



The Lacquer Screen: A Chinese Detective Story (Judge Dee Mystery)

Robert van Gulik

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Early in his career, Judge Dee visits a senior magistrate who shows him a beautiful lacquer screen on which a scene of lovers has been mysteriously altered to show the man stabbing his lover. The magistrate fears he is losing his mind and will murder his own wife. Meanwhile, a banker has inexplicably killed himself, and a lovely lady has allowed Dee's lieutenant, Chiao Tai, to believe she is a courtesan. Dee and Chiao Tai go incognito among a gang of robbers to solve this mystery, and find the leader of the robbers is more honorable than the magistrate.

"One of the most satisfyingly devious of the Judge Dee novels, with unusual historical richness in its portrayal of the China of the T'ang dynasty."—*New York Times Book Review*

"Even Judge Dee is baffled by Robert van Gulik's new mysteries in *The Lacquer Screen*. Disguised as a petty crook, he spends a couple of precarious days in the headquarters of the underworld, hobnobbing with the robber king. Dee's lively thieving friends furnish some vital clues to this strange and fascinating jigsaw."—*The Spectator*

"So scrupulously in the classic Chinese manner yet so nicely equipped with everything to satisfy the modern reader."—*New York Times*

Robert Van Gulik (1910-67) was a Dutch diplomat and an authority on Chinese history and culture. He drew his plots from the whole body of Chinese literature, especially from the popular detective novels that first appeared in the seventeenth century.

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