This book goes back sixty years in my life. In high school I started reading mysteries, modernist fiction, and literary criticism while I was also getting interested in film. College and graduate school intensified my curiosity about all of the above. A full list of debts would go on for a very long time. Here are the prime ones.

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My sisters Diane Verma and Darlene Bordwell, two tough femme fatales, grew up loving mysteries as much as I did. (Special thanks to Diane for steering me to Laura Lippman.) My wife Kristin Thompson enjoys mysteries too. Although she supported this project with love and good humor, she must at times have wanted the author to finally close the damn case.

✳✳✳

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