



# Hardboiled Hollywood: The Origins of the Great Crime Films

*Max Décharné*

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*The Big Sleep, The Godfather, Little Caesar, LA Confidential*—behind these classic films there's a story waiting to be told, and pulp novels, bank robbers, and serial killers have all played a part in shaping crime cinema. But after Hollywood throws these elements into the blender—along with the demands of censors, backers, and the frequently rampant egos of stars and directors—the finished film often bears little resemblance to its source. Real crimes are often considered by filmmakers to be too brutal, and their perpetrators too unattractive. When Sam Peckinpah filmed *The Getaway*, for instance, the novel's pessimistic ending had to be changed to suit the tastes of its glittering stars, Steve McQueen and Ali McGraw. Packed with fascinating facts and anecdotes, *Hardboiled Hollywood* delves into the origins of the greatest crime films ever, placing them in the context of their times and the studio system that produced them.

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