

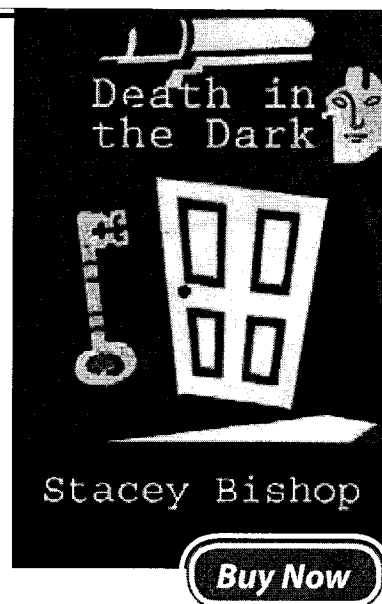
OTTO'S FAVORITE

Bishop, Stacey, *Death in the Dark*, Locked Room International.

Yes, my favorite new book of the month was first published 87 years ago. I love locked room/impossible crime stories (and edited a huge collection of them a few years ago) and this is one of the best in several ways. It does not feature one locked room mystery—it features three! The first murder occurs when the victim is shot in a pitch black room in which he appears to be the only person present. The second victim is shot in a room full of people but no weapon can be found in spite

of a thorough search. The third victim meets his fate when he is shot in a room that is locked from the inside and appears to have no means of entry or egress. The solutions are ingenious but rather absurd, even though T.S. Eliot, his editor, praised it, as did Julian Symons in his history of mystery fiction, *Mortal Consequences*. There are a lot of moving parts and the reader will have to pay close attention because of the complexity of the plot, but it's worth the effort.

This paperback edition is the first time it has been published in America, having had only one small printing in



England in 1930. Bishop, by the way, is the pseudonym of George Antheil, an American avant-garde composer, who never wrote another mystery. Paperback. \$24.99