



# Crickets on My Tongue, Rats in the Walls: A Novella

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## A Few Telling Clues:

1. A comic noir
- Detective Wilkins is not a hardened, cunning anti-hero with a thirst for dark liquors, but a small-town operative vexed by impatience and inexperience.
- Off-kilter characters who bring a humorous twist to the usual grit and grime. Reminiscent of *Twin Peaks*, minus the supernatural.
2. Use of metafiction
- A text within a text. The readers explore both the base narrative and Lucinda Dolly’s found narrative, (in)complete with damaged, partially illegible pages.
3. An internal gaze
- The story glimpses into Detective Wilkins’ thoughts—not just about clues and suspects, but about his anxieties, responsibilities, and fears regarding his life as a Detective. He is a man highly affected by the surrounding violence and deceit.

## The Briefing:

Author Lucinda Dolly dies in a house fire, her agent is found black-lipped and slumped over a desk, and the only suspect, Dolly’s personal assistant, Zieg Schulmaier, seems to think the whole thing is a joke. But when Detective Wilkins discovers a mostly destroyed manuscript written by the late author, he drifts into a whirlpool of hereditary shame, prostitution, parrot psychics, and paranoid janitors that may just lead him to an answer. During the hunt for the killer (Ten bucks on Schulmaier), the detective must confront a host of damning secrets—including his own.

## A Common Thread:

Thematically, the novella centers on knowing and forgetting. Each character faces a buried memory, as well as the terror of others discovering it. Some react violently; some endure psychological decay. In either case, *Crickets on My Tongue, Rats in the Walls* deals with the acidic gravity of unwanted but unavoidable experience.

## Reviewing the Evidence:

*“A great addition to your bookshelf, or your fireplace.”*

*~The New York Times*

*“Unbearably, obnoxiously, irritatingly ... good.”*

*~Publishers Weekly*

*“There are many great names in detective fiction, and the list remains unchanged.”*

*~The New Yorker*

*“Stop emailing me.”*

*~George R. R. Martin*

*\*Rolls over\**

*~Dashiell Hammett*