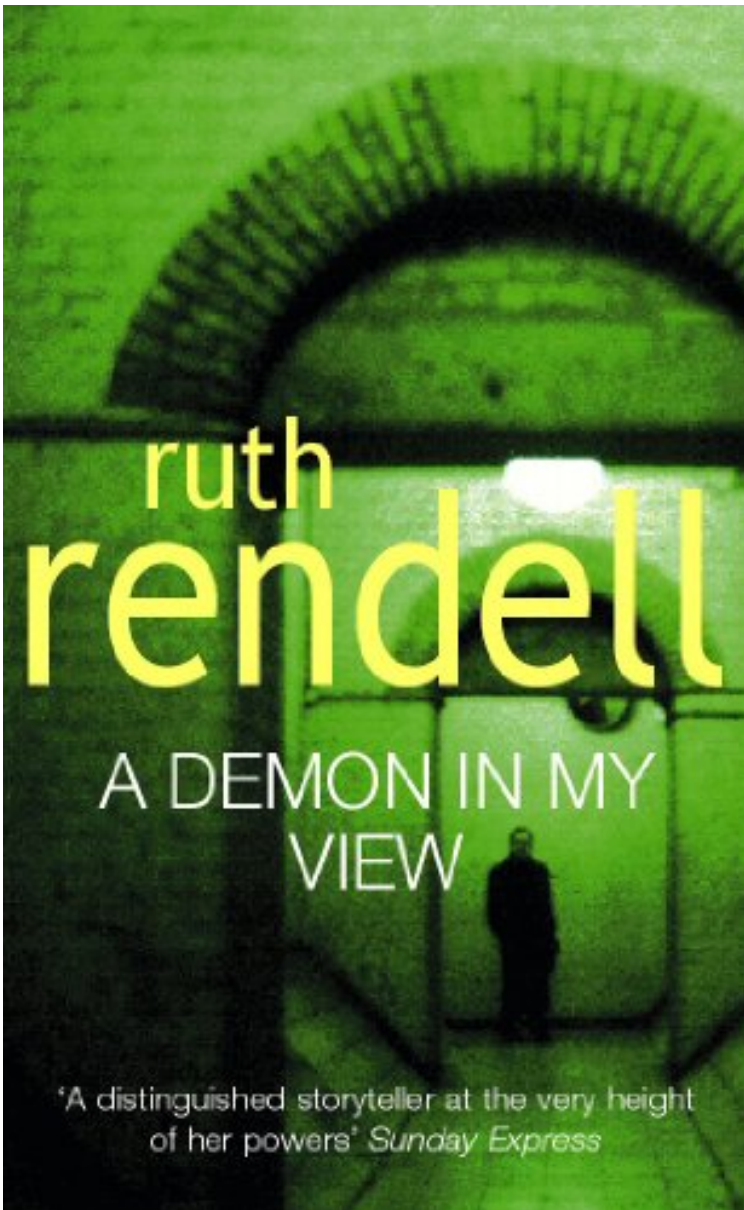


(Ebook pdf) File size: 57.Mb

A Demon In My View



Par Ruth Rendell
*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks |*
Download PDF

Dtails sur le produit Rang parmi les ventes : #191487 dans eBooksPubli le: 2009-11-24Sorti le: 2009-11-24Format: Ebook Kindle

(Ebook pdf) A Demon In My View

Par Ruth Rendell : A Demon In My View before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised A Demon In My View:

Download

Read Online

Description : Description du produitHer white face, beautiful, unmarked by any flaw of skin or feature, stared blankly back at him. He fancied that she had cringed, her slim body pressing further into the wall behind her. He didnt speak. He had never known how to talk to women. There was only one thing he had ever been able to do to women and, advancing now, smiling, he did it.Then, when it was all over, he straightened her against the wall so that she would be ready to die for him again. It was the best thing in his life; just knowing she was there, waiting until the next time.But one day she wasnt there waiting

