



This Dame for Hire

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Faye Quick, 26, 5'4", from Greenwich Village, the secretary takes over a Manhattan NY detective agency when boss Woody Mason enlists in 1943. She stumbles over a body, Claudette West NYU student, whose rich Park Avenue father suspects rejected working-class boyfriend Richard Cotton. But Faye finds secret suitors: lit prof lech, apparent con artist, killer?

This Dame for Hire Details

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From Reader Review This Dame for Hire for online ebook

Teresa says

As tough guy private eyes go, Faye Quick does an ok job. She is holding down the business while the real owner is defending the country overseas during the WWII. I liked the novelty of having a woman be the PI and some of the period details, but cannot say this book bowled me over. The mystery was solid but seemed to go on for just a bit too long. The jargon speak (e.g. Waddya lookin at?) gets a bit tiring after a while. I think I might, in future, try getting one of this series as a book-on-tape and see what I think. At any rate, if you are looking for a light weight PI story and a change of pace, you could do worse.

Sharon says

I liked the sense of time and place created in both this book and in the second of the series "Too Darn Hot." I also like the protagonist, Faye Quick, a female PI working on her own in the 1940s. In this book, I didn't find the killer's identity entirely surprising, but the motive and the discussion of some issues that I would have assumed were not talked about in the 1940s in the US added some spice.

Jan C says

Faye Quick takes over her boss' private detective agency when he goes off to fight in WWII. So it is kind of a throw back to the 'forties and the "noir" genre of detective stories.

The *Chicago Sun-Times* called her "a real hoot" and she is.

Everybody is always "askin if she has a fella yet". And it looks like towards the end of the book maybe she does.

She's coming back from the movies or something one night and trips over a dead body. A couple of months later, the body's parents come to her to see about investigating their daughter's murder. The father's a real charmer. He's got all sorts of demands he puts on her - like requiring her to report to him every day, whether there is progress or not. But he's pretty sure it is her ex-boyfriend, Richard Cotten.

It was an interesting story. But I think if you are paying attention you can figure out the murderer. I did.

I know this is a first person narrative, but it did get a little irritating after a while with words like "askin", "going", "ya", etc. And there is a lot of classism going on. Now maybe that was really prevalent in the forties, I don't know. But I think the author may go a little overboard on that point.

All that being said, I would probably read future stories about Faye Quick. It wasn't great, but it was entertaining.

Cathy DuPont says

I love our library and sometimes I just browse around looking for something that just jumps out into my hands.

This was it, jumping into my hands earlier this week and I'm glad it did because it was a fun read.

With the guys away mostly in Europe but all over the world during WWII, Faye Quick who worked for **A Detective Agency** now held down the fort at home for Woody Mason, the agency's owner. Woody trained Faye everything including how to "stake out," how to shoot a gun and before he left, she had her P.I. license and was her own boss. It was all in an effort to keep the doors open while he was overseas doing his patriotic duty.

While the book was written in 2005, Scoppettone did a thorough job researching the lingo of the first five years of the '40's decade.

The problem I had and it knocked the book from four to three stars, is the author was exhaustive in her use of the vernacular. Almost every word the letter "g" was dropped; instead of 'using' it was usin; instead of havin it was havin. She used no apostrophe which as we know, indicates to the reader that a letter is missing...such as havin' or usin' (which is why I didn't put those words in apostrophes or quotes in the last sentence.)

The setting was NYC...and I guess she was trying to show how they talked.

I've come across this before in books but it's for a few short sentences which is not bothersome. In this 255 page book, it starts on page one and never lets up until it's over so it took me much longer to read the book than it should have. What happens is that I end up re-reading the entire sentence because my eye is trained to see the "g" or the apostrophe. Then there's the "ya" instead of you and the "yor" for your or you're. It's a pain in the neck to read the same sentence twice because Scoppettone likes to be clever. She is making me work unnecessarily so I question whether I want to read another book written by her unless she dropped that annoying kind of writing.

While I think Scoppettone is trying to be clever rather than lazy, I loved this blog post by my friend and author of *The Past Never End*, Jackson Burnett.

As an author, it's his opinion (which I strongly agree with) that lack of proper use of punctuation pains the reader but makes the writing easier for the author. This is pertinent since an apostrophe is punctuation but Scoppettone goes one better with the spelling using the vernacular. And it made me, the reader tired reading her book. Here's the blog: G@##&\$~t!!!! Use Quotation Marks!

Oh, lastly, although it was a pretty good "who dun it" I got the character early on which I seldom happens to me. Therefore I question how good a mystery it really was. See for yourself but checkout from the library says this dame who loves hard-boiled.

Mei says

Ugh. I couldn't finish this, which was really disappointing as I had randomly recently read another Sandra Scoppettone book which had been pretty fun. The language drove me absolutely wild - surely no one really talks like this, and if they did they would have done it Damon Runyon style and not in this horrible artificial twang - which, even just reading it made the hairs on my arm stand on end. I persevered till I was halfway through and then it was like a bulb went off in my head - if I really, really wasn't enjoying it, why bother? So I put it down 3 minutes ago and now I feel rather happier.

Tara Chevrestt says

This was a fun read. I want to immediately point out some things I really liked about it. 1. The heroine smokes, but her smoking habits do not take up an entire quarter of the book. Well done! 2. As usual with a mystery tale, there are LOTS of characters and suspects, but I never got confused. I always knew who was who. 3. There is only one case. One simple case involving numerous interesting people and no stereo typed gangsters.

