

# DOWNLOAD PDF BEFORE LAURA: VERA CASPARYS EARLY CAREER AND NOVELS

## Chapter 1 : Laura : Vera Caspary :

*Wilkie Collins was one of the most popular novelists during England's Victorian era. While Collins scholarship has often focused on social issues, this critical study explores his formal ingenuity, particularly the novel of testimony constructed from epistolary fiction, trial reports and prose monologue.*

Where I list what I read and my reactions. Mystery is my genre, leaning towards traditional mysteries and police procedurals. Bitter hot tea is the perfect companion. Wednesday, February 22, Laura: One of the nine novels in this set is Laura. When was selected to be the year for the Crimes of the Century meme for February , I decided it was time to read this book. I had avoided this novel for years. Although I had never seen the movie based on the book, I thought I knew the story, and assumed the story was spoiled for me. That was a mistake; even if I did know one or two main points of the story, there was much there to surprise me and I loved the way the story was told. Laura is a wonderful read and not to be missed. In this novel, Laura Hunt, a successful career woman working for an advertising firm, has been murdered in her apartment. She was shot at close range with BB shot as she opened the door of her apartment to a visitor. Mark McPherson starts his investigation of the case by interviewing the two men who cared for her most, Waldo Lydecker, her friend and mentor, and Shelby J. For the most part, Laura is narrated in the first person by several different characters. Waldo is a middle-aged, overweight journalist who gave Laura her start in advertising. The second section is narrated by McPherson as he continues working the case. Another section is a "stenographic report of the statement made by Shelby J. Carpenter to Lieutenant McPherson. Caspary also explores feminist themes. Laura has struggled with the conflicts of balancing a demanding career and a fulfilling love life. How does this book reflect the year it was published? Actually the story was published first as a 7-part serial in titled Ring Twice for Laura. It was published in novel form the next year. While reading the book, I did not notice much evidence of the time. A new battle on the Eastern Front and a speech by Churchill had pushed her off the front pages. I turned to Page Four. There was her picture The problem with my viewing of the film is that I watched it too soon after reading the book. In the book, this may be implied but not so strongly. However, having said that, I do think the movie is very well done and very entertaining. It just does not convey the depth of the book at all. It is a part of the Femmes Fatales: In my opinion, the essay at the end of the book is worth the price of admission. The Feminist Press, orig.

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### Chapter 2 : Bookslut | The Grand Adventure of Vera Caspary

*Contents Acknowledgments v Before Laura Vera Casparys Early Career and Novels 99 9. Wilkie Collins Vera Caspary and the Evolution of the eBooks is available in digital format. [PDF] DANGEROUS WOMEN VERA CASPARY'S REWRITING OF LADY AUDLEY.*

Crime, Supernatural and Adventure fiction. Obscure, Forgotten and Well Worth Reading. Monday, December 8, FFB: Not such a forgotten book, I guess. The movie is definitely not forgotten. Reading the book was a revelation; so drastic are the differences. I was taken aback by the major changes made in the classic film adaptation of Laura I learned so much about this story, how it came into being, its origin as a doomed play that never saw a Broadway production and the perhaps by now famous argument Caspary had with Otto Preminger over one key scene in the film that she felt ruined her intent in writing the book in the first place. The biggest revelation to me is that Laura, the novel, is so much more than just a detective novel. Caspary uses the investigation of a horrible murder to explore complex human emotions and unusual psychology of obsessive love and does so with grace and artistry that is at times breathtaking. First and foremost are the differences in the character of Waldo Lydecker, the highbrow newspaper columnist and cultural mentor of Laura Hunt. Waldo Lydecker would have been better played by Edward Arnold with a beard and spectacles. Much as she disavowed using celebrity columnist and radio personality Alexander Woollcott as a model for Waldo the similarities are hard to ignore. Apart from the amazing coincidence of their looks Lydecker and Woollcott are both interested in writing about true crime. The only contrast between the two is that Waldo Lydecker confesses in the very first chapter a complete distaste for detective novels and Woollcott was known to devour them. He even acted as mystery selections editor for the cheap reprint publisher White House during the s. Vincent Price was a handsome and dapper fellow in the movie but not the kind of rugged and athletic Shelby that Caspary created. He also wavers between self-delusion and cognizant disingenuousness as he tries to convince Laura that he really has her best interests at heart, that he is trying to protect her from a malicious cop out to convict her of a violent crime. That should be a much bigger gun and aimed a lot closer. When Caspary was planning to turn her failed playscript into a novel she was given a bit of remarkable advice by one of her screenwriter friends in Hollywood who suggested she look to *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins as her framework. Movie dialogue alone cannot begin to convey the richness we get when we hear the characters speak their thoughts in their individual manuscripts. A driven and focussed woman in the workplace she gets her job done with little distraction. But when left to her own thoughts she confesses " At its core Laura is a study of the mystery of love in all its forms. Coming into play throughout all these narratives are varying viewpoints of idealized beauty both male and female , authenticity of character, questioning gender stereotypes and ideals of manhood and femininity, and a incisive portrait of how weakness and character flaws can be the ruling emotions in the world of love. To have seen the movie is not to know this story of Laura. I urge you to experience the mystery of Laura Hunt and her world by reading the novel. Laura is a rare instance of a book and a movie achieving classic status each in their own right. Just like the novel here is the resurrected Laura! Back-up and save all posts in the future.