Prsentation de l'diteurArthur Johnson doesn't look like a murderous psychopath; he is a mild-mannered man who has never known how to talk to women. Years of loneliness has warped his mind, turning his desire for

a woman's love and respect into a pathological need for carefully controlled violence. Locked in the cellar of his building is the perfect willing victim, a woman who can be murdered over and over again, a woman who waits for Arthur every night...When a young scholar of psychopathic personalities moves in downstairs and Arthur's mannequin disappears, where will he turn to satisfy his urgent craving for violence?The crime novel that won Rendell the first of her six Gold Dagger awards, this is a haunting insight into the mind of a pathological criminal.ExtraitA Demon in My ViewThe cellar was divided into rooms. Each of these caverns except the last of them was cluttered with the rubbish which usually encumbers the cellars of old houses: broken bicycles, old mould-grown leather cases, wooden crates, legless or armless chairs, cracked china vessels, yellowing newspapers bundled up with string, and in heaps, the nameless unidentifiable cylinders and tubes and rods and rings and spirals of metal which once, long ago, bolted or screwed or linked something on to something else. All this rubbish was coated with the thick black grime that is always present in cellars. The place smelt of soot and fungus.Between the junk heaps a passage had been cleared from the steps to the first doorless doorway, on to the second doorway and thence to the bare room beyond. And in this room, unseen as yet in the pitch blackness, the figure of a woman leaned against the wall.He came down the steps with a torch in his hand. He switched on the torch only when he had closed and bolted the door behind him. Then, led by its beam, he picked his way softly along the path that was hedged by rubbish. There was no sound but the shuffle of his slippers on the sooty stone, yet as he entered the second room he told himself he had heard ahead of him an indrawn breath, a small gasp of fear. He smiled, though he was trembling, and the hand which held the torch shook a little.At the second doorway he raised the beam and let it play from the lower left-hand corner of the room upwards and then downwards, moving it languidly towards the right. It showed him pocked walls, a cracked ceiling hung with cobwebs. It showed him old, broken, long-disused electric wires, a trickle of viscous water running from the fissure in a split brick, and then, playing in a downward arc, it showed him the woman's figure.Her white face, beautiful, unmarked by any flaw of skin or feature, stared blankly back at him. But he fancied, as the torch shivered in his hand, that she had cringed, her slim body in its short black dress pressing further into the wall which supported it. A handbag was hooked over one of her arms and she wore scuffed black shoes. He didn't speak. He had never known how to talk to women. There was only one thing he had ever been able to do to women and, advancing now, smiling, he did it.First he rested the torch on a brick ledge at the level of his knees so that she was in shadow, so that the room took on the aspect of an alley into which a street lamp filters dimly. Then he approached her, paralysed as she was, and meeting no resistance-he would have preferred resistance-he closed his hands on her throat.Still there was no resistance, but what happened next was almost as satisfactory. His hands squeezed till the fingers met, and as forefinger pressed against thumb, the beautiful white face changed, crumpled, twisted in agony and caved in. He gave a grunting gasp as her body fell sideways. He released his hold, swaying at the earthquake inside him, and he let her fall, prone and stiff, into the footmarked soot.It took him a few minutes to recover. He wiped his hands and the corners of his mouth on a clean white handkerchief. He closed his eyes, opened them, sighed. Then he picked up the plastic shop window model and set her once more against the wall. Her face remained caved in. He wiped the dust from it with his handkerchief and, inserting his fingers through the split in her neck, a split which grew wider each time he murdered her, pushed out sunken nose and crumpled eyes and depressed chin, until she was blank and beautiful again.He straightened her dress and replaced the handbag, which had come unhooked, once more on her arm. She was ready to die for him again. A week, a fortnight might go by, but she would wait for him. It was good, the best thing in his life, just knowing she was there, waiting till next time . . .1The houses were warrens for people, little anthills of discomfort. Almost each one, built to accommodate a single family, had been segmented into four or five separate units. Ungracious living was evinced by a row of doorbells, seven in an eight-roomed house, by the dustbins that had replaced rose bushes in the front gardens, by the slow decay that showed in a boarded window, a balcony rail patched with chicken wire, a latchless gate that tapped ceaselessly, monotonously, against its post.On the odd-numbered side of Trinity Road the houses were tall and with high basements so that the flights of steps mounting to their front doors seemed to assault the very hearts of these houses like engines of siege. They faced terraces of brown brick, humbler-looking and only three floors high. Outside number 142 was parked a large shiny car, a green Jaguar. A toy dog that nodded its head at the slightest vibration rested inside the rear window, and hanging from the centre of the windscreen was a blond doll in a two-piece bathing suit.The car looked incongruous in Trinity Road, along which such vehicles generally passed without stopping. Just inside the low wall that bounded the front garden of number 142 grew two lopped-off lime trees, stumps bearing on their summits

