



Actor

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ACTOR is the eighth installment in the series of mysteries revolving around Stanley Hastings, an ambulance-chasing private investigator from Manhattan. Stanley's friend from college, Herbert Drake, is now the producer of summer stock theater in a sleepy little town in Connecticut. After twenty years, Herbie places an unanticipated call to Stanley to ask him for help. Herbie is producing the play ARMS AND THE MAN, and his leading man has dropped dead of a heart attack. Stanley played this role back in college, and even though there are only two days until opening night, Herbie tells Stanley he has faith in him that he can do it. Stanley accepts the part, but does not realize he has accepted a dual role; not only will he be acting, but also he will have to take on a murder case. The killing takes place during dress rehearsal, and Stanley himself is the prime suspect.

The list of people who could have committed the crime is daunting. The murderer could have been Margie Miller, the beautiful seductive leading lady. Avery Allington, an obnoxious, overly exuberant actor who had a short-lived TV career, is also a suspect. Even Herbie Drake had the opportunity and motive to resort to murder. Stanley is caught between learning lines he has not spoken in two decades and trying to solve a complex crime that has left the local police baffled.

Stanley takes on the brunt of solving this case to clear his name, much to the delight of local police chief and part-time actor, Captain Bob. Many times Stanley seems to be on the right track and to have figured everything out, but things keep popping up that make it tougher and tougher to get anywhere in this case. Finally, Stanley's investigation leads him to pull a daring stunt that leaves the reader amazed and ready to tackle another Stanley Hastings mystery.

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