



## The Bloodied Ivy

*Robert Goldsborough*

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**The Bloodied Ivy** Robert Goldsborough

Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin go back to college to investigate a campus death in this first paperback edition of the acclaimed hardcover that earned Goldsborough praise from critics and Nero fans alike for his faithful, fun-filled re-creation of the stout sleuth.

## The Bloodied Ivy Details

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Author : Robert Goldsborough

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## From Reader Review The Bloodied Ivy for online ebook

### Victoria Mixon says

You know, considering I generally hate anyone who tries to glom onto a great author's characters for their own pecuniary advancement, I'm willing to give Goldsborough credit for this one--he did a heck of a job.

Of course, as much as I love some of the original Nero Wolfe mysteries, I know Rex Stout himself didn't always maintain the high calibre of wit for which he's so rightfully famous. ("I felt like a long morning at the alphabet piano, no I didn't.") Goldsborough's wit isn't up there with the best of Stout, but it's not below the level of Stout's middle-ground, either. And his characterizations of Goodwin & Wolfe are perfect.

I also think it's a good thing if a mystery writer can convince us the murder's impossible to solve from the get-go, as in, in this case, because it wasn't really a murder. Was it? Nice touch, Robert.

Of course, there *is* no bloodied ivy, just some branches snapped in a nasty tone of voice.

But who ever pays attention to the titles of pulp mysteries, anyway?

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### Anand Ganapathy says

Pretty good book by Goldsborough. I would have rated it a 4 had the last chapter packed in Rex Stout's characteristic punch.

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### Evgeny says

A well-known political science professor of Prescott University died in an accident.

Everybody was convinced it was not a murder. Everybody but his colleague and admirer. The only way to prove this was to ask a good detective to make thorough investigation. A good detective happens to be none other than Nero Wolfe who did not want to touch such a bad case with a ten-foot pole. Unfortunately he employs Archie Goodwin who has a real talent to persuade the lazy genius to work.

So Archie tried persuading his boss once. Then another time. Then another. Then another. Finally some drastic action taken by him forced Nero Wolfe to act. Yes, I am talking action from a guy who almost never leaves his house.

On the interesting note is the fact that not only the deceased was very right-leaning guy, he also had some student admirers. These days a professor with such views would be called fascist, racist (and sexist just for the good measure) by every single student and would be forced to resign on the spot. Times change; it seems the students of the eighties were more open-minded and less vocal.

While the new (as well as old) characters were quite interesting and recognizable from my experience in academia

the plot practically brought the book down. The only really interesting parts were Archie's efforts to make his

boss interested. The ending was a real lowdown. I do not think Rex Stout would ever allow himself to end any off his tale like this.

Still the true rating of the book is not 2 stars (it is better than that), but **2.5** - not quite good enough for 3. I will continue reading the series hoping this was a single and only hiccup of Robert Goldsborough.

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### **Kevin Findley says**

A good Wolfe tale by Goldsborough, but Archie's descriptions seemed just slightly off. Ah well, even a medium Nero Wolfe tale is better than most other so-called detectives in print today.

If you like the author, are a Wolfe completist, or just like a good mystery, you'll enjoy this one.

Read it!

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### **John Yeoman says**

Another very readable pastiche of Nero Wolfe, where all the familiar motifs are trotted out - Wolfe's quirks, Archie's wisecracks and Cramer's forever-to-be-unsmoked cigar. But the close is a whimper. It fails. It lacks that - gotcha! - twist that was Rex Stout's signature. The story is a cop out. Quite literally. (You'll understand why, if you read the story.) Why couldn't the murderer have turned out to be the university *cat*? It fits. (Read the story.) And Rex Stout would have made it work..

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### **Gabby says**

Trivia question: how many glasses of milk did Archie drink during the course of this book? Better trivia question: how many bottles of beer did Wolfe drain on his way to solving what may or may not be a crime of murder? BEST trivia question: how on earth did this book get published as a Nero Wolfe mystery? Answer to all three questions: I haven't got the first clue. For questions one and two, who the heck cares, but rest assured that every single solitary time either Archie or Wolfe got thirsty, we had to read about it. Was this information ever relevant to the story? Of course not. As for how this book got published as a continuation of the Nero Wolfe legacy? That should be a mystery for connoisseurs of the genre to debate for centuries to come.

Years ago I read a few of the Rex Stout version of Nero Wolfe, and while I thought Wolfe was often tedious and Archie was far too smug, there was something interesting about a guy who said that if it takes less than 30 minutes to make scrambled eggs, you aren't doing it right. The mental picture of a man who weighs one-seventh of a ton heaving himself into and out of the furniture was unpleasant, but okay, so the guy likes to eat. Then there's the bit about how he never, EVER leaves his brownstone except when he does which is in every single book, or at least he did in the books I read. All of that said, though, Wolfe was consistent in proving that you really don't have to get off your behind to do anything besides maybe tending orchids. Forget all that CSI stuff and toss forensics right out the window. All you really have to do to solve crimes is have a reliable gofer and a snappy vocabulary. (How many times can you fit "Brobdingnagian" into a sentence?) Then Rex Stout died, and Robert Goldsborough took over the Wolfe brand. In my opinion, that's the only criminal act worth mentioning in RG's rendition of Nero Wolfe. He's got all of Wolfe's

idiosyncrasies down pat; it's just that this is all he has to make his Wolfe books different from any other badly written mystery books. Beating readers over the head with Nero Wolfe's mannerisms doesn't make this book a Nero Wolfe mystery. It doesn't even make it a second rate ripoff.