excrescences of leathery leaves that gave them the look of prehistoric vegetation. Behind them was a small patch of brown turf. On the ground floor was a bay window, curtained in orange; above that two windows curtained in floral green-frayed curtains these, with a rent in one of them; on the top floor brown velvet curtains which, parted, disclosed a white frilly drapery like the bodice of a woman's nightgown. A shallow flight of steps, of pink granite but grazed instead of polished, led to a front door whose woodwork might have been of any colour, green, brown, grey, it was so long since it had been painted. But the glass panels in it kept the dim glow they had always had, rubber plant green and the dull maroon of sour wine, the kind of stained glass found in chapel windows of the last century. There were five bells, each one but the lowest labelled. A psychologist would have learned much from the varied and distinctive labelling of these bells. The topmost bore below it a typewritten slip, framed in a plastic container clearly designed for this purpose, which stated: Flat 2, Mr. A. Johnson. Beneath this and the next bell, on a scrap of card secured with adhesive tape, was scrawled in a bold reckless hand: Jonathan Dean. While under the third bell two labels seemed to quarrel with each other for pre-eminence. One was of brown plastic with the letters on it in relief: Flat 1, B. Kotowsky. Its rival, jostling it, stuck to the corner of it with a gob of glue, announced in felt-tipped pen: Ms. V. Kotowsky. Last came a frivolous oval of orange cardboard on which, under a pair of Chinese characters done with a brush, the caller might read: Room 1, Li-li Chan. The space beneath the lowest bell was vacant as was Room 2 with which it communicated. Between the door of the vacant room and the long diagonal sweep which was the underside of the staircase, a shabby windowless space, Stanley Caspian, the landlord, had his office. It was furnished with a desk and two bentwood chairs. On top of the shelves, bristling with papers, which lined the rear wall, stood an electric kettle and a couple of cups and saucers. There was no other furniture in the hall but a rectangular mahogany table set against the banisters and facing the ground floor bathroom. Stanley Caspian sat at the desk, as he always did when he came to 142 for his Saturday morning conference with Arthur Johnson. Arthur sat in the other chair. On the desk were spread the rent books and cheques of the tenants. Each rent book had its own brown envelope with the tenant's name printed on it. This had been an innovation of Arthur's and he had done the printing. Stanley wrote laboriously in the rent books, pressing his pen in hard and making unnecessary full-stops after every word and figure. "I'll be glad to see the back of that Dean," he said when he had inked in the last fifty pence and made the last full-stop. "Middle of