

# The Egyptian Cross Mystery

*Ellery Queen*

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## The Egyptian Cross Mystery Ellery Queen

A new series of classic facsimile reprints selected and introduced by the internationally renowned editor and mystery expert Otto Penzler. - The Egyptian Cross Mystery has justly been called Ellery Queens weirdest adventure. On Christmas Eve, an eccentric schoolmaster in the little town of Arroyo, West Virginia was brutally murdered. Over the next year, three other men were found with their heads cut off, crucified likewise in the form of a T. Ellery Queen had the feeling that there was only one clue he didnt possess and that clue came to him with the fourth murder.

## The Egyptian Cross Mystery Details


Date : Published April 5th 1983 by Signet (first published June 7th 1932)

ISBN : 9780451122407

Author : Ellery Queen

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# From Reader Review The Egyptian Cross Mystery for online ebook

## Fernando Delfim says

"Enfim, a causa do ódio era a costumada: mulheres e dinheiro."

"A chave de um mistério está mais vezes na boca de uma pessoa que julga não ser ouvida do que no desenvolvimento do mais arguto raciocínio."

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## Diane says

“The most pitiful Christmas story of the year was revealed today when the beheaded body of Andrew Van, 46-year-old schoolmaster of the little West Virginia hamlet of Arroyo, was discovered crucified to the signpost on a lonely crossroads near the village early Christmas morning.

Four-inch iron spikes had been driven into the upturned palms of the victim, impaling them to the tips of the signpost's weatherbeaten arms. Two other spikes transfixed the dead man's ankles, which were set close together at the foot of the upright. Under the armpits two more spikes had been driven, supporting the weight of the dead man in such a way that, his head having been hacked off, the corpse resembled nothing so much as a great letter T.

The signpost formed a T. The crossroads formed a T. On the door of Van's house, not far from the crossroads, the murdered had scrawled a T in his victim's blood. And on the signpost the maniac's conception of a human T...”

(Excerpt from newspaper article on what would come to be known as the first of “The Egyptian Cross Murders.”)

No one has ever seen anything like this. Van was eccentric, but inoffensive. He had no enemies or friends. His only close associate was his servant/handyman, Kling, who has also vanished without a trace. The district attorney, coroner, and law enforcement of Arroyo and Hancock County have no idea how to deal with this.

Ellery Queen hears about the bizarre murder and promptly goes to Arroyo. However, his investigation, though it turns up some interesting facts, doesn't really solve the crime. Ellery returns home to New York, thinking he has heard the last of the odd murder...Then six months later he receives a telegram from an old professor that ends:

“MY NEIGHBOR FOUND CRUCIFIED TO HIS TOTEM POST WITH HEAD MISSING STOP I SHALL EXPECT YOU TODAY.  
YARDLEY”

It has started again.

This is probably the most bloody of the Ellery Queen novels, but it's pretty tame by today's standards. The plot is complicated and twisted. This is one mystery that had me completely stumped until the end. The plot reminded me somewhat of *The Three Coffins* (a/k/a "The Hollow Man") by John Dickson Carr – someone flees a dark, violent past, only to be hunted down. "Egyptian Cross" is a wonderfully dark tale with a strong paranoid streak running through it. You literally do not know whom to trust. The terror is palpable. The only weak spots are the two romances involving secondary characters, which really just get in the way. Those characters could have been left out and the story would not have suffered.

Of all the Ellery Queens, this is probably my favorite. Very recommended.

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### **Jokoloyo says**

This is my first novel where the author challenge readers explicitly to guess the culprit. And coincidentally this novel is my first Ellery Queen's novel that I've ever read.

After finish the book, I noticed the first publishing year was 1932! The trick was so fresh for me, this is one of mystery whodunnit novel that highly influence my taste.

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### **Claudia says**

Still a fun read, but the overbearingly superior attitude of the male characters towards the women got a little grating at times - surprisingly so, because Elley Queen has written some feisty girls who can definitely stand up for themselves. But not in this book.

This was also the first Queen where I guessed the murderer correctly, which took a bit of the fun out of it; and some of the deductions and leaps of logic were a little too drastic and incredible. All in all a solid mystery and I did enjoy it, but not the best Ellery Queen I've read.

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### **Jan C says**

Really weird. Even for Ellery Queen.

And I was stumped.

Ellery asks the reader do we know who it is because he does. Clue staring me right in the face and I missed it.

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## **Mmyoung says**

In this book the writers Ellery Queen (as opposed to the fictional author Ellery Queen) can be seen to be working toward as less Philo Vancish lead character while still in the thralls of concocting overly ornate murders. Queen (the fictional character) still talks far too much and says far too little. The book would be a good third shorter if only he said what he meant, the first time, and without circumlocution. The entire books/story/plot would fall apart were not Queen, the other characters and apparently the readers as well, ignorant of that part of the world that the genesis of the tale is supposedly set in. In order to captivate the reader Queen and Professor Yardley must react (not much more than a decade after the end of the Great War) as if parts of Europe were separated from America by centuries as well as distance and as if a blood soaked crime scene and a decapitation bespoke brutality beyond any of the pogroms of recent history.

