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# Pure Pulp: THE SHADOW And BLACK MASK - 2 COMPLETE CLASSIC PULP MAGAZINES FROM THE 1930s AND 1940s: OVER 230 PAGES OF MYSTERY, MURDER AND INTRIGUE



## Synopsis

PURE PULP THE SHADOW AND BLACK MASK 2 COMPLETE CLASSIC PULP MAGAZINES FROM THE 1930s AND 1940s • THE SHADOW: NOVEMBER 1932 • BLACK MASK: SEPTEMBER, 1942 OVER 230 PAGES OF MYSTERY, MURDER AND INTRIGUE THE SHADOW In order to boost the sales of their Detective Story Magazine, Street and Smith Publications hired David Chrisman of the Ruthrauff & Ryan advertising agency and writer-director William Sweets to adapt the magazine's stories into a radio series. Chrisman and Sweets felt the upcoming series should be narrated by a mysterious storyteller with a sinister voice, and began searching for a suitable name. One of their scriptwriters, Harry Engman Charlott, suggested various possibilities, such as "The Inspector" or "The Sleuth." Charlott then proposed the ideal name for the phantom announcer: "... The Shadow." Thus, beginning on July 31, 1930, "The Shadow" was the name given to the mysterious narrator of the Detective Story Hour. The narrator was voiced by James LaCurto and, later, Frank Readick. The episodes were drawn from the Detective Story Magazine issued by Street and Smith, "the nation's oldest and largest publisher of pulp magazines." Although the latter company had hoped the radio broadcasts would boost the declining sales of the Detective Story Magazine, the result was quite different. Listeners found the sinister announcer much more compelling than the unrelated stories. They soon began asking newsdealers for copies of "that Shadow detective magazine," even though it did not exist. Recognizing the demand and responding promptly, circulation manager Henry William Ralston of Street & Smith commissioned Walter B. Gibson to begin writing stories about "The Shadow." Using the pen name of Maxwell Grant and claiming the stories were "from The Shadow's private annals as told to" him, Gibson wrote 282 out of 325 tales over the next 20 years: a novel-length story twice a month (1st and 15th). The first story produced was "The Living Shadow", published April 1, 1931 THE BLACK MASK Black Mask was a pulp magazine launched in April 1920 by the journalist H. L. Mencken and the drama critic George Jean Nathan. The magazine was one of several money-making publishing ventures to support the prestigious literary magazine The Smart Set, which Mencken edited, and which had operated at a loss since at least 1917. Under their editorial hand, the magazine was not exclusively a publisher of crime fiction, offering, according to the magazine, "the best stories available of adventure, the best mystery and detective stories, the best romances, the best love stories, and the best stories of the occult." Adapted from WIKIPEDIA ENJOY!

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