



The Blackbinder (Femmes Fatales)

Dorothy B. Hughes

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A classic World War II-era noir with a page-turning plot, a cast of colorfully sinister characters and a protagonist who is thrust into the heart of political intrigue, this captivating 1943 novel parallels the spy novels of Grahame Greene, Eric Ambler, and the films of Hitchcock and Lang. But in -signature Hughes fashion, *The Blackbirder* has a genre-bending twist: its hardboiled protagonist is a woman.

Born of American expatriate parents, Julie Guilles was a pretty, sheltered rich girl growing up in Paris, a favorite of the “Ritz Bar” set. But everything changed when the Nazis rolled into the City of Lights. After three years of life underground, Julie is hiding out in New York; but she knows trouble is coming when the corpse of an acquaintance appears on her doorstep. With a host of possible dangers on her tail—the Gestapo, the FBI and the New York cops—she embarks on a desperate journey to Santa Fe in search of her last, best hope. “The Blackbirder” is a legend among refugees, a trafficker in human souls who flies under the radar to bring people to safety across the Mexican border—for a price.

With no resources at her disposal but a smuggled diamond necklace and her own razor-sharp wits, Julie must navigate a tangle of dangers—and take a stand in the worldwide struggle that has shattered the lives of millions. In contrast to the typical representations of wartime women as “Mrs. Minivers” guarding home and hearth, Dorothy B. Hughes gives her intrepid heroine a place at the heart of the action

Dorothy B. Hughes (1904–1993) is the author of numerous hardboiled mystery novels. Three of her books became successful films: *The Fallen Sparrow* (1943), *Ride the Pink Horse* (1947), and *In a Lonely Place* (1950), reprinted by the Feminist Press in 2003. In 1978 she was named a Grand Master by the Mystery Writers of America.

Femmes Fatales restores to print the best of women’s writing in the classic pulp genres of the mid-20th century. From mystery to hard-boiled noir to taboo lesbian romance, these rediscovered queens of pulp offer subversive perspectives on a turbulent era. Enjoy the series: *Bedelia*; *The Blackbirder*; *Bunny Lake Is Missing*; *By Cecile*; *The G-String Murders*; *The Girls in 3-B*; *In a Lonely Place*; *Laura*; *Mother Finds a Body*; *Now, Voyager*; *Skyscraper*; *Stranger on Lesbos*; *Women's Barracks*.

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