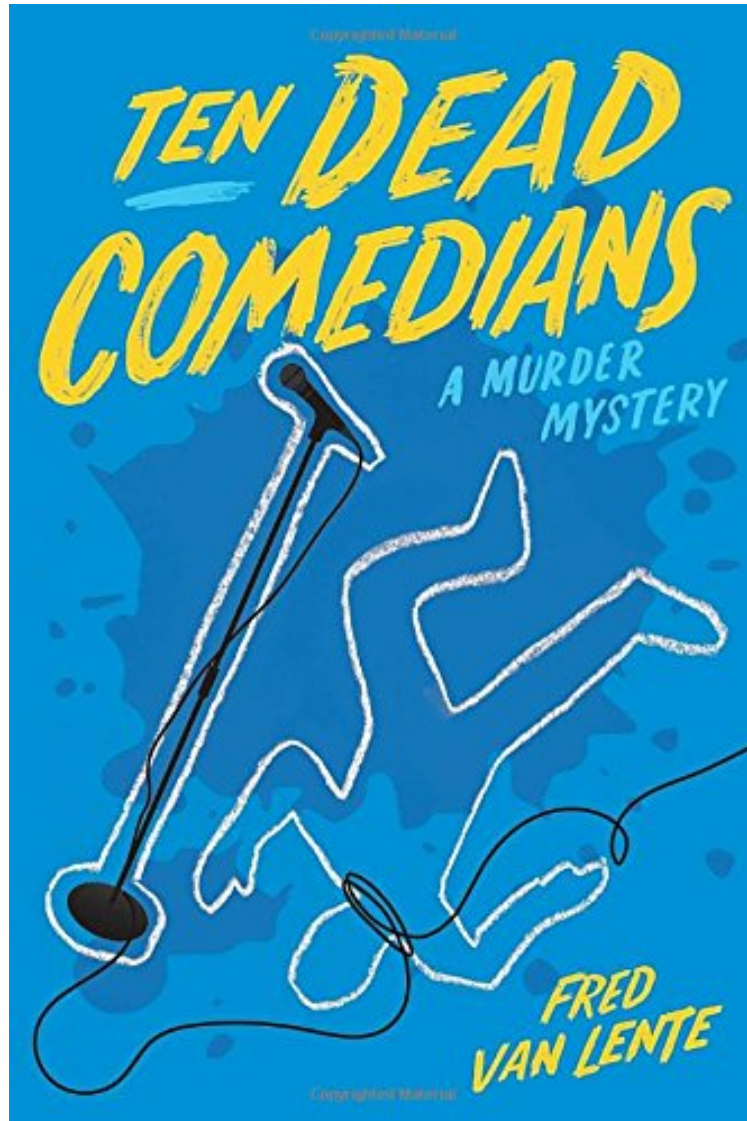


[Free] Ten Dead Comedians: A Murder Mystery

## Ten Dead Comedians: A Murder Mystery

*Fred Van Lente*

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**Fred Van Lente : Ten Dead Comedians: A Murder Mystery** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ten Dead Comedians: A Murder Mystery:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. What a clever and witty book! By ATW What a clever and witty little book! I can totally see this being produced as a Netflix or original movie. It blatantly and pointedly makes fun of certain well known 'hack' comedians in the business -- all of whom are instantly recognizable to the reader -- while following the Agatha Christie murder mystery formula, making for a fun and breezy read. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GOOD Book By APrimeanon Very good book. Clever funny and suspenseful with a surprise

ending. I'll buy more of his books and hope they're as good. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A great iteration on Ten Little Indians By D. Billings A great iteration on Ten Little Indians. I couldn't put the book down. I feared that having to read about so many characters in such a short amount of pages would make for a lot of stereotypical or too simple characters. But overall, I felt that each character got enough of a spotlight to really make this a fun mystery.

Fred Van Lente's brilliant debut is both a savagely funny homage to the Golden Age of Mystery and a thoroughly contemporary show-business satire. As the story opens, nine comedians of various acclaim are summoned to the island retreat of legendary Hollywood funnyman Dustin Walker. The group includes a former late-night TV host, a washed-up improv instructor, a ridiculously wealthy "blue collar" comic, and a past-her-prime Vegas icon. All nine arrive via boat to find that every building on the island is completely deserted. Marooned without cell phone service or wifi signals, they soon find themselves being murdered one by one. But who is doing the killing, and why? A darkly clever take on Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* and other classics of the genre, *Ten Dead Comedians* is a marvel of literary ventriloquism, with hilarious comic monologues in the voice of every suspect. It's also an ingeniously plotted puzzler with a twist you'll never see coming!

