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# DIPLOMA THESIS

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**University of Pardubice**  
**Faculty of Arts and Philosophy**

**Crime Fiction of Dana Stabenow and Linda Barnes**

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# ZADÁNÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

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Závěrečná diplomová práce se bude věnovat populárnímu žánru detektivní prózy, v němž se soustředí především na žánrovou analýzu vybraných děl. V úvodu práce diplomatka definuje žánr detektivní prózy a stručně nastíní jeho historii a kategorie, podrobněji pak pojedná o tzv. americké drsné škole se soukromým vyšetřovatelem. Dále představí zvolené autorky a zařadí je do tohoto literárního kontextu. Jádrem práce pak bude žánrová analýza vybraných detektivních románů zaměřená na to, jak zvolená díla naplňují, inovují a případně přesahují do jiných žánrů. Diplomantka pojedná o prostředí, postavách, tématech a rovněž o literárních prostředcích zvolených děl. Své analýzy shrne a vysloví obecnější závěr o naplňování a inovacích detektivního žánru u zvolených autorek.

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## ANNOTATION

This diploma thesis deals with the crime fiction and with the private eye in American crime literature. Theoretical part describes crime fiction, basic terminology and authors and examples of their works. Practical part describes main characters of the books, their investigative methods, and places where the books are set.

## KEY WORDS

Private eye, American hard-boiled school, detective fiction, crime fiction, Dana Stabenow, Linda Barnes

## ANOTACE

Tato diplomová práce se zabývá kriminální fikcí a postavou soukromého očka v americké kriminální literatuře. Teoretická část popisuje kriminální fikci, základní terminologii, autory a ukázky jejich děl. Praktická část popisuje hlavní postavy knih, jejich vyšetřovací metody a místa, kde se příběhy odehrávají.

## KLÍČOVÁ SLOVA

Soukromé očko, americká drsná škola, detektivní fikce, kriminální fikce, Dana Stabenow, Linda Barnes

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## Introduction

In the realm of American crime fiction, the private investigator has long been a revered archetype a relentless pursuer of truth and justice, navigating the dark underbelly of society to solve intricate mysteries. Traditionally, this figure has been portrayed as a rugged male protagonist, embodying resilience, intellect, and moral ambiguity. However, the genre has witnessed a significant transformation in recent decades, as female private eyes have emerged as captivating and dynamic characters within the genre's narratives.

The entire branch of detective fiction is a captivating genre that enthralls readers with its intriguing mysteries, enigmatic detectives, and cleverly crafted plots. It is a form of literature that revolves around the solving of crimes, often murders, through the sharp intellect and keen observational skills of the protagonist, typically a detective or an amateur sleuth. The genre is renowned for its compelling narratives, filled with suspense, twists, and unexpected revelations that keep readers guessing until the very end. Detective fiction captivates audiences worldwide, providing a thrilling escape into a world of secrets, intrigue, and the relentless pursuit of truth.

The main aim of the thesis is to analyse crime fiction of Dana Stabenow and Linda Barnes. The first chapter of theoretical part focuses on detective fiction. It describes its history, basic information, and important personalities. It also deals with the sub-genres of this category, such as mystery novels or police procedural. The next chapter includes information about the private eye and the public view, and some of the important female authors are mentioned. The last part of the theory deals with the American hard-boiled school. It provides a definition of the term, its history, and two names that are inherent to it - Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett. There is also a mention of the symbol of the hard-boiled school, the *Black Mask* magazine.

The practical part focuses on authors Dana Stabenow and Linda Barnes and their characters Kate Shugak and Carlotta Carlyle. For each, the character is first characterized, followed by their investigative procedures. There is also a characterization of the places where the books are set, which are Alaska and Boston. The locations play an important role as each one is completely different and completes the atmosphere of the stories. Part of the text is also devoted to the pets that both main characters own, as they are faithful companions, both in life and in investigation.

# 1 Detective fiction

Detective fiction is classified as popular literature and it evolved from the crime fiction. The beginning of the crime genre is said to be from the fourth to the first century BC, i.e. from the Old Testament to the myths of Hercules. Other representatives of famous stories with elements of crime stories include *Hamlet* or *The Scarlet Letter*<sup>1</sup>. However, critics agree that the beginning of detective stories originated in the works of Edgar Allan Poe in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Even though Poe's works were unpopular in their time because of the motifs of death and were considered unhealthy. Nevertheless, after Poe's death, his works became famous and began to spread, so there was a fundamental shift in thinking, which greatly helped criminal literature in its further development<sup>2</sup>. The work *An Essay on Fashionable Literature* by Thomas Love Peacock mentions the following: "The moral and political character of the age or nation may be read by an attentive observer even in its lightest literature"<sup>3</sup> and for example, Clausen calls the detective story "light literature" and claims that it can give readers a different perspective on the time in which it was written because its real focus is on current moral issues<sup>4</sup>.

Scaggs states that detective fiction consists of many genres and subgenres, the most recognized are detective prose, police novel, police procedural, detective story, murder mystery or mystery novel, historical crime fiction, crime thriller, female detectives, noir thriller, country-house murder, the locked-room mystery, clue puzzle and hard-boiled mode, anti-conspiracy, spy thriller and three last compound terms whodunnit, howdunnit and whydunit.<sup>5</sup> This terminology focuses on terms connected to criminology, more precisely to investigation, which is, according to Abrams, carried out by a professional detective or by an amateur detective and it is focused on a serious crime, for example a murder. It is not a condition that the detective is always the main character in the book, it can be for example the person who committed the murder or crime. The necessary part are suspects and their motives, sometimes the crime takes place in a closed place and then the number of suspects is limited to a certain number. A very typical genre in the last century was country house, as well as the characters from upper-class and well-to-do milieu. In the 1920's in America the genre of hard-boiled

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<sup>1</sup> John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 8-12.

<sup>2</sup> Aaron Marc Stein, "The Detective Story—How and Why," *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* 36, no. 1 (Autumn 1974), 19.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Clausen, "Sherlock Holmes, Order, and the Late-Victorian Mind." *The Georgia Review* 38, no. 1 (1984), 105.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Clausen, "Sherlock Holmes, Order, and the Late-Victorian Mind." *The Georgia Review* 38, no. 1 (1984), 106.

<sup>5</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 50-55.

detective story was introduced. It was usually set in urban environment. Violent acts, gangsters and other barbarous criminals were involved. Mystery novels and whodunnits primarily focus on solving the problem or some sinister events. The examples are *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins from 1868 and *The Mysteries of Udolpho* by Ann Radcliffe from 1794. The genre of thriller includes a story with fast pace of events. The protagonist is usually followed by his evil and ominous enemies. The term thriller was first introduced in pulp magazines and now it is used in popular writing, for example in James Bond stories by Ian Fleming.<sup>6</sup>

The following section includes three basic definitions of detective story: John Cawelti says that the classic detective story begins with an unsolved crime and moves toward solving its mystery. He claims that a classic detective story should contain three factors - situation, action and character and relationships. Furthermore, it is necessary that it contains at least these four character roles – the criminal, the victim, the detective, and that one who is threatened and unable to solve the crime<sup>7</sup>.

According to Thomas M. Leitch, every detective story is composed of the same narrative formula and that is: first a crime is committed, which will be solved by either an amateur or a professional detective, examine the evidence, interview the suspects and in the end the narrative climaxes in the conclusion and explanation<sup>8</sup>.

The definition stated by W. H. Auden in the book *Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel* states the following: “*The basic formula is this: a murder occurs; many are suspected; all but one suspect, who is the murderer, are eliminated; the murderer is arrested or dies.*”<sup>9</sup> These definitions predominantly pertain to the detective stories from the esteemed Golden Age of detective fiction, rather than the subsequently evolved genres like the hard-boiled school. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that even before these stories emerged, there were earlier writers who played a pivotal role in shaping the genre into its present form. However, there are also opinions that all crime fiction cannot be completely defined. John Scaggs says that from the tales of deduction by Edgar Allan Poe to the detective stories of the early 1900s and the whodunnits between the two World Wars, the genre has

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<sup>6</sup> M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms* (Stamford: Cengage Learning, 2015), 22, 69.

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Saunders, “Many Suitable Jobs for Women: Examining the Female Character in Victorian Detective Fiction.” (PhD diss., Liverpool John Moores University in Liverpool, 2014–2015), 5.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas M. Leitch, “From Detective Story to Detective Novel,” *Modern Fiction Studies* 29, no. 3 (Autumn 1983), 475.

<sup>9</sup> Julian Symons, *Bloody Murder: From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel* (London: Penguin Books, 1985), 14.

consistently revolved around crime, though not always its investigation. This enduring focus on criminal elements has led many critical studies in the past two decades to utilize the term 'crime fiction' as a catch-all classification for a genre that defies easy categorization. This examination follows suit, as it does not aim to uncover a definitive definition for the genre. Instead, it delves into the reasons and mechanisms behind the current state of the genre, exploring its evolution and the various ways it has been shaped and embraced over time.<sup>10</sup>

According to Abrams, the form that is typical nowadays to this genre first completed Edgar Allan Poe in his short stories, such as *Murders in the Rue Morgue* from 1841 and *The Purloined Letter* from 1845. Artur Conan Doyle followed next with his novels and short stories about one of the most famous detective Sherlock Holmes around years of 1890's. In the 1920's and 1930's famous Agatha Christie appeared with her novels about two well-known characters, amateur detective Miss Jane Marple and Belgian detective Hercules Poirot<sup>11</sup>. Nickerson claims, that this newness, which is now identified as "detective fiction," contributed to their unparalleled popularity among readers. Within *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, Poe introduced the intellectually gifted Parisian, Dupin, a man who possessed an uncanny ability to perceive the innermost thoughts of ordinary individuals. Notably, Dupin's powers extended beyond mere mind reading, as he could decipher the entire chain of reasoning that led to these thoughts solely by observing subtle facial expressions. When confronted with a perplexing newspaper article detailing the gruesome murders of Madame L'Españaye and her daughter in their seemingly impenetrable abode on the Rue Morgue, Dupin showcased his analytical prowess, skilfully unravelling the enigmatic puzzle. Even in a brief overview, readers can readily identify numerous characteristics inherent to the classic or analytic form of the detective genre. These include the backdrop of a bustling city, the occurrence of a violent crime within a seemingly locked room, the presence of an inept and bewildered law enforcement official, an innocent suspect who has been unjustly accused, a confession, a cleverly intricate solution where murder is revealed to be something else entirely, the underlying class conflicts embodied in the sophisticated detective apprehending a working-class criminal, and the masculine bond between an arrogant mastermind and his trusting companion, who also serves as the narrator.

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<sup>10</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 21.

These are the typical features of the detective story shown in the work of E.A. Poe as a pioneer of the genre.<sup>12</sup>

Scaggs claims, that interest in detective stories was associated with widespread problems with urban unemployment. Due to the industrial revolution in the early 19th century, which caused the rise of capitalism, many people came to urban areas, and thus there was a large increase in unemployment, which was also related to the increase in crime and the emergence of organized crime groups. And so, due to the high number of crimes, police forces were created, until then crimes and non-compliance with the law were handled by soldiers. In 1749, the police began to function as an organization of “thief-takers” who worked as freelancers and worked on commission. However, they often implicated themselves in corruption and then ended up working for the criminals they were supposed to catch.<sup>13</sup> Scaggs further states that this is how the character of Sherlock Holmes was created in British literature, who dealt with both crimes and moral issues. The author also used elements from the American Edgar Allan Poe or, for example, from Vidocq and Gaboriau to create his stories.<sup>14</sup> As time progressed, Scaggs continues, the number of scientific discoveries increased and science was used in more aspects of everyday life and thus it could also participate in detective work, as it could provide more aspects of analytical and rational thinking with direct evidence obtained by scientific means. The pioneer of detective fiction himself, E.A. Poe, and his book *Murders in the Rue Morgue* from 1841 can be stated as an example. The protagonist of the story, C. Auguste Dupin, is generally considered to be the detective forerunner of both Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes and Agatha Christie's Hercules Poirot. Dupin is peculiar, solitary, and analytical. The narrator of the book is anonymous and at the same time creates a coherent picture of a detective with human touches. In his publication, Scaggs mentions that during the period of the publication of Poe's first detective story until the Second World War, the authors of crime literature created a patriarchal worldview, which was then challenged by the detective Jane Marple by Agatha Christie.<sup>15</sup>

According to Priestman, police procedural is one of the sub-genres of the detective prose, in America, the recognized beginning of procedural is traced to the late 1950s and 1960s. This type is quite close to reality, the main representative is the police, police department or

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<sup>12</sup> Catherine R. Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 17.

<sup>13</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 18.

<sup>14</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 25.

<sup>15</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 19-20.

police officer and it shows how they investigate cases and catch criminals. Lawrence Treat is considered to be the founder of this genre when his novel *Vas in Victim* was published in 1945. Lawrence was an American mystery writer and a former lawyer, and it was his experience from law that he used when writing mysteries to achieve a realistic point of view.<sup>16</sup> Scaggs claims that before the advent of the police department, novels were mainly dominated by the private eye and the private detective. In the works, the attitude toward the police is usually condescending, and this characterizes crime literature in general, from Conan Doyle to Agatha Christie and from Poe to Chandler.<sup>17</sup> Scaggs also mentions, that the police were often depicted humorously and as inept. In contrast, there were very clever and brilliant detectives, for example Sherlock Holmes. This is one of the differences between police department and private eye and amateur detective. In a novel featuring a private eye who takes on an investigation, the police are portrayed as incompetent, inattentive, and sometimes even corrupt. And a detective or an amateur person is thus considered a positive character who will gladly take on an investigation and find out the truth or solve a case that the police failed to handle. Compared to the private detective who mainly conducted the self-serving investigation, the police are an official branch that focuses on serving the public. In hard-boiled tradition, private eye protect society and restore order disrupted by criminals. This dynamic between detective and society is most prominent in police procedurals, where police detectives, part of the state apparatus, ensure societal safety through constant surveillance, replacing the questionable justice of private investigators.<sup>18</sup>

Nickerson states, that the portrayal of police work in “procedural” tales differs significantly from most detective fiction, which tends to focus on the exceptional abilities of an individual rather than the workings of an organization or institution. In the realm of fiction, film, and television, the “great detectives” stand unmatched, uniquely capable of solving crimes using their own distinct techniques. It is not uncommon for these renowned detectives to hold little regard for regular police officers, perceiving them as marginally competent or even hindrances to the pursuit of justice. Nevertheless, not all fictional super-sleuths share such disdain for police work, as seen in characters like Sherlock Holmes. Even when supposedly

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<sup>16</sup> Martin Priestman, *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 156.

<sup>17</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 86-87.

<sup>18</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 88-89.

working alongside the police, as it is in the cases of Charlie Chan or Adrian Monk, the “great detective” often finds themselves hindered rather than assisted by law enforcement.<sup>19</sup>

Nickerson claims that the notion of “presence” holds significant importance in modern urban law enforcement practices. Since the late 1960s, police departments worldwide have embraced evolving strategies and approaches that emphasize the advantages of enhanced police presence. This entails increasing the number of officers on the streets, intensifying car patrols, and similar measures. The aim is to make the police more visible, operating under the assumption that the conspicuous display of police power facilitates its exercise with greater ease and effectiveness. Interestingly, this concept is not entirely novel. The idea of police presence has existed from the very inception of law enforcement. Uniformed police officers, distinguished by their attire as privileged members of a government-sanctioned paramilitary organization possessing extensive discretionary powers, continue to serve as visible deterrents and symbols of state authority and surveillance. Consequently, in recent years, urban police forces have allocated their personnel based not so much on individual expertise or familiarity with specific neighbourhoods and communities, but rather in response to statistical analyses of criminal behaviour. They assign more officers to areas perceived to have the highest threat levels to both people and property.<sup>20</sup> Nickerson continues, that since the mid nineteenth century, police have increasingly taken centre stage in various forms of media. Novels, movies, serials, and especially periodicals have showcased police and their work to ever-expanding audiences, despite varying degrees of accuracy. These portrayals reached individuals who had little to no direct experience with law enforcement. Following the Second World War and the rise of television as the dominant mass medium, there was a notable surge in police stories in American culture. Many of these narratives diverged from earlier works, where police primarily served as foils or supporting characters to amateur crime solvers, private detectives, or mere background figures in the ongoing spectacle of crime and punishment chronicled in newspapers.<sup>21</sup>

Scaggs states that many popular police procedurals were published around the 1950s. Crime in procedural fiction, especially American procedural, involves ordinary individuals, often centred around personal crises. However, it is the inherent realism of this sub-genre that makes it ideal for examining social order. This genre has been very successful and one of the reasons may be because at the same time true crime films and documentaries of this genre were

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<sup>19</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 97-98.

