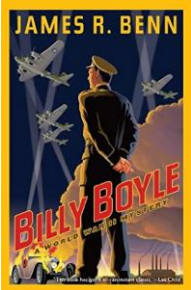


The Billy Boyle WWII series

By James R. Benn

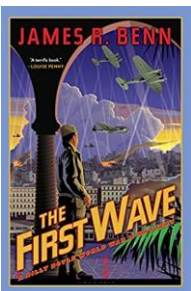


Billy Boyle (2006)

What's a twenty-two-year-old Irish cop from Boston doing at Beardsley Hall having lunch with Haakon, King of Norway, and the rest of the Norwegian government in exile? Billy Boyle himself wonders. Back home, he'd just made detective (with a little help from family and friends) when war was declared. Unwilling to fight—and perhaps die—for England, he was relieved when his mother wangled a job for him on the staff of a general married to her distant cousin, Mamie. But the general turns out to be Dwight D. Eisenhower; his headquarters are in London, which is undergoing the Blitz; and Uncle Ike has a special assignment for Billy: He wants Billy to be his personal investigator.

Billy is dispatched to the seat of the Norwegian government in exile. Operation Jupiter, the impending invasion of Norway, is being planned, but it is feared that there is a German spy amongst the Norwegians. Billy doubts his own abilities, and a theft and two murders test his investigative powers. But to his own surprise, Billy proves to be a better detective than anyone suspected.

Dilys Award Nominee



The First Wave (2007)

Lieutenant Billy Boyle reluctantly accompanies Major Samuel Harding, his boss, in the first boat to land on the shores of Algeria during the Allied invasion. Their task is to arrange the surrender of the Vichy French forces.

But there is dissension between the regular army, the local militia, and De Gaulle's Free French. American black marketeers in league with the enemy divert medical supplies to the Casbah, leading to multiple murders that Billy must solve while trying to rescue the girl he loves, a captured British spy..



Blood Alone (2008)

Billy Boyle awakens in a field hospital in Sicily with amnesia. In his pocket is a yellow silk handkerchief embroidered with the initial L. Gradually he remembers: he has been sent ashore in advance of the troops with this token from Lucky Luciano to contact the head of the Sicilian Mafia. But he must also thwart a murderous band of counterfeiters of Army scrip led by Vito Genovese.



Evil for Evil (2009)

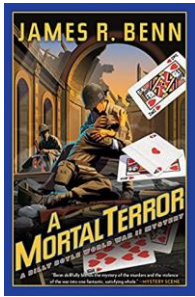
Fifty Browning Automatic Rifles have been stolen from a US Army base in Northern Ireland. His "uncle" Ike Eisenhower sends Billy to recover the weapons, which might be used in a German-sponsored IRA uprising. Bodies begin to accumulate as Billy finds unexpected challenges to his Boston-Irish upbringing and IRA sympathies. There are rogues on both sides, he learns.



Rag and Bone (2010)

American Lieutenant Billy Boyle is assigned to London in the midst of a Luftwaffe bombing offensive, by his uncle, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, to investigate the murder of a Russian security officer in the buildup to D-Day. Billy recognizes that this is a politically charged case, pitting Allies against one another, and that he must proceed with caution. The Polish contingent is incensed over evidence that implicates the Russians in the murder of hundreds of Polish prisoners in the so-called Katyn Forest Massacre, and Scotland Yard thinks this murder of a Soviet officer may be a revenge killing—perhaps perpetrated by Billy's friend Kaz, a Polish baron in exile. But Billy doesn't buy it. Can Billy track the killer through

London's criminal underworld, exonerate his friend, and prevent Allied relations from falling to pieces at this critical moment of the war?



A Mortal Terror (2011)

In his time investigating crimes for both the Boston cops and General Ike's European forces, Lieutenant Billy Boyle hasn't encountered a serial killer. But now it looks like he may--a serial killer with a particularly frightening agenda.

Two officers from the American troops stationed in Caserta, Italy, not far from Naples, have been found murdered. Lieutenant Norman Landry was found behind a supply tent with his neck snapped. Captain Max Galante, MD, was strangled on the same night, and his body left in a garden outside HQ. The MOs are completely different, and it seems like the officers had no connection to each other, but one frightening fact links the murders: each body was discovered with a single playing card: the Lieutenant, the ten of hearts; the Captain, the jack of hearts. The message seems to be clear--if the murderer isn't apprehended, the higher ranks will be next.