Perhaps the irritation of this reviewer is increased by the fact she found the solution to the crime obvious a good forty pages before it was unveiled and suspected it long before that--consequently found much of the book transparently an exercise in biding time and haring off after irrelevancies.

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## **Phoebes says**

Sarà per gli omicidi truculenti, sarà per la storia che ha radici nel passato dei protagonisti, sarà perché ho indovinato l'assassino (ieeeeeee!!!!), sarà perché effettivamente questo romanzo è migliore degli altri della serie che ho letto, fatto sta che mi è piaciuto molto di più, e sono stata per un po' indecisa se dargli o no 5 stelline. Alla fine ho optato per le quattro, ma comunque veramente un bel romanzo giallo.

<http://www.naufragio.it/iltempodilegg...>

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## **Luffy says**

What the hell! How can I never find the murderer in Ellery Queen books?

A breathtaking book. Wonderful. This book deserves more readership. It is a very clever and exotic plot and all of it works. The first crime is glossed over, but its significance overshadows the buildup to the next, more sinister crime. There are bland passages when the hippies show up. But Harakht is a funny character, albeit a tragic one too. Ellery Queen's deductions are flawless and I wish I had deduced from THAT clue (the bottle) the murderer's identity.

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## **Pamela says**

These early Queen's just aren't as good as the later ones. Not to say they are unreadable, they just don't have that crisp clarity that the later ones have.

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## **Dolceluna says**

Mio secondo Ellery Queen dopo il bellissimo "Il gatto dalle molte code" le cui atmosfere pensavo di ritrovare anche qua. Invece niente. Sono costretta a bollarlo come insufficiente: una trama confusa e subito dimenticata, una superficiale caratterizzazione dei personaggi, un' ambientazione un po' spiazzante (che diventa qualcosa a metà fra la montagna e un' isola sperduta con una spiaggia di nudisti) che secondo me ha ben poco a vedere con quelle dei bei gialli classici, poca atmosfera. Insomma, una delusione. Peccato. So che gli autori sono due geni dei meccanismi del giallo classico, pertanto non credo, dopo questo scivolone, che il mio interesse nei loro confronti si esaurisca qui.

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## **Aidan says**

This novel is the first to take Ellery out of New York and his usual set-up with his father Richard and manservant Djuna. I struggled a little to get into the book at first with its lengthy coroner's sequence and several moments of smugness from Ellery but once another person dies in a different state in the same way the case became much more interesting to me.

The book adopts a far more action-focused conclusion than I have found in the previous Ellery stories with the final chapters setting up a race against time for the detectives to catch their suspect. These sequences are exciting and help keep the reader engaged in the run up to the moment where Ellery reveals what happened.

While it may not be perfect and I have to admit that the first tenth of the book underwhelmed me, I was more entertained by this than I have been with any of its predecessors. It is a clever story that plays fair, that works to keep the reader engaged throughout the whole novel and that builds to an exciting conclusion.

For a much more detailed review see my [blog](#)

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## **Mariana says**

Y lo terminé. Estuvo genial.

Me encantó que Ellery Queen además de ser el escritor, fuese también un personaje (y qué buen personaje!) y que hasta dijera que escribiría luego una novela sobre el caso.

Y qué decir del profesor Yardley, me cayó súper bien desde el principio. Esta dupla Queen-Yardley no tiene mucho que envidiar a Sherlock y a Watson.

Una novela policiaca única, exquisita.

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## **Bill Suits says**

This was great and really different than other books. I almost figured it all out, too.

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## **Nerea says**

Not going to lie, it took me a bit to get into the book, I wasn't familiar with the writing style and even though the book starts in a very macabre and shocking way, it took some time for the plot to really take off for me; but when it did I really enjoyed the story. The crime is complicated and obscure but it makes sense even if till the end you can't tie all the loose ends, there are no plot holes and everything it's explained well. I've liked the main character, Ellery Queen, his intelligence and how he isn't your conventional detective. The rest of the characters were also intriguing and the background schemes didn't turn the plot messy, they actually added to it making it more entertaining. I've liked how since the first moment we know the name of the murderer but how, regardless, the suspense it's maintained till the end. Also as a curiosity I've liked how the author asks the readers about their theories when we are getting to the resolution of the story, and also the last paragraph in the book that was a bit Meta but also a funny gesture toward the reader.

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## **Jeffrey says**

Originally published in 1932, this classic novel is from the Golden Age of the "fair play" mystery.

All of the suspects, alibis, and clues are there for the reader to solve the mystery with no short cuts or cheating by the author.

Ellery Queen was the pen name of two cousins, Frederic Dannay and Manfred B. Lee, and their first book, *The Roman Hat Mystery* was published in 1928. The famous mystery magazine still bears Ellery Queen's name.

This is wonderful old-school fare that Agatha Christie fans should love.

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