<sup>20</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 96.

<sup>21</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 97.

on the rise. As people became interested in these facts, writers and readers alike wanted to include them in mystery novels. Examples of the investigation techniques and attitudes that are used by real police are: forensics, interrogating suspects, specialized training, division of labour, gathering evidence, obtaining warrants, professional hierarchy, and multicultural teams.<sup>22</sup> Priestman describes, that the portrayal of crime on screen is intricately linked with written fiction and has not only increased book sales but also elevated detectives to iconic status in popular culture. Nevertheless, crime depicted in movies and television has consistently faced more immediate censorship and ratings scrutiny compared to other forms of media.<sup>23</sup> Nowadays, police procedurals are mostly known in the form of TV shows. Each is specific in something different. For example, it focuses on a specific method of investigation - such as profiling in *Criminal Minds*; or there is a very specific private detective - like the Devil himself in *Lucifer*. According to the IMDb, other famous TV series are *Law&Order*, *C.S.I. Miami* or *NCIS: Naval Criminal Investigative Service*.<sup>24</sup> Nickerson claims, that in procedural narratives, the role of the protagonist is not limited to an individual; instead, it is often fulfilled by a collective effort involving a regularly organized group such as a squad, a pair of patrol officers, or a task force. Catching killers in these stories is rarely achieved through the brilliance of a lone genius. In procedural narratives, even genius requires the support and assistance of others. Based on these criteria, the author suggests to tentatively exclude police dramas or novels centred around specialized or official operatives such as psychopathologists (Profiler, *Criminal Minds*), forensics experts (*CSI*, *Quincy*, *Bones*), and consulting amateurs (*Cracker*, *Medium*, *Monk*) from the procedural genre. While some elements of these texts may align with the procedural style, the characters within them are often portrayed as atypical representatives of law enforcement.<sup>25</sup>

Nickerson claims there also exists a type of so called “rogue cop” tales, exemplified by Clint Eastwood's portrayal in Don Siegel's 1971 film *Dirty Harry*, but it should be considered separately. The rogue cop, by definition, exists outside the established norms and regulations that define the procedural genre. It is challenging to incorporate such a character within the structured framework of the procedural. However, it is not uncommon for procedural ensembles to include a rebellious or unconventional cop, similar to how a collective protagonist may have

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<sup>22</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 97.

<sup>23</sup> Priestman, *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, 242.

<sup>24</sup> “Sort by Popularity - Most Popular Movies and TV Shows tagged with keyword ‘police-procedural’,” Article, IMDb, accessed September 23, 2022. <https://www.imdb.com/search/keyword/?keywords=police-procedural>

<sup>25</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 98.



an eccentric genius among its members. In the end, the presence of a rogue character, much like the inclusion of a renowned detective, tends to disrupt the balance and harmony of the police unit, often requiring them to be reined in or expelled in order to preserve the integrity of the entire team.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 99.

## 2 The private eye and the public, early history of development

Knight claims, that in the wake of Sherlock Holmes, some writers sought to deviate from the prevailing model of detective fiction by introducing a woman detective. This trend, which had emerged in the 1860s, found renewed momentum. In 1894, Catharine Louisa Pirkis, a prolific romance writer, introduced the character of Loveday Brooke in her book *The Experiences of Loveday Brooke*. Brooke was employed by a detective agency located on Fleet Street, an extension of the renowned Strand. Despite being just over thirty years old, Brooke exuded a refined and composed demeanour. While she may not have possessed extraordinary beauty, she stood out as the epitome of sensibility and practicality. Alongside her composed nature, she displayed a spirited side by employing disguises in her investigations. In the first story, *The Black Bag Left on a Doorstep*, she showcased an extensive knowledge of London's music halls and the world of cab drivers. The cases she tackled spanned from theft to murder, with the focus placed on Brooke's ability to comprehend and ultimately provide explanations for everything she encountered.<sup>27</sup> Knight continues to say, that George Sims's *Dorcas Dene, Detective: Her Adventures* (1897) follows a similar approach to the portrayal of a female detective. Dorcas, a former minor actress whose artist husband became blind, finds herself drawn into the world of detection through her police inspector neighbour. Possessing a pleasing feminine appearance, characterized by a pretty face, soft brown wavy hair, and a keen sense of observation, Dorcas has a knack for unravelling criminal schemes with a moment of insight. The opening story, *The Helsham Mystery*, revolves around an old-fashioned inheritance drama involving the substitution of a baby. Other cases predominantly involve theft and occasional instances of family-related murder. While Dorcas occasionally employs striking disguises, such as that of an old gypsy woman, her investigative work primarily occurs from within, assuming roles like a parlourmaid. In *The Diamond Lizard*, she solves the case by astutely detecting a minuscule blood spot - an unconventional method. Although Dorcas Dene does not significantly surpass Forrester's Mrs. G and is less engagingly written, its moderate success prompted the publication of a second series of stories in 1898. This suggests that there was an audience eager for even these limited examples of gender diverse detective fiction.<sup>28</sup>

Knight says that Julian Symons dismissed the women detectives of that era, considering some of them foolish and just as absurd as other stories featuring women detectives who maintained an unrealistic refinement in their speech and demeanour while dealing with crime.

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<sup>27</sup> Stephen Knight, *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 78-80.

<sup>28</sup> Knight, *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000*, 77-80.

Admittedly, these writers had limited room to imagine a female detective until authors like Wentworth, Sayers, and Christie popularized the spinster character archetype. However, the early creators of women detectives bravely challenged the prevailing norms of male-dominated magazines and societal attitudes. They sought to offer alternative and inherently subversive perspectives and values when it came to solving crimes. Their shared pursuit was the belief that crime could be both a threat and an area where women, just like men, could provide explanations. This idea eventually became a prominent feature of a pioneering movement in crime fiction, showcased in novels by American women. These works skilfully blended mystery and emotion while firmly presenting the female viewpoint.<sup>29</sup>

According to Nickerson, the women writers who followed Poe in the detective fiction genre recognized a unique tension within the narrative structure, drawing from the gothic tradition. Alongside the main plotline that drives towards revelation, there exists another narrative thread that aims to conceal and erase information. The art of hiding evidence is just as esteemed as the skill of uncovering it. When investigating crimes within family circles, numerous secrets, whether embarrassing, harmful, or criminal, threaten to be exposed. Innocent characters and even detectives often desire to keep these secrets hidden for various reasons. While these secrets may initially appear unrelated to the crime, they ultimately prove to be interconnected. Simultaneously, the author subtly drops hints and creates clues for the investigator and the reader, ensuring that the complete sense of the puzzle is not immediately apparent. This interplay between concealment and revelation, obscurity, and clarification, is present in various forms of detective fiction but is particularly emphasized in the women's tradition.<sup>30</sup> Nickerson continues, that these authors utilized the transatlantic gothic mode to critique the hypocrisy prevalent among the affluent classes, following in the footsteps of writers such as E.D.E.N. Southworth, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Mary Elizabeth Braddon, and the Bronte sisters. The female gothic genre delves into the horrifying experiences women endure within domestic settings. Haunted houses and various forms of captivity within the home, including the chilling concept of live burial, serve as potent metaphors for a more expansive notion of danger and unhappiness within the esteemed realm of women. However, the female gothic does not solely focus on the victimization of women. Instead, the gothic heroine undergoes training in problem solving, challenges societal clichés, and discovers her own bravery and intellect beyond what she initially believed. Thus, the state of fear within this context possesses an

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<sup>29</sup> Knight, *Crime Fiction, 1800-2000*, 79.

<sup>30</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 30-31.

inherent element of acquiring knowledge. While the hard-boiled genre's cardinal rule may be “follow the money,” early women's detective fiction could be characterized by its inclination to face the things that instil fear.<sup>31</sup>

Walton and Jones stated, that around the year 1990, various mentions of female detectives began to appear in newspapers and magazines. One article wrote that their development has gradually started to increase more and more in recent years. Another article even mentioned a kind of revolution in American mystery novels, that new types of detectives are humorous, consistent, independent, determined and, above all - female. The articles mentioned the names like Sara Paretsky or Sue Grafton, together with Tony Hillerman they were categorized among the best American authors of mystery novels nowadays. Sue Grafton was very successful with her Kinsey Millhone Alphabet Series. The first book that appeared on the *New York Times* best- seller list was her seventh book in order with the title “*G*” *Is for Gumshoe*. In the same year, her novel “*F*” *Is for Fugitive* was on the list too.<sup>32</sup> Walton and Jones continue to mention, that in the same year, 1990, Julie Smith won the honoured Edgar Allan Poe Award for Best Mystery Novel with her book *New Orleans Mourning* from the series about female detective Skip Langdon. This happened almost after fifty years, that the prize was awarded to an American woman. In the following years, more mystery novels by female authors were awarded and were also nominated for awards such as the Anthony Award or the MacCavity Award. Other honoured names included for example Sara Paretsky, who was named a magazine's Woman of the Year for bringing female protagonists to detective genre, which seemed to be a male-dominated for a long time. After this, based on the Sara Paretsky series *V.I. Warshawski* a film was created.<sup>33</sup> The authors further mention that since 1990, there have been huge changes in the world of detective stories. The character of the resilient female detective, born from a male hard-boiled novel, became more and more popular in the American popular culture. There was the famous subgenre of female investigative novels, which was positively welcomed through enormous sales of books and various prizes and awards. Further, the novels highlighted various feminist issues and gradually, since the 1970's, throughout the world, they acquired regular readers and fame in the publishing world. Already in these times, it was possible to notice various feminist efforts, social and gender changes, which contributed to changes in the way of thinking about the characters in detective novels. Those changes were

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<sup>31</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 31-33..

<sup>32</sup> Priscilla Walton, Manina Jones, *Detective Agency – Women Rewriting the Hard-boiled Tradition* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1999), 10.

<sup>33</sup> Walton et al., *Detective Agency – Women Rewriting the Hard-boiled Tradition*, 11.

associated to numerous events such as the Civil Right Act in 1964, which was against sex discrimination in work, a Presidential Commission on the Status of Women in 1961, or National Organisation for Women in 1966, which demanded the complete and immediate integration of women into society.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Walton et al., *Detective Agency – Women Rewriting the Hard-boiled Tradition*, 12.

### 3 American hard-boiled school

Nickerson claims that hard-boiled is a tough subgenre of detective fiction, which brought new insight into this genre. This sub-genre drew inspiration from pulp magazines and dime novels, it had a touch of western and gangster stories, usually with violence, fast-paced and slang dialogue and often with disreputable environment. The hard-boiled style is synonymous with the American crime genre, evoking imagery of gritty and street-smart men, alluring yet deceitful women, and a mysterious, nocturnal city that would be described by Raymond Chandler as “something beyond the realm of darkness.”<sup>35</sup> As Nickerson continues, it revolves around a disillusioned protagonist who, often with limited success, strives to restore a semblance of justice to their world. These iconic elements of the style have become so widely recognized that they have attained a near-mythic status. Merely mentioning a few of its defining characteristics immerses us in a profoundly familiar realm, as if these features arise from the depths of our collective imagination.<sup>36</sup>

According to Scaggs, one of the founders of this genre was Dashiell Hammett (1894 – 1961). He put together his knowledge with that from writers like Ernest Hemingway and John Dos Passos. His new genre of detective fiction completely differed from so far known stories with usual elements like country - house with cooks and butlers, it has shifted to urban environments.<sup>37</sup> Scaggs continues, that in 1929, Dashiell Hammett's novel *Red Harvest* introduces to people Continental Op, who is described as a hard-boiled and pig-headed fellow. This term, denoting toughness, and shrewdness became synonymous with the protagonist of a specific type of detective fiction that emerged in the United States during the interwar period. While the private detective character had previously appeared as New York detective Nick Carter, primarily created by John R. Coryell in the 1880s, it was John Daly's Race Williams who is widely recognized as the first iconic hard-boiled detective hero. Williams, a physically imposing and violent man, served as a blueprint for numerous hard-boiled protagonists, including Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe and Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer. However, despite his influential role, Williams was quickly overshadowed and largely forgotten. Another famous Hammett's work is *The Maltese Falcon* with the detective Sam Spade from 1930. Another name that must be mentioned is Raymond Chandler (1888–1959).

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<sup>35</sup>Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 41.

<sup>36</sup>Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 42.

<sup>37</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 55-56.

The author of the novel *The Big Sleep* (1939) with the detective Phil Marlowe, *My Lovely* (1940) or *The Little Sister* (1949).<sup>38</sup>

Priestman claims that in a detective story, of course, the criminal and the investigator must be present, being the typical protagonists of detective fiction,<sup>39</sup> which is perfectly demonstrated in *Cold Day for Murder* and in *A Trouble of Fools*. In these mentioned books the investigator is a private eye with background in police investigation. Then Priestman continues that the private eye trusts no one, he can only rely on himself, he can be associated with the character of the tough guy and the cowboy, the men who can see everything and people can hire him.<sup>40</sup> Scaggs states that the prevalent designation for the hard-boiled detective, which holds significant clues, is the term “private eye.” Evolving from the abbreviation “PI,” this term evokes the notion of clandestine observation. Interestingly, it brings to mind the iconic staring eye emblem of the Pinkerton detective agency, where Hammett himself had been employed as an agent. The concept of covert surveillance not only underscores the private and secretive nature of the private eye but also implies a predominantly passive role. For instance, Hammett's *Op*, is depicted as a direct, neutral observer who offers minimum analysis to the reader. Similarly, Marlowe exhibits a more passive approach, refraining from active detection and fact-gathering.<sup>41</sup>

As Nickerson claims, the hard-boiled crime story holds a significant position in American popular culture due to its familiar conventions and widespread recognition. However, this familiarity can also lead to an inflated perception of its importance and a narrow association with national character, overshadowing the depth and diversity within the genre. It is important to acknowledge that the American crime narrative encompasses more than just the hard-boiled style, and there is a risk of oversimplifying it as an unattributed mythos. It originated in a specific time and place, and numerous talented artists have utilized its elements to pursue diverse artistic goals.<sup>42</sup>

Priestman says that the first appearance of the private eye was around the 1920s and 1930s in the American west, like California. Although it depended also on cultural, historical, and socio-economic development. Each of these categories was affected by the various events.

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<sup>38</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 55-57.

<sup>39</sup> Priestman, *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, 95.

<sup>40</sup> Priestman, *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, 95.

<sup>41</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 60.

<sup>42</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 42.

History was shaped by the post-war years of Civil war or the Gilded Age, which was the basis for the emergence of industrial capitalism. The economic sector was driven by events such as the use of steel, iron, steam, and the construction of railroads, urbanization, along with the introducing of the automobile and the telephone. Cultural was dominated by the naturalistic literature and the muckraking journalism. All this on the background of a dirty city, corruption, and bribery in politics, where the word crime was becoming a common word. And it was at this time that *Black Mask* magazine appeared in the 1920s, when the next Amendment to the Constitution came out and when Prohibition began, marking a turning point in American society, because this event turned a lot of decent, working, middle-class Americans into criminals, and it was not so easy to control this situation. Thus, with Prohibition, a new era was born, dominated by crime, shooting, machine guns and fast cars.<sup>43</sup>

Nickerson says that the sharp rise in crime after World War I led to the emergence of hard-boiled crime stories as a distinct genre in the pulp magazines. These magazines, known for their affordable paper, catered to a large audience seeking fiction that reflected the realities of the industrial city. The pulp industry was thriving, employing numerous writers who produced stories at a rapid pace for a meagre payment of a penny or two per word. Due to intense competition and the need for innovation, the pulps quickly adapted to changing popular tastes. With the rise of organized crime during Prohibition, the public became more aware of racketeering. In response, pulp writers and editors created a new kind of detective story, abandoning the refined elements of “golden age” detective fiction and focusing instead on the corruption and violence prevalent in the rapidly expanding metropolis.<sup>44</sup> Priestman claims that for a private eye, this was a new world emerging from the Jazz Era and gradually transforming into the Great Depression era. The private eye was a character who did not flee to Europe but stayed in America to fight criminals and corruption.<sup>45</sup>

As it was mentioned, American hard-boiled school is associated with the *Black Mask* pulp magazine, which was first published in 1920 by a journalist H.L. Mencken and a drama critic George Jean Nathan. It was created on the impulse of rescuing a loss-making magazine *Smart Set* and the first issue of *Black Mask* was just a commercial try and its content was not only about crime, among other things, it contained love stories, adventure stories, romances, and occultist stories. The magazine brought famous writer names such as Dashiell Hammett,

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<sup>43</sup> Priestman, *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, 95-96.