"Original, funny, and - like all great comedians - Van Lente slays the audience"—David Quantick, Emmy award-winning writer of *Veep*, *The Thick of It*, *Brass Eye*, and Harry Hill's *TV Burp* "Van Lente's strength is in his narrative ability [...] and his sharp, acerbic humor. The mystery is pretty fun too!"—BookRiot "Van Lente's look at the selfishness and misery of show business is sure to be a hit with mystery lovers who savor unusual setups; the side of snark provided by the bitter islanders adds to the atmosphere."—Booklist "This book is like if Agatha Christie was funny, which is to say that it is infinitely better than Agatha Christie. If you're in the comedy world you'll feel that you know some of the characters firsthand. Hell, if you're a 21st century human you'll feel you know some of the characters firsthand."—Jennifer Wright, author of *It Ended Badly* and *Get Well Soon* "Ten Dead Comedians is a funny and nail-biting front row seat to the bloodthirsty world of professional comedy ... and that's BEFORE the murders start."—Daniel Kibblesmith, writer for *The Late Show With Stephen Colbert* "Fred van Lente takes an old idea and drags it kicking and screaming into the 21st Century. So assured, so fresh and so inventive, it's hard to believe this is his first novel."—Kevin Wignall, best-selling author of *A Death in Sweden* and *The Hunter's Prayer* "Spinal Tap meets Agatha Christie. I loved it."—Martyn Waites, best-selling author of *Born Under Punches* and the *Tania Carver* series "Fred Van Lente delivers an Agatha Christie twisty mystery filled with all the cruel, horrible, and violent deaths that only stand-up comedians truly deserve."—Grady Hendrix, author of *Horrorstör*, *My Best Friend's Exorcism*, and *Paperbacks from Hell* "[this] debut fiction could possibly become, in its own way, as much of a classic as the novel it honors."—*New York Journal of Books* "Ten Dead Comedians is an ingeniously plotted puzzler with classically unanticipated twist ending."—*Midwest Book* "I flew through this book, anxious to uncover the the identity of the killer, and that is perhaps the highest recommendation I can give. I couldn't put it down."—*Geeks of Doom* "Tense, startling and relentlessly hilarious."—*HiLowBrow* "A fantastic debut and a fun ode to Agatha Christie's *And Then There Were None* that provides plenty of comedy to go along with the rampant murder."—*Four Letter Nerd* "This book [is] oddly mesmerizing."—*Mystery Playground* About the Author Fred Van Lente is the #1 *New York Times* best-selling writer of the comics *Odd Is on Our Side*, *Archer Armstrong*, and *Action Philosophers!* He also cowrote the graphic novel *Cowboys and Aliens*, which was made into a film starring Harrison Ford and Daniel Craig. Excerpt. © Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. A bleep, a boop, a shudder, a swoosh, and there it was, on each of their phones: Hey there Funny Person. Steve Gordon didn't see it at first. He had a good excuse, though. He was dying. Steve had died before, of course. He knew how. At the Laugh Shack in Portland, Maine, in front of that bachelorette party. At that open mic in Des Moines, when he was first starting out. At his SNL audition, after his career was basically already over. Dying on stage, in the middle of a set, was something every standup experienced. It was as inevitable and unavoidable as bad weather. The pros distinguished themselves from the wannabes by not buckling under the weight of the dead room, of the surly crowd, of their own (hopefully temporary) suckitude. But tonight felt different. Tonight Steve felt like he was running out of lives. "Hey, thanks, everybody, for that great welcome. Are you ready to be the best Finance Department we can be?" Bifocals, bad ties, and pantsuits peered at him from the audience of the Chicago Improv Underground. The theater used to be a strip club and still retained the vague air of being somewhat ashamed of itself, with its low ceiling and bad lighting and support beams blocking sight lines from a third of the seats. Like every other performer, Steve had to memorize the location of the ancient lump of blue putty covering the hole in the floor where the stripper pole had been sawed off to avoid tripping or stubbing his toe on it. The tumbledown surroundings were part of the act—they helped draw herds of accountants from the Whatever Co. out of the glass tomb of their conference room, down the concrete staircase beneath the Aldi supermarket, for this quarter's team-building seminar. This ritualized descent into the underworld was all part of the initiation process. The staircase was flanked by black-and-white photos of the famous before they were famous, fresh-faced and poor, honing their skills on the Underground stage before their careers began to flourish on Saturday Night

Live, Mad TV, and The Daily Show. By the time the audience arrived in the black box theater and took their broken-down seats, they understood they were ensconced in the loam of celebrity: the Improv Underground was the rich, dark soil from which impossible dreams were raised. Or, in Steve's case, the pure earth to which he had returned. In the stairwell' Before pictures, the audience had seen him twenty years younger. Now, as Steve faced them, one eye on the floor to avoid the ex-stripper-pole bump, they were looking at the After. "All right, folks. For our first team-building exercise, I'm going to hunt you for sport, so if you could all line up against the far wall and get your panda costumes . . . What? No? C'mon, being hunted builds character! Man is the most dangerous game. "No, you can tell I'm joshing. Tonight we're gonna have fun improvising sketches, just like we used to do on What Just Happened? Teddy, could you come up here on stage? Teddy is the manager of Improv Underground. He's a professional funnyman like me, which means he's also an amateur degenerate "So we'll make up a comedy scene right here in front of you. Now somebody give me a place. Any place. Doesn't matter where. No wrong answers here. The one word you can't use in improv is 'no.'" "Auschwitz!" blurted out a middle-aged CPA in the back row. Steve blinked. "Oooo . . . okay? Auschwitz. Sure! Now can somebody give me a profession?" "Rodeo clown!" yelled the Executive Senior Vice President of Something in the front. Steve swallowed. "No," he said. "You said that was the one thing you couldn't say!" the ESVPoS exclaimed with a near-audible harumph. "No, I said that was the one thing you couldn't say," Steve said. And looking at Teddy's face when he said it, and the face of the executive's assistant sitting next to him when he said it, he knew instantly he shouldn't have said it, because this guy hadn't been told no by anybody still with a job since 1998. At that moment Steve thought maybe he really was dying. The spark that had animated his existence since he was a kid was sputtering out, that desire to make people laugh, to book that next gig, to not punch an audience member in the face. What was it all for, the bad food and canceled flights? He could go back to law school like his mother always wanted. At his age, it would be a sitcom waiting to happen. Or he could flip burgers. Flipping burgers was sounding better and better by the second. His phone vibrated again. Steve ignored Teddy's look, a look that said "Oh no you will not check your damn phone while you're in the middle of a gig, you pitiful sketch-show has-been" and turned his back on the audience. "Just a second," Steve said. "I'll be right back." He pulled out the phone out and read: You don't know who I am, but you MIGHT know who I work for.