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### Chapter 3 : Laura by Vera Caspary | Women Crime Writers of the s and 50s

*Before Laura: Vera Caspary's Early Career and Novels 99 9. Laura: A Noir Novel Deeply Rooted in Sensation After Laura: Caspary's Other Casebook Novels*

Showing of 17 next show all Got to page Even knowing the solution, this is a great mystery novel. I unscrewed the carnelian cap of the silver box in which I keep my saccharine tablets. Although I spread butter lavishly on my brioches, I cling religiously to the belief that the substitution of saccharine for sugar in coffee will make me slender and fascinating. Mark questions, Waldo answers, but Waldo seems to feel that he is the one controlling the conversation. Those three men and their question, lies and subterfuges make up the first part of the book. Going on thirty and unmarried, I had become alarmed. Pretending to love him and playing the mother game, I bought him an extravagant cigarette case, fourteen-karat gold, as a man might buy his wife an orchid or a diamond to expiate infidelity. And now that tragedy has wiped away all the glib excuses, I see that our love was as bare of real passion as the mating of two choice vegetables which are to be combined for the purpose of producing a profitable new item for the markets. It was like love in the movies; contrived and opportune. And now it was over. Two strangers sat at opposite ends of the couch. We tried to find words that had the same meaning for both of us. Laura is a successful career woman and already she is inadequate and incomplete. His remaining a bachelor would make him seem sensible, desirable and mysterious. To say more would be to give away too much. Just prior there is a terrific moment where a seemingly kind and gentle character turns sinister in just a few paragraphs. While the two books are actually vastly different, I enjoyed them both and it was a close call saying which one I liked better. Starting the book with his narration made it a bit more difficult to get into the novel at the outset. Despite being from the s and having occasional pop culture references or slang words that were specific to that era, this book felt surprisingly fresh and modern. There are several twists in the plot and some points are kept intentionally vague to keep the reader guessing. The final reveal was a surprise to me, which I always consider a good thing in a mystery novel, but it was not a conclusion too outrageous to be plausible another bonus. Told in different sections from the point of view of the three principals you get a feeling for each character. The author entwines a mystery in a romance and each works equally well. Never stripped down like the film noir it seems to be, you are left to revel in the language. And the name Waldo Lydecker is just delicious. Of the period but still interesting.

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### Chapter 4 : Laura by Vera Caspary

*Caspary was invested in the character because she'd modeled Laura's personality on her own. She was a "career girl" avant la lettre and never seems to have pictured or wished herself.*