<sup>44</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 42-43.

<sup>45</sup> Priestman, *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, 95-96.



Raymond Chandler, and Erle Stanley Gardner. Dashiell Hammett first worked in a detective agency Pinkerton founded in 1850. He is the author of the story *Fly Paper*, which appeared in *Black Mask* magazine in 1929. Nowadays, the magazine is connected to few other pulp magazines like *Dime Detective*, *Strange Detective Mysteries* or *Detective Tales*.<sup>46</sup> Scaggs claims that Chandler, together with Hammett, with Chandler intentionally emulating Hammett's style, started their writing careers in the pulp magazines. They initially published short stories in *Black Mask* magazine, which was the most influential and successful publication of its kind.<sup>47</sup>

The literature of American hard-boiled school became widespread owing to the accessibility, availability, and affordability of the *Black Mask* pulp magazine. Priestman states that *Black Mask* was most printed on pulp paper, which enabled cheap and mass production of the works. This, in turn, paved the way for detective fiction to become an important genre of popular literature.<sup>48</sup> As explained by Scaggs, *Black Mask* pulp magazine successfully captivated readers with its weekly publications with eye-catching and sensational covers designed to capture the attention of a public accustomed to thrilling stories found in dime novels. However, in contrast to dime novels, “the pulps” usually contained more stories for a similar or even lower price, but with the same amount of thrill. Dime novels, Scaggs continues, emerged during the American Civil War, and greatly influenced literary preferences, catering to a rapidly expanding readership with their sensational tales. John Coryell's New York detective Nick Carter first appeared in a dime novel, setting the stage for the trend of relocating the heroic figures of Western stories to urban settings - a pattern often attributed to Hammett.<sup>49</sup>

Smith suggests that between pulp detective fiction and pulp advertising a complex connection could be found, mutually influencing the interests of working-class men and the products of the emerging customer economy. The hard-boiled private eyes, with their intense focus on work, exaggerated masculinity, keen interest in fashion and interior design, and assertive machismo, served as ideal promoters for the various products advertised in publications like *Black Mask*. These products ranged from job training courses by mail, bodybuilding programs, etiquette guides, to elocution lessons. Once hard-boiled fiction had convinced readers of the advantages of skilled and independent labour, physical strength, and

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<sup>46</sup> “Overview,” Article, Pinkerton, accessed March 20, 2023. <https://pinkerton.com/our-story>

<sup>47</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 56.

<sup>48</sup> Priestman, *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, 95-96.

<sup>49</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 56.

the significance of appearances and speech in relation to class and power, advertisers capitalized on these ideas by offering the corresponding products.<sup>50</sup>

Scaggs claims that there exists a connection between British literature and the development of hard-boiled fiction. Similar to the dime novels, sensational stories were published in Britain, including in magazines like the *Strand* where Sherlock Holmes stories by Conan Doyle were featured in the 1890s. Interestingly, Conan Doyle's early novels contained elements of adventure stories found in dime novels, which is significant for the evolution of hard-boiled fiction. The Western adventure story, which originated in the dime novel tradition, was also a popular theme in pulp magazines like *Black Mask*. The term “mask” in *Black Mask* can be interpreted as a reference to the tradition from which hard-boiled fiction emerged, involving masked champions of the weak like Zorro and the bandanas worn by Wild West outlaws. Hard-boiled fiction adapted the romanticism of the Western genre to a modern urban environment, shifting from the refined nature of classical detective stories to an imaginary world depicting social bribery and “real” crime.<sup>51</sup> As mentioned by Smith, pulp magazines, with their affordable price and widespread availability, were the preferred reading material for the majority of workers. This dominance of pulp literature among the proletariat was bemoaned by librarians, educators, and cultural critics, who observed that workers rarely engaged with other forms of literature. Pulp editors, newsmen, and advertisers agreed that their target audience for detective, Western, and adventure pulps consisted primarily of youthful, working-class men with limited formal education. A study conducted in 1931 revealed that readers from this social class expressed a strong interest in topics related to labour, the job market, and career advancement, which held little appeal for better educated individuals. Additionally, according to advertisers, these readers' aspirations for professional success extended to concerns about masculinity, adept and well-paying jobs, and the cultivation of a personal image conducive to upward social mobility.<sup>52</sup>

As explained by Scaggs, hard-boiled fiction often displays typical American characteristics due to several defining features. Firstly, the majority of early hard-boiled novels are set in California, which extends the frontier narratives of the Western genre and reinforces the image of the private eye as an urban cowboy. Secondly, the use of the American vernacular,

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<sup>50</sup> Erin A. Smith, *Hard-boiled: Working-class Readers and Pulp Magazines* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), 44.

<sup>51</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 56-57.

<sup>52</sup> Smith, *Hard-boiled: Working-class Readers and Pulp Magazines*, 76.

characterized by tough and concise language, further establishes the American identity of the genre. Lastly, early hard-boiled fiction depicts crimes that reflect the emerging realities of early 20th century America, portraying the everyday criminal activities of that time. These three elements contribute to the distinctively American nature of hard-boiled fiction.<sup>53</sup>

Nickerson stated that concerns about bureaucracy and cultural disorder have been transformed into a compelling popular myth by the hard-boiled crime story. Similar to the western hero archetype, the hard-boiled detective confronts opposing forces that are often intertwined. He rejects the corrupt authority of a decaying society, represented by the imposing and impersonal legal system. Additionally, he combats the violent enemies of civilization, with the role previously occupied by savage Indians in frontier narratives now taken by urban criminals. Instead of defying ranch owners and defeating outlaws or Native Americans, the hard-boiled detective challenges the police and confronts the foreign threat posed by organized crime. Just like in the western genre, the pursuit of justice and fairness seems overwhelmed by illegitimate power and brutal force. However, in his struggle against the adversaries of civilization, the hard-boiled detective, much like the frontier hero before him, has the opportunity to embrace his heroic mission and reshape his world.<sup>54</sup>

As stated by Nickerson, the designation “private eye” serves as a vivid representation, shedding light on the distinctive characteristics of the hard-boiled detective and the sub-genre that evolved alongside this iconic figure. The phrase “private detective,” as implied by the term “detective,” designates the resilient protagonist as a direct successor of the classic detective from the Golden Age. However, unlike in classical detective fiction, the hard-boiled exemplary, as established by Hammett in *Red Harvest*, places little emphasis on analysing clues and deductive reasoning. Instead, the hard-boiled detective's investigations contain direct interrogation and a relentless pursuit reminiscent of frontier romance and Western tales. Likewise, the expression “private investigator,” commonly referred to as “PI,” holds great importance. The term “private” serves as a clear signifier of the PI's defining characteristic: their inclination towards privacy. This inclination is further emphasized by the use of the first-person pronoun “I” in the abbreviation “PI.” The classic image of a hard-boiled private eye depicts an isolated individual, detached from the conventional societal framework of family,

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<sup>53</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 57.

<sup>54</sup> Nickerson, *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction*, 45-46.

friends, work, and home, a solitary “I” existing on the outskirts, separate from the socioeconomic norm.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 59.

## 4 About the authors

### 4.1 Dana Stabenow

Dana Stabenow was born in March, 1952 in Anchorage, Alaska in half-Aleut and half-Filipino family.<sup>56</sup> Her father was a pilot, but after her parent's separation, her mother started to work on a fishing boat, so Dana grew up there. On the boat, around the age of ten, she started with writing, they were stories about "normal" children growing up on the mainland and forced her mother to read them and even considers these stories to be some of the best of her work. She majored in journalism at the University of Alaska in 1973 and then backpacked on a four-month trip through Europe.<sup>57</sup>

Lindsay states that Stabenow is writing books in genres such as science fiction, crime and mystery fiction, thriller and suspense books, and historical adventure novels. She usually sets the plot of her books in her home state of Alaska, and she uses the motives from Alaska, such as its geography, weather conditions, wildlife, or geology. Her prose showcases resilient female protagonists and intricately depicted secondary characters.<sup>58</sup>

Lindsay continues that in 1991, her first novel, *Second Star*, was published, and a year later, the first part of the popular Kate Shugak series called *A Cold Day for Murder*, which won an Edgar Award for Best Paperback Original in 1993. In addition to this award, she won several others, for example Woman of Achievement, YWCA Alaska in 2001, Governor's Award for an Individual Artist in 2007, or Nero Award for the book *Though Not Dead* (again from the series about Kate Shugak) in 2012. Stabenow's other works include a series of books about Liam Campbell. *The Star Svensdotter* sci-fi trilogy, *the Eye of Isis* trilogy, and *the Silk and Song* trilogy that carries the label 'New York Times best-selling author'. She also wrote several independent titles.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Ray B. Browne, *Murder on the Reservation* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), 42.

<sup>57</sup> Elizabeth B. Lindsay, *Great Women Mystery Writers* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2007), 244.

<sup>58</sup> Lindsay, *Great Women Mystery Writers*, 244.

<sup>59</sup> Lindsay, *Great Women Mystery Writers*, 245..

## 4.2 Linda Barnes

Linda Barnes was born on December 6, 1949, in Detroit, where she spent her formative years with two siblings, before embarking on an academic journey. Her father pursued a career in mechanical engineering, while her mother chose to teach. Linda attended the School of Fine and Applied Arts at Boston University. Post-graduation, she found herself drawn to the world of theatre and education, taking up roles as a drama teacher and director in schools located in Chelmsford and Lexington, Massachusetts. During her tenure as an educator, Barnes channelled her creative energy into playwriting, and she penned two acclaimed plays: *Wings* and *Prometheus*. Buoyed by her success in the dramatic arts, she eventually ventured into the realm of mystery novels, where she achieved remarkable acclaim. She additionally mentions her desire to explore unresolved enigmas from her past, such as a shooting incident in her childhood area and the tragic loss of a friend to suicide. Currently, she lives in Brookline, Massachusetts with her husband and a son.<sup>60</sup>

Lindsay claims that Linda Barnes dedicated her pen to the creation of a diverse collection of literary works. Among her repertoire are sixteen mystery novels, with twelve showcasing the exploits of the towering 6'1" redheaded private investigator, Carlotta Carlyle. She introduced the beloved character Carlotta to readers in 1985 through the critically acclaimed short story *Lucky Penny*. Since then, she has penned a remarkable series of twelve novels featuring Carlotta Carlyle. The series includes titles such as *A Trouble of Fools* from 1987, *The Snake Tattoo* from 1989, and the highly regarded bestsellers according to the Boston Globe: *Coyote* from 1991. Additionally, Barnes delved into the world of actor/detective Michael Spraggue, an amateur sleuth, penning four enthralling novels featuring his adventures. Alongside her bestselling mysteries, she has also woven together award-winning plays and captivating short stories, showcasing the breadth of her creative prowess. Linda Barnes Next titles are *Steel Guitar* (1993), *Snapshot* (1994), *Hardware* (1995), and *Cold Case* (1997), which was also included to The Boston Globe bestseller list. Barnes has garnered numerous accolades for her exceptional contributions to the literary world. Notably, she clinched the Anthony Award for Best Short Story in 1986 for *Lucky Penny* and secured the esteemed American Mystery Award for Best Private Eye Novel in 1987 for *A Trouble of Fools*.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Lindsay, *Great Women Mystery Writers*, 16.

<sup>61</sup> Lindsay, *Great Women Mystery Writers*, 17-18.

## 5 Kate Shugak by Dana Stabenow

Kate Shugak first appears in the book *A Cold Day for Murder* by Dana Stabenow published in 1992. The protagonist of the book is a complex and formidable character with a strong sense of justice. Kate is a typical Alaskan woman with black hair, bronze skin and light brown eyes tilted up at the temples, which was the exact feature of her race. Kate is Aleut, but there are members of other communities living in her neighbourhood in Alaska:

We came to an Indian gift shop by the side of the road. The man who was running it, a Navajo he said when we asked him, wanted to know where we were from. We told him, and he wanted to know, where do Indians live in Alaska? Jack said, a lot of the time next door. He didn't believe us. I told him I was an Aleut.<sup>62</sup>

Currently, Kate lives a solitary life in the Alaskan wilderness in a reserve in a secluded homestead, which she inherited from her father. She is physically and mentally tough, having grown up in a harsh environment and survived various challenges. Her only everyday company is her half wolf dog Mutt. At first glance, Kate seems to be strict and distant, yet a strong and independent woman: “*She paused momentarily, taking in this sartorial splendor with a long, speculative survey that reminded him uncomfortably of the dog outside.*”<sup>63</sup> This quote refers to Kate's very first meeting with an FBI agent Fred. From their conversation and Kate's demeanour, it is clear that she is not entirely fond of strangers visiting her house, perhaps sometimes even familiar ones. Fred's first encounter with Kate's dog Mutt did not go entirely smoothly as he thought the dog was a wolf and wanted to attack him, and now even Kate reminds him of Mutt as they both have similar untrustworthy and unapproachable behaviour: “*‘Coffee's fine, Kate,’ the big man said. ‘It's on the stove.’ She jerked her chin. ‘Mugs and spoons and sugar on the shelf to the left.’ The big man smiled down at her. ‘I know where the mugs are.’ She didn't smile back.*”<sup>64</sup> The nickname 'the big man' refers to Kate's friend. But their conversation again shows that Kate is firm and does not argue with anything. However, she does not mean her words badly, she just does not hide her character and current state of mind, she is straightforward. Her image of a strict woman is supported by the fact that she did not smile during the conversation. This image of Kate can be beneficial not only in her private life, but also in her career as a private eye. It is important that during the investigation of crimes and when questioning suspects, she acts stern and above the fray to get all the information she needs from the suspects. If she interrogates a man, there may also be a situation where the man,

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<sup>62</sup> Dana Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder* (London: Head of Zeus Ltd, 2013), 52.

<sup>63</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 6.

<sup>64</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 7.

according to stereotypical prejudices, will feel stronger than Kate and will not want to talk to her. But Kate already knows this and knows how to counteract it. This is again confirmed by the interview with the FBI agent who had respect for Kate and would not dare say or do anything bad against her.

So role of gender is one of the aspects of the book which helps to complete its atmosphere. Kate's gender does influence her investigative methods to some extent. Being a woman in a traditionally male-dominated field like private investigation can present unique challenges and opportunities. She may need to navigate preconceived notions or stereotypes associated with women in law enforcement or investigative roles. But in the book *A Cold Day for Murder*, Kate's gender gives her more of an advantage in her work. People may underestimate her or perceive her as less threatening or intimidating, allowing her to gather information discreetly or elicit confessions from suspects who may let their guard down. She can leverage these perceived vulnerabilities to her benefit during investigations. Mainly men can think based on stereotypes that they are stronger than women in terms of physical characteristics. They can be taller, more muscular, or faster and then they get the impression that they can do anything to a woman and get away with it. However, these assumptions may not always be true. Overcoming these prejudices can fuel her determination and drive her to prove herself as a skilled investigator. Kate disproves all preconceptions about women and proves that a woman can be truly successful in her work.