Billy is sent to Italy for the investigation, which grows increasingly sinister. But he has other things on his mind, too. His girlfriend, Diana, is on a very dangerous spy mission, and Billy doesn't know when--or if--he'll see her again. To make matters worse, Billy's just learned that his baby brother, Danny, is being sent over to Europe as an infantry replacement, an incredibly dangerous assignment. And all around him, he sees GIs suffering from combat fatigue preparing for another battle. As the invasion at Anzio begins, Billy needs to keep a cool head amidst fear and terror as the killer calculates his next moves.



Death's Door (2012)

Lieutenant Billy Boyle could have used a rest after his last case, but when his girlfriend, Diana Seaton, a British spy, goes missing in the Vatican, where she was working undercover, he insists on being assigned to a murder

investigation there so he can try to help her.

An American Monsignor is found murdered at the foot of Death's Door, one of the five entrances to Saint Peter's Basilica. Wild Bill Donovan, head of the OSS, wants the killing investigated. The fact that the Vatican is neutral territory in German-occupied Rome is only one of the obstacles Billy must overcome. First is a harrowing journey, smuggled into Rome while avoiding the Gestapo and Allied bombs. Then he must navigate Vatican politics and personalities - some are pro-Allied, others pro-Nazi, and the rest steadfastly neutral - to learn the truth about the murdered Monsignor. But that's not his only concern; just a short walk from the Vatican border is the infamous Regina Coeli prison, where Diana is being held. Can he dare a rescue, or will a failed attempt alert the Germans to his mission and risk an open violation of Vatican neutrality?



A Blind Goddess (2013)

March, 1944: US Army Lieutenant Billy Boyle, back in England after a dangerous mission in Italy, is due for a little R&R, and also a promotion. But the now-Captain Boyle doesn't get to kick back and enjoy his leisure time because two

upsetting cases fall into his lap at once.

The first is a personal request from an estranged friend: Sergeant Eugene "Tree" Jackson, who grew up with Billy in Boston, is part of the 617th Tank Destroyers, the all-African American battalion poised to make history by being the US Army's first combatant African American company. But making history isn't easy, and the 617 faces racism at every turn. One of Tree's men, a gunner named Angry Smith, has been arrested for a crime he almost certainly didn't commit, and faces the gallows if the real killer isn't found. Tree knows US top brass won't care about justice in this instance, and asks Billy if he'll look into it.

But Billy can't use any of his vacation time to investigate, because British intelligence agent Major Cosgrove puts him on a bizarre and delicate case. A British accountant has been murdered in an English village, and he may or may not have had some connection with the US Army - Billy doesn't know, because Cosgrove won't tell him. Billy is supposed to go into the village and investigate the murder, but everything seems fishy - he's not allowed to interrogate certain key witnesses, and his friends and

helpers keep being whisked away. Billy is confused about whether Cosgrove even wants him to solve the murder, and why.

The good news is the mysterious murder gives Billy an excuse to spend time in and around the village where Tree and his unit are stationed. If he's lucky, maybe he can get to the bottom of both mysteries - and save more than one innocent life.



The Rest is Silence (2014)

When an unidentified corpse washes ashore at Slapton Sands on England's southern coast, US Army Captain Billy Boyle and his partner, Lieutenant Piotr "Kaz" Kazimierz, are assigned to investigate. The Devonshire beach is the

home to Operation Tiger, the top-secret rehearsal for the approaching D-Day invasion of Normandy, and the area is restricted; no one seems to know where the corpse could have come from. Luckily, Billy and Kaz have a comfortable place to lay their heads at the end of the day: Kaz's old school chum David lives close by and has agreed to host the two men during their investigation. Glad for a distraction from his duties, Billy settles into life at David's family's fancy manor, Ashcroft, and makes it his mission to get to know its intriguing cast of characters.

Just when Billy and Kaz begin to wrap up their case, they find themselves with not one soggy corpse on their hands but hundreds following a terrible tragedy during the D-Day rehearsal. To complicate things, life at Ashcroft has been getting tense: secret agendas, buried histories, and family grudges abound. Then one of the men meets a sudden demise. Was it a heart attack? Or something more sinister?

