

## Who Dun It? Mysteries

**T**he game's afoot! Can you discover the true identity of the thief? Who is the killer? Which suspects can be eliminated? The following mysteries appeal to today's YA readers, in part, due to that game mentality. Don't forget to check out the Edgar Allan Poe Web site for lists of winning titles in the category of best juvenile and young adult mystery (<http://www.mysterywriters.org/awards.html>).

*Close to a Killer.* Marsha Qualey. Laurel Leaf, 2000. 192 pp. Barrie's ex-con mom owns Killer Looks, a beauty salon staffed by her former prison mates—all in for murder. When two new murders happen, fingers immediately point toward Killer Looks employees. But Barrie has other ideas about who is responsible.

*Deathwatch.* Robb White. Laurel Leaf, 1973. 223 pp. Needing money for school, a college boy accepts a job as guide on a hunting trip in the desert and nearly loses his life as he becomes the hunted.

*Face on the Milk Carton.* Caroline Cooney. Doubleday, 1996. 184 pp. When Janie sees a photo of herself as a child looking back from an ad for missing children on a carton of milk, she is puzzled. Why was she reported as missing as a child? This is the first in a series of books about Janie and her rediscovered past.

*Fatality.* Caroline Cooney. Scholastic, 2001. 176 pp. Four years ago, Rose was invited to spend the

weekend at Angelica's home. She had planned to just enjoy the luxury, but somebody ended up dead. Now the police are reopening the case. They find Rose's diary and she has to get it back.

*For Mike.* Shelley Sykes. Delacorte, 1998. 197 pp. When Jeff's best friend Mike disappears, Jeff knows he has to find out what happened. He keeps having disturbing dreams in which Mike says, "Come get me." Then Jeff begins to uncover a secret life of Mike's, one he knew nothing about.

*Ghost Canoe.* Will Hobbs. William Morrow, 1997. 160 pp. After a ship crashes off Cape Flattery, Nathan refuses to believe there were no survivors—too many unexplained things are happening. He sets off to search for clues and uncovers a mystery of treasure, betrayal, and murder.

*Ghost in the Tokaido Inn.* Dorothy Hoobler. Philomel, 1999. 214 pp. In Japan in 1735, Seikei dreams of becoming a samurai—impossible because he is a merchant's son. But after a theft at the Tokaido Inn, samurai Judge Ooka calls on Seikei to help catch the thief.

*Killer's Cousin.* Nancy Werlin. Delacorte, 1998. 229 pp. Acquitted of murdering his girlfriend, David moves in with some relatives to finish school and make a fresh start. Yet, David finds no peace—his 11-year-old cousin maliciously harasses him. Maybe he's not the only killer in the family.

*Killing Mr. Griffin.* Lois Duncan. Laurel Leaf, 1976. 223 pp. A group of students kidnap their teacher to "teach him a lesson," but their plans go awry when he accidentally dies, leaving them in a

jumble of lies, guilt, and fear. This is a chilling tale from a master of suspense.

*Locked Inside.* Nancy Werlin. Delacorte, 2000. 240 pp. Marnie would rather be in Paleopolis, an Internet game, than in the real world. But closing herself off doesn't mean she's safe. Kidnapped and locked inside an empty basement, Marnie confronts painful truths about herself and her mother, as she desperately tries to escape.

*The Man Who Was Poe.* Avi. Orchard Books, 1989. 224 pp. Edmund has come to Boston to search for his mother. He is accompanied by his younger sister and his aunt, Edmund's mother's twin sister. His aunt disappears leaving the two children to fend for themselves. In desperation, Edmund seeks help from a Mr. Dupin, Poe himself, who must help solve a locked room mystery.

*Never Trust a Dead Man.* Vivian Vande Velde. Harcourt Brace, 1999. 192 pp. In this medieval whodunit, Selwyn is wrongfully convicted of murdering Farold, and is thrown in a cave with the corpse. A witch helps Selwyn escape and brings Farold back to life. Selwyn must join forces with Farold to find the real killer.

*The Other Side of Dark.* Joan Lowery Nixon. Delacorte, 1986. 185 pp. Stacy wakes up to discover she's been in a coma for nearly four years. Her mother was murdered—and Stacy, who was also shot, was the only one who saw the killer. Will Stacy find the killer before the killer finds her?

*Prophecy Rock.* Rob MacGregor. Laurel Leaf, 1995. 207 pp. Visiting his Hopi tribal police chief father, Will Lansa is drawn into an unusual murder investigation that may be linked to a powaqu, a powerful witch, and the mystery brings Will closer to his Hopi heritage. A sequel is *Hawk Moon*.