The woman who, until fourteen months ago, had been the acknowledged star of the Anchorage District Attorney's investigative staff. Who had the highest conviction rate in the state's history for that position. Whose very presence on the prosecution's witness list had induced defense lawyers to throw in their briefs and plea-bargain. Who had successfully resisted three determined efforts on the part of the FBI to recruit her.<sup>65</sup>

Despite facing stereotypes, Kate leverages her perceived vulnerabilities to gather information discreetly and prove herself as a skilled investigator, ultimately challenging traditional gender roles.

Kate possesses a wide range of practical skills necessary for survival in the Alaskan wilderness. She is adept at hunting, fishing, tracking, and other outdoor activities. Her knowledge of the local environment and her ability to navigate the rugged terrain make her an invaluable asset: *"I run a couple traps, I pan a little gold, I bag a few tourists in season and raft them down the Kanuyaq, so I'm not broke. I guided a couple of hunting parties this fall and*

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<sup>65</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 9.



*took my fee in meat, so the cache is full. I won't starve.*"<sup>66</sup> She rides a snow machine, can get petrol for herself, but also other supplies needed for a living, and she takes care of the whole plot and the house. Her self-reliance and resilience make her a force to be reckoned with. There is no mention about her age, but as Fred Gamble tried to guess, she was about twenty- nine or thirty years old.<sup>67</sup> Kate worked as a police officer, more specifically a member of the Anchorage State Prosecutor's Team. She was precise and excellent at her job, as evidenced, for example, by her largest share in the conviction of suspects during the entire duration of office. She was a highly respected person, and the lawyers of the accused always advised one thing in any meeting with her, and that was to confess.<sup>68</sup>

All these characteristics imply that Kate is not a one-dimensional character, she has layers to her personality and experiences that make her multidimensional. The fact that Kate has a clear moral compass and believes strongly in what is right and just, implies that she may take action to uphold these principles. These qualities have helped her get a job with the police and will subsequently come in handy in her career as a private investigator. Of the typical preconceptions about men and women, Kate is an example that defies these preconceptions. Kate is self-reliant and capable of taking care of herself and her homestead without assistance from others, her ability to thrive in a harsh environment indicates her resilience and strength in the face of adversity. According to many prejudices, it might seem that Kate cannot handle such a life in the wilderness and on her own, but the opposite is true: "*You've been pouting up here for over a year. From what I read outside just now you haven't left the homestead since the first snow.*" He met her eyes with a bland expression. *'What's next? You going to give the spruce trees a manicure?'*"<sup>69</sup> Jack wants to say that Kate has been sulking in her solitude for too long, and when he is sarcastic about giving the trees a manicure, he is indicating the absurdity of Kate to continue isolation and lack of activity. Jack thinks that however well Kate can cope with life alone, she cannot live like this anymore, that it is not good for her mental health and that she should get involved in the life around her.

However, Kate does not live all alone, because her everyday companion is her faithful half-wolf dog, Mutt, indicating a close bond with animals and perhaps a preference for their company over human interaction. They have a deep and special bond; her loyal canine companion plays an important role in her life and contributes to Kate's investigative work. Mutt

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<sup>66</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 12.

<sup>67</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 15.

<sup>68</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 15.

<sup>69</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 12.

is not only Kate's trusted partner in the wilderness but also a source of companionship and emotional support. Kate is a very solitary individual, so she relies on Mutt's presence to alleviate feelings of loneliness and provide comfort during challenging times. Mutt's unwavering loyalty and affection are a constant source of solace for Kate. Mutt is someone like her best friend, someone she can talk to, and she can confide her feelings to the dog:

With an effort Kate restrained herself from hurling a crescent wrench at her beloved roommate. "You are right, Mutt," she said, holding out her hand. Mutt trotted over to stick her head under it. "But just because I've come to a decision and settled on a course of action doesn't mean I have to like it." Of course not, Mutt said. "I need somebody to blame," Kate said. Anybody but me, Mutt said agreeably.<sup>70</sup>

From the excerpt, the relationship between Kate and Mutt appears to be like a close companionship and understanding. Kate is frustrated and upset, and Mutt serves as a comforting presence for Kate, offering her support and agreement without judgment. Their interaction can be described as a bond of mutual trust and reliance, where Kate can express her feelings openly to Mutt, who responds with understanding and acceptance. Mutt accompanies Kate almost everywhere she goes, for example to the bar, and some people fear her and respect her, and some like her and look forward to her:

Mutt saw Bernie and bounded across the room to jump up with her two front paws on the bar. "Hey, no dogs allowed in- Oh, it's you, Mutt," Bernie said. "Hold on a minute." He turned and plucked a package of beef jerky off a stand and ripped it open. He tossed a chunk to Mutt, who caught it neatly in her teeth.<sup>71</sup>

All the situations show the different natures of the people Kate and Mutt encounter and also that when a beloved pet looks like a wild animal, it can be frightening, but this can also be an advantage for Kate because it earns her respect in her work as a private eye. This is confirmed by the scene when Fred from the FBI arrives at her home, and he is afraid of Mutt:

"Son of a bitch, what is that?" His face if possible becoming even more colourless. The big man looked up to see an enormous gray animal with a stiff ruff and a plumed tail trotting across the yard in their direction, silent and purposeful. "Dog," he said laconically. "Dog, huh?" He groped in his pocket until his gloved fingers wrapped around the comforting butt of his .38 Police Special. ... "Looks like a goddam wolf to me."<sup>72</sup>

There is a visible difference between a person who comes from the city, does not know nature, and does not know how to behave in it, and between Kate, who has lived in nature all her life. Fred is scared and his instinct tells him to pull out his gun to defend himself, which is very likely behaviour, given Fred's police training. On the other hand, a second man came with

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<sup>70</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 22.

<sup>71</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 56.

<sup>72</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 5.

Fred, who is familiar with the wilderness and knows how to communicate with animals simply and kindly:

“Hold out your hand,” the big man said. “What?” “Make a fist, palm down, hold it out.” The other man swallowed, mentally bid his hand goodbye and obeyed. Mutt sniffed it, looked him over a third time in a way that made him hope he wasn't breathing in an aggressive manner, and then stood to one side, clearly waiting to escort them to the door of the cabin.<sup>73</sup>

While Fred, with his city background and lack of experience in the wilderness, instinctively resorts to fear and readiness to defend himself with a gun, the second man, who is accustomed to the wild, demonstrates a calm and confident demeanour. His ability to communicate with animals and approach them with kindness not only reflects his comfort in the environment but also suggests a deeper understanding and respect for nature. This contrast underscores the importance of familiarity and respect for the natural world, emphasizing how different experiences shape one's perception and behaviour in the wilderness.

In addition to Mutt's deep bond with Kate, Mutt's acute senses and instincts are often instrumental in alerting Kate to potential dangers or suspicious activities. Her ability to detect subtle cues and react to changes in his environment adds an extra layer of security for both Kate and the people she cares about. Mutt's watchfulness and protective nature help Kate navigate the wilderness and stay safe during her investigations. Mutt's protective behaviour is manifested, for example, in a shootout: “*“Mutt! Fetch!” Mutt hit the ground running, a gray streak stretched out low, skimming over the snow like a ghost. They heard a snow machine splutter into life and roar off.*”<sup>74</sup> Even though Mutt has lost track of the shooter, she does not hesitate to pounce on the German shepherd who approached her owner: “*Mutt, looking for a fight in her frustration at not catching whoever had had the audacity to shoot at her very own private human, growled a loud and toothy warning.*”<sup>75</sup> However, Mutt would not be a proper mountain dog if she did not have a sense for tracking and wilderness navigation. Because Mutt's tracking skills and familiarity with the Alaskan wilderness are invaluable assets in Kate's investigative endeavours. She can follow scent or sonic trails: “*She turned toward the entrance and saw Mutt's ears go up and the dog's head swivel toward the woods.*”<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, she can locate missing persons, and navigate difficult terrains with ease. Mutt's expertise in

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<sup>73</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 5.

<sup>74</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 91.

<sup>75</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 91.

<sup>76</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 163.

wilderness navigation often aids Kate in reaching remote locations or uncovering hidden clues related to her cases.

Throughout the time spent together, Kate and Mutt have developed a deep level of nonverbal communication and trust over the course of their partnership. They understand each other's cues, gestures, and body language, allowing them to work together seamlessly. This unspoken connection enables Kate to rely on Mutt's instincts and observations during investigations. So, Mutt can tell when Kate has come up with a clue or is worried:

Kate had finished reading the minutes and was sitting, motionless, staring blindly into the fire. Jack saw that Mutt was sitting in front of her, staring into Kate's face with her yellow eyes wide and unblinking. As he watched, Mutt turned her head and looked at him and whined. It was a muted, anxious little whine, unlike anything he'd heard Mutt say before.<sup>77</sup>

In this excerpt, the deep connection and sensitivity is shown. The situation appears to be tense, and Mutt's behaviour suggests a sense of concern or awareness of Kate's emotional state. The fact that Mutt turns her head to look at Jack and emits a muted whine indicates that Mutt is trying to communicate something about Kate's state to Jack. This behaviour shows that Mutt is not only attuned to Kate's emotions but also feels a sense of responsibility or concern for her well-being. The situation is again about a strong bond between Kate and Mutt, where Mutt is not only a companion but also a sensitive and caring presence in Kate's life. Finally, Mutt is a moral support and reflection for Kate. Mutt serves as a sounding board for Kate's thoughts and ideas. Through their interactions, Kate often verbalizes her thoughts and musings, discussing her investigative progress and reflecting on various aspects of the case. This process of externalizing her thoughts with Mutt as a receptive listener helps Kate gain clarity and new perspectives: “*And I do too have someone to talk to,*’ she said suddenly to Mutt. *‘I’ve got you. Vow of silence my ass.’ Mutt licked her face with a large, wet, and understanding tongue.*<sup>78</sup>” While Mutt does not possess human reasoning or investigative techniques, her presence, companionship, heightened senses, and wilderness skills significantly contribute to Kate's overall capabilities as a private investigator. Mutt's enduring support and unique contributions make her an integral part of Kate's investigative team.

Unfortunately, Kate ended her police career fourteen months ago due to injury. All this time, Kate has been experiencing terrible nightmares from which she suffers from insomnia and has been left with a deep scar on her neck: “*For a moment her collar had fallen away and he*

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<sup>77</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 156.

<sup>78</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 22.

*had seen the scar, twisted and ugly and still angry in colour. It crossed her throat almost from ear to ear.*<sup>79</sup> This injury was a turning and important point in Kate's life because of which she quit her job, closed up, and moved to secluded place. Kate's injury was caused by a pedophile, who had five children and abused them all. While inspecting the house, Kate was attacked by him with a knife, causing her a deep scar and a traumatic experience.<sup>80</sup> That leads to Kate also having a vulnerable side as she carries emotional baggage from her past and struggles with personal demons. These complexities add depth to her character and make her more relatable. However, since Kate became a private investigator, she is unafraid to confront danger and stand up for what she believes in. She is relentless in her pursuit of justice and is willing to put herself at risk to uncover the truth and protect the innocent. “*‘Stay where you are!’ she yelled, or tried to. Her maimed throat made it difficult. She eeled herself backward, beneath the steps, and spoke as loudly as she could through the floor.*<sup>81</sup>” Her determination and courage make her a formidable protagonist.

As for Kate's background, her life has not been easy since childhood. At the age of eight, she lost her father, who drowned, and at the age of ten, her mother died. Little Kate refused to live with her grandmother, so she was adopted by Abel, who was part of the family through Kate's mother and was essentially her surrogate father. He took excellent care of Kate and taught her all the basics that could be useful to her in the reservation, from repairing fishing nets, fishing, and gutting salmon to preparing meat.<sup>82</sup> As a result, Kate and Abel had a very good relationship, Kate was loved and Abel was happy to share the same interests with someone, so it cannot be said that Kate suffered in her infancy. Although Kate did not want to live with her grandmother as a child, she still remains an important person in her life. Her grandmother Ekaterina Moonin Shugak serves as a symbol of Kate's connection to her past and her family, and this cannot be denied simply because of Kate's resemblance to her grandmother: “*Her eyes were like Kate's, light brown and impenetrable at will*”<sup>83</sup> and also because she calls her by traditional name ‘Katya’ and in turn Kate calls her grandmother ‘Emaa’. She embodies tradition and provides Kate with a steady source of strength during times of uncertainty and insecurity in her present and future. However, the bond with what Emaa represents is continuously tested and requires painful adjustments. It can be recognized in the sentence Kate says to Mutt when she goes to visit her grandmother: “*Just because you've never been afraid of*

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<sup>79</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 10.

<sup>80</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 20-21.

<sup>81</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 88.

<sup>82</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 34.

<sup>83</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 43.

*anything in your life doesn't mean I haven't been.*<sup>84</sup>” The problem with her grandmother is that she wants Kate to live in their community of people: “*You would know that already if you chose to live at home among your own people.*”<sup>85</sup> But Kate knows she does not want to live like that and she cannot:

Kate said slowly, feeling her way, “Emaa, someday you are going to have to drag yourself, kicking and screaming if necessary, into this century. You want to keep the family at home, keep the tribe together and make the old values what they were.”<sup>86</sup>

Kate knows that her grandmother is still living in the past, but the future is relentless and moving fast, which is not a good situation for their tribe. Because times have moved on, now modern technology, snowmobiles and television are all around them and traditional life is becoming a thing of the past. Kate has taken the clear position that they must move forward with the future anyway because that is the only way they can have a good life. However, talking her grandmother down is a very difficult task because she is a wilful woman with traditional values. Despite her solitary nature in adulthood, Kate is deeply connected to her community and the people she cares about. She has strong ties to her Native Alaskan heritage and is actively involved in helping and protecting her community. Her loyalty and commitment to the people she loves drive her actions throughout the book. During the time, Kate has gained a sense of observation and intuition. She pays attention to details and is adept at reading people and situations. Her ability to notice subtle clues and connect the dots helps her solve mysteries and uncover the truth. In general, Kate Shugak is a multi-dimensional character with strength, independence, and a strong sense of justice with vulnerability and emotional depth. Her unique qualities and experiences make her a compelling and memorable protagonist of the book series.

Kate Shugak takes on the role of a private investigator, she uses her unique skills and knowledge of the Alaskan wilderness to solve mysteries and uncover the truth. One of Kate's strengths as a private investigator is that she has a great Alaskan insight, she has a deep understanding of the Alaskan environment, its people, and its culture. Growing up in the wilderness and being part of the native Alaskan community gave her an edge in understanding the nuances of the cases she investigates. This insight allows her to connect with witnesses and suspects, navigate remote areas, and interpret clues that others may overlook. In one of her dialogues with her cousin Xenia, who wants to leave the town, Kate describes what it is like to be part of their community and culture:

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<sup>84</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 43.

<sup>85</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 43.

I want you to think about what you're doing, Xenia. I want you to think about what you'll be leaving behind. You think it's nothing. I tell you it can be everything. Here, you're surrounded by family and friends, good people you've known all your life, good people who know you, people you can turn to when you're in trouble, people who are always there for your birthday and Christmas and New Year's.<sup>87</sup>

Kate's words demonstrate the significance of community and cultural roots in Xenia's decision to leave town. She highlights the deep bonds of family and friendship, the familiarity of those who know and support her, and the sense of belonging. Kate urges Xenia to consider the profound value of these connections before abandoning them, implying that leaving behind such a supportive community may entail sacrificing more than she realizes.

Other Kate's strengths are above all tenacity and determination. She is well known for her unwavering determination to get to the bottom of the mysteries she encounters. She is not easily discouraged and will persistently pursue leads and follow up on any potential evidence. Her tenacity is a crucial factor in her success as a private investigator. This determination of hers is again combined with the fact that she is not afraid to solve cases in the wild. There is beautifully shown scene at the ravine, on the one hand, there is Jack's respect for nature, heights, and dangerous places:

... and without looking around Kate gunned the throttle and sped across the bridge. ... Jack was on his hands and knees, his nose practically touching the hard-packed snow beneath him, his eyes never looking to the right or to the left but only straight down at the tracks left by the treads of countless snow machines. He didn't get up from all fours until he was at least twenty feet onto access.<sup>88</sup>

Kate's character traits of tenacity and fearlessness imply that she is well-suited for her role as a private investigator, able to navigate challenging situations with perseverance and courage. The quote further emphasizes this by showing Kate's boldness in contrast to another character's caution, highlighting her unique approach to solving cases. Compared to Jack, Kate is fearless and determined to find the dead bodies. Her behaviour and body language indicate that she does not feel threatened by anything:

It should have been a sight to delight Kate's soul. She strolled to the edge of the gorge and peered over the side. It took Jack eleven minutes to cross the bridge. Kate was counting. "What the hell do you think you're doing?" he shouted. She turned, facing him fully, standing with the heels of her shoepacs an inch from the edge, and said, her hands in her pockets, "Looking for bodies."<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 74.

