

Spider

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a young woman goes to an isolated warwickshire monastery to visit her brother who is a monk there her sister drops her off at the door the girl meets her brother in the parlour they say goodbye and part and she is never seen again a search of the buildings and grounds finally reveals her body buried in a shallow grave in the monastery cemetery the monks however have a cast iron alibi they were all in chapel at the time of her death then the abbot receives a mysterious telephone call a man s voice threatens to hand evidence of the murder to the police and so incriminate one of the monks unless the monastery puts up for public auction its most treasured possession a unique mediaeval manuscript and donates the proceeds to charity is this blackmail or a hoax as the events unfold the inspector and his sergeant become less and less sure of what is fact and what is

fiction and the inspector begins to fear for his newly won promotion the case takes him to a castle in italy a town house in southern france a laboratory in cambridge and the home of a professor of music outside lincoln but the solution arrives unexpectedly in his own sitting room in this stylish story written in the classic tradition of british detective fiction the author intrigues informs and entertains in equal measure book reviews online publishedbestsellers website

on the morning following the feast of st giles 1 september 1966 the bishop of worcester the right reverend giles wyndham brookes is found slumped and lifeless in his study at hartlebury castle his official residence the doors and windows are securely locked from the inside and on his desk is a fifteenth century book in middle french and gothic script which he could not read he had seemingly tripped on an edge of carpet and hit his head on the fender but there is a distinct whiff of murder in the air the immediate suspects are the members of his household his wife the chaplain the secretary the housekeeper his almoner and the archdeacon of worcester others including a woman found casting spells in the castle grounds a young italian lurking at night in the bishop s chapel and a suggested unknown late night visitor appear in the course of the investigation inspector wickfield and his sergeant embark on a roller coaster tour of the anglican church in a search for motive and for a cunning killer there are forays into naples relics assassination locked room mysteries the cult of the saints wicca and blue moons follow the inspector if you dare but hold on to your hats in this latest offering from the pen of the adept julius falconer you will be instructed entertained and intrigued in equal measure book reviews online publishedbestsellers website

inspector wickfield and sergeant hewitt find themselves caught up in a saga of murder illicit money making and racist thuggery a young girl s body is found one morning on the banks of a canal with help from a clairvoyant the trail leads the investigating officers to london and thence to reading and augsburg they find themselves mixing with butchers decorators fashion retailers dentists and the leisured rich bargees ex cons and bilingual administrators but the mythical and mysterious zedler who seems to hold all the threads in his hands eludes them is he the moving force behind the british league a right wing political movement whose aim is to keep foreigners out of britain is he the brains behind the counterfeiting operations is he the murderer wickfield finds out with a little help from his wife who fortunately has a better insight into robinson crusoe than he does as always with julius falconer you the reader are given all the information available to the detective officers and the vital clue is there for you

to spot if you are up to it take your time enjoy the many detours and red herrings the literary allusions the religious and philosophical byways the silver smooth english and keep your eye on the ball if you can you are guaranteed a stimulating read
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a police investigation into the violent death of a part time cathedral verger stalls for lack of incriminating evidence however three people have a close interest in clearing the matter up where the police have failed the victim s sister and two suspects released without charge and eager to clear their names

fancy a bit of political theory mixed up with your murder a group of danish students with daring plans for a new world order a scam involving some missing music scores wolf ravens in scandinavian folklore then this is the book for you inspector wickfield and sergeant hewitt are invited to take on the investigation into the murder of a woman in the st john s wood area of london the metropolitan police have arrested her husband and although he vigorously protests his innocence wickfield like his colleagues before him finds it difficult to believe him the investigation takes a different turn when the inhabitants of a sleepy manor house in gloucestershire are outraged by the appearance of a dog s head and a dead rook mounted on a spike in their drive follow the inspector in an intricate and baffling investigation in which only a brainwave saves his reputation allow the narrator to lead you by the hand or possibly by the nose until it may be the light dawns on you before it dawns on the inspector gracious english dry wit learned asides well researched background all the falconer hallmarks are here book reviews online publishedbestsellers website

when lady amelia walden is murdered at monk fryston hall hotel in yorkshire on the night of her eightieth birthday the chief suspect is robert purbright a bachelor in his fifties engaged at farlington hall the ancestral walden mansion to catalogue her extensive collection of stamps at his trial the prosecution allege that he was creaming off choice specimens for himself and that his employer was beginning to have her suspicions exposure would have brought his career to an unpleasant end the jury however find him not guilty enraged by their obtuseness lady amelia s son toby vows to prove them wrong the detective inspector who had been in charge of the investigation walter moat admits to toby walden in a strictly off the record conversation that the police had made a poor case but he also lays some of the blame on counsel for the prosecution for not

fully exploiting the evidence despite his best amateur efforts walden does no better until a second murder offers more promising openings a book by freud and an iroquois legend conspire to raise walden s hopes of finally getting purbright convicted but will raised hopes be enough all the hall marks of falconer are here velvet smooth english well shaped narrative erudite allusions and a rich surplus of thought provoking obiter dicta in short intelligent entertainment at its finest for the connoisseur

a suicide before the first world war a university career cut short by drink and debt a missed business opportunity family antagonisms a threat to jobs on the estate all give the inspector some food for thought until he rumbles the one tiny mistake that leads to the unmasking of a killer

one february evening in the year 1968 fr wilfred the parish priest of the sacred heart catholic church in droitwich tumbles out of his confessional stabbed to death his older sister demands the best detective in the force and stan wickfield is appointed to the case unfortunately he cannot identify either the means or the motive of the murder much less the perpetrator his investigation leads him through the highways and byways of tensions in the catholic church in the wake of the second vatican council and brings him face to face with anti catholic sentiment in the local population his suspects include an eccentric and learned septuagenarian spinster who quotes d azeglio every time they meet a school technician rejected for the priesthood because of his sexuality the custodian of kenilworth castle and a bookmaker with a taste for anti papal sentiment motives for the priest s death waver confusingly between contempt for his office disapproval of a teenage indiscretion personal hatred and suicide wickfield is at his wits end until his wife s reading a novella by nicholas montserrat prods him towards a triumphant solution the story comes to a dramatic climax in two sermons preached by the dead priest s curate fr gabriel julius falconer never fails to write serious and stimulating stories with humour a wealth of researched detail and subtle plots book reviews online publishedbestsellers website

it is august 1974 a respected teacher at a private girls school in rural worcestershire adrian carrick physically attracted to one of the sixth form leavers discloses his feelings for her convinced that he has mishandled their final meeting he writes her a letter of regret and then kills himself by leaping over the edge of a quarry the coroner s verdict is suicide while the balance of his

mind is disturbed not all is as it appears however and inspector wickfield is called in to take a look his investigation leads him to venice where carrick seemingly led a double life as the owner of an art gallery which acted as a base for international crime to st gallen and bologna to hereford and birmingham to pershore and the suburbs of worcester without significant success a second murder adds increasing urgency to the case interleaved in the investigation are the members of mr carrick s philosophy class in particular the girl who had caught carrick s eye the case is solved through two startling pieces of intuition which confirm the inspector s place at the top of his profession and his wife beth as his steady muse in mr carrick is laid to rest julius falconer has again provided the discerning public with a tightly woven deft and thought provoking novel in the best traditions of british detective fiction it will defy your efforts to put it down and inspector wickfield will take his place in the pantheon of greats book reviews online publishedbestsellers website

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