Patrick Anderson From the Reviews: Well, dropping the "psycho"-bit, it is quite a thriller in its way; though I say it uncertainly, being no judge of these who-dun-it affairs, and always prone to drop behind the field before we are half-way home. Still, I imagine that people who like murders will like this one; I shall like it better when I see it on the screen, where such situations are so very much better served. Similarly the illustrative quotes chosen here are merely those the complete review subjectively believes represent the tenor and judgment of the review as a whole. We acknowledge and remind and warn you that they may, in fact, be entirely unrepresentative of the actual reviews by any other measure. The detective called in to take on the case -- not the kind he usually handles -- is Mark McPherson, and Lydecker defers to his central role: For all his rough edges, he was the man I should have been, the hero of the story. The hero, but not the interpreter. That is my omniscient role. As narrator and interpreter, I shall describe scenes which I never saw and record dialogues which I did not hear. For this impudence I offer no excuse. I am an artist, and it is my business to recreate movement precisely as I create mood. I know these people, their voices ring in my ears, and I need only close my eyes and see characteristic gestures. My written dialogue will have more clarity, compactness, and essence of character than their spoken lines, for I am able to edit while I write, whereas they carried on their conversations in a loose and pointless fashion with no sense of form or crisis in the building of their scenes. But it only gets her so far, and, a bit over a third of the way in, she abandons him, the one who takes over the telling-duties next -- McPherson -- explaining that the turn of events in the investigation were such a shock to Lydecker that: Which is a nice way of putting it, but also turns out to be as deflating for the novel as a whole as it is for Lydecker. The detective continues the story -- but not through to the end: A fourth part is yet another first-person account, by yet another of the players in this story, before McPherson takes the reins again in concluding the account. This shifting of perspectives and voices suggests Caspary was unsure quite how to present it. While that may, ultimately, be necessary, she certainly does so earlier than need be -- and the novel struggles a bit to regain its footing after that, wobbling some as it shifts to the voices that follow. The victim was shot when she answered the door of her apartment, her body identified by her maid and her aunt -- Laura Hunt, a successful young professional working in advertising, and engaged to be married, the following week, to much less successful co-worker Shelby Carpenter. Shelby already was the beneficiary of her tidy life insurance, for example. In trying to learn about Laura and her circles, McPherson relies a lot on Lydecker, and they have good fun playing their parts -- the cultured, refined prig and the rough-at-the-edges cop who is, of course, more cultured and observant than he wants to let on. So, for example, when Lydecker suggests an after-dinner Courvoisier, McPherson responds: As are the other men in her life -- even with Lydecker, her: The storm was coming closer", and indeed, what a storm it then is. It does shift the investigation some -- notably, by offering another suspect -- and puts additional pressures on McPherson, as the case does become front-page tabloid fodder, making for greater urgency. The story is clever, and Laura a creatively presented femme fatale of sorts. Caspary does write well, and captures some of these characters and scenes nicely, but what seems like a lack of confidence shows through repeatedly. Caspary seems almost overwhelmed by the potential of her inspired story. It comes as no surprise that even Laura had once tried her hand at novel-writing, when she was twenty -- and that: All in all -- plot and writing --, it makes for an intriguing work, but one that falls short of the greatness that seems within reach. The attempts at romance -- specifically but not solely of McPherson falling so easily for the image of this woman -- feel rather over-heated and less convincing, and Caspary perhaps tries to push that angle a bit too hard, but the resolution is satisfying enough. Orthofer, 2 January

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### Chapter 5 : Laura (novel) - Wikipedia

*I came to the novel Laura by Vera Caspary by two routes. Not too long ago, I purchased the two volume set from Library of America titled Women Crime Writers: Eight Suspense Novels of the s & 50s.*

