

ROGER L. SIMON - MOSES WINE BOOKS - SELECTED QUOTES

THE BIG FIX

Roger L. Simon is a gifted writer. I think the most brilliant new writer of private detective fiction who has emerged in some years. His vision of Los Angeles -- fresh, new, kaleidoscopic -- gives us perhaps the best recent portrait we have had of the great multi-cultured city where the future is continually being born -- halfway between a love-lyric and an earthquake. The Big Fix, like The Big Sleep, should become something of a landmark in its field.

Ross Macdonald

The Big Fix is pure, six-minute hard-boiled dick. Moses Wine is an absolutely accurate character, as fine a picture of his time as Archer and Marlowe and Spade were of theirs.

Joel Siegel, Los
Angeles Times

The style is out of Dashiell Hammet by Rolling Stone. The setting is Southern California, the narrative, hard-boiled, with dialog as realistic as any heard on a bugged telephone... The story is compelling, the characters recognizable.

Robert Kirsch

Here is today's Sam Spade or Lew Archer, a post-60's analogue... There is little pretension, a lot of careful aping of past forms and themes, a keen sense of prose timing (especially in the chapter endings and beginnings) and no sanctimonious panderings to youth cult. Moses Wine is a private eye that bears looking into.

Washington Post

If you think thrillers are dead, forget it. "The Big Fix," already sold to the movies, is sure to make Moses Wine the next James Bond.

Daphne Davis
Women's Wear Daily

"The Big Fix" starts with the most provocative opening sentence of recent years.

United Press
International

...as with all good thrillers, you don't want to put it down.

Gentlemen's Quarterly

The book moves with the speed of a Seaver fastball.

Washington Square Daily
News

The attempt to create a long-haired, left-wing equivalent of the familiar private cop is a successful one. Highly recommended.

Wilson Library Bulletin

Private eye thrillers are not usually this reviewer's cup of tea, but Moses Wine's THE BIG FIX is an offbeat and enjoyable piece of writing.

The Cleveland Press

Roger L. Simon's "The Big Fix" introduces Moses Wine, a hero who will probably rank with Philip Marlowe and Lew Archer, those other great creations of California detective fiction.

The Hollywood Reporter

Moses Wine is the latest in the long line of fictional private eyes descended from Philip Marlowe. But this book is not the unashamed Chandler pastiche that Robert Parker's recent The Godwulf Manuscript was, and its all-Jewish hero is a likable ethnic imitation of Marlowe. Wine is literate but not overburdened with degrees (a law school dropout); likes his simple pleasures (hash and hard rock), and is sexually unencumbered.

The Times Literary
Supplement

The brightest and freshest crime story for some time. No addict should miss it.

Julian Symons, New Review

Weird corners of Los Angeles and even weirder inhabitants skillfully revealed.

Sunday Telegraph

Very fresh, very effective.

Guardian

WILD TURKEY

[Wild Turkey] includes most of the ingredients necessary for good, hardboiled fiction -- realism, a sense of locale, social criticism, a hint of literary pretentiousness and a bluntly humorous conclusion that even Raymond Chandler might have applauded. Wine is the latest in an unbroken line of popular private eyes -- molded by Dashiell Hammett in the 20's, psychoanalyzed by Ross Macdonald in the `50s and `60s and now dragged kicking and screaming into the `70s by Simon to face a new decade's cultural crunch... Here, obviously, is a mystery writer to reckon with. And a private eye Los Angeles can be proud to call its very own.

Dick Lochte
Los Angeles Times Book
Review

Roger Simon remains the shining hope in a field of endeavor glutted by mediocrity and boring repetition -- the only mystery writer of his generation worthy to be placed alongside Ross Macdonald on the shelf.

Nicholas Meyer
(Seven Percent Solution)

Time will tell (others have already made the big comparisons) whether Wine will age into Spade or Bond, but this is the ultimate zonk -- energized to take care of any crisis and pretty funny.

Kirkus Reviews

A first-class, up-to-the-minute whodunit.

Playgirl

Here's a fun detective novel you just don't get enough of anymore. Moses Wine may not be built of the same macho fabric (when we first meet him, he's changing his kid's diaper), but there is a certain style reminiscent of those 1950's Mickey Spillane novels when men were men and private investigators were "private dicks."... Wild Turkey is definitely recommended reading.

West Coast Review of
Books

Simon writes in classic detective style, but still captures the farout atmosphere and skillfully parodies the chic, the sleazy, and the bizarre. Typical of this is a very funny nude investigation and chase scene at the Liberation Institute. Wild Turkey is a fast-paced, clever, well-written detective story that puts a nice touch on a grand tradition.

