

In the annals of pulp fiction, oriental villains are a dime-a-dozen. Taking their parentage from Sax Rohmer's insidious Dr. Fu Manchu, a few, such as Wu Fang and Dr. Yen Sin, even managed to get their own pulp magazine titled after them. While others didn't achieve such high goals, they did manage to create a lasting image of evil, such as The Shadow's bitter foe, Shiwan Khan. At the other extreme, there is Wo Fan, a series character who appeared in NEW MYSTERY ADVENTURES and MYSTERY ADVENTURE MAGAZINE. Purportedly written by Bedford Rohmer, a clear marriage of H. Bedford-Jones and Sax Rohmer, the author was wise to hide behind a pseudonym. There were seven Wo Fan stories in all: "The Golden Bride of Wo-Fan" (March 1935), "The Snake Ring" (June 1935), "Hell's Highway" (September 1935), "The Invisible Dagger" (November 1935), "Mongrels of Wo Fan" (April 1936), "Apricot Blossoms" (July 1936) and "Coils of Death" (September 1936). To make sure the readers didn't miss the good parts, phrases like "sexual excesses" were italicized. This may have been a valuable service; it allowed the reader to skip the rest of the story and preserve some measure of sanity. Somebody must have been reading them though--Wo Fan appears to have been this pulp's longest running series character.