with none of his aides to help him. He is separated from his traveling escort when he crosses a bridge before them and it is destroyed by the flood before they can cross. He finds himself stranded on an island caused by the flood and takes refuge in the only house there. This house is a walled mansion that is under seige by bandits, at the same time there is a death in the house. How Judge Dee notifies the Garrison at the fort across the flood swollen river to come to their aid is kind of ingenious.

Derek Solomon says

two quick stories, nice introduction to a great detective series

Mel says

This book contained two rather short Judge Dee stories. The first story seemed to be fairly typical, a murder, a troublesome gang, prostitution etc. Though I have to say this one also had a very sweet tragic love story. Despite it starting quite simply I found that I got caught up in the story and did enjoy it quite a bit. The tiger on the other hand started very dramatically. Dee managed to get trapped on an island with bandits attacking. It was much more dramatic and a nice change from the typical city story. The actual murder was interesting though I felt the end was a bit sudden and a bit of an anti-climax. I am definitely enjoying Judge Dee, though I did notice at least one anachronism in the tiger story there was a statue of Guan Yin which Van Gulik referred to as the Goddess of Mercy and she was depicted as a woman, however Guan Yin didn't have her sex change till a couple hundred years later in the Song! But they are good fun. Short and interesting and set in Tang China! Definitely looking forward to reading some more.

Ivonne Rovira says

The Monkey and the Tiger consists of two distinct novellas: *The Morning of the Monkey*, which takes place — as the title implies — early in Judge Dee's career in the year A.D. 666, and *The Night of the Tiger*, which takes place 10 years later when Judge Dee has left his magistrate duties behind due to a promotion and is

heading to take up his new position as Lord Chief Justice of the Imperial capital, Chang-An (modern day Xi'an).

In the first story, Judge Dee recovers an expensive emerald ring from a gibbon and proceeds to try to discover its owner. The search leads Judge Dee to discover a murder almost in his own backyard. In the second tale, Judge Dee, en route to his new post, takes refuge in a villa under siege from the marauding bandits known as the Flying Tigers; while there, Judge Dee realizes that a death by misadventure was actually a murder. *The Night of the Tiger* will truly hold readers in suspense with its twists and surprises, but both novellas are excellent.

J Grimsey says

Simple enjoyable double story. The first worked well the second less so.

Terence says

Two more solid whodunits from Judge Dee's career.

"The Morning of the Monkey" finds Dee struggling to find out who murdered and mutilated an old vagabond and left his body in an abandoned mountain hut while also trying to break up a smuggling ring. Needless to say, both cases wind up being connected and the obvious suspects are not the real culprits.

"The Night of the Tiger" takes place late in Dee's career. He's on his way back to the capital to take up his post as Chief Justice and finds himself stranded by flooding in a fort besieged by bandits and neck deep in a sordid tale of murder and greed. In this particular tale, Gulik is able to indulge in revealing a bit of Chinese culture when Dee spends some time playing the lute (Gulik had written an entire book on the subject: *The Lore of the Chinese Lute*).

Victoria Law says

Maybe I just haven't read a Judge Dee mystery in a while, but both of these stories seem to have a hint of misogyny running through them. Also, the denouement of the second story seemed to come out of left field with no hints or slow build-ups to the judge's conclusion.
