



The Final Deduction

Rex Stout

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When the seemingly safe return of an abducted millionaire ends in his murder in his own home, Nero Wolfe sends Archie Goodwin to do his usual legwork, while Wolfe uncovers corruption and greed among Manhattan's elite.

The Final Deduction Details

Date : Published November 1st 1995 by Bantam (first published October 13th 1961)

ISBN : 9780553763102

Author : Rex Stout

Format : Paperback 144 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Detective

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From Reader Review The Final Deduction for online ebook

Tony says

My Grade = 85% - B

Published 1961. - 140 pp.

I really love this series of books which I just discovered sometime in the present decade (2010's). They are especially handy when I need just a pocket book to tote along on travels where I might have a bit of waiting.

Rex Stout wrote these (33 novels and 39 novellas and short stories) and published them between 1934 and his death in 1975. Since then Robert Goldsborough has continued the series with the approval of Stout's estate. In them, the characters live and work and eat and grow orchids in a massive brownstone on W. 35th Street in present day New York City. And it is always present day and the characters never age, but the technology around them grows with the times. In this current book (1961) they make use of a newfangled device called the taper recorder to record a client's confession.

The great joy of the books, however, is the ever wise cracking gumshoe, Archie Goodwin, constant narrator and always absolutely delightful. My favorites are the ones that take place in the 30's, 40's, and 50's.

Jill Hutchinson says

I will say the same thing that I always say about Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe books.....fantastic!! It is not the plot that is the attraction but the interaction between Wolfe and Archie that makes these books so appealing. The plot here concerns a rich woman's husband who has been kidnapped and Wolfe is hired to get his back safely. He does but that is when the story takes a sudden turn to the deadly. Lots of fun.

If you haven't tried Rex Stout and you are a mystery fan, get busy and find one in the corpus of 40+ Nero Wolfe books. But caution.....do not start with *A Family Affair* which is the last book in the series written by Stout since you must be familiar with the characters prior to reading it.

by Rex Stout

Lisa Kucharski says

Stout hitting his stride in this book. The characters are vivid and again, Wolfe and Archie go as far as they can legally before solving murder! Great dialogue here as well. I feel that in this book, both Archie and Wolfe know each other well enough that they need each other, and even though Archie pesters, Wolfe realizes that the gamble Archie sees, is worth it. And it is.

Tony says

Stout, Rex. THE FINAL DEDUCTION. A Nero Wolfe Mystery. (1955). ****.

This is one of Stout's better Wolfe mysteries: a controlled number of characters and fewer reaches into Wolfe's exotic deductive reasoning powers. A woman enters Wolfe's offices and tells him she needs to help him find her husband, who has been kidnapped. She shows him the ransom letter that demands half-a-million dollars. Money is no object to her; she just wants her husband back. There are a few suspects that Wolfe zeros in on as the possible culprit in this case: the woman herself, her son and daughter, the maid/secretary, and the family attorney. When the secretary is found dead – run over by a car – near the supposed delivery point of the ransom money, the case takes on a new aspect. After a short while, after the ransom money is delivered to the specified site, the husband returns to the fold. At a celebratory gathering after his gathering, all of the principals get a little tipsy and the husband falls asleep on the couch in the library. He is found dead the next morning, apparently crushed to death by a life-sized bronze statue in the library that he had apparently tipped over when awakening from his deep sleep. Put all of these events into Wolfe's bag and he jumbles them up until he is sure who the murderer of both people is and reasons behind them. The clues are all there, you just need to match wits with Wolfe and his infinite powers of deductive reasoning.

Recommended.

astaliegurec says

There are no surprises, here, with Rex Stout's 1961 novel "The Final Deduction (A Nero Wolfe Mystery Book 35)." It's the 35th novel in his "Nero Wolfe" series and, once again, it's very well done, with excellent characters, wonderful dialog, and good pacing. I will note, though, that I found the tone of this book to be just slightly different from earlier books: Archie's just a bit more independent and Nero Wolfe is actually just a tad more polite than normal. But, for anyone who's read the previous books, you know what to expect. I'm rating it at a Very Good 4 stars out of 5.

Vicki Cline says

A rich woman whose husband has been kidnapped comes to Wolfe, not to find her husband, but to make sure he's returned safely. Wolfe has a notice put in the paper addressed to the kidnapper to make sure of this outcome, which does happen. But then the husband turns up dead the day after he returns. Was it murder or an accident? The son of the woman next hires Wolfe to find the ransom, which his mother has told him he can keep if he finds it, with Wolfe getting one-fifth as a fee. How he finds the money and deduces the murderer is quite interesting.

Michael Brown says

More of the same well crafted and can not put down - must read one more chapter tale by the master on Nero Wolfe.

Carolyn says

One of the more clever plots in the Wolfe canon.

Marie says

Another great story in the Nero Wolfe series. FYI, possible spoilers ahead. Towards the very end of The Final Deduction, I found myself wishing I knew more about the tax laws of the late 1950s, early 1960s. Since I'm not a millionaire, I don't know if the tax laws have changed dramatically since then or if they are still the same. Anyway, I continue to enjoy the interactions between Archie and Nero Wolfe and all of Archie's commentaries.

Dakota McCoy says

Another outstanding book! I enjoyed Archie's role a lot.

Bill Kerwin says

A rich woman comes to tell Wolfe that her husband's been kidnapped. The ransom is paid, the husband quickly released, but soon two people are dead--and Wolfe and Archie begin to suspect the kidnapping is not what it seems.

Not a particularly memorable Wolfe adventure, but still entertaining.

Robert Henry says

Well done. These characters are growing on me.