Houston Chronicle

It is a garish, adventure-charged tale that takes full advantage of Los Angeles as a city of kinky sex, choked expressways, primeval mudslides, reactionary politicians and Disneyland. Best sentence in the book: "The whole society had gone decadent without style -- a Weimar Republic with no cabarets and no George Grosz to draw it."

The Washington Star

There is enough verve and invention here for a couple of books.

The Times Literary Supplement

PEKING DUCK

What a delight! Moses Wine that ex-radical detective from Berkeley showing us what it's like in the People's Republic of China. Not only is the book witty and suspenseful, it's amusing how Simon could link the Gang of Four to Coca-Cola before it even happened.

Sara Davidson
(Loose Change)

Peking Duck is a delicious mystery, crisp and chewy.

Thomas Thompson
(Blood and Money)

The proper mixture of intrigue, rumination, wisecrack, travelogue and even romance.

Los Angeles Magazine

The writing, as always in Moses Wine books, is sharp, amusing and sophisticated.

Newgate Callendar
New York Times Book
Review

...considerable wit and verve.. full of action and fair surprises, told in bouncy style.

San Francisco Sunday
Examiner and Chronicle

Simon here offers a new and very interesting detective to the world of crime. This book was written after a trip to Red China so he is up on the current situation over there.

West Coast Review of
Books

Wine is a figure from the land of Groucho in the world of Karl who is suddenly caught up in perilous consequences of the Cultural Revolution. Mr. Simon may offend traditionalists but he has attempted something new and achieves it in style.

Guardian

There are a hundred ways of telling a story and Simon chose the most rigorous one. The politics are scrupulously accurate and as far as individual motivations they follow the internal logic of mentalities and cultures as different as the Chinese and the Americans. Simon creates his characters from within and it is because he tries to see them so clearly that we are with him. A constant respect for the personality and ideas of others with quite a bit of humor and a strong critical mind makes us swallow Peking Duck with pleasure and interest.

Le Monde

CALIFORNIA ROLL

The perfect mystery for the '80's...the best Moses Wine mystery Roger Simon has written... I found "California Roll" an absolute delight to read... Simon has created scenes that are not only terrific reading, but make "The Big Chill" appear facile and faked.

Lawrence S.Dietz, LOS ANGELES HERALD
EXAMINER

What a delight it has been over the years to watch the development of Southern California writer Roger Simon. In "California Roll," Simon has found an almost perfect voice for his character. Observant, wry, wise, funny vulnerable and tough-minded, Moses Wine has truly come into his own... The story will tickle anyone who has followed the success of Steve Wozniak's Apple computers (who hasn't?) and the wooing of chief executive officers from other industries to bring the wildness of the Silicon Valley under control.

Patricia Holt, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

...a high degree of accomplishment... Mr. Simon has written an amusing, even an exhilarating book.

John Gross, NEW YORK TIMES

... a deliberate work of social history, a remarkable series.

Charles Champlin, LOS ANGELES TIMES

"California Roll" is the most entertaining of a cresting wave of suspense novels exploiting the glamour, big money and technological witchcraft of Silicon Valley. It's not the first of its kind, but this one's better. It's funnier... There's more here, though, than stinging satire. This is a mystery, and the valley's high technology is not incidental to it. It's the key to the solution and is drawn with more depth and feeling than in many other novels.

SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

Roger L. Simon's notably diverting young detective is named Moses Wine... The setting is delicious, the characters are suitably overdrawn, and what the story lacks in suspense, it makes up in fun.

LONG ISLAND NEWSDAY

The Moses Wine series continues. The other books were well received and "California Roll" also should be... There is a lot of humor in "California Roll."

Newgate Callendar, NEW YORK TIMES BOOK
REVIEW

If you like really well-written detective yarns, you'll really enjoy Roger L. Simon's work. His latest is California Roll. Once again, the exploits of Moses Wine are featured, and this time the mystery deals with the computer industry in Silicon Valley and Tokyo. Couldn't put it down.

Larry King's PEOPLE, USA TODAY

...an artful blend of Zen, computers, American corporate politics and Japanese culture. I certainly enjoyed it.

Honorable Edmund G. Brown Jr.

Crisp... clever--a good entertainment.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

... pure enjoyment from start to finish.

THE DENVER POST

THE STRAIGHT MAN

The new Moses Wine is great! THE STRAIGHT MAN is tough and funny and real. Roger Simon is absolutely first rate.

Robert B. Parker

THE STRAIGHT MAN is fast and funny. It's an exceptionally good year for Moses Wine.

Paul Mazursky

"... reeks of authenticity: Simon's uncanny ear for dialogue and his vivid, spare descriptions keep the story moving as tautly as Dashiell Hammett's evocative imagery did... Simon lethally lampoons the opulent-decadent L. A. charity circuit... [His] prose has never been sharper."

