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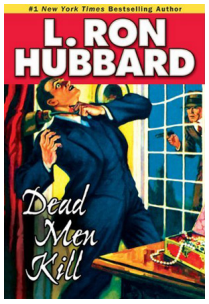
For all those who think zombie literature began with the great Max (WORLD WAR Z) Brooks, think again.



Before the dawn of George A. Romero, L. Ron Hubbard (yes, the father of Scientology) wrote a pulp novella called DEAD MEN KILL, which, although probably not the first living-dead opus ever written, first appeared way back in 1934 in an issue of *Thrilling Detective*. Hubbard’s vintage tale has been reissued by Galaxy Press as part of their Stories from the Golden Age collection in a handsome new paperback edition, one which should please both nostalgia buffs who like fast-paced, old-fashioned noir-style prose and those who simply enjoy creeping horror from the grave.

Wealthy men are being murdered by walking corpses as part of an extortion scheme, and it’s up to hardboiled dick Terry Lane to get to the bottom of it all. Throw in a femme fatale, a talky coroner, a masked villain named “Loup-garou” and the threat of premature burial, and you have all the ingredients of what the Brits would call a “ripping yarn.” The zombies in DEAD MEN KILL are of the kind first seen in classic films like WHITE ZOMBIE and I WALKED WITH A ZOMBIE: dead people brought back to life to serve as slaves to some evil genius. Sorry, not a Fulci-esque flesheater in sight.

What you will find in DEAD MEN KILL, however, is a breezy horror/mystery where almost every sentence ends in an exclamation point (“ ’Don’t!’ screamed Morton. ‘Don’t come near me! You’re dead, man! Get away from me!’ ”). Readable in one sitting, DEAD MEN KILL is frightful fun from yesteryear.