

# Splendid Executioner



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From Publishers Weekly This is the debut of an exceptionally talented writer, but the story's effects are blunted by his boring reliance on basic Anglo-Saxonisms and sexual antics beyond the kinky, into the absurd. The chief character is bibulous Pete Killharney, a columnist on a Manhattan daily, Apple, which publishes his annual Hit List: names of prominent citizens who engage in shady activities. The current list includes a crooked official, a slumlord, a TV evangelist and the secret owner of Times Square sleaze joints. As the result of Killharney's latest "J'accuse," an unseen avenger begins killing the hypocrites and the columnist joins the police in hunting the murderer. The suspense is unremitting, keeping readers on the ragged edge with episodes of violence and close shaves. In the denouement, Downey does justice to his original plot, possibly inspired by revelations about cynical deals "in the public

interest, " between criminals and U.S. intelligence agencies. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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