<sup>88</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 125.

<sup>89</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 126.

As every excellent private investigator Kate possesses sharp observational skills, honed by her years of living in the wilderness. She pays attention to small details, reads body language, and notices patterns that others might miss. These skills aid her in piecing together the puzzle of each case and identifying significant clues that lead her closer to the truth.

It is customary in Alaska, that many people are close to each other, so Kate also uses local connections for her investigation. As a part of the Alaskan community, she has built relationships and earned the trust of the people around her. She leverages these connections to gather information and gain insights into the cases she investigates. Her ability to navigate the tight-knit community and tap into local knowledge is invaluable in her pursuit of justice: *“It was the day of that hearing on building a road into the Park. Everybody came down to the Roadhouse for a drink after the committee adjourned and stayed on. There were about fifty witnesses.”*<sup>90</sup> It means that Kate's integration into the local Alaskan community plays a crucial role in her investigative work. By being part of the community and building relationships, Kate gains access to valuable information that aid her in solving cases. The example suggests that community gatherings provide opportunities for Kate to gather information informally from a wide range of individuals. Among the community, Kate demonstrates her strategic approach to questioning witnesses and suspects. She remains composed and patient, using carefully chosen questions to elicit information. She is recognizing the importance of maintaining a cooperative dialogue to gather valuable information. This approach allows her to gradually uncover details and it indicates her effectiveness in extracting information through strategic questioning:

Kate hid a long, silent intake of breath, and said, “Would you care to tell me about it?” “About Miller or Dahl?” “Let’s start with Miller. He was seeing Xenia.” “Yup.” “Often?” Kate said patiently. It did no good to get irritable with Bernie, he’d just close up like a clam and invite you out of his bar. “Bernie?” Kate repeated when he didn’t reply.<sup>91</sup>

She knows how to ask the right questions to elicit valuable information and uncover hidden motives or secrets. Her ability to analyse responses and detect inconsistencies helps her separate truth from deception.

Since life in Alaska is not easy and not for everyone, a person living there should have at least basic adaptability and survival skills. Kate's background in the Alaskan wilderness has equipped her with a range of survival skills that prove useful in her investigative work. She can handle extreme weather conditions, navigate challenging terrains, and employ outdoor

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<sup>90</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 78.

<sup>91</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 77.



techniques to gather evidence. Her adaptability and resourcefulness give her an advantage in the field. Due to her knowledge of the terrain, she immediately knows where to hide or what to do if her life is in danger. For example, during a shootout:

Kate took a giant leap and hurled herself down the short, steep flight of stairs and behind the berm of snow that lined the path to the shack. Her shoulder hit first, and she rolled into a crouch. ... Every one of her senses was receiving such an overload of information that she was too busy collating it all to be scared. She had never felt more alive in her life.<sup>92</sup>

This excerpt shows that Alaskan wilderness has endowed Kate with essential survival skills important for her investigative work, for example during dangerous situations. Despite the intensity of the situation, Kate's flexibility and inventiveness enable her to remain focused and alert, utilizing her surroundings to protect herself. This demonstrates her capability to succeed in demanding environments and underscores her resilience in the face of danger. In these dangerous situations, when she is full of adrenaline, she manages to keep a cool head and tries to keep other endangered people and her beloved dog safe:

She spoke as loudly as she could through the floor. "Stay where you are. It's some nut with a gun up at the school. Get down behind the counter and stay there." She kicked the floor for emphasis. She risked a look up over the berm. She stretched out flat and slithered on her belly down the icy path.<sup>93</sup>

This shows that Kate is considerate to her loved ones and especially to her canine partner. By instructing others to take cover and signalling to them, she demonstrates leadership and quick thinking. Moreover, she illustrates her bravery and commitment to ensuring the safety of others. Overall, it is important for Kate to trust her instincts and she relies heavily on them throughout her investigations. She follows her gut feelings and intuition, often leading her to crucial breakthroughs. While she embraces evidence-based investigation, she also recognizes the power of her instincts and uses them to guide her decision-making process. Kate's job as a private investigator combines her deep knowledge of the Alaskan wilderness with her observational skills, tenacity, strategic questioning, and reliance on local connections. Her unique blend of investigative procedures and techniques makes her a formidable and effective investigator in solving the mysteries that come her way.

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<sup>92</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 88.

<sup>93</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 89.

## 5.1 Alaska

From the very first pages of the book *A Cold Day for Murder*, a frosty Nordic atmosphere, full of danger, mystery and gloom breathes upon the reader: “*You don’t want to step off into the snow anywhere near here. It’s deeper than it looks, probably over your head. You could founder here and never come up for air.*”<sup>94</sup> The snow in the area is treacherous and potentially dangerous, possibly concealing hazards such as deep pits or crevasses. The nature of the snow in this area is unpredictable and risky, requiring caution and awareness from anyone traversing it. On the other hand, a quiet landscape and white snow can suggest a nice place for peace, relaxation: “*The rending, tearing noise of the snow machine’s engine echoed across the landscape and affronted the arctic peace of that December day.*”<sup>95</sup> Or watching the wildlife of animals: “*It woke a bald eagle roosting in the top of a spruce, causing him to glare down on the two men with malevolent eyes.*”<sup>96</sup> Alaska is depicted as a land of stunning natural beauty, characterized by its majestic and rugged landscape. The vast wilderness, with its towering mountains, expansive glaciers, dense forests, and pristine lakes, serves as a backdrop to the story. The author further describes nature very colourfully, and the impression the reader gains from it is beneficial and important for him, so that he can really relate to this world:

The sky was of that crystal clarity that comes only to lands of the far north in winter; light, translucent, wanting cloud and color. Only the first blush of sunrise outlined the jagged peaks of mountains to the east, though it was well past nine in the morning. The snow was layered in graceful white curves beneath the alder and spruce and cottonwood, all the trees except for the spruce spare and leafless, though even the green spines of the spruce seemed faded to black this morning.<sup>97</sup>

This description paints a picture of a serene and stark winter landscape in Alaska. The portrayal of nature suggests a pure and pristine atmosphere, with a lack of clouds and vibrant colours. The first blush of sunrise in nine o'clock in the morning indicates the lateness of dawn in northern winter regions, contributing to the ethereal quality of the scene. The snow-covered ground evokes a sense of beauty and tranquillity. The mention of leafless trees adds to the feeling of winter's grip and dormancy and fading to black further emphasizes the subdued and monochromatic palette of the landscape. But overall atmosphere creates stillness, cold beauty, and a sense of time standing almost frozen in the midst of a northern winter. It feels serene yet somewhat desolate, capturing the quiet majesty of a winter remote landscape.

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<sup>94</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 2.

<sup>95</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 1.

<sup>96</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 1.

<sup>97</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 2.

However, the harsh and unforgiving environment plays a crucial role in shaping the lives and experiences of the characters and all this suggests that life in snowy and icy Alaska will not be easy for everyone. The book emphasizes the challenging climate of Alaska, particularly during the winter season. The extreme cold, heavy snowfall, and long nights contribute to the isolation and sense of remoteness experienced by the characters. The harsh weather conditions not only impact their daily lives but also present obstacles and dangers that must be overcome:

“How about this cold spell?” Abel, as all true Alaskans are by talk of the weather, was immediately diverted. “It’s a bitch, ain’t it? If it don’t snow again pretty soon, spring runoff’s going to be lousy. At this rate the creeks’ll be running so low we won’t see so much as a scale next spring, let alone a whole fish.”<sup>98</sup>

This passage highlights the interconnectedness between weather patterns and natural phenomena, specifically in the context of Alaska's climate. The dialogue interprets that weather conditions have direct consequences on natural processes - runoffs in spring. In turn, these changes in water flow can affect fishing, which will later have a negative impact on residents who rely on natural wildlife resources. Overall, it emphasizes the intricate relationship between weather, natural processes, and human life in the context of Alaska's environment, where even small variations in weather patterns can have significant implications for both ecosystems and human communities. Nevertheless, people from Alaska are used to winter, they know what to expect and they can adapt to it. This can be observed on the example of a man driving through the icy nature on a snow machine. The first of them is Jack, who is in his natural environment: “*The driver had thick eyebrows and a thicker beard and a lush fur ruff around his hood...he was a big man, made larger by parka...his teeth were bared in a grin that was half-snarl.*”<sup>99</sup> The second man is an FBI agent, who clearly does not live in the countryside: “*The man sitting behind him and clinging desperately to his seat was half size and had no ruff around the edge of his hood. His face was a fragile layer of frost over skin drained a pasty white. He wore a snowsuit at least three sizes too big for him. He wasn’t smiling at all.*”<sup>100</sup> This implies that Jack looks like a typical Alaskan, he is well-groomed, and his body is adapted to the cold and harsh weather. He knows how to dress, and judging by the smile on his face, he has no great difficulty with Alaskan weather. On the other hand, the second man is a typical townsman, his discomfort and lack of preparedness are evident from his desperate clinging to his seat and his ill-fitting

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<sup>98</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 29.

<sup>99</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 1.

<sup>100</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 1.

snowsuit. He is unfamiliar with the cold environment, and he is not finding the situation enjoyable or comfortable.

However, what does this say about the main character Kate Shugak, who lives all alone in a lonely cottage next to the woods? Kate is a very independent and self-sufficient woman from a gender and feminist point of view. She represents a woman who could be a role model for other women. She can take care of herself, both in terms of practical life and every other aspect of life. The fact that she lives alone and does all the work herself shows that she does not need male help, maybe she might even feel insulted if someone thought she needed help. Living in the Alaskan environment is no obstacle, and Kate must be strong in every way to live everyday life in these inhospitable conditions. Kate's personality is also quite harsh, adamant, and straightforward. This is confirmed by her first meeting and conversation with the FBI agent, when she spoke to him, her voice is described as follows “*Her voice was odd, too loud for a whisper, not low enough for a growl, and painfully rough, like a dull saw ripping through old cement.*”<sup>101</sup> As she speaks to the man she sees for the first time, her words are terse and reserved: “*...he said, and turned with a friendly smile. 'All your major American philosophers. We'll get along, Ms. Shugak. 'I wasn't aware we had to, ' she said without inflection, and turned back to the counter.*”<sup>102</sup> Another sign of her strong character is the welcoming of two men, although she knows one of them, she behaves aloof and strict from the beginning. Her behaviour may thus indicate that she does not have to serve men, but that they can serve themselves and also, both men have respect for her, almost as much respect as the FBI agent had of Kate's dog, whom he came across outside and thought he had encountered a wolf: “*She paused momentarily, taking in this sartorial splendour with a long, speculative survey that reminded him uncomfortably of the dog outside.*”<sup>103</sup> As they are in the room together, she is not very talkative, and she does not smile and she strictly guards her privacy:

He replaced the book and strummed the strings of the dusty guitar hanging next to the shelving. It was out of tune. It had been out of tune for a long time. “Hey.” The woman was looking over at him, her eyes hard. “Do you mind?” He dropped his hand. The silence in the little cabin bothered him.<sup>104</sup>

This implies that Kate is reserved and values her privacy. She is cautious about sharing personal information or emotions with others. Her reaction to the man indicates that she might be easily annoyed or disturbed by intrusion to her solitude. Generally, the passage says that

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<sup>101</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 6.

<sup>102</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 8.

<sup>103</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 6.

<sup>104</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 8-9.

Kate is independent and prefers to keep to herself, indicating a guarded and introspective personality.

One of the important elements in the book is a native Alaskan heritage and culture, which are intricately woven into the fabric of the story. The book explores the deep connection between the characters and their Native Alaskan roots, highlighting their respect for tradition, reliance on subsistence practices, and the influence of ancestral wisdom. But there are still people who have no idea about the functioning of communities, who have ingrained ideas that communities still live in the distant past: *“So we showed him pictures of where we lived, and he laughed. He wanted to know what kind of reservations we had, and we told him, none, or none like they do Outside. He still wouldn't believe us, but he was too polite to call us liars to our face.”*<sup>105</sup>

The Native Alaskan culture adds richness and depth to the portrayal of Alaska as a place. The Alaskan heritage is depicted primarily on the character of Kate Shugak and mainly through her grandmother Ekaterina, who still lives by the old traditions. Kate already has a slightly more modern view of traditions and knows that even if people wanted to, progress in the world cannot be avoided. But it does not mean that she has forgotten about traditions and does not respect them:

It's not going to happen. We have too much now, too many snow machines, too many prefabs, too many satellite dishes bringing in too many television channels, showing the kids what they don't have. There's no going back. We've got to go forward, bringing what we can of the past with us, yes, but we've got to go forward. It's the only way we're going to survive.<sup>106</sup>

The other sign connected to the culture is a community. Alaska is presented as a close-knit and interconnected community, particularly in the small villages and towns where the story takes place. The people rely on one another for support, cooperation, and protection in the face of the challenges posed by the environment. The characters' relationships with one another and their sense of belonging to this community contribute to the overall atmosphere of the book. As being stated before, Kate quit the police force and she has started a living as a private eye. She came to this job when her friend Jack came to ask her for help, along with an FBI agent. A ranger has been missing for six weeks, he got lost in the Park, and since his father is a congressman from Ohio, the FBI is also working on the case. Jack has assigned a person from his office to investigate, who has also been missing for two weeks. And in this way, Kate started

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<sup>105</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 52.

<sup>106</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 46.

to work as a private investigator. After a nasty accident and the end of her career, Kate withdrew and hardly left her house for over a year. Until Jack was able to lure her out by recommending her to the FBI because he believes her police work was excellent and she could be a great asset to the investigation. What is more, she fits better into the community of people who live around the Park. *“The feds want the best. I recommended you. I told them you know the Park better than anyone. You were born here, raised here. Hell, you’re related to half the people in it.”*<sup>107</sup>

The overall assessment of the importance of the place is that the vast and remote wilderness of Alaska is an integral part of the story. The characters must navigate through rugged terrains, frozen and stunning landscapes, and treacherous conditions to solve the mysteries at hand. The isolation and harshness of the wilderness serve as a constant reminder of the untamed nature of Alaska and the resilience required to survive in such an environment. Alaska's rich biodiversity and abundant wildlife are featured throughout the book. The presence of bears, wolves, eagles, and other native animals adds to the sense of adventure and danger. The characters' encounters with wildlife reflect the delicate balance between humans and nature, highlighting both the beauty and potential threats posed by Alaska's natural inhabitants.

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<sup>107</sup> Stabenow, *A Cold Day for Murder*, 12.

## 6 Carlotta Carlyle by Linda Barnes

Carlotta Carlyle first appears in the book *A Trouble of Fools* by Linda Barnes published in 1987. Carlotta lives in Boston, and she is former policewoman. She spent a total of six years with the police, after which she was fired for insubordination. The incident took a toll on her and affected her ability to continue in her role as a detective. That is the reason why she decided to go on her own path as a private investigator, where she solves a variety of cases, from the simple ones, such as finding lost pets, to the more complex ones, such as theft. In addition to this, Carlotta also works as a taxi driver part - time. Carlotta can be characterized as a strong and independent female protagonist. She is a tall and athletic private investigator. Carlotta is known for her sharp wit, resourcefulness, and determination in solving cases. She is a tough and capable woman who does not shy away from danger. Carlotta is also portrayed as compassionate and protective, often going the extra mile to help those in need. Throughout the book, she faces various challenges, both personal and professional, which add depth to her character.

