



Montalbano's First Case and Other Stories (Inspector Montalbano Mystery)

By Andrea Camilleri

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From the author of the *New York Times*–bestselling Inspector Montalbano mystery series, twenty-one short stories spanning the beloved detective’s career

Inspector Montalbano has charmed readers in nineteen popular novels, and now in *Montalbano’s First Case and Other Stories*, Andrea Camilleri has selected twenty-one short stories, written with his trademark wit and humor, that follow Italy’s famous detective through highlight cases of his career. From the title story, featuring a young deputy Montalbano newly assigned to Vigàta, to “Montalbano Says No,” in which the inspector makes a late-night call to Camilleri himself to refuse an outlandish case, this collection is an essential addition to any Inspector Montalbano fan’s bookshelf and a wonderful way to introduce readers to the internationally bestselling series.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

For this sparkling collection, bestseller Camilleri (*A Beam of Light*) selected 21 of his 59 published stories featuring Chief Insp. Salvo Montalbano of Sicily's Vigã ta police. The title tale, one of the longest and most satisfying, is the only one to have previously appeared in English translation. In 1985, Montalbano is transferred to Vigã ta, where he deals first with a sensitive case involving Giuseppe Cusumano, the favorite grandson of Don Sisino Cuffaro, the head of a powerful Mafia family. The story showcases Montalbano's love of good food, his perfect little house, his curiosity and sympathy, and his unconventional but shrewd problem solving. Some of the best stories are quite brief and moving, such as "The Pact," in which Montalbano stops to help an old woman walking alone at night, and the metafictional "Montalbano Says No," in which the detective has a dispute with his creator. Familiar supporting characters get a chance to shine, most notably and improbably in "Catarella Solves a Case," in which "Cat" Catarella, his assistant (with a gift for butchering language), takes a lead role. This is a treat for admirers of the Montalbano novels and a superb introduction for new readers. Agent: Donatella Barbieri, Agenzia Letteraria Internazionale (Italy). (Feb.)

Review

"A sparkling collection... This is a treat for admirers of the Montalbano novels and a superb introduction for new readers."

—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review/Pick of the Week)

"Series fans will especially enjoy learning the origins of Montalbano and company... newcomers may be intrigued by Camilleri's droll humor and nifty storytelling."—*Kirkus Reviews*

"[An] enjoyable collection."—*Booklist*

Praise for Camilleri and the Inspector Montalbano mystery series

"Camilleri's Inspector Montalbano mysteries might sell like hotcakes in Europe, but these world-weary crime stories were unknown here until the oversight was corrected (in Stephen Sartarelli's salty translation) by the welcome publication of *The Shape of Water*... This savagely funny police procedural... prove[s] that sardonic laughter is a sound that translates ever so smoothly into English."

—*The New York Times Book Review*

"Hailing from the land of Umberto Eco and La Cosa Nostra, Montalbano can discuss a pointy-headed book like *Western Attitudes Toward Death* as unflinchingly as he can pore over crime-scene snuff photos. He throws together an extemporaneous lunch of shrimp with lemon and oil as gracefully as he dodges advances from attractive women."—*Los Angeles Times*

"[Camilleri's mysteries] offer quirky characters, crisp dialogue, bright storytelling—and Salvo Montalbano, one of the most engaging protagonists in detective fiction... Montalbano is a delightful creation, an honest man on Sicily's mean streets."—*USA Today*

"Camilleri is as crafty and charming a writer as his protagonist is an investigator."

—*The Washington Post Book World*

“Like Mike Hammer or Sam Spade, Montalbano is the kind of guy who can’t stay out of trouble...Still, deftly and lovingly translated by Stephen Sartarelli, Camilleri makes it abundantly clear that under the gruff, sardonic exterior our inspector has a heart of gold, and that any outburst, fumbles, or threats are made only in the name of pursuing truth.”—*The Nation*

“Camilleri can do a character’s whole backstory in half a paragraph.”—*The New Yorker*

“Subtle, sardonic, and *molto simpatico*: Montalbano is the Latin re-creation of Philip Marlowe, working in a place that manages to be both more and less civilized than Chandler’s Los Angeles.”—*Kirkus Reviews* (starred)

“Wit and delicacy and the fast-cut timing of farce play across the surface...but what keeps it from frothing into mere intellectual charm is the persistent, often sexually bemused Montalbano, moving with ease along zigzags created for him, teasing out threads of discrepancy that unravel the whole.”—*Houston Chronicle*

“Sublime and darkly humorous...Camilleri balances his hero’s personal and professional challenges perfectly and leaves the reader eager for more.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)

About the Author

Andrea Camilleri is the author of the *New York Times*–bestselling Inspector Montalbano mystery series as well as historical novels that take place in nineteenth-century Sicily. His books have been made into Italian television shows and translated into thirty-two languages. His thirteenth Montalbano novel, *The Potter’s Field*, won the Crime Writers’ Association International Dagger Award and was longlisted for the IMPAC Dublin Literary Award.

Stephen Sartarelli (translator) is an award-winning translator and the author of three books of poetry.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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