next month and he'll be gone." "And his gramophone," said Arthur, "and his wine bottles filling up our little dustbin. I'm sure we'll all be devoutly thankful." "Not Kotowsky. He won't have anyone to go boozing with. Still, thank God he's going off his own bat, is what I say. I'd never have been able to get rid of him, not with this poxy new Rent Act. Put the kettle on, me old Arthur. I fancy a spot of elevenses." And tenses and twelveses, Arthur thought. He plugged in the electric kettle and set out the cups. He wouldn't have dreamed of eating anything at this hour, but Stanley, who was enormously fat, whose belly almost burst open the front of his size-seventeen-collar shirt, opened one of the packages he had brought with him and began devouring sandwiches of bread rolls and processed cheese. Stanley spluttered crumbs all over his shirt, eating uninhibitedly like some gross, superannuated baby. Arthur watched him inscrutably. He neither liked nor disliked Stanley. For him, as for everyone, he had no particular feeling most of the time. He wished only to be esteemed, to keep in with the right people, to know where he stood. Inclining his head towards the door behind him, he said: "A little bird told me you'd let that room." "Right," said Stanley, his mouth full. "A little Chinese bird, was it?" "I must confess I was a bit put out you told Miss Chan before telling me. You know me, I always believe in speaking out. And I was a little hurt. After all, I am your oldest tenant. I have been here twenty years, and I think I can say I've never caused you a moment's unease." "Right I only wish they were all like you." Arthur filled the cups with instant coffee, boiling water and a dribble of cold milk. "No doubt, you had your reasons." He lifted cold eyes, of so pale a blue as to be almost white. "I mustn't be so sensitive." "The fact is," said Stanley, shovelling spoonfuls of sugar into his cup, "that I wondered how you'd take it. You see, this new chap, the one that's taking Room 2, he's got the same name as you." He gave Arthur a sidelong look and then he chortled. "You have to laugh. Coincidence, eh? I wondered how you'd take it." "You mean he's also called Arthur Johnson?" "Not so bad as that. Dear oh dear, you have to laugh. He's called Anthony Johnson. You'll have to take care your post doesn't get mixed up. Don't want him reading your love letters, eh?" Arthur's eyes seemed to grow even paler, and the muscles of his face tightened, tensed, drawing it into a mask. When he spoke his accent smoothed into an exquisite, slightly affected English. "I've nothing to hide. My life is an open book." "Maybe his isn't. If I wasn't in a responsible position I'd say you could have a bit of fun there, me old Arthur." Stanley finished his sandwiches and fetched a doughnut from the second bag. "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male, that's the sort of open book

