



# The Paper Moon

*Andrea Camilleri , Stephen Sartarelli (Translation)*

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**The latest mystery in Andrea Camilleri's internationally bestselling Inspector Montalbano series**

With their dark sophistication and dry humor, Andrea Camilleri's classic crime novels continue to win more and more fans in America. The latest installment of the popular mystery series finds the moody Inspector Montalbano further beset by the existential questions that have been plaguing him of late. But he doesn't have much time to wax philosophical before the gruesome murder of a man-shot at point-blank range in the face with his pants down-commands his attention. Add two evasive, beautiful women as prime suspects, some dirty cocaine, mysterious computer codes, and a series of threatening letters, and things soon get very complicated at the police headquarters in Vigàta.

**Read translator Stephen Sartarelli's post on the Penguin Blog.**

## The Paper Moon Details

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## From Reader Review The Paper Moon for online ebook

### Maria Altiki says

Πάντα απολαμβάνω να διαβάζω ιστορίες για τις περιπέτειες του φίλου πια και αγαπημένου Σάλβο Μονταλμπάνο. Και όταν κ'νω καιρ', πιάνω τον εαυτό μου να μου λέπει, να θ'λω να μ'θω τα ν'α του παλι'φίλου. Ήχει ξεχωριστή θέση στην καρδί' μου πως να γ'νει.

Στο συγκεκριμένο βιβλίο έχει να κ'νει με την αρρωστημένη αγ'πη από δ'ο αδ'λφια, με μυστικές και ψ'μματα, με μια υπ'θεση νοθευμένης δηλητηρίασ'νης κοκα'νης, με νοσηρ' π'θη και με δ'ο επικ'νδυνες γυνά'κες που τον προκαλο'ν αλλ'. Πως πάντα ως δ'γμα ηθικ'ς και εγκρ'τειας αντιστ'κεται σθεναρ'. Ο Σάλβο μ'ως βασαν'ζεται και από μα'ρες σκ'ψεις που αφορο'ν το γ'ρας και τον θ'νατο και αυτ' τον κ'νει τρωτ' και ας μην το δ'χνει... Απογοητε'εται και ζηλε'ει όταν σταματ' να προκαλε' ενδιαφ'ρον και να τον κυνηγο'ν, η αυτοπεπο'θηση του δ'χεται ισχυρ' πλ'γμα.

"Ας υποθ'σουμε τι ν'να κουν'λι βλ'πει ν'να γατ'παρδο να το ακολουθε' και αρχ'ζει να τρ'χει φοβισμ'νο για να ξεφ'γει. Ξαφνικ' το κουν'λι δεν νοι'θει πια π'σω του το γ'ριο θηρ'ο. Γυρ'ζει και βλ'πει το γατ'παρδο να κυνηγ'ει ν'να ελαφ'κι.

Η ερ'τηση ε'ναι η εξ'ς : γιατί το κουν'λι αντ' να ε'ναι ευχαριστημ'νο, νι'θει λ'γο απογοητευμ'νο που δεν ε'ναι πια λε'α;"

"Το κουν'λι δεν μπορο'σε ακ'μα να καταλ'βει γιατί δεν το ε'χε φ'ει ο γατ'παρδος."

Αχ γλυκ', καλ' μου φίλε Σάλβο!

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### Cathy Cole says

First Line: The alarm rang, as it had done every morning for the past year, at seven-thirty.

The moody Inspector Salvo Montalbano has been plagued by the sense of his own mortality of late. He's trying to dodge all those morbid questions floating around in his mind-- without much success-- so what he needs is a good murder to take his mind off death. This he gets when the body of a man-- shot in the face at point-blank range-- with his pants down around his ankles is found.

Montalbano soon has more than enough to occupy his mind with the victim's beautiful sister, the victim's beautiful girlfriend, cocaine, blackmail letters, and mysterious computer codes all complicating the investigation. Not to fear, though-- allow Montalbano to cogitate while digesting an excellent meal, and the killer will soon be in jail.

Although the first book in the series was rather shaky for me, I am so glad that I continued because this is now one of my absolute favorite series. Montalbano and his team of officers are all gems, and Stephen Sartarelli does a perfect job of translating colloquial dialogue. (By the way, my husband is another huge fan of this series.) How Sartarelli manages to imply regional Sicilian speech and yet keep the meaning completely clear for English speakers is beyond me. The man is a master!