Barry Award Nominee

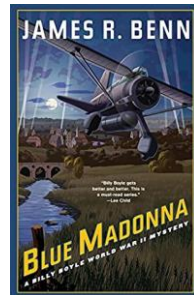


The White Ghost (2015)

1943: In the midst of the brutal, hard-fought Solomon Islands campaign between the Allies and the Japanese forces, Lieutenant Billy Boyle receives an odd assignment: he's sent by the powerful Kennedy family to investigate a murder in which PT skipper (and future president) Jack

Kennedy has been implicated. The victim is a native coastwatcher, an allied intelligence operative, whom Kennedy discovered on the island of Tulagi with his head bashed in. That's Kennedy's story, anyhow.

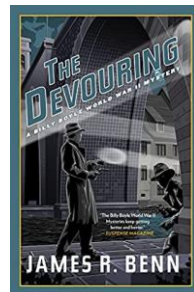
Kennedy was recovering in the Navy hospital on the island after the sinking of his PT-109 motor torpedo boat. The military hasn't decided yet whether to make him a hero for surviving the attack, or have him court-martialed for losing the boat, and the last thing the Kennedy clan wants is a murder charge hanging over his head. Billy knows firsthand that he shouldn't trust Jack: the man is a charmer, a womanizer, and, when it suits his needs, a liar. But would he kill someone in cold blood? And if so, why? The first murder is followed by two more, and to find the killer, Billy must sort through a tangled, shifting web of motives and identities, even as combat rages all around him.



Blue Madonna (2016)

May 1944: Captain Billy Boyle is convicted on spurious charges of black market dealings stripped of his officer's rank, reduced to private, and sentenced to three months' hard labor. But Billy is given an opportunity: if he takes on the

incredibly dangerous mission of investigating a set of murders at the Allies' safe house in the French town of Chaumont, he can avoid his punishment. Parachuted in as part of a three-man team the night before the Normandy invasion, he has very little time to find the killer's identity and lead a group escape back to England, with a whole army of foes nipping at his heels.



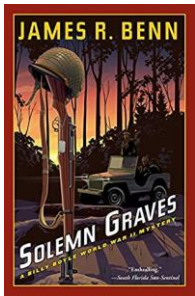
The Devouring (2017)

Europe, 1944: Captain Billy Boyle and his friend Lieutenant Piotr "Kaz" Kazimierz are sent to neutral Switzerland to work with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), investigating Swiss banks that are laundering looted

Nazi gold. The US and Swiss governments are about to embark on diplomatic discussions regarding the Safehaven Protocols, aimed at limiting the amount of war materials exported by Switzerland to the Nazis, stemming the tide of looted gold, and preventing postwar use of Nazi wealth by war criminals. With the talks about to

begin and the Gestapo ever present, the OSS wants Billy and Kaz to protect the participants, which turns out to be a very deadly task.

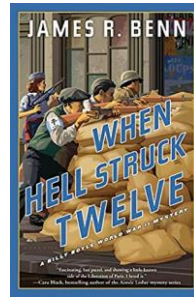
The plans go wrong from the beginning when Billy and Kaz crashland in France. As they make their way through occupied territory to the border, they meet Anton Lasho, a member of the Sinti ethnic group, whose family was slaughtered by the Nazis, and who is, in turn, a one-man Nazi-killing machine. They'll need his help, because as they find once they make it across the border, Swiss banks are openly laundering gold "harvested" from concentration camps, and those who are profiting will do everything they can to protect their wealth and hide their dark secrets.



Solemn Graves (2018)

July, 1944, a full month after D-Day. Billy, Kaz, and Big Mike are assigned to investigate a murder close to the front lines in Normandy. An American officer has been found dead in a manor house serving as an advance headquarters outside the town of Trévières. Major Jerome was far from his own unit, arrived unexpectedly, and was murdered in the dark of night.

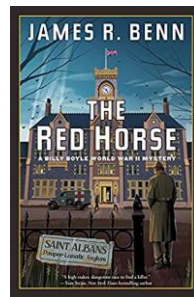
The investigation is shrouded in secrecy, due to the highly confidential nature of the American unit headquartered nearby in the Norman hedgerow country: the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, aka, the Ghost Army. This vague name covers a thousand-man unit with a unique mission within the US Army: to impersonate other US Army units by creating deceptions using radio traffic, dummy inflatable vehicles, and sound effects, causing the enemy to think they are facing large formations. Not even the units adjacent to their positions know what they are doing. But there are German spies and informants everywhere, and Billy must tread carefully, unmasking the murder while safeguarding the secret of the Ghost Army—a secret which, if discovered, could turn the tide of war decisively against the Allies.