I got this book years ago when I was in my Mystery Guild stage and let them send me the featured selection every month. I read some very good mysteries through that method of selection, and I discovered some very good authors. This book was definitely not one of them, and it's way too late to ask for my money back.

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### **Steven Abercrombie says**

Not quite Rex Stout, but certainly good enough... I will read Goldsborough's other Nero Wolfe novels.

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### **HBalikov says**

I really like natural black licorice candy. There is a lot of licorice candy out there, some using other ingredients that taste like licorice and others using "artificial" licorice flavor. But there is plenty of real licorice out there for almost the same cost, so why not buy it?

If you like Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe, you have plenty of stories (novels, novellas, short pieces) to read in the over 40 years that Stout cranked them out. If you are interested in Nero Wolfe, this isn't the place to start. Begin with *Fer-de-Lance* or *The League of Frighted Men* or the shorter stories of *Trouble in Triplicate*.

It's not that Goldsborough does a bad job. All the trademark riffs on Archie and Nero are in *The Bloodied Ivy*. Plenty of touchstones with: orchids, food, Fritz's fussiness, Cramer's ill-humor, Lon's Gazette, Saul's perfection. But, it's not the real thing. Stout rarely wrote to give his audience the power to solve the mystery and neither does Goldsborough. Here, the mystery is less than it should be. And, Nero is more complimentary to Archie than usual.

If you like Elvis Presley's songs, and The King isn't around to sing, maybe an impersonator will do.

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### **A.G. Lindsay says**

It's nice to read Archie and Co again, but the tone of the book was a little off. A bit too many polysyllabic words in the text (as opposed to the dialogue) for my taste, I think. Archie as narrator has seldom used "big words" and he seems to do so more than "usual" in this book. Even though this was very a Archie-centric mystery, I really felt the dearth of Wolfe's presence. Goldsborough seemed to give a part to every character in the Wolfe books EXCEPT Wolfe himself. (OK, slight exaggeration, but it really seemed that Fritz had more to say in this book than Wolfe did.)

Overall, however, I enjoyed the plot, the mystery, and the characters. It's not Rex Stout, but it's a fun read.

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### **Denise Kearney says**

I Book-\$1.99-Early Bird Books. Archie Goodwin dragging his boss Nero Wolfe into solving a murder on a college campus.

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### **Kay Hudson says**

I'm really enjoying Goldsborough's continuation of Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe series. This one was published in 1988, and Archie has finally acquired a computer--intended to manage Wolfe's orchid germination records, it also helps turn up a clue. In this entry, Archie takes on a case involving the death of a college professor, and Wolfe actually leaves the brownstone. With an introduction by Rex Stout's daughter.

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### **Ed says**

#3 in the Robert Goldsborough continuation of the 47 entry Nero Wolfe series by Rex Stout. Goldsborough does a good job copying Stout's style in the language of Wolfe and Archie Goodwin and their interaction. However, the premise used to have Nero leave his brownstone was atypically flimsy and the resolution of the mystery was somewhat unsatisfactory. A lightweight entry in the series but fans will enjoy the re-appearance of the usual cast of characters.

Nero Wolfe series - Nero Wolfe becomes involved only when Archie Goodwin investigates a controversial professor's death in upstate New York and lands in jail.

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### **Melanie Swift says**

I have to agree with other reviewers here that among Goldsborough's Nero Wolfe attempts, this was not his finest plot. However, in general he does an admirable job of capturing Stout's (Archie's) voice. And it was Stout's conscious, stated decision to always write in contemporary times without aging the characters. The original books spanned many decades, and when interviewed, Stout said he planned for Archie and Wolfe to always remain the same ages. So you can't fault Goldsborough for keeping with the tradition and bringing them into the 80's. Yes, milk and beer are ubiquitous, but how is that new? I tend to give the guy credit for having a genuine love for the characters and respect for the Wolfe universe. This is what fan fiction is all about, and the Stout family welcomes his efforts, so who are we to turn up our noses?

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### **Dalene Johnson says**

Robert Goldsborough has done a credible job of carrying on for Rex Stout with the Nero Wolfe series. I've read all of them. Rex Stout's characterizations of Archie Goodwin and Nero Wolfe created a reality I was saddened to leave once I had devoured more than 40 books of the series. As many others, I came to know them as admired friends. Goldsborough misses the mark sometimes with sloppy plotting and dialog inconsistent with Wolfe's erudition and I forgive him these shortcomings. In this particular effort, however, I was disappointed when he portrayed Archie as lascivious and inconstant to his long time lady friend, Lily Rowan. I doubt Stout would have approved either.

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## **Donna Jo Atwood says**

Archie is arrested out in the sticks and Nero Wolfe is pulled out of his brownstone comfort zone to go to the rescue. The death of a controversial college professor and, days later, of one of his students sets the scene for the detecting skills of the great one.

I have always loved the Nero Wolfe mysteries since I started reading them back mumble mumble years ago--in fact, I had a serious crush on Archie Goodwin for awhile. Goldsborough has done a nice job of continuing the tone of the original stories.

There has been an attempt to bring Archie into the computer age, but I'm not too sure that is as successful.

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