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Posted on 24 March 2019 By Ngaio Marsh

#FREE BOOK ¶ Artists in Crime ? eBook or E-pub free

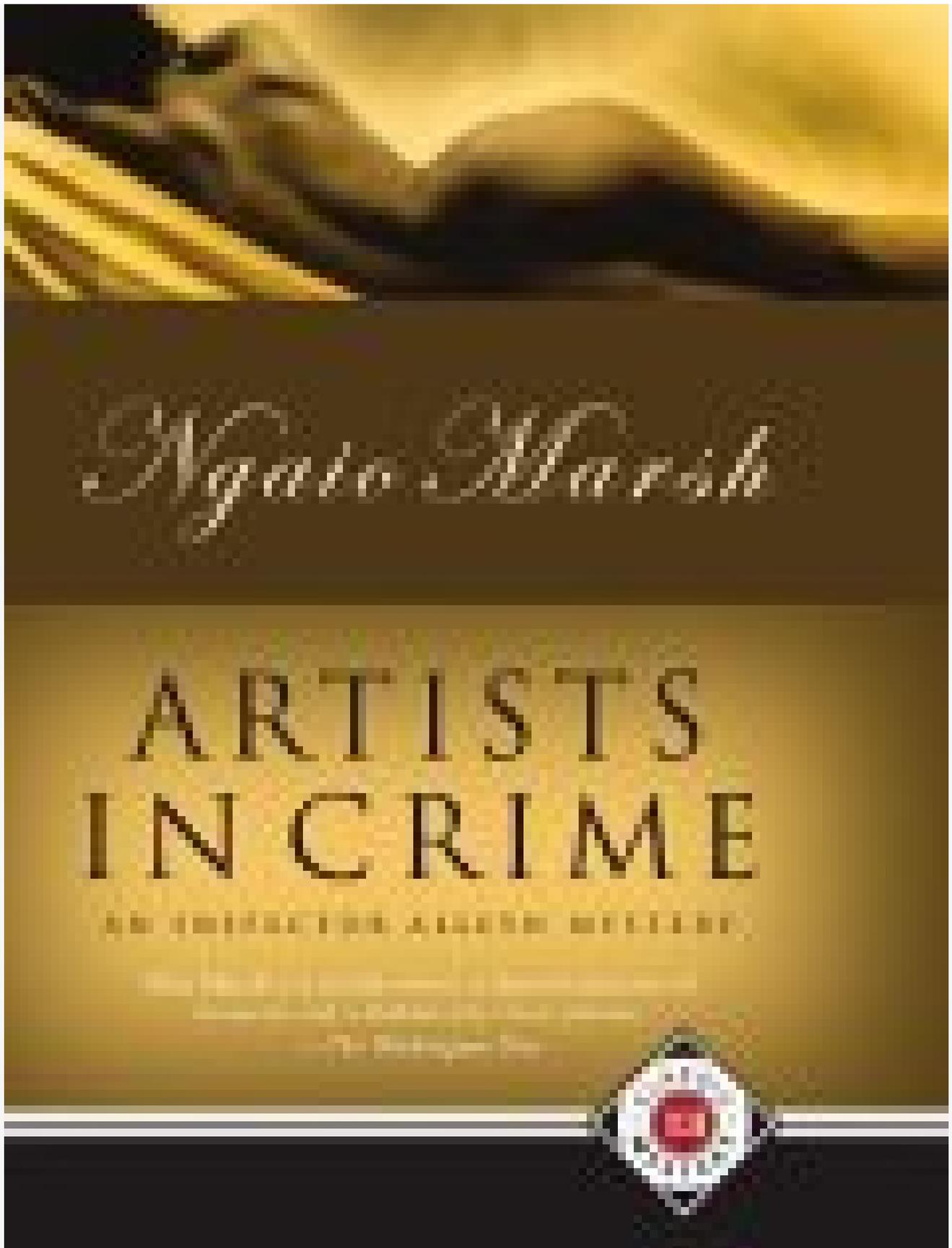
Originally published on my blog here in March 1998. Like *Vintage Murder*, this seems to me to be one of the very best of Ngaio Marsh's detective novels. By the time this book came out, the characters in her series Alleyn, Fox, Bathgate and so on were well established, old friends. In *Artists in Crime*, another important series character is introduced, the painter Agatha Troy. As so often happens in Ngaio Marsh's stories, one of the series characters interacts with one of the new characters before the murder happens. This follows on directly from the previous novel in the series, *Vintage Murder*, as the interaction takes place on the ship on which Alleyn returns from New Zealand to England. One of his fellow travellers is the artist Agatha Troy. On her return to England, Troy is running a school for several pupils. It is at this school that the murder takes place of the model they are using. She is a particularly infuriating person, and manages to severely annoy just about everyone. She defaces one of Troy's best portraits, is such a difficult sitter for another portrait that it has to be abandoned, is blackmailing at least one of the pupils, is pregnant by another basically, no one is really going to miss her. The way in which she is murdered is typical of Marsh: a trap is laid which leads to the actual murder being committed by someone who didn't necessarily set the trap. Similar plots where the actual killer may not be the murderer include *Enter a Murderer*, for example. The book includes one of the most unpleasant murdered bodies in the whole of classic detective fiction, but otherwise is an impeccable example of the art at its very best. I have a love-hate relationship with Ngaio Marsh. I find her writing is often a mixture of snobbery; it's not her characters, Marsh herself, who comes across as believing the aristocracy should have special privileges. Mixed up in a murder mystery, how common there is often a touch of cultural cringe: believing NZ culture is inferior to other cultures, usually the UK or the States. This particular book also tested my desire to read uncensored work. Page 17: Miss Katti Bostock, the well-known painter of Negro musicians. Acceptable for the times. Page 23: Alleyn writing to his mother: "No darling, I didn't not lose my heart in the Antipodes. Would you have been delighted to welcome a strapping black Fijian lady?" Hmmm. Page 29: this is in the narrative: Troy's Australian protégé, was a short, extremely swarthy youth, who looked like a dago in an American talking picture. Wow. But yes, I do still want to read uncensored or you wonder what else has been changed. For example, also on page 29 is digestion. Digestion. I spotted some other typos as well. My copy is 1962. I wonder how far back they go. This is the start of the Alleyn-Troy romance, which I found painful to read in all the Marsh books I read. Not just this one. Marsh never married. I think she just wasn't comfortable writing about love. It shows. Maybe British police had a lot of latitude, but view spoiler: Some of the access journalist Alleyn's Watson Bathgate got seemed unethical. Police carrying hip flasks on duty. Possible, I suppose. The method of murder in