Furthermore, Carlotta says about herself that she possesses the necessary qualifications for the job at hand. Moreover, she mentions her history. Carlotta never met her grandmother, but the talk about her suggests that it is from her grandmother's side that Carlotta has Jewish roots: “*I never met my bubbe, my grandma, the source of all my mother’s Yiddish proverbs, but thinking about it now, I guess I wouldn’t mind if she’d been a ringer for Margaret Devens - stubborn, smart, and crafty behind the sweet-old-lady facade.*”<sup>108</sup> Carlotta’s parents died and this is how she came to Boston, to live with her aunt Bea. She successfully completed her college education, becoming the first member of her family to achieve this milestone. UMass Boston was primarily a commuter school, but it provided Carlotta with a quality education, and she gained invaluable insights into the city while working part-time as a taxi driver. If required, Gloria, her colleague at the taxi company, can vouch for her character with kind words. Carlotta often talks about her part-time job as a taxi driver throughout the story, which she has come to love and which is also an important part of her other job, that of private eye. Driving a taxi helps her in her investigations, she can stealthily infiltrate different groups of people to find out information that will help her solve her cases: “*I hacked part-time while I majored in sociology at U. Mass.–Boston. It taught me how to get around the city without ever being obliged to stop for a red light. It also kept me away from waitressing, which was a good thing because I’ve*

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<sup>108</sup> Linda Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools* (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1987), 1.

*never gotten the knack of taking orders.*"<sup>109</sup> The fact that she does not have to stop at red lights shows that Carlotta is inventive and responsive. She has found a way to best optimize her route and save time, which indicates that she is very experienced as a taxi driver, and it benefits both of her jobs. Recognizing that she does not have "the knack of taking orders" shows self-awareness and honesty about her abilities and preferences. As it was mentioned before, the police fired Carlotta for insubordination, which is connected to her aversion to waitressing and taking orders implies a dislike for hierarchical structures or being told what to do. That implies she prefers roles where she has more autonomy and control over her actions, which is perfectly fitted to her role of a private investigator. Furthermore, she dedicated six years of her professional life as a Boston police officer, earning a gold detective's shield before deciding to pursue other endeavours. Mooney would be the appropriate point of contact for further details regarding their tenure there, as they maintain regular communication. Presently, she operates her own business, known as Carlyle Investigations.

As for her aspirations, they revolve around pursuing her current path. She aims to secure a sufficient amount of reputable private investigation work, allowing her to reduce her work as a taxi driver, and potentially even retire from it entirely, despite the fondness she holds for navigating the city's late-night streets. In her dreams, she envisions herself skilfully playing blues guitar: "*I always keep my left-hand nails short because I play blues guitar, not as well as I used to, but pretty damn well considering how little I practice these days;*"<sup>110</sup> drawing inspiration from musicians like Rory Block, and possibly even composing songs for her former partner to record. Another desire is to encounter a man who could help her move past her previous relationship, an individual who would bring joy and fulfilment into her life. However, she wants to clarify that she is not actively seeking or desperate to remarry. In fact, she lacks enthusiasm, or even interest, in pursuing marriage again, especially considering that the men who captivate her attention tend not to be the type to settle down. This is what she mentions about her marriage:

I am not Mrs. Carlyle. Carlyle is my maiden name, which I never abandoned. I am Ms. Carlyle, sometimes Miss Carlyle, although I don't see what business my marital status should be to people who don't even know me on a first-name basis. I wasn't even Mrs. when I was married. But I don't quibble with folks who want to give me money.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 14.

<sup>110</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 40.

<sup>111</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 22.



This passage implies that the speaker prefers to be addressed by her maiden name, Carlyle, rather than as Mrs. Carlyle, as she did not take her husband's surname when she got married. She also expresses indifference toward people knowing her marital status and suggests that it shouldn't matter to those who don't know her personally. However, she is willing to accept being called Mrs. Carlyle if it's necessary for financial transactions or other formal situations.

The character of Carlotta, especially her physical features, is introduced right at the opening pages of the book. From the beginning, Carlotta can appear distracted or strange, even slightly neglected: “*My sweats had seen their heyday long ago, and most of my right knee was visible through a tear.*”<sup>112</sup> She herself says that she does not look her best and admitted that she looked better in the past, as a woman sometimes she does not even think about whether she should wear makeup. Nevertheless, Carlotta seems like a strong independent woman, which is hinted at by her unusual and natural hair colour: “*I've got red hair, really red hair, the kind that beggars adjectives like 'flaming'.*”<sup>113</sup> Regarding her age, the exact figure is not mentioned in the book, but only what Carlotta says herself: “*With my hair under control, I almost look my age, which is on a different side of thirty than most people suspect.*”<sup>114</sup> Another unusual thing is about revealed by her that she often goes barefoot, as her figure is not average like that of other women. Carlotta is over one hundred and eighty centimetres tall and unfortunately has a large shoe size. She complains that most women's shoes are only made up to a size 10, although she is a size 11 and, with exaggeration, she must spend most of her life shopping for shoes. The book does not describe the exact figure of her weight, but her statement while sitting on the couch can at least give the reader an idea of her silhouette: “*I sat on the sofa, which creaked to let me know that while it hadn't collapsed under my weight, it was only a matter of time.*”<sup>115</sup> Carlotta shares her house with Roz, whom she calls as “*post-punk weirdo tenant.*” Roz has more duties at Carlotta's:

From the right distance, propelled by other hands - in this case the paint-smearred hands of Roz, my tenant cum new-wave artist cum sometime assistant - vacuum cleaner buzz could make the lullaby obsolete. Roz gets reduced rent in exchange for basic household chores. As a cleaner, she's a great artist. My floors have never been filthier, but then Roz doesn't have much time for nitty-gritty cleaning. She dyes her hair a new colour every three days and that takes up the hours. I like Roz.<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 4.

<sup>113</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 4.

<sup>114</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 4.

<sup>115</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 6.

<sup>116</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 6.

This implies that Carlotta and Roz have a unique living arrangement where Roz helps out with household chores in exchange for reduced rent. Roz is depicted as more focused on her artistic pursuits than cleaning, but expressing fondness for Roz, nonetheless. Roz's artistic endeavours are highlighted and her colourful personality, emphasizing her prioritization of creative expression over mundane tasks like cleaning. Overall, it portrays a quirky and somewhat chaotic living situation characterized by mutual understanding and acceptance of each other's quirks.

In addition to her character and personality, Carlotta also describes her origin of her appearance and the roots where she comes from, and where she again reveals a bit about her family:

I can pass for Irish. I've got that kind of colouring, red hair, green eyes. I am part Irish, for the record. Also part Scots, and half Russian Jew. Somewhere back in the misty past, I am reputed to have had a great grandma, on my mother's side, who stood well over six feet, accounting for my otherwise surprising height. My parents were both shorties, Mom a passionate union organizer, Dad a Scots - Irish Catholic cop, at war with himself when he wasn't doing battle with Mom.<sup>117</sup>

This implies that Carlotta has a diverse ethnic background, including Irish, Scottish, and Russian Jewish heritage. Physical traits like red hair and green eyes, mentioned are commonly associated with Irish ancestry. Carlotta's family background also includes elements of union activism and a conflicted relationship between their parents. In addition, some of these features could be advantageous for Carlotta's job of a private investigator. Having knowledge of different cultures and backgrounds could make her more relatable to clients from different cultures, enhancing trust and communication. Owing to her ethnic background she may find connections or family ties across communities that could provide valuable leads or insights into cases. This is connected to her physical traits such as red hair and green eyes, that could help the investigator blend into certain environments or communities where those traits are more common.

Throughout the book, Carlotta mentions her cat named Thomas Cat, but he is also known as Mr. T.C. Carlyle or Tom Cat. Both his appearance and nature are best described by this quote from Carlotta:

A good sort, Mr. Carlyle, but definitely of the feline persuasion. Sleek and black, with a right forepaw so white that it looks like he dipped it in a dish of cream, Thomas Cat has a disposition you could describe as independent, which I prefer, or surly, which is closer to the truth. He is not your eager three-piece-suit-and-tie type. I have trouble getting him

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<sup>117</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 26.

to wear a bell around his neck, a necessary indignity that keeps him from dumping dead sparrows on my carpet, which in turn prevents the parakeet from going bonkers.<sup>118</sup>

This says that Kate's cat, Thomas Cat, has a distinct personality characterized by independence or even aloofness. The mention of his reluctance to wear a bell implies that he is not easily controlled or domesticated, and he may tend to bring home a prey. The cat seems like a strong willed and somewhat mischievous nature. For Carlotta, her cat is a loyal companion throughout the story and provides her with emotional support and as she mentions: "*He's the only male I share the place with regularly.*"<sup>119</sup> Although the cat does not actively participate in the investigation, like Kate's dog Mutt, its presence offers comfort and reassurance to Carlotta during challenging times. Throughout the story, Thomas Cat is portrayed as Carlotta's constant companion and confidante: "*T.C., curled up on the pillow next to mine.*"<sup>120</sup> When Carlotta is feeling overwhelmed or needs to clear her mind, she often finds calmness in the gentle purring and soothing presence of Thomas Cat. The cat has a knack for sensing Carlotta's moods and always seems to be by her side, offering comfort and companionship. Mostly, Thomas does not like to share Carlotta with anyone, he has a protective nature towards her: "*Raiitt gave the song one of her fine wailing finishes. Her voice quieted the other noises in the room, from the ticking clock to T. C. meowing in the corner. He likes to warn me when I pay too much attention to another male.*"<sup>121</sup> He is especially jealous when Carlotta meets her suitor Sam: "*And here he was, with flowers in his hand, and a warm smile on his face, inquiring whether I'd missed him while he was gone. T. C. rubbed against my leg, immediately and instinctively jealous. I knelt down and fussed over him.*"<sup>122</sup> During intense moments of the investigation, Carlotta finds herself deep in thought, pondering the clues and piecing together the puzzle. Thomas Cat often curls up on her lap or nuzzles against her leg, providing a sense of calm and grounding in those moments: "*T. C. rubbed against my leg.*"<sup>123</sup> Carlotta frequently strokes Thomas's fur absentmindedly as she contemplates the case, finding comfort in the rhythmic motion. The bond between them is evident throughout the story, depicting the deep connection and understanding they share. However, this only lasts until Carlotta decides to travel with the cat, as it is not exactly a pleasant time together for the cat:

T. C. does not like to travel except when he likes to travel. I hadn't had him in the Toyota since the last time he threw up on the dashboard. Mooney had insisted. I grabbed the cat

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<sup>118</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 2.

<sup>119</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 2.

<sup>120</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 40.

<sup>121</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 133.

<sup>122</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 177.

<sup>123</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 23.

and wrestled a leash attachment onto his collar. He glared at me with wide-eyed disbelief, and exercised his claws. I kept a grip on him, and pretty soon he calmed down.<sup>124</sup>

This confirms that Thomas Cat is not fond of traveling. The cat's reaction to being leashed suggests he is uncomfortable or resistant to the idea, as he initially reacts with disbelief and exercises his claws. However, he eventually calms down after the Carlotta maintains control over him.

In the book, Carlotta Carlyle's role as a private investigator is central to the story. As a character, Carlotta embodies the qualities of a determined and resourceful investigator, employing a range of procedures and techniques to solve the mysteries she encounters. She showcases her sharp observational skills, effective interviewing techniques, utilization of modern tools, street smarts, and unwavering determination. These attributes combine to form a compelling and capable investigator who tackles complex cases and unravels the mysteries at the heart of the story.

In the book *A Trouble of Fools* Carlotta experiences her first thrilling adventure when she takes on the case of a missing person. A spirited elderly Irish woman hires her to locate her brother, Eugene, who has mysteriously disappeared, leaving behind a puzzling stash of \$13,000. As Carlotta delves deeper into the investigation, she discovers that Eugene and his fellow taxi drivers, who are also Irish sympathizers, are entangled in a clandestine plot connected to the IRA. Drawing upon her previous experience working for the taxi company, Carlotta decides to re-join their ranks to closely monitor their activities. Little does she know that her actions will lead her into a collision course with a powerful drug ring, the FBI, and a former lover with ties to the Mafia. These formidable adversaries soon learn the hard way that crossing paths with someone who wears size 11 shoes is never a wise move.

Carlotta's investigative approach is marked by her keen observation skills and attention to detail: "*I started searching, careful where I put my feet. The destruction was even worse in the kitchen - canned goods, cereal, flour, emptied in a pile in the middle of the floor. This didn't look like robbery. It looked like vengeance. Or war.*"<sup>125</sup> She is adept at noticing subtle clues and she utilizes modern investigative tools and technologies to aid her work. She harnesses the power of the internet, databases, and public records to gather relevant information about individuals and organizations involved in her cases. Moreover, she leverages her network of contacts, including fellow investigators, law enforcement officials, and informants, to obtain

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<sup>124</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 184.

<sup>125</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 49.

crucial insights and leads. Carlotta describes her investigative procedures throughout the book nicely, commenting on what she does, what she thinks, or what she plans to do: “*One good thing. I had gotten through to the morgue, and they didn’t have any unclaimed corpses that matched up with Eugene Devens.*”<sup>126</sup> Her ability to gather information and piece together disparate elements is instrumental in unravelling complex cases throughout the book:

I sat in my car and took notes. Comings and goings. Two kids, one not more than twelve years old, gave something to Wispy Beard, got something in return. Full descriptions went down in the notebook. As soon as I got a definite pattern, I’d give my cop friend a date and a time, and make sure the bastard got himself busted good. His days were numbered in my mind.<sup>127</sup>

This shows that Carlotta is highly observant and skilled at gathering information. In the book, she is depicted as someone who pays attention to detail, noticing even the smallest clues that other investigators or cops might miss. Also, Carlotta is actively involved in gathering evidence, like taking notes on people’s activities and interactions, and is determined to use this information to assist law enforcement in apprehending wrongdoers. The mention of a “cop friend” refers to her former employment and that she still has great connections within the police force. And because Carlotta worked in the police force for six years, in some parts of the book she goes back in time and comments on her work as a police officer or even explains why she sometimes misses police work:

I pulled around the corner and ditched my Toyota in a loading zone, locking it carefully. The thing I miss most about being a Boston cop is that little sticker you put on your windshield that keeps you from getting a parking ticket every hour on the hour. It also has a sobering effect on potential car thieves, if they can read.<sup>128</sup>

Carlotta expresses nostalgia for her time as a Boston cop. It means that she misses certain aspects of her former job. The mention of ditching her car in a loading zone suggests that she is still accustomed to taking advantage of such privileges, even though she is no longer a police officer, because as a private eye, no one can offer her these benefits.

As a private investigator, Carlotta demonstrates proficiency in conducting interviews and interrogations. She employs effective questioning techniques to elicit information from witnesses, suspects, and individuals connected to the cases she investigates. Carlotta’s intuition and astute judgment often guide her in determining the credibility and reliability of the information she gathers:

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<sup>126</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 13.

<sup>127</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 44-45.

<sup>128</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 26.

The cops had left a trail of muddy footprints on the stair carpeting. I followed them. ... Four bedrooms and a tiled bath opened off the narrow hallway. I glanced in each doorway. Picking Eugene's room seemed easy. ... Standing in the dimly lit hallway, I tried to imagine the room before the whirlwind struck, make a few guesses about the guy who'd slept there for sixteen years' worth of nights. It didn't seem like the room of a fifty-six-year-old man.<sup>129</sup>

The text suggests that Carlotta, as a private investigator, possesses strong empirical skills and the ability to make deductions based on her surroundings. Her decision-making process regarding which room to investigate indicates her intuitive nature and her ability to make educated guesses based on limited information, then she is able to analyse the information she gathers to form conclusions about the case she's working on. Carlotta often describes her examination methods in detail in the book. It is clear that she was skilled in the police force and really worked her way up. Now she puts all that experience to good use in her work as a private investigator. An important aspect for this work is also to estimate a person's character and qualities, so called to make a profile of him. For example, Carlotta uses this to choose the appropriate strategy when interrogating a suspect, because each person needs to be approached in a different way. For example, in this paragraph:

I suppose I could have tried the direct approach, sidling up to one of the Geezers, buying him a whiskey or three in memory of our former camaraderie at Green & White, then easing in the crucial questions: So where's old Gene Devens? What's he up to these days? But I suspected that some of the old coots might remember my transformation from cabbie to cop....I figured they weren't about to give me the inside scoop.<sup>130</sup>

At first, Carlotta suggests that she could have used direct interrogation as an investigative method, asking directly where the person she is looking for is, this is supported by the fact that she knows the interviewee and, for example, over a drink, it should not be a problem to ask a direct question. However, Carlotta suspects that the interviewee might be wary of her because of her change of job from taxi driver to police officer. So it is through her profiling and good judgment that she guesses that she must apply a completely different approach to the situation and that is guile:

The situation called for subterfuge. Sneakiness. I live and breathe for that kind of stuff. If I thought I could possibly agree with half—well, a quarter—of their activities, I might have joined the CIA. Spying has its attractions for me. Government does not. I knew one important fact about Eugene Devens. He drank.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 60.