The mystery isn't all that difficult to solve, but that's not the point. The point is being able to watch grumpy Inspector Montalbano distracted by two pretty girls. You know that, sooner or later, the pheromones are going to lose their effect, and the wily Sicilian policeman is going to figure everything out. The joy is in

watching him do it.

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## David R. Dowdy says

A missing middle-age man is reported by his sister, Michela Pardo. She convinces Inspector Salvo Montalbano to search for him. This is how the police procedural, *The Paper Moon*, begins. Soon, Camilleri weaves a wonderful and intriguing story that looks into Angelo Pardo's past.

Montalbano's police station is in the fictitious city of Vigata near Palermo. To put yourself there, imagine a romantic old city. Stucco buildings painted vivid colors, scrolled black iron railings penning second-floor balconies, people shopping in the outdoor markets, and alley-streets climbing the hills.

There in the station Montalbano's associates share their lives with us. There's an officer whose new baby tests him. A commissioner who's perpetually too tied up to meet with Montalbano. Catarella, a junior officer whose substandard way of speaking, said with upmost sincerity, stuns Montalbano. *TPM* was written in Italian. Still, everything flows well in the English translation, including Cat's hilarious mispronunciations.

This is Sicily. I'm sorry, you know there must be some Mafia goings-on. It's not all violent and tragic, though. There are many light and sometimes fantastic moments. Montalbano operates alone and by his wits. He tirelessly digs up information from seemingly barren evidence. Whatever the motivations of his prey, his erudite mind will discover.

Careful, there are many moments when a catcall wouldn't be out of the question. However, Michela and Elena, another beautiful lady Montalbano interviews, are just as ready to pounce. He drinks demitasse coffee in their company and works hard to avoid characterizing them in terms of his girlfriend who's away.

This book is a testament to Camilleri's concise writing. I'm surprised by the uncanny similarity of Camilleri's simple and logical Montalbano to Georges Simenon's Maigret. They both work for flying police squads which, I recently learned, are forces that get to the scene of the crime quickly. Nothing to do with aeronautics!

Come, rest on the veranda overlooking the Tyrrhenian Sea. Sit with Salvo and share a glass of J&B as he awaits his Livia. Ciao!

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## Anastasia ^^ says

Μια καταπλκτικ? ατμ?σφαιρα. Σικελ?α .

Υπ?ροχα φαγητ?. ?νας πολ? ιδι?ρρυθμος αστυν?μος που ?ταν πρ?γματι αυθεντικ?ς, παρατηρητικ?ς, ?ξυπνος και ενδιαφ?ρον με φοβ?ες και γκρ?νιες.

Απολαυστικ? αν?γνωσμα.

Πρ?βλεψα ?μως το τ?λος... ?δωσε αρκετ? στοιχε?α και αρκετ? χρ?νο για να το βρ?.

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## **vagia says**

[www.vivliakaioneira.blogspot.com](http://www.vivliakaioneira.blogspot.com)

Πρ?τη γνωριμ?α με τον επιθεωρητ? Μονταλμπ?νο κ θα μου με?νει αξ?χαστη! Πρ?τη φορ? γελασα σε αστυνομικ? και ο ?ρωας ε?στροφος, γρηγορος, λ?γο ?τσαλος και τ?σο ανθρωπινος, σε κατακτ? απο την πρωτη σελιδα!

Η ατμ?σφαιρα αν?λαφρη, μα το μυστ?ριο ελλοχε?ει και ο συγγραφεας φανερωνει τη λ?ση ?συχα, μα τ?σο πειστικ?.

Το βιβλιο, μικρ? σε μ?γεθος, ε?χρηστο και προσεγμενο, κανει την αν?γνωση πραγματικ? απ?λαυση!

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## **Donna says**

This particular series has been a solid 3 stars for me. I enjoy the MC. He is quirky and can carry a book. I like his thought process in finding the guilty. I never really know how he is going to get to the end, so that always reels me in. I usually enjoy the story line as well, but this one was just okay for me. It wasn't my favorite in this series. But overall, this was still enjoyable. So 3 stars.

