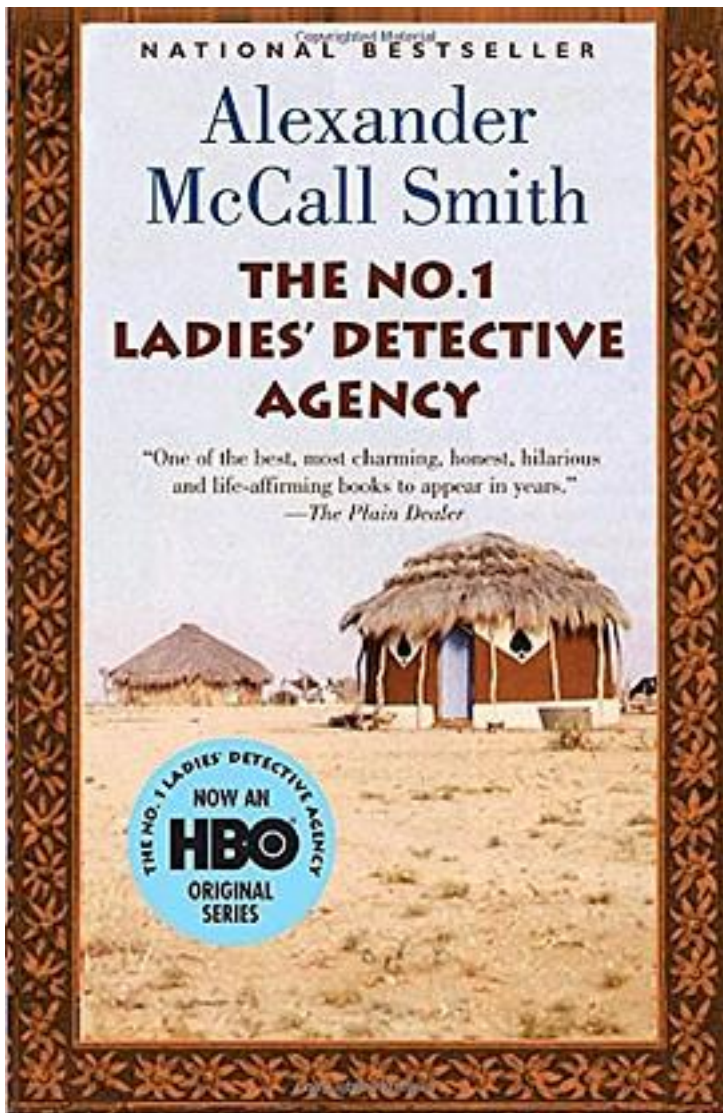


The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency



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著者:McCall Smith, Alexander

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Amazon.com Penzler Pick, July 2001: Working in a mystery tradition that will cause genre aficionados to think of such classic sleuths as Melville Davisson Post's Uncle Abner or Robert van Gulik's Judge Dee, Alexander McCall Smith creates an African detective, Precious Ramotswe, who's their full-fledged heir. It's the detective as folk hero, solving crimes through an innate, self-possessed wisdom that, combined with an understanding of human nature, invariably penetrates into the heart of a puzzle. If Miss Marple were fat and jolly and lived in Botswana--and decided to go against any conventional notion of what an unmarried woman should do, spending the money she got from selling her late father's cattle to set up a Ladies Detective Agency--then you have an idea of how Precious sets herself up as her country's first female detective. Once the clients start showing up on her doorstep, Precious enjoys a pleasingly successful series of cases. But the edge of the Kalahari is not St. Mary Mead, and the sign Precious orders, painted in brilliant colors, is anything but discreet. Pointing in the direction of the small building she had purchased to house her new business, it reads "THE NO. 1 LADIES DETECTIVE AGENCY. FOR ALL CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS AND ENQUIRIES. SATISFACTION GUARANTEED FOR ALL PARTIES. UNDER PERSONAL MANAGEMENT." The solutions she comes up with, whether in the case of the clinic doctor with two quite different personalities (depending on the day of the week), or the man who had joined a Christian sect and seemingly vanished, or the kidnapped boy whose bones may or may not be those in a witch doctor's magic kit, are all sensible, logical, and satisfying. Smith's gently ironic tone is full of good humor towards his lively, intelligent heroine and towards her fellow Africans, who live their lives with dignity and with cautious acceptance of the confusions to which the world submits them. Precious Ramotswe is a remarkable creation, and The No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency well deserves the praise it received from London's Times Literary Supplement. I look forward with great eagerness to the upcoming books featuring the memorable Miss Ramotswe, Tears of the Giraffe and Morality for Beautiful Girls, soon to be available in the U.S. --Otto Penzler--This text refers to the Paperback edition. From Publishers Weekly The African-born author of more than 50 books, from children's stories (The Perfect Hamburger) to scholarly works (Forensic Aspects of Sleep), turns his talents to detection in this artful, pleasing novel about Mma (aka Precious) Ramotswe, Botswana's one and only lady private detective. A series of vignettes linked to the establishment and growth of Mma Ramotswe's "No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency" serve not only to entertain but to explore conditions in Botswana in a way that is both penetrating and light thanks to Smith's deft touch. Mma Ramotswe's cases come slowly and hesitantly at first: women who suspect their husbands are cheating on them; a father worried that his daughter is sneaking off to see a boy; a missing child who may have been killed by witchdoctors to make medicine; a doctor who sometimes seems highly competent and sometimes seems to know almost nothing about medicine. The desultory pace is fine, since she has only a detective manual, the frequently cited example of Agatha Christie and her instincts to guide her. Mma Ramotswe's love of Africa, her wisdom and humor, shine through these pages as she shines her own light on the problems that vex her clients. Images of this large woman driving her tiny white van or sharing a cup of bush tea with a friend or client while working a case linger pleasantly. General audiences will welcome this little gem of a book just as much if not more than mystery readers. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc. See all Editorial Reviews

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