

## **The problem of the difficult bridges**

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Bridges are almost unknown in detective fiction: murderers, who have committed heinous crimes in the most unlikely places and circumstances, seem to avoid them carefully.

The reason is very simple: the bridge is a complex obstacle to engineering a crime without leaving a clue. Spaces are often narrow. Bridge is often a necessary step to overcome an obstacle, so it's much harder to avoid the presence of inconvenient witnesses. The majority of the bridges are opened and then what happens here is visible from afar. In conclusion, it's much easier to kill a person in a closed room and get away (criminal literature on locked rooms is exterminated).

But there are some exceptions. Indeed, there are some superb exceptions.

In these few short stories and novels bridges are not only places: bridges can be witnesses, murder weapons or, even, the culprits.

It's never been tried to make a history of crime fiction through the bridges: it would be impossible.

But I want to propose the story of the bridges in the traditional crime fiction. Citations, architectural references and location: above all, I would like to focus on the few but impressive works where bridges are the protagonists or where, however, they assume a prominent role.

Starting by the excellent Doyle's short story "The problem of Thor Bridge" (Doyle, 2009), up to Hoch's two masterpieces "The problem of the covered bridge" (Hoch, 1981) and "The second problem of the Covered Bridge" (Hoch, 1998), there is a short but fascinating path, a dangerous bridge where one false step leads to crime.

Carr (1989), Heyer (2009) and Farmer (1975), to name a few, are waiting for us in this exploration: different voices that remind us that bridges can be very insecure, sometimes lethal.

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