Laura Hunt had the face of an angel, the kind that makes men weak at the knees and turn them into ad-hoc poets. And yet somebody was driven not to poetry but to murder, blasting that pretty face with a shotgun as she opened the door to her expensive Fifth Avenue apartment one sultry summer evening. Reluctant detective Mark McPherson, a rising star in the police department of the metropolis is tasked with finding the murderer, a job he feels is beneath his previous successes dealing with government corruption and organised crime. Most of us are familiar with the story from the Otto Preminger classic movie of the same name. A quick look at her biographical notes online offer a few suggestions and furthermore point to several autobiographical notes in her most famous novel. This is no simple task. She had no secret fortune, no hidden rubies. But, I warn you. McPherson, the activities of crooks and racketeers will seem simple in comparison with the motives of a modern woman. A complicated, cultivated modern woman. The story is narrated succesively by each of the main characters, offering us clues in the manner they describe the victim and their relationship with her view spoiler [ later Laura Hunt herself takes up the narrative giving us her own take on the drama and on her motivations hide spoiler ]. The first one is Waldo Lydecker - a snobish, self-centered intellectual who sees himself as the Pygmalion who guided Laura through success in the glizy New York society. He is a collector of fine china and glassware and quite clearly a phony, but what is he really hiding behind the polished public persona? I should have been an actor. Had I been physically better suited to the narcissistic profession, I should probably have been among the greatest of my time. Lydecker likes o pontificate on a number of subjects his own magnificence, culture, food, manners, etc , but relevant to the story might be his opinion on crime literature: I still consider the conventional mystery story an excess of sound and fury, signifying far worse than nothing, a barbaric need for violence and revenge in that timid horde known as the reading public. The literature of murder investigation bores me as profoundly as its practice irritated McPherson. Yet I am bound to tell this story, just as he was obliged to continue his searches, out of a deep emotional involvement in the case of Laura Hunt. I offer the narrative, not so much as a detective yarn, as a love story. I wish I were its hero. I fancy myself a pensive figure drawn, without conscious will, into a love that was borne of violence and destined for tragedy. I am given to thinking of myself in the third person. Opposite Waldo Lydecker is a practical, pragmatic man who makes a job out of finding other people secrets. Detective Mark McPherson sees a lot and keeps his own council, most of the time, but even he gets rattled by the airs Lydecker assumes: Yet, maybe because of his humble origins, Mark falls under the spell of the glamorous Laura. More than the mystery of her death, he is captivated by her portrait hanging over the fireplace at the murder scene, by her books and her wardrobe, by the reasons that made her postpone marriage to a very presentable suitor and drove her instead to seek a solitary retreat in the country, a couple of days before the wedding. Can the dour Scotsman maintain the distance between his professional and his emotional life? This was a search no man could make with his eyes alone; the heart must also be engaged. We hear next from Shelby Carpenter, the Southern gentleman with the chiseled profile and perfect manners who was supposed to marry Laura in the week after her murder. His chapters take the form of an official police interview, in the presence of his attorney - from which we can deduce he is one of the suspects in the crime. Without getting into details about the alibis and the damaging evidence against Shelby, his role turns on the question of the definition of a modern man, the other side of the coin where Laura is the personification of the modern woman. Shelby has good looks, good breeding and a lot of succes with women, but he is lost in the jungle of New York, a habitat where he is closer to the role of gigolo than to that of bread-winner. Auntie Sue said that when a woman feels the need for a man that way, she ought to have a baby.

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### Chapter 6 : Vera Caspary - Wikipedia

*Laura Hunt desires, as Caspary did, life lived on a large canvas: a career at the level of a man's, a satisfying love life—“including a good sex life—”friendships, good food, good drink, theatre, art.*

This novel has elements of mystery, psychological drama and romance mixed together in a very readable story. Unfortunately it has been overshadowed by the film that remains a classic. I readily admit that I have trouble separating the novel from the movie as I am a huge fan of the Otto Preminger film. The differences between the film and the book lies mostly in the way Laura is portrayed. Overall, I recommend that one indulges in both the book and the film of Laura, as each are classics and well worth the time spent investigating. It has remained a favorite of mine. So when I discovered "Laura" in paper format, I looked forward to a good read, based upon my acquaintance with the film. I was not disappointed. A woman is murdered, shot in the face at close range, thus bringing a detective into the realm of and amongst the people she knew and loved. As detective Mark McPherson digs deeper into the life of this tragically murdered woman, he finds himself drawn to who she was Different from and yet similar to the movie of the same name, this mystery held my attention to the end. I especially and thoroughly enjoyed the verbal altercations between the characters. I quite like the old time pulp detective stories with the hard-boiled detectives, the dames, the guns. They feel like comic books. This is not one of these. Though classified as pulp. Each character is given a voice, and their lives are detailed enough so that you feel as if you can see them. In every case, the interplay between the characters makes the story multi-dimensional, gripping, and beyond expectations. Or, at least, not many that I am able to remember the plots as I doze in and out, struggling to keep reading. And bravo to Caspary for making Laura a complex, strong, stand-alone character, not just a hanger for clothing. She was one of the first who did in this genre, and she did it fantastically well. Now I have to get "Bedelia" by the same author. Dabble58 Jan 23, Yikes! As a detective story? It was an easy plot to follow. Very hard to discuss this book without spoilers. However, once the dramatic twist occurs that Laura was not really murdered, but it was someone who was borrowing her apartment , the book kind of lags a bit. It does pick up toward the last two parts of the book, but the middle was a bit less exciting. Now I have to see the movie! Book version is told in different writing styles of different characters--I think film only retains the "voice" of Waldo. These familiar depictions of handsome young men also probably were the types that made Mark McPhearson think he had seen Shelby Carpenter somewhere before. You know the story. He falls in love with the dead woman, and then she walks in the door. And was she or Laura the intended victim? The beginning of the story is told by Waldo Lydecker, aesthete, man about town and well-known newspaper columnist, who is himself in love with Laura. The point of view then shifts to Mark, then Carpenter, Laura, and back to Mark. But Caspary is good at what she does, describing the life of a woman like Laura and the society in which she moved. If you liked the movie, read the book. Quibble from a criminal lawyer: A hardboiled detective in the central role; but he treads softly. A femme fatale central to the plot; but played by an portly and acerbic elderly man. And the hero is a heroine. Vera Caspary has taken all the elements of the classic Noir tale and turned them upside down. The result is an innovative and subtle mystery. The plot has some minor annoyances, but they are subjugated by a brilliant story. Writing the novel in first person narrative form, from three separate viewpoints, was an ambitious undertaking. It did not fully succeed. The language too often gets in the way of the narrative: Laura is not masterpiece of writing. It is a masterpiece of story telling.

