




ELLERY QUEEN

Face to Face

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The only clue to the murder of Gloria Guild, the singing Glory of the Thirties, is her dying scrawl of the word face. Why face? Whose face? Ellery Queen pursues the Glory riddle from the Bowery to a way-out wedding -- and a surprise climax that will jolt you into cold shock. Any reader who nails this killer is a genius or a cheat.

Face to Face Details

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Author : Ellery Queen

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Tony says

FACE TO FACE. (1967). Ellery Queen. ***1/2.

This may have been one of the last mysteries written by the famous duo known as Ellery Queen. It is a slick mystery in the old style – that of providing sufficient clues so that the reader can solve it himself. I was not able to do so myself, though I had my suspicions. When Gloria Guild was found shot to death in her dressing room, the only obvious clue was what she had managed to scrawl upon a paper that was on her desk. The clue was “f-a-c-e.” When our detective team attempted to work out its meaning, they consistently came up with a blank. What could it all mean? Through a series of uncovering known associates of Ms. Guild began, we meet quite a few potential suspects. It was further confusing that all of the suspects each had logical reasons for killing her. At stake was the inheritance of a significant amount of money through her will. We’re talking about one-million dollars – give or take odd change here or there. The key to the solutions of this crime, however, was persistence. The younger Ellery gnawed at this case with unceasing attention. His father, the elder Queen, was less persistent, and had to follow the lead of his son. Together, however, the two finally came up with the only possible solution that met all the criteria for reasonableness. This was a well-crafted book, one that fully involved the reader in the solution of its crime.

Bogdina says

Ellery Queen seems dirty. The way the female characters were written bothered me. I like the Rex Stout books better.

Cocodras says

Entretenido, para un viaje en el que se tienen dificultades para concentrarse. Más flojo de lo que esperaba.

Eadie says

I like Ellery Queen but in his novels the killer is almost always a little too obvious. Queen tips his hat way too early in this novel. It's still a very good novel and worth a read if you're a fan of Ellery Queen's books.

William Ritch says

Quite a good mystery. I had a couple of suspects near the end - and I caught the subtle clue. This is a late-term Ellery Queen, taking place in the post-Kennedy 60s. I really liked it.

Jeffrey Marks says

A good, but not great EQ. A serviceable plot, though padded at times, the story is fairly straight-forward. A nice touch is the number of references to the early EQ books. Mentions of the Roman theatre, JJ McQ, and Siamese Twins appear in this late EQ title.

LA Bourgeois says

I'd seen the Ellery Queen show sometime in my youth, and when a friend of mine lent me her copy of this book, I gobbled it up. The writing is totally period and fun, with the authors' tongue stuck firmly in his cheek. A couple of damsels in distress, the hardnosed cop dad, and the smart and dashing young detective son along with his hapless friend round out the cast of an entertaining bit of fluff for a quiet snowy afternoon.

Michaela Dunaway says

Lovely story over all, but I had a niggling feeling I knew who the murderer was a little less than half way through the book. In the end, I was right.

Jack Chapman says

Another entry from the later EQ canon written in 1967 - Jack Vance, a terrific and stylish writer, rather than Manfred Lee is rumoured to have ghost-written from Frederick Dannay's plot outline - but apart from Ellery's friendship with one blatantly camp character the author(s) make it clear they're not at all engaged in the swinging sixties. I narrowed the killer down to one of two suspects quite early on but the mystery (as usual with EQ) was fair enough. The 'gubbins' that lies behind the 'face to face' title however is exceptionally ridiculous and unconvincing.

Jim says

I vaguely recall reading some short Ellery Queen stories many years ago & seeing a few episodes of a TV series that was kind of fun, so when I saw my library had these as audio books, I thought I'd give them a try. I listened to a bit of the narration & really liked it, but I was ultimately terribly disappointed. 1.5 stars is the best I can do. I'm giving it 2 stars simply so I'll give another a try in the future.

To sum it up in a word - misogynistic. Coming from me, that's damning. It's not a word I use often since I don't think it is used properly most of the time. This book was published in 1967, but it's #31 in the series. The first was published in 1929, so I don't expect women to be treated equally. That's the times, but this story went out of its way to denigrate women. Boob size, pretty faces, & riches were their measure & the core of the story line. It was taken for granted that they were otherwise too stupid to tie their shoe laces, save for one

ugly old lady who was quite savvy & kept very secondary.

Also (I will not say worse, although it should be, so that gives you an idea how bad the misogyny was.) the big mystery was obvious about 2/3 of the way through. The last third dragged while Ellery brooded about it & then brings it to light at the very end at the worst possible moment. If I was the Scot, I'd have broken his nose.

I have #7 The Siamese Twin Mystery & might try that at a future date, but it had better be a lot better or I won't finish it. I barely made it through this one as I kept waiting for some sort of great ending. I didn't get it. My recommendation is to skip it.

J. Clayton Rogers says

In my younger days, meaning ancient times, I enjoyed a number of the Ellery Queen mysteries. I picked up this last (I believe) written by the duo, after a long hiatus when the books were written by others, and was sorely disappointed. It's terribly contrived (although I understand first hand how difficult to make a who-done-it sound plausible) and the murderess is all but announced 4/5 of the way through the book--although the detective acts as though he doesn't know the answer. I'll have to go back and pick up some of the older volumes, to see if they were really as good as I remembered.

Carrie says

This is my first Ellery novel. It wasn't the worst I've seen in this respect, but the characters are pretty oblivious to major clues or possibilities that stare the reader in the face (no bad pun intended) the entire time. Also, it follows in the grand '40s tradition of females that are either stupid sheep or vampish, born from misogynistic paranoia and fear of women. I can handle that in a great film noir but this book isn't worth your time.