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## **Jim Leffert says**

Paper Moon is one of a series of police procedural detective novels that take place in Vigata, a fictional town in Sicily, featuring the quirky “everyman” Inspector Montalbano and his equally quirky colleagues. Having never visited Sicily, I was hoping for descriptions of the scenery and local customs, but the story, as translated by Stephen Sartarelli, read like it could have taken place anywhere in Italy. (Reportedly, these novels feature local Sicilian dialect and expressions that don’t make it into the translation.)

If low on depictions of scenery and customs, Paper Moon is a tightly written novel with a lot of gruff and colorful dialogue among the cops, a seductive female suspect who was the murdered man’s mistress, and references to departmental intrigues and larger political currents—a well-crafted, somewhat pulpy, detective story with a sympathetic and fallible cop at its center—no more and no less. I could imagine watching it on television—and apparently there is an Inspector Montalbano series that was a big hit in Britain.

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## **Frances Sawaya says**

There is no getting around it! I am hooked on Montalbano whether it be the series on telly ( with the dynamic Luca Zingaretti as the inspector) or the new series on BBC, "The Young Montalbano." or the books created by Camilleri. Makes for great reading in the wee small hours when insomnia hits. Interesting to see how the young Catarella is portrayed and how Montalbano makes a place for him in the workplace and eventually comes to realize his hidden talents. I also enjoyed how poor Mimi is pigeonholed as less than human because he is unable to enjoy the pure taste of food in quiet friendship; yet Montalbano also comes to accept him for what he brings to the workplace.

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## Spuddie says

#9 Inspector Montalbano series set in Sicily, Italy. Once again, beautiful women and corrupt men pepper Inspector Montalbano's investigation into the death of one Angelo Pardo, a pharmaceutical representative. There's Angelo's sister Michela--who reported him missing and his mistress Elena, whose husband is older and impotent and allows his wife her sexual freedom. Both seem to be playing off one another, blaming each other for Angelo's death, and both are definitely suspects and not telling the whole truth, but when Angelo's connection to some corrupt politicians comes to light, there are a whole host of other possibilities as well.

While the mystery was rather obvious, as always, I enjoyed the whole package of being deposited into Sicily, with its weather, the food, the atmosphere of Montalbano's world. These books read very quickly but are by no means cozy--there's a lot of sexual innuendo and content and graphic descriptions of the violent crime scenes. It's hard to know since it's written and set in a different culture if the author is trying to be 'sensational' or if this is just what's expected of crime fiction in Italy. At any rate, I loved this entry in the series no less than others but after reading two in one month, am now content to wait another couple of months before I get to the next one.

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## Tracy L says

The Montalbano series reminds me of Alexander McCall Smith's Ladies Detective Agency series - only this is a slightly coarser version set in Sicily. The language is light but fun, and the plot well paced but far from taxing. A nice easy read, made all the more entertaining by the grumpy character of Montalbano and his worries about old age. A good holiday read.

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## Jakefan Efp says

Non sono obiettiva, lo so, ma non mi va di mettermi a ragionare su strutture e cose serie: lo amo e basta, that's all. Poi l'ho audioletto, recitato da Lo Cascio nell'italo-siculo originale di Camilleri, quindi come potevo non goderlo fino all'ultima sillaba?

Mi chiedo: ma come fanno i lettori anglofoni a "percepirlo"? Ho visto recensioni a due, tre stelline. Mi sembrano ingiuste, anche se probabilmente necessarie. Per quanto riguarda me, God save Camilleri e gli conceda lunghissima vita per scrivere ancora tantissimi Montalbano.

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## Nico says

Il precedente mi aveva leggermente delusa mentre questo mi è piaciuto moltissimo. Rispetto ad altri libri della saga si focalizza di più sull'aspetto investigativo, non lasciando nessun spazio alla vita personale di Montalbano. Il caso si svolge in modo molto lineare e senza particolari colpi di scena fino al finale che quasi non ci si aspettava più.

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## Gary says

Absurd; usually keeps the plot near; humorous; delves into aging; funny; dark; literate; consistently interesting.

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## Orinoco Womble (tidy bag and all) says

I first met Montalbano in the Italian TV series with English subtitles and fell in love. Reading a Montalbano novel is like listening to my husband and his best friend banter back and forth. I guess it's true what they say: "Italiani, spagnoli, una fazza, una razza." When I picked this one up I was dangerously close to reading-slump territory--so much so, that I was afraid even to try a Maigret novel in case I was disappointed. *What? It has happened.* It was yet another sleepless night, so I thought I'd ask *il dottore* to investigate why I wasn't enjoying books lately. He came up with the goods, as always.