<sup>130</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 24.

<sup>131</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 24.

She mentions the need for subterfuge, by this, she indicates that she does not hesitate to use covert tactics to gather information. She also expresses a personal affinity for espionage and spying, suggesting that she finds these aspects of investigative work appealing. Additionally, the statement about Eugene's drinking could be an indication that Carlotta sees this as a potential vulnerability or avenue for investigation in Eugene's case. But most crucial is that this unconventional and perhaps morally ambiguous investigative method will be successful.

Moreover, Carlotta also conducts an interrogation, for example, in a bar with a bartender, but here she encounters people's distorted perception of a police investigation, which she naturally criticises:

“You want to ask me a few questions, right?” he said, like he'd been waiting for the day when somebody would come by and do just that. He looked around as if he expected TV cameras. TV has practically wrecked the investigation business. People have such unrealistic expectations.<sup>132</sup>

Carlotta is expressing frustration and cynicism about the influence of television on people's perceptions regarding law enforcement and investigations. She practically thinks that television has created unrealistic expectations among the public about the speed, methods, and outcomes of police investigations. Subsequently, this could lead to dissatisfaction or misunderstanding when real life investigations do not match up to the portrayals on television. The mention of looking around as if expecting TV cameras implies that he believes people have been influenced to expect dramatic or sensationalized interactions, perhaps akin to what they see in crime dramas or reality TV shows. However, Carlotta conducts one of her interrogations in an informal and indirect way - in a bar, using conversational tactics rather than formal interrogation: “*‘Eugene Devens,’ I said under my breath, trying to play the role. ‘Gene,’ the bartender agreed. ‘Yeah.’ ‘In trouble?’ ‘No trouble.’*”<sup>133</sup> Carlotta has chosen this approach because she is talking to the bartender, and he is in his natural environment and therefore may be less reluctant to answer questions. In addition, Carlotta even offers to buy the bartender a drink: “*‘Pour yourself a beer,’ I said. ‘My treat.’*”<sup>134</sup>, which builds trust with the bartender and is likely to make him more cooperative. This form of eliciting information is similar to some of Kate Shugak's interrogations, who also conducted some of the interview conversations in the bar. Her use of questions is also noteworthy, as Carlotta subtly steers the conversation towards

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<sup>132</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 30.

<sup>133</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 30.

<sup>134</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 31.

the information she needs by asking essentially open-ended questions about Eugene and his location. Carlotta uses questions or statements such as “*He come by often?*”, “*You know him pretty well.*”, “*Look, suppose Gene Devens decided he couldn’t take living with his sister one more night, where would he go?*”<sup>135</sup> This allows the bartender to volunteer information without feeling pressured. In addition to this, Carlotta carefully observes his reactions and body language, looking for any signs of deception or evasion, and judges the credibility of the information accordingly. As a proper investigator, Carlotta must examine all parts of Eugene's life: “*Isn’t Gene getting old for that?*” “*Not Gene.*” “*He have a woman friend? A girlfriend?*” “*He wouldn’t have brought her in here.*”... “*Gene talk about a woman? A girl?*”<sup>136</sup> By asking about Eugene's love life, she tries to find out his social circle and potential connections. A romantic partner could provide valuable information about Eugene's whereabouts or activities. Relationship problems, conflicts, or external pressures from the partner could serve as motives for Eugene's sudden leaving. Whether or not Eugene had a girlfriend may also provide insight into his character and habits. This adds another layer to the investigation and helps Carlotta create a more comprehensive profile of Eugene as a person.

In addition, Carlotta's physical capabilities also play a role in her investigative procedures. Her background as a former cab driver and her tall, athletic stature provides her with advantages in certain situations. She navigates the streets of Boston with ease, gathering first-hand information and utilizing her physical presence as a means of establishing authority or asserting herself when necessary. Also her determination and persistence are key elements of her investigative process. She tenaciously pursues leads, often going beyond the boundaries of conventional investigative procedures to get to the truth. Her commitment to justice and her clients drives her to overcome obstacles and confront dangerous situations head-on:

As I opened my mouth to call her name, I heard footsteps, heavy running steps, and the slam of a screen door. Back door, side door, how the hell did I know? I ran out front, stared right and left, saw nothing, no one. I raced down the narrow walkway to the back of the house. Somewhere, a car engine roared to life and tires screeched on pavement. Through a stand of lilac bushes, I caught one glimpse of a hurtling dark van. By the time I’d vaulted Margaret’s back fence, it was gone.<sup>137</sup>

This implies that Carlotta is quick to react and has a sense of urgency when faced with unexpected situations. It demonstrates her physical agility and determination as she chases after a fleeing suspect. The protagonist's ability to swiftly assess the situation, determine the direction

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<sup>135</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 31.

<sup>136</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 31

<sup>137</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 49.



of the noise, and take immediate action indicates that she is active and decisive in high pressure situations. As mentioned, Carlotta is taller than the average person, which could be advantageous in situations where physical presence or intimidation might be required, giving her a natural advantage in certain confrontational or surveillance scenarios. This is also linked to the fact that Carlotta plays volleyball, after which she goes swimming.

Volleyball, though, I love. We play hard, but we treat each other kindly. You dive after a ball, give it everything you've got, and even if you miss the damn thing, you get a pat on the back and a hand up. I like that. And after the game, I swim laps to cool off. Three days a week, that's my morning. Good healthy exercise.<sup>138</sup>

Not only does she get to relax and unwind while playing her favourite sport, but it is also important for keeping her physically fit should she need to chase a suspect. It is important for every police officer, and private eye, to be fit. Carlotta's proportions can be put in contrast with gender roles. Prejudices say that women are usually more petite than men or that they cannot fight. But this is not the case with Carlotta, whose height defies normal female standards, and therefore prejudice. The combination of her height and her regular fitness routine makes it easy for her to outwit or intimidate any criminal. Overall, the book showcases Carlotta as a capable and strong protagonist who overcomes obstacles and proves herself as a skilled detective. The book emphasizes Carlotta's professionalism, expertise, and dedication to her job, highlighting her as a capable investigator regardless of societal expectations or stereotypes related to women working in this field.

As for the details of the cases, the very beginning works by having clients make an appointment with her first: "*I usually work by appointment only*"<sup>139</sup>. Carlotta is accommodating to clients, she describes most of them as shy, because it is not easy for them to entrust their personal affairs to a stranger, they do not feel comfortable. That is the reason why Carlotta tries to create a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere when dealing with clients: "*My clients are nervous a lot, on the whole. Most of them would rather have root canals without novocaine than discuss their troubles with a stranger. I offered coffee to break the uneasy silence.*"<sup>140</sup> It is positive quality that Carlotta is empathetic and understanding towards her clients' feelings of discomfort and nervousness, and she makes efforts to alleviate their unease by creating a welcoming environment, such as offering them coffee.

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<sup>138</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 41.

<sup>139</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 4.

<sup>140</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 5.

Furthermore, Carlotta also mentions the background of her clients, that they are mostly very wealthy, but she thinks the opposite about her client, Margaret Devens:

‘How much do you charge?’ she asked. I glanced down at her shoes. My full-price clients are mainly divorce lawyers with buffed cordovan Gucci loafers. Margaret Devens wore orthopedic wedgies with run-down heels, much worn, much polished, shabbily genteel. My pay scale started a downward slide.<sup>141</sup>

This suggests that Carlotta is making assumptions about Margaret's financial status based on her appearance, particularly her worn out shoes. Despite Margaret's actual wealth, Carlotta perceives her differently because she does not fit the typical image of Carlotta's affluent clientele. Carlotta's judgment is based on stereotypes or preconceived notions about wealth and status, leading her to incorrectly assess Margaret's financial situation solely based on her shoes.

While with Kate Shugak and her very first investigation of the missing ranger, no price is known for her work as a private investigator, nor what reward she was given, with Carlotta Carlyle the information is accurate:

‘I’m not a charity case,’ she said firmly. ‘You tell me the same price the rich ones pay. I’ve plenty of money. What do the wealthy pay you?’ ‘Three hundred a day plus expenses,’ I said, knocking a hundred off the top. ‘But with missing persons cases, I generally take some expense money up front, and charge a flat fee on delivery. Maybe I’ll find him with one phone call. Maybe I never will.’<sup>142</sup>

This suggests that there is a difference in how Kate and Carlotta handle their pricing as private investigators. Carlotta explicitly discusses her pricing with her client, Margaret, indicating a more structured approach to her fees. Carlotta is transparent about her pricing, discussing rates and payment terms with her client, which suggests a more business oriented approach to her private investigation work compared to Kate. In any case, Carlotta approaches her work with Margaret in a professional manner, striving to gather all the necessary information to aid in the investigation. She listens attentively to Margaret's concerns, gathers details about Eugene's disappearance, and works diligently to uncover any leads or clues:

The narrow bed's brass headboard was barred and knobbed. The mattress had been yanked onto the floor, and slit repeatedly. Coils of wire poked out of the springs like jack-in-the-box toys. Over the bed hung a giant poster of young Carl Yastrzemski, Red Sox hero. So the searchers had been looking for something substantial, not a key, or a photo, or anything flat that could be taped behind smiling Yaz.<sup>143</sup>

This implies that Carlotta is thorough and methodical in her approach to her work. She carefully examines the scene, noting details such as the condition of the bed and the presence

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<sup>141</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 11.

<sup>142</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 11.

<sup>143</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 60.

of a poster, to gather information relevant to the investigation. The quote also suggests that the search for clues has been extensive, focusing on finding something substantial rather than smaller items. Carlotta's professionalism is evident in her efforts to aid in the investigation of Eugene's disappearance.

Throughout the process, Carlotta maintains open and regular communication with Margaret, providing updates on her progress and involving her in decision making when appropriate. She ensures that Margaret is informed and involved in the investigation, offering support and reassurance during what is undoubtedly a difficult and distressing time for her. Carlotta's interactions with Margaret are full of empathy, understanding, and a commitment to helping her find answers about her brother's disappearance. She respects Margaret's role as a concerned family member and collaborates with her to uncover the truth. Carlotta works closely with Margaret as a dedicated investigator, striving to provide the support and answers she seeks while employing her professional skills and experience to solve the case. Certain situations also beautifully show that Carlotta developed a certain affectionate and warm relationship with Margaret, precisely as a result of not knowing her grandmother, for example where Margaret was in the hospital:

I sat with her a little while. The IV dripped. The second hand of the big clock described steady circles. Her breathing grew soft and even, her hand warmer. Before I left, I tucked her hand underneath the thin blanket, and smoothed a strand of white hair off her forehead. Like I said, I never met my grandmother.<sup>144</sup>

This implies that Carlotta's lack of a relationship with her own grandmother may have influenced her interactions with Margaret, fostering a sense of affection and warmth towards her. Despite not having a personal connection to her own grandmother, Carlotta shows care and tenderness towards Margaret, such as sitting with her in the hospital. By this, Carlotta may be filling a void in her life by forming a compassionate bond with Margaret, possibly seeking the familial connection she missed out on with her own grandmother.

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<sup>144</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 54.

## 6.1 Boston

The book *A Trouble of Fools* is set in Boston. Here, the contrast between the lively colossal city and the peaceful Alaskan nature is shown. Boston serves as a vivid and dynamic setting that contributes significantly to the overall narrative. The city's distinct features and unique atmosphere play a crucial role in shaping the story and the experiences of the characters:

I'd stayed at my observation post too long, so I flew down Memorial Drive, my thoughts grimly fixed on that scumbag drug dealer. I was halfway to the Boston University Bridge before I shook myself out of it, and noticed that the elm leaves were edged with gold, and high clouds filtered the sunlight into fine visible rays. With breath taking suddenness, the road reared up and flashed a spectacular view of Boston's church steeples, brownstones, and skyscrapers. It still gives me goosebumps after all these years.<sup>145</sup>

Carlotta is very familiar with Boston and its surroundings. The description of the view giving Carlotta "goosebumps after all these years" suggests a deep emotional connection to the city, like she has strong feelings of attachment or nostalgia towards Boston. The quote paints a picture of the cityscape and suggests that Carlotta finds it impressive or beautiful. And when she is at first engaged with not happy thoughts, the sudden beauty of the city scenery distracts her from these grim thoughts, highlighting the power of the scene to uplift their spirits.

Firstly, Boston's historical significance is skilfully incorporated into the narrative. The author often references the city's rich past, highlighting landmarks and events that tie into the plot. Whether it's the cobblestone streets of Beacon Hill or the iconic Freedom Trail, the historical backdrop adds depth and authenticity to the story, creating a sense of time and place. Linda Barnes created a list of Carlotta's various cherished places. One of them are for example Carlotta's favourite places for walks, which include The Muddy River, Jamaica Pond, or Memorial Drive from Mass Ave to the Science Museum, over the bridge into Boston and then back down the Esplanade. For instance one of the Carlotta's favourite sights and views is the breath taking view from the Boston University Bridge, facing east. As she gaze upon the scene, she is greeted by the serene Charles River, adorned with a few rowers gracefully gliding through the water:

On crisp autumn days, no city compares to Boston, especially when you sneak up on it from the Cambridge side of the Charles. It's the river that makes the magic, frames the city with a silver band. Today the Charles was flat as glass, except for two single sculls cutting the water, gliding toward the M.I.T. boathouse.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 45.

<sup>146</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 45.

This passage paints a vivid picture of Boston during autumn, when the air is likely cool and refreshing, with hints of the changing foliage adding warmth to the visual landscape. The season of autumn brings with it a sense of transition and nostalgia, which can be felt in the description of the scene. According to this, Boston appears enchanting, perhaps even magical, especially when viewed from across the Charles River. The imagery of the river framing the city suggests a picturesque scene, enhancing the city's allure. The description of the Charles River evokes a sense of tranquillity and calmness. The city scene continues:

The skyline is a jumble downtown, but off to the right the Hancock and Prudential towers guard the Back Bay. At the top of Beacon Hill, the gold dome of the State House caught a shaft of sunlight and beamed it back in my eyes. The air is filled with the joyous honking of the ever-present flock of white geese, encouraging the rowers as they navigate their way onward. It is always a picturesque moment that captures the beauty and harmony of nature.<sup>147</sup>

The description of the city suggests a bustling and perhaps chaotic urban centre. However, the mention of iconic landmarks adds a sense of stability and prominence to the cityscape; and it further highlights the historical and architectural significance of the city. The atmosphere of the city appears lively and vibrant, as indicated by the "joyous honking" of the white geese. This means a sense of community and activity within the city, with people and wildlife coexisting harmoniously. Despite the hustle and bustle of the city, there's a sense of peace and unity portrayed through the interaction between nature, architecture, and human activity.

Anyway, Boston's vibrant neighbourhoods and diverse communities come to life in the book. From the bustling streets of downtown to the tight-knit enclaves like the Italian North End or the Irish South Boston, the author paints a vivid picture of the city's multicultural fabric. But there is a contrast with living alone in the middle of wilderness, where one does not meet another person as the day is long. On the contrary, in vibrant Boston there are always a lot of people and on every corner, so there are more assaults and break-ins. That is why Carlotta takes care of her own protection and has the entrance to the house properly secured: "*It isn't that I have far to travel from the dining room to the hall. It's that I have about five locks on my crummy front door. Filling burglary reports has replaced baseball as my neighbour's prime pastime.*"<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>147</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 45.

<sup>148</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 11.

