



The Crime at Black Dudley (Albert Campion)

Margery Allingham

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Classic Crime from the Golden Age, the first in the Albert Campion Series. Margery Allingham is J.K. Rowling's favourite Golden Age author.

A weekend away in a country estate, an ancient ritual with a dagger, a missing document and a murder in the dark. *The Crime at Black Dudley* is English Classic Crime of the first order and introduces Albert Campion, the eccentric and beloved detective of Allingham's Campion series.

The Black Dudley is an ancient, remote mansion inhabited by recluse, Colonel Combe, but owned by Wyatt Petrie, a young academic who decides to revive his property with a weekend party to which he invites his friends and colleagues. Among the guests is George Abbershaw, a renowned doctor and pathologist who is occasionally summoned by Scotland Yard to help with consulting mysterious deaths. Abbershaw hopes that the leisurely weekend at Black Dudley will help him to get acquainted with red-haired Meggie Oliphant whom he quietly admires. Little does he suspect that instead he will be involved in a series of extraordinary and dangerous incidents which unravel one by one in the gloomy mansion and split the party.

It all begins with a seemingly innocent ritual-game, played in Black Dudley for generations, in which a jewelled dagger is passed between the guests in the darkness. The young visitors are intrigued and eager to play, but when the lights are restored it becomes apparent that Colonel Combe has fallen ill. In the commotion of helping the invalid gentleman to his bedroom the dagger disappears and the Colonel is soon pronounced dead. Although Colonel's closest friends claim that he suffered from a weak heart for many years, Abbershaw begins to suspect that there is more to his death. Soon the guests realise that the petrol has been drained from every single car and the party is imprisoned within the manor of Black Dudley with a murderer among them.

Luckily for Abbershaw, among the guests is Albert Campion – a garrulous and affable party-crasher with a great knack for solving mysteries and interrogating suspects.

The Crime at Black Dudley, first published in 1929, is the first novel which introduces Margery Allingham's amiable sleuth – Albert Campion.

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