



# The Manual of Detection

By Jedediah Berry

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**"This debut novel weaves the kind of mannered fantasy that might result if Wes Anderson were to adapt Kafka." --*The New Yorker***

Reminiscent of imaginative fiction from Jorge Luis Borges to Jasper Fforde yet dazzlingly original, *The Manual of Detection* marks the debut of a prodigious young talent. Charles Unwin toils as a clerk at a huge, imperious detective agency located in an unnamed city always slick with rain. When Travis Sivart, the agency's most illustrious detective, is murdered, Unwin is suddenly promoted and must embark on an utterly bizarre quest for the missing investigator that leads him into the darkest corners of his soaking, somnolent city. What ensues is a noir fantasy of exquisite craftsmanship, as taut as it is mind-blowing, that draws readers into a dream world that will change what they think about how they think.

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## **The Manual of Detection By Jedediah Berry Bibliography**

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

Set in an unnamed city, Berry's ambitious debut reverberates with echoes of Kafka and Paul Auster. Charles Unwin, a clerk who's toiled for years for the Pinkerton-like Agency, has meticulously catalogued the legendary cases of sleuth Travis Sivart. When Sivart disappears, Unwin, who's inexplicably promoted to the rank of detective, goes in search of him. While exploring the upper reaches of the Agency's labyrinthine headquarters, the paper pusher stumbles on a corpse. Aided by a narcoleptic assistant, he enters a surreal landscape where all the alarm clocks have been stolen. In the course of his inquiries, Unwin is shattered to realize that some of Sivart's greatest triumphs were empty ones, that his hero didn't always come up with the correct solution. Even if the intriguing conceit doesn't fully work, this cerebral novel, with its sly winks at traditional whodunits and inspired portrait of the bureaucratic and paranoid Agency, will appeal to mystery readers and nongenie fans alike. (*Feb.*)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

The comparisons used by critics in describing *The Manual of Detection*—Borges! Chesterton! Bradbury! Kafka! Lynch! Gilliam!—may seem overblown. But this list of literary (and cinematic) heavy hitters may not be hyperbolic praise so much as the only means available to explain how a book that initially seems to be a private eye novel can also be a work of absurdist art, “a surreal transmogrification of a genre” (*Wall Street Journal*). The critics might not have been able to categorize it, but they were also unable to put it down. However, as more than one reviewer pointed out, this may not be the best book for those who like their gumshoes straight, no chaser.

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From [Booklist](#)

In a giant and rigidly bureaucratic agency, Charles Unwin is the personal clerk for legendary detective Travis Sivart. The detail-minded Unwin loves his job, but when Sivart suddenly goes missing, Unwin is unwillingly promoted to fill the vacancy. He only wants to solve one case: he wants to find Sivart so he can go back to being a clerk. In his first novel, Berry has created a wonderful and fantastic world, a vintage mystery seen through a hall of fun-house mirrors. Sivart's cases have names like *The Man Who Stole November Twelfth*; a villain is the nefarious bilquist Enoch Hoffmann; chapters begin with koan-like excerpts from the *Manual of Detection*. Unwin's adventures take him through rain-slicked city streets, to a dilapidated carnival run by criminals, and into the dreams of Sivart's murdered supervisor. There are false starts and false identities, double crosses and doppelgängers—and there's far more at stake than Unwin can imagine. Occasionally the story gets a little bit lost inside its own puzzle boxes, but this is a remarkably auspicious debut. --Keir Graff

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**Kenneth Roberts:**

The feeling that you get from *The Manual of Detection* is the more deep you looking the information that hide inside words the more you get serious about reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to be aware of but *The Manual of Detection* giving you excitement feeling of reading. The copy writer conveys their point in specific way that can be understood by anyone who read it because the author of this guide is well-

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**Carlos Vickers:**

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**Sarah Farmer:**

Playing with family within a park, coming to see the water world or hanging out with friends is thing that usually you could have done when you have spare time, after that why you don't try issue that really opposite from that. One activity that make you not experience tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition details. Even you love The Manual of Detection, it is possible to enjoy both. It is great combination right, you still want to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh can happen its mind hangout men. What? Still don't get it, oh come on its named reading friends.

**Cindy Johnson:**

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