his life'll be. Good-looking young devil, he is. Real flypaper for the girls, I shouldn't wonder." Arthur couldn't bear that sort of talk. It made him feel sick. "I only hope he's got a good bank reference and a decent job." "Right He's paid two months' rent in advance and that's better than all your poxy bank references to me.

He's moving in Monday." Stanley got heavily to his feet. Crumbs cascaded onto desk, envelopes, and rent books. "We'll just have a look in, Arthur. Mrs. Caspian says there's a fruit bowl in there she wants and young Anthony'll only smash it." Arthur nodded sagely. If he and his landlord were in agreement about anything, it was the generally destructive behaviour of the other tenants. Besides, he enjoyed penetrating the rooms, usually closed to him. And in this one he had a special interest. It was small and furnished with junk. Arthur accepted this as proper in a furnished room, noting only that it was far from clean. He picked his way over to the window. Stanley, having secured his fruit bowl, of red and white Venetian glass, from heterogeneous stacks of crockery and cutlery on the draining board, was admiring the only object in the place less than twenty years old. "That's a bloody good washbasin, that is," he remarked, tapping this article of primrose-coloured porcelain. "Cost me all of fifteen quid to have that put in. Your people did it, as I remember." "It was a reject," said Arthur absently. "There's a flaw in the soap dish." He was staring out of the window which overlooked a narrow brick-walled court. Above an angle of wall you could see the topmost branches of a tree. The court was concreted and the concrete was green with lichen, for into the two drains on either side of it flowed-and sometimes overflowed-the waste water from the two upstairs flats and Jonathan Dean's room. In the wall which faced the window was a door. "What are you looking at?" said Stanley, none too pleasantly, for Arthur's remark about the washbasin had perhaps rankled. "Nothing," said Arthur. "I was just thinking he won't have much of an outlook." "What d'you expect for seven quid a week? You want to remember you pay seven for a whole flat because the poxy government won't let me charge more for unfurnished accommodation. You're lucky, getting your hooks on that when I didn't know any better. Oh yes. But times have changed, thank God, and for seven quid a week now you look out on a cellar door and lump it. Right?" "It's no concern of mine," said Arthur. "I imagine my namesake will be out a lot, won't he?" "If he's got any sense," said Stanley, for at that moment there crashed through the ceiling the triumphant chords of the third movement from Beethoven's Eighth. "Tschaikowsky," he said learnedly. "Dean's at it again. I like something a bit more modern myself." "I was never musical." Arthur gravitated into the hall. "I must get on with things. Shopping day, you know. If I might just have my little envelope?" His shopping basket in one hand and an orange plastic carrier containing his laundry in the other, Arthur made his way along Trinity Road towards the launderette in Brasenose Avenue. He could have used the Coinerama in Magdalen Hill, but he went to Magdalen Hill every weekday to work and at the weekends he liked to vary his itinerary. After all, for good reason, he didn't go out much and never after dark. So instead of cutting through Oriel Mews, past the Waterlily pub and making for the crossroads, he went down past All Souls' Church, where as a child he had passed two hours each Sabbath Day, his text carefully committed to memory. And at four o'clock Auntie Gracie had always been waiting for him, always, it seemed to him, under an umbrella. Had it invariably rained on Sundays, the granite terrace opposite veiled in misty grey? That terrace was now gone, replaced by barracklike blocks of council flats. He followed the route he and Auntie Gracie had taken towards home, but only for a little way. Taking some pleasure in making the K.12 bus stop for him alone, Arthur went over the pedestrian crossing in Balliol Street, holding up his hand in an admonitory way. Down St. John's Road, where the old houses still remained, turn-of-the-century houses some enterprising but misguided builder had designed with Dutch fashions, and where plane trees alternated with concrete lamp standards. The launderette attendant said, "Good morning," and Arthur rejoined with a cool nod. He used his own soap in the machine. He didn't trust the blue stuff in the little packet you got for five-pence. Nor did he trust the attendant to put his linen in the drier nor the other customers not to steal it. So he sat patiently on one of the benches, talking to no one, until the thirty-five-minute cycle was completed. It afforded him considerable satisfaction to note how superior were his pale blue sheets, snowy towels, underwear and shirts, to the gaudy jumble sale laundry in the adjacent machines. While they were safely rotating in the drier, he went next door to the butcher's and then to the greengrocer's. Arthur never shopped in the supermarkets run by Indians, in which this area of Kenbourne Vale abounded. He selected his lamb chops, his small Sunday joint of Scotch topside, with care. Three slices off the roast for Sunday, the rest to be minced and made into Monday's cottage pie. A pound of runner beans, and pick out the small ones, if you please, he didn't want a mouthful of strings. A different way back. The linen so precisely folded that it wouldn't really need ironing-though Arthur always ironed it-he trotted up Merton Street. More council flats, tower blocks here like pillars supporting the heavy, overcast sky. The lawns which separated them, Arthur

