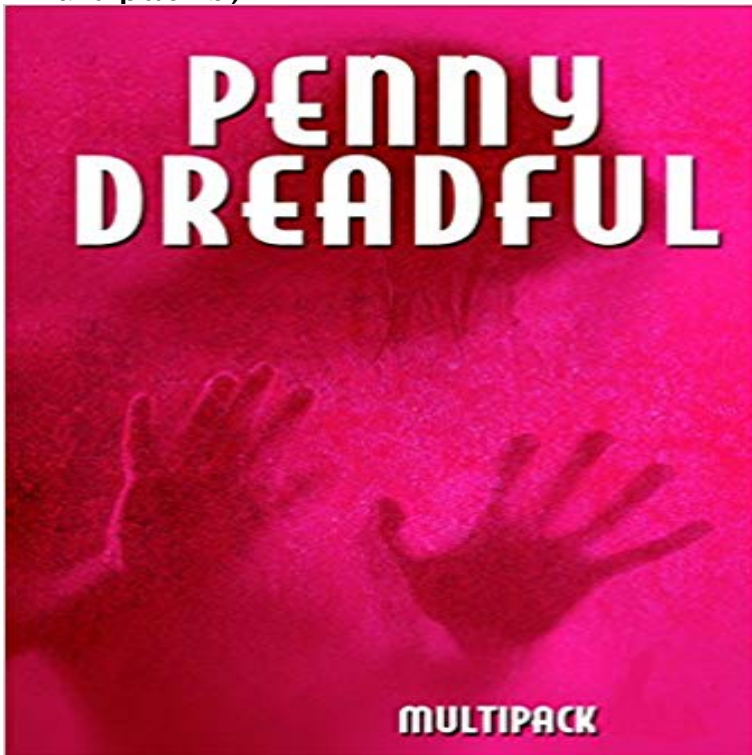


Penny Dreadful Multipack Vol. 6 - The Seven Curses of London, Mysteries of a London Convent, The Wilds of London, Memoirs of Detective Vidocq and The Mysteries ... (Illustrated) (Penny Dreadful Multipacks)



The theme of Volume 6 is life in the city, specifically life in London and Paris. Collected here are five essential Penny Dreadful texts showcasing the sights, sounds and smells, the locations and, most of all, the colorful denizens, from aristocrat to criminal, that populated each metropolis, both of which feature heavily in some of the best penny blood literature. In *The Seven Curses of London*, chronicler of the times James Greenwood dissects the problems inherent in England's capital by dividing the city's ills into seven categories; for readers seeking more escapist fare, there is *The Mysteries of a London Convent*, William Heard Hillyard's long forgotten 1866 sensationalist blockbuster of 22 chapters, written very much in the Wilkie Collins style; James Greenwood returns for the third London book, *The Wilds of London*, a remarkable document from 1866 exposing deplorable conditions in the city originally published anonymously by the author who secretly spent the night in a casual ward disguised as a pauper. The articles expose corruption and wretched conditions and the exotic manner in which the information was gathered sealed the author's reputation overnight. The city of Paris is represented here by two entertaining and highly readable works: master French detective Vidocq's riveting autobiography *The Memoirs of Detective Vidocq, Convict, Spy and Principal Agent of the French Police* and Volumes 4, 5 and 6 of *The Mysteries of Paris* by Eugene Sue, the final three installments of the sprawling mega-mystery from Penny Dreadful Multipacks Volume 3. Vidocq (1775-1857) was a French criminal who became the founder and first director of the crime-detection *Sûreté Nationale* as well as the head of the first known private detective agency. Vidocq is widely regarded as the father of modern criminology and of the French police.

department. He is also considered to be the first private detective. Vidocq's successes as an investigator inspired many Victorian authors who borrowed his brilliance to embody their fictional heroes. The character of Sherlock Holmes is very much based on Vidocq; so are both Jean Valjean and Inspector Javert in *Les Misérables*. Dickens mentions Vidocq in *Great Expectations*; Melville cites him in *Moby Dick*; and Poe refers to Vidocq's methods in *Murders in the Rue Morgue*. As a player in the criminal underworld, Vidocq was a master of disguises and an accomplished thief, eventually turning his unlawful talents toward catching criminals as the first chief of secret police. Playing both sides of the law, Vidocq's life highlights the blurry line between law enforcement and the criminals they pursue. He has a knack for finding trouble throughout his topsy-turvy life, getting into one hot situation after another, often finding himself behind bars, only to escape the first chance he gets. In December 1828, Vidocq published his *Memoirs*, with the help of some ghostwriters. The work became a bestseller and sold over 50,000 copies in the first year. His book takes the reader on a whirlwind tour of 1830s France, including the circus stage, pirate ships, prison cells and beautiful women's boudoirs. Vidocq's life story is unforgettable and includes some of the best crime stories and juicy tales ever written. He preferred the tumultuous life of danger to the contentment of security. His story is one long swashbuckling adventure as he breaks out of jails, pursues actresses, duels to the death, raids the hells of criminals and stalks the Paris night in a thousand disguises. Philip John Stead, *Vidocq: Picaroon of Crime* Penny Dreadful Volume 6 includes a new image gallery with period maps, original illustrations, photographs of famous personages and more. This book series is not affiliated with Showtime Networks television series *PENNY DREADFUL*.

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