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### Chapter 7 : Laura by Vera Caspary | Kaleido Books & Gifts

*Vera Caspary, an acclaimed American writer of novels, plays, short stories and screenplays, was born in Chicago in Her writing talent shone from a young age and, following the death of her father, her work became the primary source of income for Caspary and her mother.*

Houghton Mifflin republished *Laura* in book form the next year; afterwards, Caspary sold the film rights to Twentieth Century Fox, resulting in a hit movie starring Gene Tierney and Dana Andrews. In 1941, Caspary sold the story for a fourth time, this time co-writing a theatrical version with George Sklar. Since its original publication, the novel has been reissued many times. I Books released an edition in 1998, billing it as a "lost classic. Detective Mark McPherson, assigned to the case, begins investigating the two men who were closest to Laura: As he learns more about Laura, Mark "not the most sentimental of men" begins to fall in love with her memory. When Laura turns out to be very much alive, however, she becomes the prime suspect. The novel has some autobiographical elements; Caspary, like Laura, was an independent woman who earned her living as an advertiser and who struggled to balance career and romance. Diane Redfern, a struggling young model; the actual murder victim. I always envied her; I wanted to grow up and be desperate too. On Friday afternoon, as I walked up and down my office, I whispered it over and over. I can see the office now, the desk and filing-case and a proof of a Lady Lilith color ad with Diane lying backward on a couch, head thrown back, breasts pointed upward like small hills. I feel, rather than smell, the arid, air-conditioned atmosphere, and I tense my right hand as if the letter-opener were still cutting a ridge across my palm. I was sick, I was desperate, I was afraid. I hid my face in my hands, my forehead against the wood of my desk. Please help improve it by rewriting it in an encyclopedic style. April Learn how and when to remove this template message Laura is often identified, erroneously, as a noir novel, and the lead character as a femme fatale. The falsely impugned heroine, her rescue by her lover, and the happy ending put Laura solidly in the romantic suspense genre. What sets it apart is that Laura is no helpless virgin: Otto Preminger" DVD review. La Factory website, January 28, Morehead State University, January 31, , pp.

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### Chapter 8 : Laura - Vera Caspary

*"Laura, by Miss Vera Caspary, is a psycho-thriller, the wrapper tells me. Well, dropping the "psycho"-bit, it is quite a thriller in its way; though I say it uncertainly, being no judge of these who-dun-it affairs, and always prone to drop behind the field before we are half-way home.*