This portrayal enhances the story's authenticity and provides a backdrop against which the characters' interactions and conflicts unfold. From the cultural and social area of the city, Carlotta also has her favourite places. From the music venues it is Passim and Sanders Theatre in Cambridge, Johnny D's and Somerville Theatre in Davis Square, Somerville. Or from movie theatres it is The Brattle in Cambridge and The Coolidge Corner in Brookline. As it is known, it is very difficult for Carlotta to find shoes in her size, and there are only three stores in Boston that carry shoes in size 11, and they are Simon's Shoes in Coolidge Corner, Designer Shoes on Newbury Street and The Barn in Newton. Carlotta has refined taste buds and therefore she has a list of the best restaurants and their delicious dishes:

I stopped at a deli on the VFW Parkway and ordered a pastrami on light rye, two half-sour pickles, and a can of Dr. Brown's cream soda. That's the kind of food I was raised on. ... I gobbled a huge wedge of strawberry cheesecake for dessert. If it weren't for volleyball and a speedy metabolism, I swear I'd be as fat as Gloria.<sup>149</sup>

The mention of ordering pastrami on light rye suggests a cultural diversity within the city. These food items are often associated with Jewish delis, indicating the presence of a Jewish community or influence in the city. At the same time, the mention of stopping at a deli for lunch indicates that it is part of her routine and reflects the social fabric of the city. There are plenty of other restaurants in town with excellent ratings. In Mary Chung's, their Suan La Chow Show is absolutely amazing and a must-try dish. The flavours are out of this world. In the restaurant Summer Shack, Carlotta recommends fried oysters, there are not any better than the ones served there. They are simply the best. In Anna's Taqueria, their chicken quesadillas are incredibly delicious, and Ocean Wealth is a hidden gem in Chinatown, it offers exceptional Chinese cuisine that will satisfy taste buds.

Additionally, Boston's academic institutions play a notable role in the narrative. With renowned universities such as Harvard and MIT, the city attracts a diverse and intellectually stimulating population. The influence of academia is evident in the characters' backgrounds and professions, shaping their perspectives and actions throughout the book. It also provides opportunities for exploration of intellectual themes and adds a layer of complexity to the plot.

Lastly, Boston's distinctive atmosphere and weather patterns contribute to the overall mood of the story. The cold winters, foggy mornings, and occasional coastal storms create an atmospheric backdrop that reflects the characters' emotions and the tension of the plot: "*The storm whistled and sang. I shook water off my hat, and sat in the plastic guest chair.*"<sup>150</sup> The

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<sup>149</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 55.

<sup>150</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 100.

author effectively captures the essence of the city's climate, weaving it into the narrative to enhance the reader's immersion:

The first drops started slowly, a single leisurely splash against my cheek, another on my hand, then a heavy wet plop on the bridge of my nose. The drops ganged up quickly and turned into an unexpected shower. A sudden gust of north easterly wind tried to steal my hat, and the rain began battering the pavement, bouncing back inches high. I walked briskly. I ran. Listening to the Boston weather report is a pure waste of time.<sup>151</sup>

The quote says that the city of Boston experiences unpredictable weather, as indicated by the sudden onset of rain. The description of the raindrops starting slowly and then quickly intensifying creates a vivid sensory experience for the reader, also the bouncing raindrops add to the chaotic atmosphere. Carlotta has already found it useless to listen to the weather forecast and residents had to learn to adapt quickly to sudden changes in the weather.

In general, in the book, Boston serves as a multi-dimensional and engaging setting. Its historical significance, diverse neighbourhoods, academic institutions, and unique atmosphere intertwine to create an authentic and captivating backdrop for the story, making Boston itself an essential element of the narrative.

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<sup>151</sup> Barnes, *A Trouble of Fools*, 99.

## Conclusion

The aim of the diploma thesis was to characterize crime fiction of Dana Stabenow and Linda Barnes using the works by selected authors. Dana Stabenow's book *A Cold Day for Murder* and Linda Barnes' book *A Trouble of Fools* were used.

The characters of Kate Shugak and Carlotta Carlyle are undoubtedly wonderful and unusual characters, in some ways they are similar and in some ways they are quite different. The most similar is the overall view of the two characters, with both women having worked in the police force in the past and having retired after a not so happy event and now working as private eye. As well as cases and investigations, they both deal with issues such as troubles in their private lives or other unpleasantness in their surroundings, whether it relates to culture and community or abuses of the law and crime. The places in which the stories are set - Alaska and Boston - are also indispensable to both books. Two completely different places, but ones that perfectly complete the atmosphere of the stories.

Kate Shugak lives in the Alaskan wilderness with her faithful dog Mutt. Kate's life has not been easy since she was a child, but she has overcome the loss of her parents and then a difficult leaving from the police force, from which she carries bad memories and a scar. However, in her story, Kate has shown that she is brave and will not let just anything get her down. Although she is sometimes secluded and withdrawn, she is not afraid to face new challenges, and in the end she accepts them with honour. In investigating the case, she demonstrates her physical and mental strength and her fearless and protective nature. She honestly investigates all leads and does not give up until the crime is solved. Her life is inseparably linked to Aleut culture, where the book's criminal theme is intertwined with the cultural and social issues and, consequently, the life problems of the local people. Thus, Kate must also deal with the differences with the history of the culture and its blending with modern times. This in part is linked to the collusion and bribery that occurs in the community.

Kate innovates the detective genre with all of her aforementioned qualities and by the fact that she is a woman, because not everyone could be as strong as she is after all the events, and moreover in the inhospitable Alaskan wilderness where even an experienced ranger gets lost and other men are in trouble. Kate stays strong, fighting for truth and justice, even at the cost of sometimes having to fight against her own family.

As mentioned, the Alaskan setting is part of the book and is really beautifully and richly described and manages to draw the reader into the story. Some of the cultural and other issues



are related to the inhospitable nature of Alaska, and so all the themes in the book connect beautifully. Overall, Dana Stabenow's book is innovative or different in that the murder is not immediately described at the beginning, but is first classified as a disappearance, at the same time the first pages of the book are mostly devoted to describing the Alaskan nature, which is a beautiful introduction to the story.

The opposite of Kate is Carlotta Carlyle, who lives in Boston with her cat and a roommate, and also works part-time as a cab driver. Carlotta also did not have an easy childhood when her parents died. Carlotta's personality is a little different from Kate's. Throughout the book, Carlotta proves to be talkative, purposeful, and maybe even a little crazy. Although Carlotta lives in America, her background is also Russian-Jewish, Irish, and Scottish, and the book shows how cultural themes associated primarily with Judaism and Ireland can be intertwined. The story also manages to describe well how practices associated with the IRA and other shady groups and people become involved in the investigation. Carlotta proves to be very capable in her work as a private investigator, combining an unyielding nature with her gentle and caring side. With her persistence and diligence, she could join the CIA, as she herself confirms, just as Kate was being lured to the FBI, of both women, it attests their excellent investigative skills and that they are experts in their field. The difference in the career of a private eye is that Kate was rather persuaded or "forced" into it, whereas Carlotta officially has her own office and gets paid. Carlotta contributes to the innovation by her straightforwardness, by her fearlessness to throw herself into situations and by not being afraid to cheat a little sometimes to get what she needs, but she does everything for a good cause and above all to solve a case. The fact that she basically has two jobs that she can merge perfectly into one another and thus draw benefits for her investigations is definitely innovative. Then there is also the unusualness of her body proportions, as they are not quite typically female, yet she is able to use those to her advantage. The uniqueness of the story is enhanced by the well portrayed secondary characters who make the story more engaging. In addition, *A Trouble of Fools* is different in its linguistic devices, where the author uses urban slang and informal language (hiya, pick 'em up), and often uses hyphenated words (chicken-scratched, kitchen-canned).

The story is set in the streets of Boston, which manages to complete the atmosphere of the story in an urban setting. A story set in the city becomes very different from one set in the wilderness. Boston helps to complete the mood to Carlotta's investigations, for example, when she drives through the city streets in a taxi, but also on her days off when she goes out.

Overall, both books absolutely comply with the crime fiction category, including by definition of Leitch or Auden. There is a crime that is subsequently being solved by a private eye who examines evidence and interrogates suspects until the mystery is eventually solved. The characters fulfil what is expected of a private eye, they are dedicated to their job, and they do it very well, moreover, they are entertaining and independent, which fulfils the Walton and Jones' idea of a private eye. Both books expand from the crime theme into the other themes mentioned above, which makes the main characters' stories even more complex, but the main motive is still retained in the crime.

## Resumé

Cílem diplomové práce je na základě děl vybraných autorů charakterizovat kriminální fikci autorek Dany Stabenow a Lindy Barnes. Teoretická část se věnuje detektivnímu žánru, ženským autorkám i postavám. V praktické části jsou již charakterizovány vybrané postavy, jejich vyšetřovací postupy a také místa, do kterých jsou příběhy zasazeny. Obě místa jsou velmi odlišná, je zde kontrast mezi velkoměstem a divokou krajinou. Jako podklad byly použity knihy *A Cold Day for Murder* od Dany Stabenow a *A Trouble of Fools* od Lindy Barnes.

Teoretická část se nejprve věnuje detektivkám, které se vyvinuly z kriminální literatury a v současnosti jsou velmi populárním žánrem mezi čtenáři. Počátky tohoto žánru sahají až do starověku, ale do popředí se dostal až začátkem 19. století, kdy ho charakterizují hlavně díla od Edgara Allana Poe. Detektivní literatura zahrnuje různé sub žánry, jako jsou detektivní próza, policejní procedurály, nebo tzv. whodunit. Základem většiny detektivních příběhů bývá obvykle nevyřešený zločin, zapojení profesionálního nebo amatérského detektiva, zkoumání důkazů, výsledky podezřelých a očekávaný závěr, který odhalí řešení a potrestá zločince. Hlavními prvky jsou potom role zločince, oběti a detektiva, stejně jako přítomnost podezřelých a jejich motivů. Mezi první vlivné autory tohoto žánru patří E. A. Poe, Arthur Conan Doyle a Agatha Christie. V dnešní moderní době jsou policejní procedurály známé především v podobě televizních kriminálek. Každá kriminálka má svůj cíl, na který vyšetřování soustředí. Například specifická metoda vyšetřování, jako je profilování v seriálu *Myšlenky zločince*. Existuje i velmi specifický typ soukromého detektiva, a to samotný Ďábel v seriálu *Lucifer*. Dalšími známými seriály jsou *Zákon a pořádek*, *Kriminálka Miami* nebo *Námořní vyšetřovací služba*.

Druhá kapitola teoretické části se zaměřuje jak na vznik a vývoj ženských detektivek, tak i na pohled veřejnosti na detektivní literární díla. Na konci 19. století představili spisovatelé Catharine Louisa Pirkis a George Sims ženské detektivky, a to postavy Loveday Brook a Dorcas Dene, čímž zpochybnili žánr, v němž dominovali muži. Tato raná díla položila základy pro budoucí ženské detektivní postavy. Dále autorky jako Wentworth, Sayers a Christie zpopularizovaly archetyp postavy staré panny a představily řešení zločinů z ženského pohledu. Autorky detektivního žánru si uvědomovaly napětí mezi odhalením a utajením, čerpaly z gotické tradice a kritizovaly společenské pokrytectví. Ženský gotický žánr se zaměřoval na zkušenosti žen v domácím prostředí a dával gotické hrdince sílu vzdorovat klišé a získávat různá poznání. Kolem roku 1990 došlo k pozoruhodnému rozvoji ženských detektivek v amerických detektivních románech, kde se prosadily autorky jako Sue Grafton a Sara Paretsky.

Tyto romány se zabývaly feministickými otázkami a odrážely společenské a genderové změny, což přispělo k popularitě a úspěchu ženských detektivních románů.

Další kapitola pojednává o hard-boiled school a hard-boiled fiction, jedná se o sub žánr detektivky, který vznikl v meziválečném období. Hard-boiled fiction je spojována s Kalifornií, americkou lidovou slovesností a zločiny odrážejícími realie Ameriky počátku 20. století, což ji činí výrazně americkou. Žánr byl inspirován pulpovými časopisy a vyznačoval se násilím, rychlými dialogy a nevábným prostředím. Významnými autory tohoto žánru byli Dashiell Hammett a Raymond Chandler. Postavy soukromých detektivů, jako byl Hammettův Continental Op a Chandlerův Philip Marlowe, ztělesňovali tvrdost a prozíravost. Žánr byl ovlivněn kulturními a socioekonomickými faktory, jako byla poválečná léta, průmyslový kapitalismus a prohibice. Významnou roli v popularizaci hard-boiled fiction sehrál časopis *Black Mask*, který představoval renomované autory. Pulp magazíny, tištěné na levný papír a proto i cenově dostupné a přístupné dělnické třídě, byly preferovaným čtenářským materiálem.

První část praktické části je věnována postavě Kate Shugak a Aljašce. Charakterizuje Kate, hlavní hrdinku knihy *A Cold Day for Murder* od Dany Stabenow. Kate je složitá a impozantní postava, která žije osamělým životem v aljašské divočině. Ovládá praktické dovednosti nezbytné pro přežití v drsném prostředí, včetně lovu, rybolovu a stopování. Její samostatnost a houževnatost z ní dělají silnou ženu, kterou málo co překvapí. V minulosti Kate pracovala u policie, kde se naučila a zdokonalila její vyšetřovací schopnosti, které v knize uplatňuje už jako soukromé očko. Pro svou práci je známá svou precizností a šikovností. Aljaška je v knize vykreslena velmi barvitě, pyšní se úchvatnými přírodními krásami, které dotváří kulisu příběhu, avšak je zde i kontrast, kdy je Aljaška nehostinná, připravuje pro obyvatele různé nástrahy a těžké životní situace, se kterými se musí popasovat. V roli soukromého očka Kate využívá její jedinečné znalosti aljašské divočiny a při řešení záhad se spoléhá na vlastní instinkt. Její pohlaví představuje ve svém oboru výzvu i příležitost, protože může být podceňována nebo čelit předsudkům, navíc je Aleutka, což může spoustu lidí také odsoudit. Důležitou součástí Kateina života je její vlčí fenka Obluda. Je jí věrnou přítelkyní, když je Kate osamělá, nebo si nemá s kým promluvit. Obluda pomáhá Kate i při vyšetřování a svou paničku za každou cenu ochraňuje.

Druhá kapitola praktické části je věnována postavě Carlottě Carlyle a Bostonu. Charakterizuje Carlottu, hlavní hrdinku knihy *A Trouble of Fools* od Lindy Barnes. Carlotta, stejně jako Kate, původně pracovala jako policistka, která se později dala na dráhu soukromé

vyšetřovatelky. Na částečný úvazek pracuje i jako taxikářka, Carlottě se dokonce povedlo skloubit tyto dvě práce dohromady, a taxikářství jí nakonec pomáhá v řešení případu. Carlottiným každodenním společníkem je její kocour Tom a také její spolubydlící Roz. Carlotta je silná a nezávislá žena, známá svým důvtipem, vynalézavostí a odhodláním při řešení případů. Přestože čelí osobním i profesním výzvám, zůstává houževnatá a soucitná a pro pomoc druhým udělá i něco navíc. Oblíbila si hlavně starší dámu Margareth, která k ní přišla pro pomoc s hledáním jejího bratra. Margareth je ve sém věku již zranitelná paní, navíc Carlottě velmi připomíná její zesnulou tetu, kterou měla velmi ráda. Celým příběhem se tedy prolíná Carlottina starostlivost o Margareth a s tím spojené vzpomínky na okamžiky strávené s tetou. Carlotta má po babičce židovské kořeny, po rodičích i irské. Děj knihy se odehrává v Bostonu, který je v knize líčen jako živé a rozmanité město, které příběhu dodává hloubku. Ústřední roli v příběhu hraje Carlotta jako soukromá vyšetřovatelka, která využívá své schopnosti, intuici a odhodlání při řešení záhad. Ačkoli pohlaví není v jejích vyšetřovacích metodách významným faktorem, občasné zmínky o problémech, kterým ženy v oboru čelí, se mohou objevit, aniž by to snižovalo Carlottiny schopnosti.

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