

A Wild Surge of Guilty Passion: A Novel

Ron Hansen



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A Wild Surge of Guilty Passion: A Novel Ron Hansen From the acclaimed author of *Atticus* and *Mariette in Ecstasy* comes a stylish novel set in the harddrinking, fast-living New York City of the Jazz Age that follows two lovers in a torrid affair on an arc of murder and sexual self-destruction.

Based on a real case whose lurid details scandalized Americans in 1927 and sold millions of newspapers, acclaimed novelist Ron Hansen's latest work is a tour de force of erotic tension and looming violence. Trapped in a loveless marriage, Ruth Snyder is a voluptuous, reckless, and altogether irresistible woman who wishes not only to escape her husband but that he die—and the sooner the better. No less miserable in his own tedious marriage is Judd Gray, a dapper corset-and-brassiere salesman who travels the Northeast peddling his wares. He meets Ruth in a Manhattan diner, and soon they are conducting a white-hot affair involving hotel rooms, secret letters, clandestine travels, and above all, Ruth's increasing insistence that Judd kill her husband. Could he do it? *Would* he? What follows is a thrilling exposition of a murder plan, a police investigation, the lovers' attempt to escape prosecution, and a final reckoning for both of them that lays bare the horror and sorrow of what they have done. Dazzlingly well-written and artfully constructed, this impossible-to-put-down story marks the return of an American master known for his elegant and vivid novels that cut cleanly to the essence of the human heart, always and at once mysterious and filled with desire.

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