



The Final Detail

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Myron Bolitar feels culpable when he learns of the death of Clu Haid, a self-destructive New York Yankee pitcher with a history of drug and alcohol problems. Without telling Esperanza, the agent has run away to the Caribbean to recover from the pain of a previous murder case and is not there to help when Haid panics because he thinks his life and Bolitar's are in danger. In jail, Esperanza is strangely uncommunicative.

Complicating the plot are the efforts of a Princeton-educated gangster to take away all of MB Sports Reps' clients, the mysterious disappearance, years earlier, of the daughter of the new owner of the Yankees, and evidence that Haid and Esperanza, a highly unlikely couple, have been having an affair. With the cool assistance of his best friend, eccentric millionaire Win Lockwood, Bolitar slowly discards the red herrings to find the truth behind the murder.

Harlan Coben expertly blends his mystery plot with details of big-time professional sports and media and life in Manhattan and suburban New Jersey. Featuring fascinating, if not entirely credible, characters and situations, his tale is crammed with amusing popular culture references, worshipful of Woody Allen, disdainful of the music of Kenny G, Maria Carey, Michael Bolton, and their ilk. Coben writes lovely passages about the magic of baseball and the heaven of growing up in Livingston, New Jersey. Except for assuming familiarity with Bolitar's previous case, he presents a fast-paced, highly entertaining yarn equal to the best sports mysteries, such as Crabbe Evers' Duffy House series and Troy Soos' Mickey Rawlings novels.

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