Caspary went through a string of menial office jobs, looking for one where she could write instead of taking dictation from people with bad grammar. Once again leaving a job to write her own material, Caspary wrote her first published novel Ladies and Gents which would not be published for two years due to a publishers delay. When her mother fell ill, she took still another job writing a Charm and Beauty correspondence course. While living in Greenwich village she was inspired to write The White Girl, published in January The reviews were better than she had hoped and some people speculated that it was written by a black woman who was indeed passing. This job provided free tickets to theater shows, concerts, and nightclubs and introduced her to a wide circle of press agents and celebrities. Moving back to Chicago, she co-wrote the play version Blind Mice with Winifred Lenihan , which would feature an all-female cast and would form the basis for the film Working Girls. She and her mother moved to Connecticut to do the rewrites on the play. When Caspary returned, the true original copy could not be found and the play closed in two weeks. Caspary admits in her memoir, that she would rewrite and resell this exact plot exactly eight times in the coming years. In March , a Fox story editor called and asked for another original just like Suburb, which had been filmed as the Night of June She spent that summer in Hollywood, writing a treatment for Fox and working on a play with Samuel Ornitz. Caspary could not sell that play and by winter she was broke again, but Ornitz insisted they write another and brought her back to Hollywood where her luck was always better. Within a week she had sold three stories to studios and gotten a five hundred dollar-a-week contract. She bought herself a completely new wardrobe and brought her mother from New York. Like most people, Caspary did not get along with Harry Cohn , and after one spat, she no longer received writing assignments. Since her contract had five more months, she merely stopped going to the studio and spent her days at the beach while her agent picked up her paycheck. Again wanting to write her own material she got her contract canceled and set sail for New York. Communism[ edit ] By this point in the Depression many intellectuals were flirting with Socialist causes, and Ornitz tried to interest Caspary by giving her the Communist Manifesto , The Daily Worker and other materials. Though not truly committed, she allowed her work to be affected by changing attitudes, but found that having never been a proletarian, she could not write the great proletarian novel. Nonetheless, one of the last things her mother would do before she died was to scold her for associating with "filthy reds". In April , Caspary used the profits of a Hollywood story sale to travel to Russia to "see how people lived" in what the Daily Worker had described as a paradise. During her trip across Europe she was nearly persuaded from guilt to marry an Austrian Jew in order to get him to the United States, but due to a slowness in paperwork she was saved that fate. She later learned that he made it to America on his own steam. She traveled through Germany by train, being strip-searched at border crossings. In her words, "Loss of faith is a slow process, and painful. A last desperate effort to cling to belief attacks the nerves. I became irritable, disliked my friends, slept badly, lost tolerance. Haunted by ghosts of deeds and statements. She called their bluff and agreed to it; however they were reluctant to let her go quietly, and agreed to call it a "temporary leave of absence". In January she closed up her house and moved back to Hollywood. Laura[ edit ] However, her conscience would not let her simply abandon causes she believed in. Caspary would continue to sign petitions, contribute money, write to congressmen and keep up her memberships in the Hollywood Anti-Nazi League , the League of American Writers. She also taught classes in writing screenplays to raise funds to bring refugee writers to America. During this time Caspary started tinkering with a murder mystery, but instead of producing an original story for the screen she was encouraged to turn it into a novel. It was finished by October, and to get some perspective she went to work on a story about a night plane to Chungking for Paramount Studios. When the