Kevin Allman, LOS ANGELES HERALD EXAMINER

"Moses Wine has not only become a better detective since his hippie days in "The Big Fix," he has also grown wiser, funnier and sharper. Through him, Simon is more deadly than his fictional murderers in his scathing satire of pretentiousness, bigotry, materialism and ambivalence in American life."

Patrica Holt, SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

Roger Simon writes with humor and real energy... nobody around is better at caricature, and his potshots at everything from white liberals to Richard Pryor-like comedians make great reading."

Paul Skenazy, SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

"A lively story, as many of the Moses Wine stories are. It also has elements of sadness in the character of the talented, mixed-up, childlike, foul-mouthed, repressed Otis King, the black comic. And it gives psychiatry a few gentle prods."

Newgate Callendar, NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

"One of the most trenchant satirists of contemporary mores in or out of the genre."

Tom & Enid Schanz, THE PURLOINED LETTER

"Roger Simon writes the craziest California detective novels of anyone writing and in THE STRAIGHT MAN he's at the top of his form!"

Digby Diehl, CBS MORNING NEWS

"...among the best new mysteries... Roger L. Simon's swift and funny The Straight Man... a tale that combines show-biz sleaze, drug mania and charity scam."

William A. Henry III, TIME MAGAZINE

"Reliable smart-guy entertainment -- fast, raucous and... amusing."

Kirkus Service

"Roger L. Simon is a clever and gifted writer... Wine plunges into his investigation, but also as a kind of occupational therapy. It takes him all over Los Angeles, which Simon describes in fresh and cunning detail... Simon has a fine ear for dialogue and an equally fine eye for telling detail. This may be the best of the recent adventures of Moses Wine, back-slid '60s radical and bemused traveler through the '80s, whose last steady job provided him with a BMW that he guiltily adores. All too conscious of the recent past, he is, Angst and all, a most contemporary and entertaining detective. As it must have been remarked before, Moses Wine ages well.

Ross Thomas, Los Angeles Times Book Review

"Easily Moses Wine's Finest hour."

Denver Post

RAISING THE DEAD

"Moses Wine, a Los Angeles private investigator, finds himself in Israel working for the Arab-American Friendship Association, carrying heavy cultural and theological baggage. Roger L. Simon's RAISING THE DEAD is an uncommonly questioning, informed, feeling novel, vastly superior to the average mystery.

--Gregory McDonald

"RAISING THE DEAD is a chilling yet rollicking romp through Israel's back alleys where danger, intrigue and sudden death are apparently permanent residents. Roger Simon's insouciant and always knowledgeable private eye, Moses Wine, is our guide through this marvelous journey into jeopardy, and neither Mr. Wine nor Mr. Simon have ever been better."

--Ross Thomas

"Another winner for Roger Simon. Moses Wine, my favorite private eye since THE BIG FIX, improves with age. RAISING THE DEAD is delightful. Great fun!"

--Tony Hillerman

"Roger L. Simon's RAISING THE DEAD is by far the best Moses Wine novel. It is rich and textured, gripping and amusing, and it mixes a twisty plot with thrills and belly laughs and engrossing philosophical discussion--and somehow makes it all work. Simon evokes

the polyglot reality of Israel--the modern Babel, by turns frustrating, fascinating, and bewildering--better than any writer of recent memory. His detective Moses Wine has kept growing and maturing and developing throughout the series just like real people do in their real lives; by the end of RAISING THE DEAD, Moses has emerged a hard-eyed liberal who thinks. Such a man is rare in any age, but in our contemporary time of slogan living he is a breed almost unknown. Like his hero, Simon has been perfecting his craft over the years; with this book he becomes a novelist demanding serious critical attention. RAISING THE DEAD is a shoo-in for everyone's best-of-the-year list."

--Joe Gores

A corker of a mystery, Simon's new novel about Moses Wine tops his prize-winning The Big Fix and The Straight Man, jetting the Jewish private eye from home in Los Angeles to Israel... Intimations of an action that could trigger all-out war push Wine to the limits of his courage and speed the reader's pulse. This is a landmark in the cynically humorous, sexy detective's exploits.

--Publisher's Weekly

The result is sensitive, deep and funny, and while the mystery does hold up, this ranks as one of the better travel-guide books....Certainly less smart-alecky than Simon's usual, to good result. And the complex story and emotional complications are well thought out and evolved. A moving accomplishment.

--Kirkus

Simon's a brilliant, classy writer, and Raising the Dead is one of his best, most touching books.

--Louise Bernikow, Cosmopolitan

Swift-paced and snappily told..."

--William A. Henry III, Time

Simon's scintillating story becomes ever more engrossing as the characters play out their religious and political passions.

