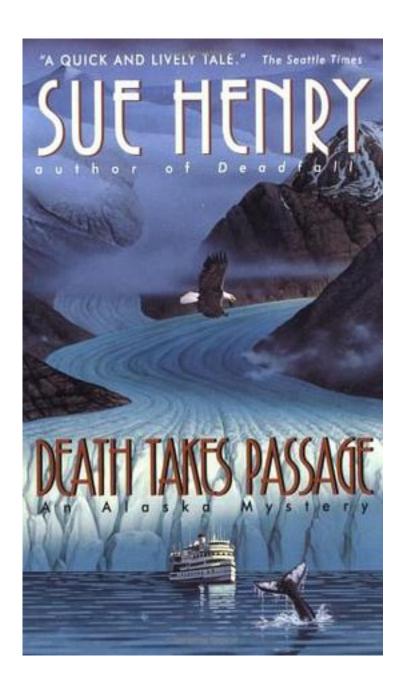
Death Takes Passage



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著者:Henry, Sue

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In July of 1897, the S.S. Portland sailed from Skagway, Alaska, to Seattle, Washington, carrying two tons of Yukon gold--its arrival setting off the famed Klondike Gold Rush. Now, a hundred years later, amid great fanfare and publicity, another ship is recreating the fabled voyage. But this time Death is on board. A true Gold Rush buff, Alex Jensen is thrilled to be representing the Troopers on the Spirit of '98's historic journey down Alaska's spectacular Inside Passage even though it means having to dress up in an uncomfortable period costume and keeping an eye on the ton of gold the ship carries below. But as long as his lady love, the famous "musher" Jessie Arnold, is at his side, this leisurely trip through a giant maze of scenic straits, sounds, harbors and inlets is as close a thing to heaven as the quiet, serious policeman can imagine. That is, until an unexplained rash of shipboard robberies--followed by the strange disappearance and probable death of a crew member--pulls Alex rudely back to Earth. Meanwhile, a stolen ketch sails north out of Douglas Island harbor in the Southeast Alaska Panhandle--silently cutting through the black waters of Gastineau Channel under cover o darkness, with a two-man crew and the bound I dead body of an innocent woman in the hold heading toward a fateful encounter that could write a grim new chapter in Alaska's history. The only law officer in the vicinity, it is now Alex's duty to unravel the twisted skein of lies greed and lethal secrets that entangles the crew and passengers on this historic cruise, before Death once again hails the Spirit somewhere along the Inside Passage.

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