

Spencer Quinn's "Chet & Bernie" Series



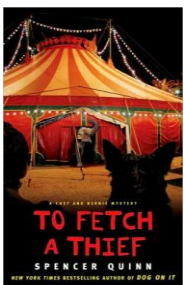
Dog On it [2009]

Set in the Valley of an unnamed Western state, Quinn's winning debut introduces one smart canine detective and his partner, PI Bernie Little of the Little Detective Agency, who's pretty quick on the uptake himself. Chet, a "lively mongrel" with one white ear and one black ear, serves as the book's narrator, communicating with Bernie via doggy methods that verge on the telepathic ("I wagged my tail, that quick one-two wag meaning yes, not the over-the-top one that wags itself and can mean lots of things"). Wealthy divorcée Cynthia Chambliss hires Bernie, a former cop, to find her missing 15-year-old daughter, Madison, whose father is a real estate developer who smells suspiciously of cat. (Chet's keen sense of smell comes in handy.) When Madison reappears and disappears again, her dad says she's just a runaway, though Bernie thinks otherwise. Chet must use all his superdog tricks to extricate Bernie from a mighty tight fix in a climax that fans of classic mysteries are sure to appreciate



Thereby Hangs a Tale [2010]

This volume finds dog and owner, private investigator Bernie Little, down on their financial luck and looking into threats against a pampered celebrity show dog named Princess. Before long, Princess and her wealthy, high-maintenance owner are abducted, along with the newspaper reporter who was covering the case, Bernie's on-again off-again love interest, Susie Sanchez. The trail leads the four-legged detective and his bipedal partner to a creepy ghost town, where they're separated; with a bit of doggie diligence and good luck, the duo reunites and unravels a messy conspiracy involving a corrupt small-town sheriff, a disgruntled dog trainer, and two hippies who can't stop listening to "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida." Chet makes a clever narrator, thinking like a human but often confounded by figures of speech ("crocodile tears," "red herring"), and Quinn manages to keep things both humorous and suspenseful while delivering a proper, satisfying whodunit



To Fetch a Thief [2010]

When Peanut, the elephant star of the Drummond Family Traveling Circus, goes missing, along with elephant tamer Uri DeLeath, Uri's tearful clown partner, Popo, seeks the help of canine detective Chet the Jet and Chet's human partner in cracking crimes, Bernie Little of the Little Detective Agency, in Quinn's terrific third Chet and Bernie mystery set in "the Valley" of an unnamed Western state (after January 2010's Thereby Hangs a Tail). Sgt. Rick Torres of Missing Persons adds his considerable expertise, but it's Chet's fearless nose for clues that leads them on a strange odyssey that becomes downright hairy after Uri's found dead in the desert from the bite of an illegal African puff adder. Quinn, the pseudonym of suspense author Peter Abrahams (End of Story), radiates pure comedic genius via Chet's doggy bright narrative. You don't have to be a dog lover to enjoy this deliciously addictive series.

The Dog Who Knew Too Much [due in September 2011]