Some of the themes touched on in the book are pretty scabrous: love, sex, aging, death--all in their many forms--and yet Camillieri's light touch never lets him down. Hats off to the excellent translator of the Picador edition. His rendering of Catarella had me trying to stifle my chuckles so as not to wake my husband--I could just hear the Noo Joisy Italian-American voice in my head. It cracked me up that the translator chose to use the Spanish word "cojones" instead of our good old English term "balls"; but then "cojones" passed into the language some time ago. (I often cite it as a case of the latest linguistic borrowing, and it never fails to make my Eng Lit students sit up and take notice.) Poissonally in poisson, I think it couldn't be bettered.

Grazie, dottore.

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## Lou Robinson says

This was a difficult book to rate. I didn't hate it, I didn't love it. It was just ok. So that makes it a 2\* right? But overall, on balance, that seems harsh, so maybe it's really a 2.5\*. It was an impulse buy at Paphos airport, having finished the last paperback I took on holiday before I got on the plane and needing something to fill the 4 hour journey home. Except I ended up buying 2 and reading the other one. The downsides of *The Paper Moon* - it felt like it was too literal a translation throughout. Would Inspector Montalbano (which I couldn't seem to help reading as Montepulciano) really talk like that? Or maybe it's because I'm not Italian. There were some very strange characters, including an administrator at the police station named Catarella, who every time he appeared, all I could imagine was an Italian Manuel. And the upsides, it was unintentionally (I think!) funny. The story was entertaining and a fairly intricate crime and I certainly didn't struggle to read it, at no point did I consider giving up on the book. Don't think I'll be going back to read the rest of the series though...

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## Margaret says

As entertaining as usual. I remembered the plot from watching it on television, but it didn't matter.

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## **Spiros says**

I have always treasured the books in this series far more for their flavor than for any strength of plot or characterization; Inspector Salvo Montalbano has always seemed to me to be a pale imitation of Colin Dexter's brilliant creation, Inspector Endeavor Morse, and the plots have ranged from ingenious to, increasingly as the series has progressed, downright obvious. Still, the books are imbued with a wonderful feel for Sicily and, especially and mouthwateringly, Sicilian cuisine, to my mind the greatest fusion cuisine in the world. So imagine my chagrin: throughout the entire body of this work Montalbano eats, but only once (in the event, some uninteresting salmon and herring shipped from Norway) is any of the food described. What gives? Is Camilleri undergoing chemo? Has he become a vegan, or taken up smoking and lost his appetite? For the first time reading one of Camilleri's novels, I didn't get hungry once. Dear Andrea: let's get back to describing the food, please; either that, or put Montalbano out to pasture (have him marry his long-suffering girlfriend and move to Milano, where food doesn't matter), or perhaps have him join the late, lamented Inspector Morse.

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## **David Highton says**

Montalbano gets to the bottom of another murder in his own idiosyncratic way - some excellent characters in the story - and Montalbano starts to get concerned about ageing.

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## **Karen says**

Please don't ask me what the correct order of this series is, as I've got absolutely no idea. I've never found the need to worry about it as each book works on its own, and each book is one of those little pieces of joy that just make you feel good.

Part of it has got to be Inspector Montalbano who is just so gloriously grumpy and idiosyncratic that he leaps alive from each and every page. Part of it is the setting which is woven into the action so seamlessly that you're just there, in that location, beside that ocean, in those restaurants, with those people. But definitely it's that food, which, frankly, I'm starting to think there should be a law against. You simply cannot read one of these books without constant mental references to the decided lack of wonderful meals lurking in your own refrigerator. (Note to self, first sniff of a Lotto win and we're hiring one of those housekeepers that cook like he has!).

Of course, none of the pluses thus far touch on the nature of the plots in these books, which are also extremely good. Almost masterclasses on tight, taut, clever plots in succinct but fully formed stories, decorated brilliantly by all the other aspects.

I dip into this series these days when I want a bit of comfort reading. And when I'm not on a diet.

<http://www.austcrimefiction.org/revie...>



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**Sophia B says**

I want to move to Vigata and eat silently at Enzo's with Salvo and take a meditative stroll in Marinella. I love Camilleri's humour and Sartarelli's translation. Long live Camilleri!

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