one death just seems so unlikely hide spoiler #FREE BOOK ? Artists in Crime ? It Was A Bizarre Pose For Beautiful Model Sonia Gluck And Her Last For In The Draperies Of Her Couch Lay A Fatal Dagger, And Behind Her Murder Lies All The Intrigue And Acid Etched Temperament Of An Artist S Colony Called In To Investigate, Scotland Yard S Inspector Roderick Alleyn Finds His Own Passions Unexpectedly Stirred By The Fiesty Painter Agatha Troy Brilliant Artist And Suspected Murderess First Published In A really good murder mystery Inspector Alleyn meets an artist and falls in love Meanwhile a model is murdered in front of a group of artist but it takes Inspector Alleyn of Scotland Yard to find the killer P S The brilliant Benedict Cumberbatch read it on youtube Yay An author I haven t read before but have always meant to read Would best describe this as a vintage mystery with a hint of romance Felt the mystery component was strongly delivered and I had no inkling who the culprit would be until all was revealed at the end This novel introduces Roderick Alleyn s love interest the fiesty painter Agatha Troy.The dialogue between Alleyn and his mother however did tend to grate on this reader The use of little mum etc just didn t ring true with how Alleyn was portrayed Also had a few issue with the dialogue of the Australian painter, it just didn t gel.I m basing my rating solely on the mystery component, and the atmosphere and manners of a bygone era. As nearly perfect as a book can be to please me so successfully on several levels My approach to these Marsh books featuring Roderick Alleyn has been to grab them from the library shelf without any attention to the order of the series I got lucky with this one This book begins with Alleyn traveling on a ship headed back to England after a long absence from Scotland Yard, a voyage where he first meets Agatha Troy She manages to get Alleyn s permission to paint his head during the passage Their meetings are uncomfortable for Alleyn, perhaps, as he finds a strong pull towards this woman who seems than ambivalent about him.Alleyn s first stop is a planned visit at his mother s estate Events lead to a death at Agatha Troy s estate where she tutors and supports several artists All of the characters are uniquely different, and in this case it is the model who was murdered With Alleyn scheduled to return to work soon, they call on him to investigate since the location is very close to his mother s estate.Alleyn s usual team is assembled and intensive interviews of all these wildly different artists ensue.What I found quite wonderful The relationship between Alleyn and his mother Their mutual respect and affection is brilliantly warm, dignified and the essence of charm.I suspect I will find this book to be the very best book of the Alleyn series, but I have many to go yet I liked this one so much I will have to read it again First published 1938, my pristine paperback from Felony Mayhem Well she s done it again Not for the first time, I have read the whole of a Ngaio Marsh book convinced that I ve been very clever and spotted whodunit only to discover I m completely wrong I thought I d picked up subtle clues that others may have missed only to find I d been led up the garden path I love it This book also introduces Agatha Troy I enjoyed seeing the developing relationship between her and Alleyn as their two very different worlds collide. It started as a student exercise, the knife under the drape, the

model's pose chalked in place. But before Agatha Troy, artist and instructor, returns to the class, the pose has been re-enacted in earnest: the model is dead, fixed for ever in one of the most dramatic poses Troy has ever seen.