had often noticed with satisfaction, were prohibited to children. The children played in the street or sat disconsolately on top of bits of sculpture. Arthur disapproved of the sculptures, which in his view resembled chunks cut out of prehistoric monsters for all they were entitled "Spring" or "Social Conscience" or "Man and Woman," but he didn't think the children ought to sit on them or play in the street for that matter. Auntie Gracie had never allowed him to play in the street. Stanley Caspian's Jaguar had gone, and so had the Kotowskys' fourth-hand Ford. A fistful of vouchers, entitling their possessor to three-pence off toothpaste or free soap when you bought a giant size shampoo, had been pushed through the letter box. Arthur helped himself to those which might come in handy, and mounted the stairs. There was a half-landing after the ten steps of the first flight where a pay phone box was attached to the wall. Four steps went on to the first floor. The door of the Kotowskys' flat was on his left, that to Jonathan Dean's room facing him, and the door to the bathroom they shared between the other two. Dean's door was open, Shostakovitch's Fifth Symphony on loud enough to be heard in Kenbourne Town Hall. The intention apparently was that it should be loud enough merely to be audible in the bathroom from which Dean, a tall, red-haired, red-faced man now emerged. He wore nothing but a small mauve towel fastened round him loincloth-fashion. "The body is more than raiment," he remarked when he saw Arthur. Arthur flushed slightly. It was his belief that Dean was mad, a conviction which rested partly on the fact that everything the man said sounded as if it had come out of a book. He turned his head in the direction of the open door. "Would you be good enough to reduce the volume a little, Mr. Dean?" Dean said something about music having charms to soothe the savage breast, and beat his own, which was hairy and covered with freckles. But, having slammed his door with violence but no animosity, he subdued Shostakovitch and only vague Slavic murmurs reached Arthur as he ascended the second flight. And now he was in his own exclusive domain. He occupied the whole second floor. With a sigh of contentment, resting his laundry bag and his shopping basket on the mat, he unlocked the door and let himself in. Arthur prepared his lunch, two lamb cutlets, creamed potatoes, runner beans. None of your frozen or canned rubbish for him. Auntie Gracie had brought him up to appreciate fresh food, well-cooked. He ended the meal with a slice from the plum pie he had baked on Thursday night, and then, without delay, he washed the dishes. One of Auntie Gracie's maxims had been that only slatternly housekeepers leave dirty dishes in the sink. Arthur always washed his the moment he finished eating. He went into the bedroom. The bed was stripped. He put on clean sheets, rose pink, and rose pink pillowcases. Arthur couldn't sleep in a soiled bed. Once, when collecting their rent, he had caught a glimpse of the Kotowskys' bed and it had put him off his supper. Meticulously he dusted the bedroom furniture and polished the silver stoppers on Auntie Gracie's cut-glass scent bottles. All his furniture was late Victorian, pretty though a little heavy. It came up well under an application of polish. Arthur still felt guilty about using spray-on polish instead of the old-fashioned wax kind. Auntie Gracie had never approved of short cuts. He gave the frilly nets with which every window in the flat was curtained a critical stare. They were too fragile to be risked at the launderette, so he washed them himself once a month, and they weren't due for a wash for another week. But this was such a grimy district, and there was nothing like white net for collecting every bit of flying dust. He began to take them down. For the second time that day he found himself facing the cellar door. The Kotowskys had no window which overlooked it. It could be seen only from this one of his and from the one in Room 2. This had long been known to Arthur, he had known it for nearly as long as the duration of his tenancy. Very little in his own life had changed in those twenty years. The cellar door had never been painted, though the bricks had darkened perhaps and the concrete grown more green and damp. No one had ever seen him cross that yard, he thought as he laid the net curtains carefully over a chair, no one had ever seen him enter the cellar. He continued to stare down, considering, remembering. He had been at school with Stanley Caspian-Merton Street Junior-and Stanley had been fat and gross and coarse even then. A bully always. "Auntie's baby! Auntie's baby! Where's your dad, Arthur Johnson?" And with an inventiveness no one would have suspected from the standard of Stanley's school work: "Cowardy, cowardy custard, Johnson is a bastard!" The years civilise or, at least, inhibit. When they met by chance in Trinity Road, each aged thirty-two, Stanley was affable, even considerate. "Sorry to hear you lost your aunt, Arthur. More like a mother to you, she was." "Yes." "You'll be wanting a place of your own now. Bachelor flat, eh? How about taking the top of a hundred and forty-two?" "I've no objection to giving it the once-over," said Arthur primly. He knew old Mrs. Caspian had left her son a lot of property in West Kenbourne. The house was in a mess in those days and the top flat was horrible. But Arthur saw its potential-and for two pounds ten a week? So he took Stanley's offer, and a couple of days later when he had started the redecorating he went down into the cellar to see if, by chance, it housed a stepladder. She was lying on the floor of the furthest room on a heap of sacks and black-

