



Poets and Murder: A Judge Dee Mystery

Robert van Gulik

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Judge Dee, the master detective of seventh-century China, sets out to solve a puzzling double murder and discovers complex passions lurking beneath the placid surface of academic life. A mild-mannered student is rumored to have been slain by a fox-demon, while a young dancer meets her death as she dresses to perform for the magistrate's illustrious dinner guests—an obese Zen monk revered for his calligraphy, a beautiful poetess accused of murder, and the past president of the imperial academy. To connect the present crimes with betrayals and adulteries from decades past, the clever judge must visit a high-class brothel and the haunted shrine of the Black Fox. From the moment the young scholar is found dead on the eve of the Autumn Festival, the pace never lets up.

"The China of old, in Mr. van Gulik's skilled hands, comes vividly alive again."—Allen J. Hubin, *New York Times Book Review*

"If you have not yet discovered Judge Dee, I envy you that initial pleasure. . . . For the magistrate of Pooyang belongs in that select group headed by Sherlock Holmes."—Robert Kirsch, *Los Angeles Times*



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