Roderick Alleyn series 3: A Man Lay Dead
Roderick Alleyn, 1 3 Artists in Crime
Roderick Alleyn, 6 4 Death in a White Tie
Roderick Alleyn, 7 3 Death of a Peer
Roderick Alleyn, 10 3 Death and the Dancing Footman
Roderick Alleyn, 11 3 Night at the Vulcan
Roderick Alleyn, 16 3 When in Rome
Roderick Alleyn, 26 TR Enter a Murderer
Roderick Alleyn, 2 TR The Nursing Home Murder
Roderick Alleyn, 3 TR Death in Ecstasy
Roderick Alleyn, 4 TR Vintage Murder
Roderick Alleyn, 5 TR Overture to Death
Roderick Alleyn, 8 TR Death at the Bar
Roderick Alleyn, 9 TR Colour Scheme
Roderick Alleyn, 12 TR Died in the Wool
Roderick Alleyn, 13 TR Final Curtain
Roderick Alleyn, 14 TR A Wreath for Rivera
Roderick Alleyn, 15 TR Spinsters in Jeopardy
Roderick Alleyn, 17 TR Scales of Justice
Roderick Alleyn, 18 TR Death of a Fool
Roderick Alleyn, 19 TR Singing in the Shrouds
Roderick Alleyn, 20 TR False Scent
Roderick Alleyn, 21 TR Hand in Glove
Roderick Alleyn, 22 TR Dead Water
Roderick Alleyn, 23 TR Killer Dolphin
Roderick Alleyn, 24 TR Clutch of Constables
Roderick Alleyn, 25 TR Tied Up In Tinsel
Roderick Alleyn, 27 TR Black As He's Painted
Roderick Alleyn, 28 TR Last Ditch
Roderick Alleyn, 29 TR A Grave Mistake
Roderick Alleyn, 30 TR Photo Finish
Roderick Alleyn, 31 TR Light Thickens
Roderick Alleyn, 32

After struggling a little with Ngaio Marsh's previous mystery, *Vintage Murder*, I was pleased to discover that I enjoyed the sixth in the series, *Artists in Crime*, a great deal. In *Vintage Murder*, Roderick Alleyn was travelling and, in this book in the series, we see him returning to the UK. On board ship he meets, and falls for, artist, Agatha Troy. Miss Troy turns out to live at Tatler's End House, close to Lady Alleyn, in Bucks. Alleyn goes to visit his mother, while Agatha Troy has a group of students visiting. Along with her friend, Katti Bostock, there are a range of other visitors, including artist model, Sonia Gluck. When Sonia is found dead, Alleyn has to unravel the motives among a group of people who all have reasons to dislike the victim, including Agatha Troy. I enjoyed this mystery and thought there was a good range of suspects and motives. I enjoyed meeting up with Nigel Bathgate and Fox again. I think I missed them in the previous book. Both Lady Alleyn and Agatha Troy seemed a little reminiscent of the Wimsey books to me. However, although Ngaio Marsh is considered one of the four Queens of Crime, she does not seem, to me, to be quite as good as either Sayers, or Christie. Saying that, I look forward to reading on in the series.



Even though I was repulsed by the Sylvester Stallone like figure on the cover, I pulled this out of the book dumpster for a quick read. It started out promisingly, with Inspector Roderick Alleyn leaning over the deck rail on a Fiji to England cruise, but once we disembarked in England stasis took over. A nude model for an art class held at a wealthy artist and teacher's estate is knifed to death, and everyone in the class becomes a suspect. Interminable.

discussions of the details of the knifing and of every student's relationship to every other student are held. Because it is 1938, there is a lot of slut shaming. Just because, Inspector Alleyn feels sexy tingles up and down his pins. I'm trying to channel the Daily Mail here whenever he is around art teacher Agatha Troy. It was all so tedious that by the time the killer/killers were revealed, I no longer cared who might have done it. I no longer cared whether it was a human, or a really intelligent gerbil. There was one sentence that impressed me: Miss Lee's hair was parted down the centre and dragged back from her forehead with such passionate determination that the corners of her eyes had attempted to follow it. Her face, if left to itself, would have been round and eager, but the austerities of the Slade school had superimposed upon it a careful expression of detachment. Because it's 1938, one art student looked like a dago. Another fellow is in Hong Kong taking pictures of the Chinks. And Lady Alleyn, Roderick's mother, is reading the letters of D.H. Lawrence, finding some of the letters really rather tedious. All these negroid deities growling in his interior. One feels sorry for his wife, but she seems to have had the right touch with him. Have you got your drink? The cast of characters is listed at the front of the book. Example: Valmai Seacliff, a student with sex appeal. One is identified as a student with a beard. Marsh writes about the beard as if no person in the solar system had ever worn one before. The beard is remarked on repeatedly, and described as if it is not a natural outgrowth of hair, but a meerkat that happens to be permanently clinging to a man's face. At the model's inquest, the coroner is startled only once and that was when Cedric Malmsley gave evidence. The coroner eyed Malmsley's beard as if he thought it must be detachable, abruptly changed his own glasses, and never removed his outraged gaze from the witness throughout his evidence.

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