out curtains left over from the war. She was naked and her white plastic flesh was cold and shiny. He never found out who had brought her there and left her entombed. At first he had been embarrassed, taken aback as he was when he glimpsed likenesses of her standing in shop windows and waiting to be dressed. But then, because he was alone with her and there was no one to see them, he approached more closely. So that was how they looked? With awe, with fear, at last with distaste, he looked at the two hemispheres on her chest, the soft, swollen triangle between her closed thighs. An impulse came to him to dress her. He had done so many secret things in his life-almost everything he had done that he had wanted to do had been covert, clandestine-that no inhibition intervened to stop him fetching from the flat a black dress, a handbag, shoes. These had belonged to Auntie Gracie and he had brought them with him from the house in Magdalen Hill. People had suggested he give them to the WVS for distribution, but how could he? How could he have borne to see some West Kenbourne slattern queening it in her clothes? His white lady had attenuated limbs and was as tall as he. Auntie Gracie's dress came above her knees. She had yellow nylon hair that curled over her cheekbones. He put the shoes on her feet and hooked the handbag over her arm. In order to see what he was doing, he had put a hundred-watt bulb in the light socket. But another of those impulses led him to take it out. By the light of the torch she looked real, the cellar room with its raw brick walls an alley in the hinterland of city streets. It was sacrilege to dress her in Auntie Gracie's clothes, and yet that very sacrilege had an indefinable rightness about it, was a spur. . . . He had strangled her before he knew what he was doing. With his bare hands on her cold smooth throat. The release had been almost as good as the real thing. He set her up against the wall once more, dusted her beautiful white face. You do not have to hide or fear or sweat for such a killing; the law permits you to kill anything not made of flesh and blood. . . . He left her and came out into the yard. The room that was now Room 2 had been untenanted then as had the whole house but for his flat. And when a tenant had come he had been, as had his successor, on night work that took him out five evenings a week at six. But before that Arthur had decided. She should save him, she should be-as those who would like to get hold of him would call it-his therapy. The women who waited in the dark streets, asking for trouble, he cared nothing for them, their pain, their terror. He cared, though, for his own fate. To defy it, he would kill a thousand women in her person, she should be his salvation. And then no threat could disturb him, provided he was careful never to go out after dark, never to have a drink. After a time he had come to be rather proud of his solution. It seemed to set down as nonsense the theories of those experts-he had, in the days of his distress, studied their works-that men with his problem had no self-control, no discipline over their own compulsions. He had always known they talked rubbish. Why shouldn't he have the recourse of the members of Alcoholics Anonymous, of the rehabilitated drug addict? But now? Anthony Johnson. Arthur, who made it his business to know the routines and lifestyles of his fellow tenants, hoped he would soon acquire a thoroughgoing knowledge of the new man's movements. Anthony Johnson would surely go out two or three evenings a week? He must. The alternative was something Arthur didn't at all want to face. There was nothing for it but to wait and see. The possibility of bringing the white lady up into the flat, installing her here, killing her here, occurred to him only for him to dismiss the idea. He disliked the notion of his encounters with her taking on the air of a game. It was the squalor of the cellar, the dimness, his stealthy approach that gave to it its reality. No, she must remain there, he thought, and he must wait and see. He turned from the window and at the same time turned his mind, for he didn't much care to dwell upon her and what she truly was, preferring her to stand down there forgotten and unacknowledged until he needed her again. This, in fact, he thought as he took away the curtains to put them in soak, was the first time he had thought of her in those terms for many years. Dismissing her as a man dismisses a compliant and always available mistress, Arthur went into the living room. The sofa and the two armchairs had been reupholstered since Auntie Gracie's death, only six months after, but Arthur had taken such good care of them that the covers still looked new. Carefully he worked on the blue moquette with a stiff brush. The cream drawn-thread antimacassars might as well go into the water with the nets. He polished the oval mahogany table, the mahogany tallboy, the legs and arms of the dining chairs; plumped up the blue and brown satin cushions, flicked his feather duster over the two hand-painted parchment lampshades, the knobs on the television set, the Chelsea china in the cabinet. Now for the vacuum cleaner. Having the flat entirely covered with wall-to-wall carpet in a deep fawn shade had made a hole in his savings, but it had been worth it. He ran the cleaner slowly and thoroughly over every inch of the carpet, taking his time so that its droning zoom-zoom wouldn't be lost on Jonathan Dean, though he had little hope of its setting him an example. Finally, he rinsed the nets and the chair backs and hung them over the drying rack in the bathroom. There was no need to clean the bathroom or the kitchen. They were cleaned every morning as a matter of course, the former when he had

dried himself after his bath, the latter as soon as breakfast was over. From Library Journal Published in 1976 and 1977, respectively, these are fairly typical of Rendell's popular psychological thrillers. Demon presents a researcher studying psychopathic personalities who doesn't recognize that his seemingly shy, harmless neighbor is a total nut job. Judgement finds a police investigator trying to discern why a housekeeper slaughters her employer's entire family on Valentine's Day. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc.