



Ruth Rendell

Ruth Barbara Rendell
Baroness Rendell of Babergh
[1930 – 2015]

Diamond Dagger Award, 1991
Grand Master Award from Mystery Writers of America, 1997

Reginald Wexford, a chief inspector in Sussex, England:

From Doon with Death (1964)

A New Lease of Death (1967)
APA: Sins of the Fathers (1970)

Wolf to the Slaughter (1967)

The Best Man To Die (1969)

A Guilty Thing Surprised (1970)

No More Dying Then (1971)

Murder Being Once Done (1972)

Some Lie and Some Die (1973)

Shake Hands Forever (1975)

A Sleeping Life (1978)
Finalist 1979 Edgar Award for Best Mystery

Means of Evil and Other Stories (1979)
[SS]

Put on by Cunning (1981)
APA: Death Notes (1981)

The Speaker of Mandarin (1983)
Finalist 1983 Gold Dagger Award

An Unkindness of Ravens (1985)
Finalist 1986 Edgar Award for Best Mystery

The Veiled One (1988)

Kissing the Gunner's Daughter (1992)

Simisola (1994)

Road Rage (1997)

Harm Done (1999)

The Babes in the Wood (2002)

End in Tears (2005)

Not in the Flesh (2007)

The Monster in the Box (2009)

The Vault (2011)

No Man's Nightingale (2013)

Non-series:

To Fear a Painted Devil (1965)
Vanity Dies Hard (1966)
APA: In Sickness and in Health (1966)
The Secret House of Death (1968)
One Across, Two Down (1971)
The Face of Trespass (1974)

A Demon in My View (1976)
1976 Silver Dagger Award

The Fallen Curtain and Other Stories (1976) [SS]

A Judgement in Stone (1977)
Finalist 1977 Gold Dagger Award

Make Death Love Me (1979)
Finalist 1980 Edgar Award for Best Mystery

The Lake of Darkness (1980)
Master of the Moor (1982)

The Tree of Hands (1984)
1984 Silver Dagger Award
Finalist 1986 Edgar Award for Best Mystery

The Killing Doll (1984)
The New Girl Friend (1985) [SS]

Live Flesh (1986)
1986 Gold Dagger Award

Collected Short Stories (1987) [SS]
Heartstones (1987) [novella]
Talking to Strange Men (1987)
The Bridesmaid (1989)

Going Wrong (1990)
Finalist 1990 Gold Dagger Award

The Copper Peacock and Other Stories (1991)
[SS]
The Fever Tree and Other Stories (1992) [SS]
The Crocodile Bird (1993)
The Keys to the Street (1996)
Bloodlines (1997) [SS] [includes Wexford]
Thornapple (1998)
A Sight for Sore Eyes (1999)
Adam and Eve and Pinch Me (2001)
Piranha to Scurfy and Other Stories (2001) [SS]
The Rottweiler (2004)
Thirteen Steps Down (2004)

The Thief (2006)
[novella in Quick Reads series]
The Water's Lovely (2006)
Portobello (2008)

Written as Barbara Vine

The Dark-Adapted Eye (1986)
1987 Edgar Award for Best Mystery
Finalist 1986 Gold Dagger Award

A Fatal Inversion (1987)
1987 Gold Dagger Award
Finalist 1988 Macavity Award for Best Novel

The House of Stairs (1989)
Gallowglass (1990)

King Solomon's Carpet (1991)
1991 Gold Dagger Award

Asta's Book (1993)
APA: Anna's Book (1993)
No Night Is Too Long (1994)
The Brimstone Wedding (1996)
The Chimney Sweeper's Boy (1998)
Grasshopper (2000)
The Blood Doctor (2002)
The Minotaur (2005)
The Birthday Present (2008)

Ruth Rendell (1930 - 2015)

- Born as Ruth Barbara Grasemann, in London, daughter of two teachers; father English, mother Swedish – not a happy marriage
- Lonely childhood – escapes were literature and her own imagination
- At age 7, family moved to Essex, where she lived through high school
- Did not go to college, went into journalism, but always felt constrained by facts
- After high school, she became a feature writer for her local Essex paper, the *Chigwell Times*; however, she was forced to resign after filing a story about a local sports club dinner she hadn't attended and failing to report that the after-dinner speaker had died midway through the speech.
- Married Donald Rendell, a political reporter, in 1950 (divorced 1975, remarried 1977, he died 1999); one son Simon, born 1953
- While home with son, she started an intensive program of reading, learning French and classical Greek
- Started writing fiction, submitting novels to publishers
- 1964: first Wexford novel published
- Also wrote psychological suspense and psychological thrillers – some under pen name of Barbara Vine (Barbara = middle name, Vine = great-grandmother)
- Lived in 15th C cottage in Suffolk
- 1997: named a Baroness, joined House of Lords, member of Labour Party; active in environmentalism, children's rights, literacy

Things to think about:

Plot

- 1) Did you guess the solution to the mystery?
- 2) Were there clues? Were there red herrings?

Setting

How does the Kingsmarkham setting affect the story?

Style

- 1) Are parts of the book humorous?
- 2) What is “a sleeping life”?
- 3) Is Rendell a feminist? (Note the date of the book.)

Characters

- 1) Wexford and Burden are different in many ways, yet they have an effective working relationship. How do they do it?
- 2) What other characters stood out for you?