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United States declared war on Germany and Japan in early December, that story was canceled, and Caspary asked to be laid off and returned happily to her murder mystery. Despite their efforts, Olney could not secure backing and gave up the option on the play. When Caspary returned to Hollywood Igee was waiting for her with bouquets of red roses. At Christmas, their love affair was interrupted as every able-bodied British citizen was recalled to help with the defense of England. Igee, born in Austria, had emigrated to England in and would have to return there. She would not see him again for thirteen months. Meanwhile, every director who read Laura wanted to put it on the stage, but no producer or backer would finance it. Otto Preminger bullied Darryl Zanuck into buying the property for 20th Century Fox, convincing him that the production would be inexpensive. Tired of shopping it around and against her own advice, "Once a writer sells a story to Hollywood, they can kiss it goodbye," she sold it to Fox. I signed it as carelessly as a five-dollar check. As I would be reminded in restaurants and parking lots, I had signed away a million dollars. Who would have thought that a film which for all its elegance, was not expensive, whose stars were not then considered important, would become a box office smash and a Hollywood legend? The war had made civilian travel generally difficult, and to Europe nearly impossible. However, Caspary cabled Igee that he could have the film rights to Bedelia for a British production, if she could be brought over to write the screenplay. Thus putting into motion a plan involving two British Ministries, J. Thus during the nine weeks she was in New York waiting for her passport, Good Housekeeping paid all her expenses and all her Stork Club dinners were free. Unfortunately one night she was seated next to Otto Preminger, and they proceeded to start a fiery argument regarding the script for Laura and the resultant film. As part of the deal with the British Ministry of Information she agreed to write articles about wartime England for American newspapers and magazines. Unfortunately, there were too many distractions for her to write in London, but luckily she had the loan of W. Igee had to stay and finish the picture. Igee[ edit ] Though the success of Laura had increased her salary fivefold, Caspary was unhappy in Hollywood without Igee. Her work on a new novel was interrupted by preproduction on the doomed stage version of Laura. Unfortunately the play was dreadfully miscast, Miriam Hopkins was too old for the part yet had much influence, the producer was inexperienced and intimidated letting Hopkins run "rough shod" over the production, the lighting designer was replaced as was the stage manager and finally the director himself. The play ran for 44 performances. To streamline the film, one wife was eliminated by Caspary, and when the script reached production, Joseph L. Mankiewicz removed another one. However, when the same screenplay won the Writers Guild of America award for Best Written American Comedy, Mankiewicz was forced to share the award and credit with Caspary, the original adaptor. After three years of physical separation, Igee got his divorce on the grounds of abandonment. While in Europe finalizing the divorce, Igee traveled to visit his grown son in Switzerland and, while there, bought Caspary a small chalet in nearby Annecy. After living together for the better part of seven years, they were married within the week. Unfortunately, Caspary and Igee forgot the first rule of finance, "never use your own money", and had put all their own funds and savings into the company. Their films were contracted to United Artists, and when United Artists went into bankruptcy and restructuring in, the films of Gloria Films were tied up in litigation and the couple lost everything. Igee was devastated at the loss, he would never get to be the bread winner of the couple. This last sale, the couple deposited in New York, which was fortunate as it would be a long time before they worked again in Hollywood. If you testified you were a "friendly" witness, if you were named a communist sympathizer you were "blacklisted", either way your side was chosen for you. The couple were preparing to leave for Europe, as Igee was negotiating a French remake of Three Husbands, when MGM abruptly and illegally questioned Caspary regarding her Communist links. They were duly worried, as they had just bought two expensive stories from her, and if she were named and blacklisted they would not be able to release them. In, Caspary and her former activities had been listed along with other influential progressives in the notorious anti-communist pamphlet, Red Channels: Since Caspary had left the Party before she came to Hollywood, she told the truth about which committees she attended and the initiatives she had worked on, but the one thing they never asked was if she had ever been a member. They remained in Europe, Igee going from

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studio to studio trying to finance new projects or remake old ones, finally inspiring Caspary to write a musical comedy, *Wedding in Paris*. It was while working in Austria on the musical adaptation of *Daddy Long Legs*, Caspary learned she had been added to the gray list and told to abandon the project. If you had appeared before the HUAC committee and refused to name names, you were blacklisted, if your file indicated that you had signed pledges, attended congresses or contributed to doubtful causes, you were graylisted. Caspary described the former as hell, while the latter merely purgatory. They left again after six months, and what followed were two more years of bad luck. A job was waiting for her; an old friend Sol Siegel had purchased the rights to the book *Les Girls*, and was eager for her to adapt it for the screen. The novel *Evvie* about two emancipated girls in the 1920s and heavily based on her own experiences, [1] was begun in London, continued in New York, finished in Beverly Hills, and proofed in Paris. The novel won faint reviews, but Caspary considered it one of her best novels, and famed Chicago Tribune reviewer Fanny Butcher came out of retirement long enough to denounce it as obscene. Caspary even broke a twenty-year vow and took work from Columbia Pictures and the ever irascible Harry Cohn. They wanted it for Marilyn Monroe; a deal was made for the page treatment of *Illicit*, the contract signed and the first payment sent, but then Monroe became undisciplined and unreliable and was suspended by the studio. Caspary completed a first draft, but the film was never made. In between surgeries and bouts of illness, the couple traveled: Greece, Las Vegas, New England—all the places they had meant to go. They traveled until Igee was no longer fit to; he died while they were in Vermont in 1954. None equaled the popularity of her early suspense work.