*Sammy Keyes and the Hollywood Mummy.* Wendelin Van Draanen. Knopf, 2001. 256 pp. Girl detective Sammy heads for Hollywood to surprise her elusive, soap opera-star-wannabe mother. When

one of her mother's neighbors is murdered, Sammy must sort through the Hollywood hype to find out who committed the crime.

*Shadow-Catcher.* Betty Levin. Greenwillow, 2000. 160 pp. In 1892, Jonathan is sent to look after his mysterious grandfather, a traveling photographer. Grandpa shoots an image of a puzzling struggle on the river that comes back to haunt them when a stranger shows an uncommon interest in the undeveloped negatives.

*Skullduggery.* Kathleen Karr. Hyperion, 2000. 160 pp. Matthew's joy at landing a job with phrenologist Dr. ABC dims considerably when he must dig up skulls for the doctor's research. When Cornwall wants to add some renowned skulls to his collection, they find themselves pursued by a malevolent professional grave robber.

*Swallowing Stones.* Joyce McDonald. Bantam, 1997. 256 pp. The best day of Michael's life becomes the worst when the bullet he fires into the air comes down a mile away and kills a man. He hides the evidence and tries to forget. Meanwhile, the police are closing in.

*Tightrope.* Gillian Cross. Holiday House, 1999. 208 pp. Good girl Ashley has a secret alter ego, "Cindy," the in-your-face graffiti artist who tags walls all over her urban neighborhood. Ashley's daring attracts the notice of the local gang leader—then she begins to receive threats addressed directly to Cindy.

*The Trouble with Lemons.* Daniel Hayes. Juniper, 1995. 183 pp. Tyler McAllister has always felt like an outsider, but when he and his friend Lymie discover the dead body of the school janitor, he decides to put aside his fears of being different and investigate the death.

*Twisted Summer.* Willo Davis Roberts. Atheneum, 1996. 156 pp. Fourteen-year-old Cici hopes for a romantic summer at the beach with long-time crush Jack, but instead finds herself trying to solve



a murder that occurred there the previous year—one Jack's brother is accused of committing.

*Viking Claw: A Finnegan Zwake Mystery.* Michael Dahl. Pocket Books, 2001. 162 pp. Finn and his uncle head to the Haunted City of Tquuli, where Finn's parents were last seen before their odd disappearance. Finn doesn't believe the creepy legends of the ancient Vikings, until members of his expedition begin disappearing.

*Who Killed Mr. Chippendale?* Mel Glenn. Lodestar, 1996. 100 pp. When an English teacher is murdered at school, everyone has a story to tell. This murder mystery is told in poems from the students and staff of Tower High School. One of the narrators might be the murderer! Other Glenn books following this format include *Split Image*, *Foreign Exchange*, *The Taking of Room 114*, and *Jump Ball*.

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#### SOME INTERNET SITES OF INTEREST TO BIBLIOPHILES

[www.ala.org/alsc](http://www.ala.org/alsc). Association of Library Services to Children of the American Library Association. This site will announce the winners of the Newbery, Caldecott, Coretta Scott King, Pura Belpre, and Sibert awards as well as the 2001 Notable Books for Children about mid-January.

[www.ala.org/yalsa](http://www.ala.org/yalsa). Young Adult Library Services Association of the American Library Association. This site will announce the winners of the Margaret A. Edwards Award (for lifetime achievement to a YA author), the Michael Printz Awards (for best YA literature), and the Best Books for Young Adults and Quick Picks for Reluctant Readers lists, among others. Look for the announcements in mid-January.

<http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/top100bannedbooks.html>. American Library Association's Office of Intellectual Freedom. This site features the list of the most frequently banned books from the 1990s. Take a stance against censorship.

<http://tln.lib.mi.us/~amutch/jen/>. Reading Rants! An off-beat booklist site maintained by YA librarian and reader, Jennifer Huber. Look here for recommendations on recent YA books as well as loads of lists on a variety of themes, topics, and issues.

<http://www.aaronshep.com/>. Looking for new ways to present book "reports" in the classroom? Have a hunch that getting kids up and moving might help solve some discipline problems? Want to bring literature to life for your students? Visit Aarom Shepard's Web site on readers theater for scripts, tips, and much more.

<http://www.bookfinder.com/>. If you need to find out-of-print books, look here.