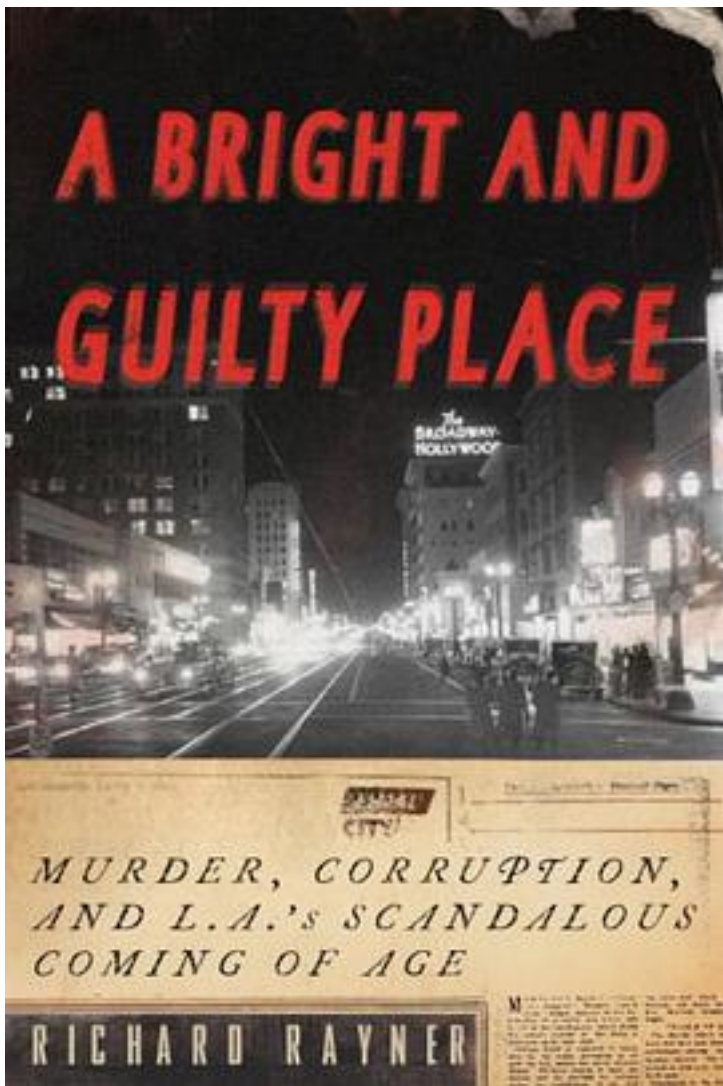


# A Bright and Guilty Place



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著者:Rayner, Richard

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A captivating chronicle of how the City of Angels lost its soul Los Angeles was the fastest growing city in the world, mad with oil fever, get-rich-quick schemes, celebrity scandals, and religious fervor. It was also rife with organized crime, with a mayor in the pocket of the syndicates and a DA taking bribes to throw trials. In *A Bright and Guilty Place*, Richard Rayner narrates the entwined lives of two men, Dave Clark and Leslie White, who were caught up in the crimes, murders, and swindles of the day. Over a few transformative years, as the boom times shaded into the Depression, the adventures of Clark and White would inspire pulp fiction and replace L.A.’s reckless optimism with a new cynicism. Together, theirs is the tale of how the city of sunshine got noir.

When *A Bright and Guilty Place* begins, Leslie White is a naïve young photographer who lands a job as a crime-scene investigator in the L.A. district attorney’s office. There he meets Dave Clark, a young, movie-star handsome lawyer and a rising star prosecutor, with big ambitions. The cases they tried were some of the first “trials of the century,” starring dark-hearted oil barons, sexually perverse starlets, and hookers with hearts of gold. Los Angeles was in the grip of organized crime, and White was dismayed to see that only the innocent paid while the powerful walked free. But Clark was entranced by L.A.’s dangerous lures and lived the high life, marrying a beautiful woman, wearing custom-made suits, yachting with the rich and powerful, and jaunting off to Mexico for gambling and girls. In a shocking twist, when Charlie Crawford, the Al Capone of L.A., was found dead, the chief suspect was none other than golden boy Dave Clark.

*A Bright and Guilty Place* is narrative nonfiction at its most gripping. Key to the tale are the story of the theft of water from the Owens River Valley that let L.A. grow; the Teapot Dome scandal that brought shame to President Harding; and the emergence of crime writers like Raymond Chandler and James M. Cain, who helped mythologize L.A. In Rayner’s hands, the ballad of Dave Clark is the story of the coming of age of a great American city.

作者介绍:

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