

JIM FEAST'S *KARL MARX, PRIVATE EYE*, 2022

Jim Feast's *Karl Marx, Private Eye* is set in the Hotel Tri Lilie in Karlsbad Germany around 1871, just after the Paris Commune fell. A series of murders take place in or near the spa. In residence is Karl Marx, his daughter Eleanor, Dr. Cranky, Sgt. Hubner and a teenage Sherlock who happens to be in the hotel with his derringer and his telescope. There are numerous ideas circulating between the characters about who killed whom and why. "Every crime creates a miasma," Sgt. Hubner says, "the absurd speculations of the general public grow like hot house flowers in their fevered imaginations." "Good Sargeant," Karl Marx says, "are you one of those sentimental dummkopfs that thinks this was a crime of passion?" Even the Hegel-reading masseuse who is busy working on Karl's body has a theory. "It's simple," he says, "the slave and master exterminated each other." In *Karl Marx, Private Eye*, Jim Feast not only engages us intellectually, but as the readers unravel the mysteries, there's a good laugh ever few pages and gorgeous descriptions of the hotel, the clothing and the food of the time. It's a very witty fast-moving story with a terrific ending. If you like detective fiction, you'll love this book.