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### Chapter 9 : Bitter Tea and Mystery: Laura: Vera Caspary

*Get this from a library! Wilkie Collins, Vera Caspary and the evolution of the casebook novel. [A B Emrys] -- "Wilkie Collins was one of the most popular novelists during England's Victorian era.*

I had never felt anything but respect and tenderness for this brilliant, unhappy friend. And I made myself think of Waldo dutifully; I thought of the years we had known each other and of his kindness. I felt sick within myself, ashamed of hysteria and weak shrinking. I made myself stand firm; I did not pull away; I accepted the embrace as women accept the caresses of men But that does not detract from how wonderful the story is in novel form. Quite simply, this is one of the finest and most unusual mystery novels Laura Hunt had the face of an angel, the kind that makes men weak James Thane This classic crime novel was first published in , and in , Otto Preminger made from it the equally classic film starring Gene Tierney and Dana Andrews and featuring a haunting title song composed by David Raskin. At the center is L This classic mystery-romance is sometimes overshadowed by the magnificent film it spawned a couple of years later, starring Dana Andrews and Gene Tierney. But that lofty height is equ Laura Hunt is dead, and detective Mark McPherson is assigned to investigate. During the mystery, he relies on the advice and personal insight of one of her Alex Vera Caspary is playing a dangerous game. Often, the chasm between book and silver screen will leave the fan firmly in one camp or the other. Some books, like *The Ghost and Mrs Muir*, suffer in comparison to their movie counterpart. In another generation, perhaps the next, equality will be taken for granted. Those who come after us may find it easier to assert independence, but will miss t Amy I have watched the movie *Laura* so many times that even my absent-minded mother has begun to object. She forgets she has seen the film until the movie starts playing and then she protests, "We just watched this! Needless to say, I was excited to discover my favorite film was based off a novel. Dorcas Pleasant who-dunnit about a NYPD detective who, on probing the murder of a young woman, falls in love with her. And then one night while sitting in her old apartment musing the case, a woman in rain soaked clothes enters. Morgan Wiley I drank in every word of this book. I saw the movie first. And watched it over and over and over due to an uncontrollable crush on Dana Andrews. I just happened to catch in the opening credits the hundredth time I watched it that it was based on this novel by Vera Caspary. I immediately bought it because, as we all know, books are always better than the films. This did not disappoint. TJ A very interesting book! I was talked into reading "Laura" by a friend who is an old movie buff and found an original version. It was like traveling back in time to solve a murder! Each point of view held its own voice so well one feels they know the characters personally right down to their idiosyncrasies. The murder mystery itself has some really great twists and t Would best describe this as hard boiled noir. I enjoy when the view of the character presenting the story is unreliable to say the least. As for the mystery component itself, it was fairly easy to work out who the murderer must have been. DeAnna Knippling A woman is murdered in her apartment, leaving behind a detective to pick up the pieces A nice, melancholy noir, given from several well-defined POVs.. Frankly, I had never seen it on any of the shelves of the used book stores I frequented. Jennifer Lafferty "Laura" is one of the best examples of the classic noir mystery novel. The story itself and the writing are equally captivating. The characters are well fleshed out. The big screen adaptation of "Laura" is much better known than the book. I saw the film before I read the book but even though I knew the outcome, I greatly enjoyed the novel. It is just as glamorous Sometimes I like to read a mystery set in a specific time and written in that time. I like all the references to politics, society, celebrity, news, etc. Any book written in a time, and set in that time, are going to soon be dated. I read an article about a book writ I disliked the style of Part One intensely. The twist was something of a cliché and the ending was predictable. Nor did I find it very atmospheric, which is surely the point of noir. Debbie Robson Another slow start to a book and this time it was because I had made assumptions wrong as it turned out about the author Vera Caspary. How wrong I was! Laura is made up of five parts, *Jeanne Laura* is an amazing book. I had read *Bedelia* first--the main character is somewhat like being stuck in a closet with someone with too much lilac perfume. The character Laura is

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very much the antithesis of Bedelia. Lynda This is one of my all time favorite mysteries. I have owned three editions of it. While the book is entitled Laura, it is really about the three men in her life. Laura as seen through the eyes and descriptions of these three men. Ultimately it the twist in this mystery that makes it memorable. A twist that has been copied many times. I highly recommend it to any murder fans. Andrea Some might be more familiar with the Otto Preminger film noir by the same name. This is one of the few instances where the film outshines the book, but only because I adore Gene Tierney and much prefer the ending re-written for the film. The novel, in its own right is a taught, exceptionally, well-written, psycho-thriller. Dare I say, literary-pulp. The novel is so great. Dana Jennings A bit about the author, who is a fascinating person, excerpted from the afterward - Born in , she got her start as an ad-agency stenographer. The year American women got the right to vote, Caspary began writing ads.