Faye Quick is running A Detective Agency while her boss is in Europe during world war 2. The parents of a murdered girl hire her to find her killer. They seem to hope her killer is an ex boyfriend from a "lower" class they were not fond of, but upon investigating, Faye may disappoint them. She digs up lots of dirt, and not necessarily about the boyfriend but the family itself. What follows is a lot of surprising twists and turns and even a bump on the head...

Very well told and with a likeable heroine. Faye is a tough gal but doesn't "overdo" it. She's not running around waving her gun in people's faces, having random sex with strangers or anything you may expect from woman P.I. tales. The only thing I didn't like about it is the speech. With "ya" being used almost all the time in place of "you," the characters, Faye included, come off sounding a bit like hicks. Thus, four stars.

Lansing Public Library says

Secretary, Faye Quick, takes over the job of Private Detective from her boss who has joined the Army during WWII and then literally trips over the body that becomes her first case.

The reading group rated this book 5.

Everyone enjoyed this book. It was a fast summer read. The author was very descriptive about New York City during the 1940's; they liked that! No one guessed who the murderer was. This is always a sign of a good mystery book.

Jennifer Morefield says

I enjoyed this PI mystery. Loved Faye and her no nonsense style. This story took place in the early 1940's when her boss left her in charge of his investigative business while he hurried off to fight the Japanese after WWII. While it was difficult being thrown into the PI business, she finds she has a knack for investigative work.. While many road blocks were thrown in her path, Faye doesn't stop until she catches her man (or her woman). The '40s dress and vernacular makes the time period come alive. I enjoyed the writing style of Ms. Scoppettone.

Laura says

Since this book was written in that old 30s/40s/whatever crime language, it was kind of hard to follow at first. Once I got past that it was an okay story. Kind of slow at first. A few curve balls that were a little out there, like the neighbor being involved somehow. There were just too many suspects at one point. I originally thought it might be a member of the family, and it just kept straying away and back and weirdly before coming back to that.

Glenda L says

It's been a long time since I read a true mystery and I enjoyed it. There were more people involved than I like, but it made it fun. It is about a girl who took over a PI business in 1943 after her boss was sent to war. She made the business a success ... she is a tough cookie and a real investigator.

Katina French says

Enjoyable hard-boiled 40s detective noir story, with a twist. Faye Quick runs Manhattan's "A Detective Agency" in her boss Woody's absence, while he's away fighting in WWII (as most able-bodied men are at the time). Fun period piece with a likable lead. I figured out who the killer was pretty early, but still enjoyed the writing enough to stick with the book till the end.

Jim says

This was a lot of fun as an audio book. I don't think it would have read as well. The language went a little overboard in setting us in NYC during WWII, but the narrator was very good. She brought out Faye very well. She's a plucky broad who even has a gat, although she normally keeps it on the top shelf of her closet. Still, she needs it since the owner of the detective agency is overseas fighting the Japs or the Gerries & she's proud of all the boys who are serving their country. In the meantime, someone needs to keep the business going & she's just the dame to do it.

The mystery was pretty good until the ending which was a confess all sort. I don't care for those. Overall, I was close to giving it 4 stars much of the time, but in the end I could only give it a solid 3 stars. I don't know

that I'll read another any time soon, but it was a fun ride.

John says

Wasn't sure what to think of this one, but as I like almost anything set in historic NYC decided to give it a chance. At first, Faye's snappy patter overwhelmed me, but after a while I grew used to that. Secondary characters are quite well done; this is where the audio narration makes for a possibly better experience with this series. Characters are quite differentiated, with the narrator doing male voices well.

I didn't guess the killer, but then again I rarely do - perhaps I don't want to? The victim's father (Faye's client) was a bit over-the-top. Another minor quibble had to do with Faye's hinting at her family background back in Newark, just throw-away references without any real resolution for this reader. Speaking of Newark, her friend from high school, a rich girl with family money allowing her to live in Manhattan as a psychic, didn't quite work for me in that I don't think Anne would've attended a public school with Faye. Otherwise, I liked the psychic angle. Without giving anything away, there's one suspect who's pretty much dropped leaving his situation rather ... unsettled.

The romantic angle is handled well, helped by the fact that he's likeable, in a low-key way. Faye's secretary, Birdie, comes off as a bit flighty (dippy), though holding her own later in confronting Faye about feeling taken for granted. Woody, the agency owner, serves as a character in his own right though offscreen fighting overseas. She has a couple of What Would Woody Do? moments dealing with the case, along with worrying about his fate. The Final Solution is referenced, which Faye dismisses as too fantastically bizarre to possibly be true. This at a time when lynchings were commonplace.

Sorry there are only two books, but looking forward to visiting with Faye and the recurring characters again. Especially recommended for those with an interest in life at home during the war, particularly 1940s New York.

Dennis Fischman says

A mock-noir set in 1943 Manhattan. I've always enjoyed Sandra Scoppetone's writing--I read all her Lauren Laurano books with the terrible puns for titles--and this lived up to my expectations. The only thing I would say is that the period jargon went over the top at times, but the characters and the mystery were thoroughly enjoyable.

Ed says

#1 in the Faye Quick series.

Faye Quick, secretary to PI Woody Mason, takes over his Greenwich Village based detective agency when

he is drafted in 1943. She literally stumbles over the body of a young woman during a snowstorm and then is hired to find the murderer when the cops have made no progress after 3 months. Good period atmosphere but rather obvious solution.