When Hell Struck Twelve (2019)

August, 1944: US Army detective Billy Boyle is assigned to track down a French traitor, code-named Atlantik, who is delivering classified Allied plans to German leaders in occupied Paris. The Resistance is also hot on his trail and out

for blood, after Atlantik's previous betrayals led to the death of many of their members. But the plans Atlantik carries were leaked on purpose, a ruse devised to obscure the Allied army's real intentions to bypass Paris in a race to the German border. Now Billy and Kaz are assigned to the Resistance with orders to not let them capture the traitor: the deception campaign is too important. Playing a delicate game, the chase must be close enough to spur the traitor on and visible enough to ensure the Germans trust Atlantik. The outcome of the war may well depend on it.



The Red Horse (2020)

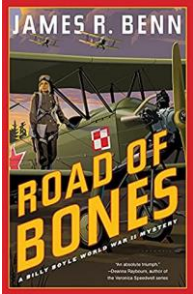
England, 1944: Recovering from physical and psychological wounds sustained in the liberation of Paris, US Army detective Billy Boyle and Lieutenant Kazimierz are sent to a convalescent hospital in the English

countryside—only to discover that St. Albans may have its own war secrets, including a killer.

Just days after the Liberation of Paris, US Army Detective Billy Boyle and Lieutenant Kazimierz are brought to Saint Albans Convalescent Hospital in the English countryside. Kaz has been diagnosed with a heart condition, and Billy is dealing with emotional exhaustion and his recent methamphetamine abuse. Meanwhile, Billy's love, Diana Seaton, has been taken to Ravensbrück, the Nazi concentration camp for women, and Kaz's sister, Angelika, who he recently learned was alive and working with the Polish Underground, has also been captured and transported to the same camp.

This news is brought by British Major Cosgrove, who asks Billy for help, unofficially, in solving what he thinks was the murder of a British agent recuperating at Saint Albans. The convalescent hospital is really a secret installation for those in the world of clandestine warfare to recover from wounds, physical and emotional. Some are allowed to

leave; others are deemed security risks and are detained there. When a second body is found, it is evident that a killer is at work in this high-security enclave. Now Billy must carry out his covert investigation while maintaining his tenuous recovery, shielding his actions from suspicious hospital authorities, and dodging the unknown murderer.



The Road of Bones (2021)

It's September 1944, and the US is poised to launch Operation Frantic, a shuttle-bombing mission to be conducted by American aircraft based in Great Britain, southern Italy, and three Soviet airfields in the Ukraine.

Tensions are already high between the American and Russian allies when two intelligence agents—one Soviet, one American—are found dead at Poltava, one of the Ukrainian bases. Billy is brought in to investigate, and this time he's paired, at the insistence of the Soviets, with a KGB agent who has his own political and personal agenda.

In the course of an investigation that quickly spirals out of control, Billy is aided by the Night Witches, a daring regiment of young Soviet women flying at night at very low altitudes, bombing hundreds of German installations.

It's a turning point in the war, and allied efforts hang by a thread. Unless Billy and his KGB partner can solve the murders in an atmosphere of mutual distrust, Operation Frantic is doomed.



From the Shadows (2022)

In the fall of 1944, Billy Boyle, Kaz, and Big Mike, returning from the Soviet Union, are called to southern France for what should be a simple assignment: they are to serve as security for Royal Navy Commander Gordon Stewart, head

of the Special Operations Executive's Section F in Algiers, which oversees SOE agents sent into the southern region of occupied France. Stewart's mission is to work with Resistance leaders to gather information that will help track down Vichy officials and other traitors who escaped with the retreating Germans. Death threats have been made against Stewart, and there has already been one attempt in Algiers.

Over the course of his investigation, Billy learns that Stewart has made many enemies as of late: both on the SOE side and the Resistance side, due to a financial plot gone wrong. Diana, Billy's on-again, off-again sweetheart, joins the search for the truth as well, as does the legendary 442nd Regimental Combat Team, a unit made up of entirely Nisei soldiers which went on to become the most highly-decorated unit in the history of the Army.

With as much sacrifice as betrayal afoot, Billy isn't sure whom he can trust. Can he and Kaz keep Stewart safe . . . and not die in the process?

James R. Benn website:

<https://www.jamesrbenn.com/>

**This booklist created in January 2022 for the
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