Evgeny says

A wealthy woman came to Nero Wolfe asking him for help. Her husband was kidnapped for ransom:

Well in this case a tiny sum of just half a million dollars was requested; may I remind you that the book was written in the early sixties when this kind of money could buy a lot of happiness. She was obviously was afraid to notify the police and Nero Wolfe seemed to be the obvious choice.

I have yet to see any story from the series without at least one dead body. So judging from the beginning I was very sure about whose dead body would make an appearance first; it is obvious, right? Wrong! Somewhere within first fifty pages of the book there was a plot twist which caught me completely off guard. I also need to add this was the first, but not the last one; they just kept on coming.

Archie Goodwin always calls his boss genius. So do I occasionally. Do you have any doubts about this? As anybody familiar with the series knows Nero Wolfe is also very lazy. So in this book he really outdid himself: he found a way to earn a good chunk of money by doing **absolutely nothing whatsoever**. If this is not genius, I do not know what is. Nero Wolfe, I bow my head to your brilliance in avoiding work while still making a high class living.

I rated this book with 4 stars initially. I raised the rating to 5 after I reread my own review. I think I made a fairly good case for the new rating.

Jeffrey Marks says

I had been saving back this particular Wolfe book for a some special occasion and I decided that my 55th b'day was as good an event as any. The book lived up to my expectations. Unlike some of the cases, the deductions were slowly revealed so that at the end Wolfe only needs to resolve one issue, but it's incredibly well done. Satisfactory, he might say!

Diane K. says

I really enjoyed this book. It's a little different in several ways.

First, the kidnapping. There's only one other reference to a kidnapping case, in the first book, FER-DE-LANCE (Goldsborough makes it the subject of one of his books). Technically, Wolfe and Archie are not involved in the kidnapping per se; they are on standby just in case the victim doesn't get safely home. Essentially, Wolfe has been hired to flex his detectival muscles and state: "Ignore me at your peril." The job is not as simple as it seems; as Wolfe points out to his client, he is putting his reputation on the line. If the worst does happen, he will go after the kidnapper with everything he has. If his client wearis of the chase and withdraws her support, his integrity will force him to continue, no matter how long it takes or how much it costs.

Secondly, Wolfe and Archie pick up a whopper of a clue almost as soon as they take on the case. They foresee a swift capture of the criminals once the kidnap victim is safely at home. Even when the case abruptly veers into murder mode, the information is still useful.

Thirdly, Archie mentions one of the all-time best television characters ever to grace the small screen: Paladin. It doesn't surprise me that Archie is a fan of "Have Gun, Will Travel." But I like to think that, if Archie ever manage to persuade Wolfe to take a look, Wolfe would appreciate this excellent Western as well. Paladin, in fact, has a lot in common with Wolfe and Archie. He appreciates fine food and beverages, he loves to read, he enjoys poker and women. He has traveled widely, knows a number of languages, is a brilliant strategist...and, oh, yes, he charges high fees, too.

Fourthly: Archie doesn't link up with the girl! Miss Tedder, daughter of Althea Vail, is attractive enough, but in spite of (or because of?) the fact that her mother was an actress (and her grandfather a bandit) she has turned out a raging snob, not to mention a complete priss who moves like her hips are in a cast. Wolfe doesn't think much of her intelligence or that of her brother Noel. I'm not so sure that they're stupid; it's more likely that their lifestyle has simply limited their opportunities to exercise their wits. Even with normal intelligence, Wolfe could run rings around them with one frontal lobe tied behind his back. So rather than the young lady, Archie in fact helps the young man to grow up. Noel Tedder has enough wit to hit his mother up for the ransom money at the proper psychological moment, and he's smart enough to go to Wolfe to ask his assistance--and very smart to offer him a hefty percentage, unlike his nitwit of a sister, who felt Wolfe should help her for nothing, because of his previous large fee. Noel not only learns to stand up to his mother, he keeps his word to Wolfe and Archie, and even throws in a nice bonus for Archie, Saul, Fred and Orrie, that was not in the original oral contract.

There was one thing I found annoying in this book: although a lot of the action takes place in Westchester County, our favorite evil state cop, Con Noonan, is nowhere to be seen. Did the good people of Westchester get fed up with him? His replacement, Captain Saunders, has a virtually identical personality; he just has more authority.

Not a brilliant mystery, to be sure, but a fast, fun ride. Enjoy.

Jdetrick says

34 books and Rex Stout is still able to make changes to his formula and keep these books interesting.

Julie says

Nero Wolfe is asked to help guarantee the safe return of a woman's kidnapped husband. Soon people start to die and Archie feels obligated to get involved while Wolfe would, as always, prefer to read a book.

While it was fairly easy to guess who was responsible I always love the interaction between the regular characters.

Mark Baker says

Nero is hired by actress Althea Vail when her current husband is kidnapped. She pays the ransom and everything seems to be going well - until someone is murdered.

I'm not super familiar with this series, something I should definitely change. I found Nero a little egotistical at times, but it certainly helps that we are spending time away from him thanks to Archie's narration and trips outside Nero's home. The plot is fast paced with plenty of twists to keep me engaged. The suspects are a bit weak, but that is a minor issue overall. There are some dated references since this book was written in the 1960's, so keep that in mind as you read.

Read my full review at [Carstairs Considers](#).

Eric Stafford says

Great book! The first Nero Wolfe I have ever read. Rex Stout has a great style that I loved and was close to my personal perfect writer, Stephen King in his style. The only complaint is Wolfe's thesaurus-like dialogue that I would have to look up from time to time. Lots of twists and turns and a lot of characters to remember but I kept them all clear in my head! Archie Goodwin is the best and I loved his narration through out. Highly recommended!

Jefferson Searle says

This was a good one. It is hardly my favorite though. Better than many of the short ones. I had the murderer pegged too early on. Although the motives were impossible to guess.
