



The Blind Alley

Jake Hinkson

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“Jake Hinkson is the Roger Ebert of film noir. His stylish prose bristles with memorable insights and the kind of fun only a true movie lover can bring to the table.” —Ed Gorman, co-founder of Mystery Scene and winner of the Anthony Award for Best Critical Work for *The Fine Art of Murder* “Newcomers to noir and connoisseurs alike can both revel in Jake Hinkson’s riffs on the subject. He brings to the films a wealth of insight, valuable context, and—most vitally—real passion and a sense of fun. It was a privilege to publish many of these pieces the first time around, and it’s a pleasure to read them again in this smart and savvy collection.” —Eddie Muller, author of *Dark City* and president of the Film Noir Foundation “If you want to learn more about film noir, read *The Blind Alley*. Jake Hinkson is like a literary Reed Hadley. His lively, informative essays comprise an essential voice over tour of the characters and foibles of film noir.” —Alan K. Rode, author of *Charles McGraw: Film Noir Tough Guy* and *Sit On The Camera, Pant Like a Tiger: The Life and Films of Michael Curtiz* “In *The Blind Alley*, Jake Hinkson ventures down some of the darkest and most unfamiliar back streets of film noir. A knowledgeable and passionate tour guide, Hinkson illuminates neglected corners with insightful essays on noir’s treatment of subjects from religion to childhood, lesbianism to the “crisis pregnancy.” Incisive profiles of overlooked figures—Norman Foster, Richard Quine, Tom Neal, Mickey Rooney—rescue their contributions from the shadows while revealing lives often more noir than their films. *The Blind Alley* is especially to be treasured for its loving tributes to women who never quite had the careers they deserved, but who left their indelible mark on noir, among them Peggie Castle, Martha Vickers, and Thelma Ritter. For the noir fan, delving into this collection is like opening a box of extra-dark chocolates.” —Imogen Sara Smith, author of *In Lonely Places: Film Noir Beyond The City* “Even though it is hard to believe that there are any dark corners left in the study of classic film noir, Jake Hinkson in *The Blind Alley* manages to shine light into a few of its more obscure niches with perceptive and entertaining studies of character actors like the redoubtable Art Smith, unrecognized femme fatales like Peggie Castle and Joan Dixon, as well as taking on neglected social issues in noir such as lesbianism and unwanted pregnancy.” —James Ursini, author of *The Noir Style* and editor of the *Film Noir Reader* series “Jake Hinkson’s concise, highly readable essays cover the wide waterfront of film noir, offering insightful new perspectives both on monumental films like *Double Indemnity* and *Touch of Evil* and overlooked figures such as Peggie Castle and Norman Foster. A must-have collection for every student of this eternally fascinating genre.” —Dave Kehr, author of *When Movies Mattered: Reviews From a Transformative Decade*

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