--US Magazine

It's time to extricate Roger Simon from the literary ghetto he has created for himself: his many detective novels and his fictional sleuth, Moses Wine... Simon has done for his protagonist what the creators of Spenser, Marlowe, Poirot, Holmes and other detectives didn't--he let Moses Wine grow up, grow older and confront changing times head-on... What makes all this a literary ghetto for Simon is the commercial look of his novels. Yes, they're all formula mysteries, but the surprise is that each one is a philosophical adventure that provokes and intrigues in its own right.

--Patricia Holt, San Francisco Chronicle

Simon proves as familiar with Israel as with the bigotry-strewn alleys of Los Angeles. Wine's adventure is suspenseful, eventful and economically told. But the denouement is tantalizingly elusive, as if when theocracies clash, there are higher forces at work that even a very good private eye cannot detect. It is a mystery more provocative than most.

--Charles Champlin,
Los Angeles Times

His best...If you loved the past Moses Wine mysteries, you're sure to love this one. If Simon's hero has somehow escaped you, there's no better way to start.

--Minneapolis Star-Tribune

Simon is the only major crime writer whose work treats political as well as moral questions, and it takes a deft hand to deal fairly with the parties involved in such murky events... The book is filled with insights into the police state Israel has become beneath the burden of its people's messianic politics. It succeeds in raising questions of God and gumshoe amid the unholy politics of the Holy Land.

--Brian McCormick

LA Weekly

Latest and liveliest...

--New York Times Book Review

This is a funny, exciting and most entertaining mystery novel.

--Newark Star-Ledger

Simon, always an entertaining storyteller, is in top form in this latest Moses Wine caper.

--Virginia Van Vynckt

Chicago Sun-Times

Moses Wine has aged well as he now appears in Roger L. Simon's Raising the Dead, the sixth in the series. He still can be glib and flip. But he can also be genuinely funny and, at times, even sensitive and touching.

--Jean M. White Washington Post Book World

It's as wryly funny as earlier Wine books, and also more substantial, with Wine continuing to grow as a character as Simon matures as a writer. Simon says it's his best book yet. He's right.

--Tom & Enid Schanz

The Purloined Letter

"Raising the Dead" is Roger L. Simon's sixth Moses Wine mystery. It is also the best in a very good bunch...his most interesting case yet.

--Grand Rapids Press

The most attractive part of the book is the philosophical debate aimed at this nonreligious Jew returning to his roots -- and the powerful tug he feels to convert to orthodoxy and stay. It makes Wine a richer character, and the skill with which it is done makes Simon a better author.

--The Seattle Times

"Raising the Dead", Roger L. Simon's sixth Moses Wine mystery, is an intriguing and humorous story....Simon melds all the diverse elements together into a thoroughly satisfying mystery. It is a sensitive and truthful tale that holds the reader's attention all the way to the last page."

--Magill Book Reviews

"Raising the Dead," Simon's sixth mystery, will satisfy fans of the former hippie detective who debuted in 1973 in The Big Fix. Wine's mellowed a bit, but he hasn't lost his sense of humor.

--Torrance Daily Breeze

Does this man of the world [Moses Wine] have any qualms when he is hired to work for Arabs to find the murderer of a prominent Arab-American? That's the whole point behind this delightful mystery, in which Wine's journey to Israel turns those niggling misgivings into a crisis of modern American atheism... As Wine finds himself seduced by the arguments for religion and the return of his ancestral roots, the plot gets thicker with a latter-day messiah, media-conscious fundamentalist leaders of Christian and Jewish varieties and, inevitably, the Israeli secret service. What more could a mystery lover ask -- how about more fine Wine?

-- The Sacramento Union

Moses Wine in the Promised Land: What took him so long?... Yup, that's right, Wine is working for the Arabs, but that's only part of his turmoil, though it does put a nice spin on things. Otherwise, it's the usual slick adventure that readers have come to expect from Simon.

-- Los Angeles Reader

Moses [Wine] experiences deep, quite real emotional conflicts as he journeys to Israel in Raising the Dead... Beneath the farce and burlesque is a perceptive, ironic writer at work, and this is one of Simon's better productions.

-- The Statesboro (GA) Herald

Hard-boiled P. I. with an interesting ethnic spin. For those fond of the genre, "Raising the Dead" will lift the spirit.

--The Asbury Park Press

THE LOST COAST

Author Simon provides us with action, suspense, humor and bright dialogue aplenty, but it's his narrator-detective's approach to life that has distinguished this series. In *The Lost Coast*, middle age may have shaken his confidence and smoothed the edge of his hipster attitude, but fueled by fatherly love, Moses Wine is still a force to reckon with and to read with pleasure.

--Dick Lochte, *Los Angeles Times*

It is this sort of hard honesty and savage humor, this willingness to simultaneously embrace and disparage the past that hooks you on the Moses Wine series... This is a fine novel, courageous enough to not just point fingers, but to look into the mirror without blinking.

--Kevin Burton Smith, *January Magazine*