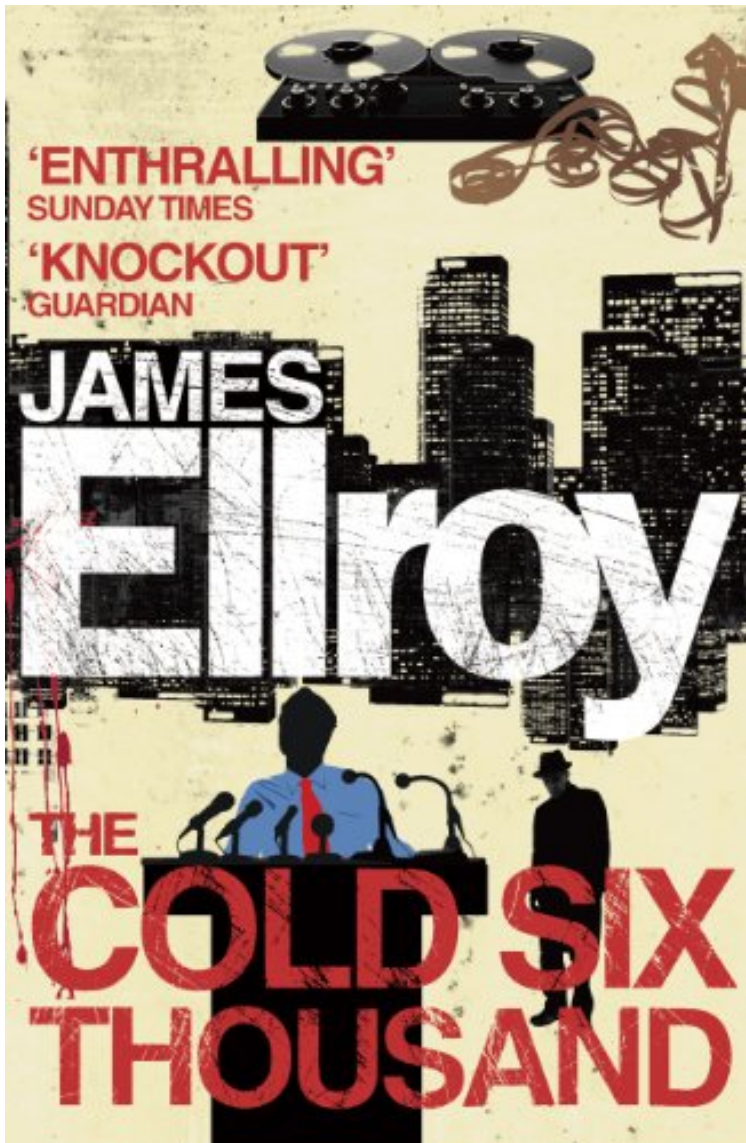


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# The Cold Six Thousand



*Par James Ellroy*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur DALLAS, NOVEMBER 22ND, 1963. Wayne Tedrow Jr has arrived to kill a man. The fee is \$6,000. He finds himself instead in the middle of the cover-up following JFK's assassination. There follows a hellish five-year ride through the sordid underbelly of public policy via Las Vegas, Howard Hughes, Vietnam, CIA dope dealing, Cuba, sleazy showbiz, racism and the Klan. This is the 1960s under Ellroy's blistering lens, the icons of the era mingled with cops, killers, hoods, and provocateurs. The Cold Six Thousand is historical confluence as American nightmare. Fierce, epic fiction. A masterpiece..com's Best of 2001 With its hypnotic, staccato rhythms, and words jostling, bumping, marching forward with edgy intensity (like lemmings heading toward a cliff of their own devising), The Cold Six Thousand feels as if it's

being narrated by a hopped-up Dr. Seuss who's hungrier for violence than for green eggs and ham. In spinning the threads of post-JFK-assassination cultural chaos, James Ellroy's whirlwind riff on the 1960s takes nothing for granted, except that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Hurling from Las Vegas to Vietnam to Cuba to Memphis and back again (and all points in between), from Dealey Plaza to opium fields to smoke-filled back rooms where the mob holds sway, the novel traces the strands of complicity, greed, and fear that connect three men to a legion of supporting characters: Ward Littell, a former Feeb whose current allegiance to the mob and to Howard Hughes can't mask his admiration for the Kennedy brothers and Martin Luther King; Pete Bondurant, a hit man and fervent anti-Communist who splits his time between Vegas casinos and CIA-sponsored heroin labs in Saigon; and Wayne Tedrow Jr., a young Vegas cop who's sent to Dallas in late November 1963 to snuff a black pimp, and who is fighting a losing battle against his predilection for violence: "Junior was a hider. Junior was a watcher. Junior lit flames. Junior torched. Junior lived in his head." And behind these three, J. Edgar Hoover is the master puppeteer, pulling strings with visionary zeal and resolute pragmatism, the still point around whom the novel roils and tumbles. At once evil and comic, Hoover predicts that LBJ "will deplete his prestige on the home front and recoup it in Vietnam. History will judge him as a tall man with big ears who needed wretched people to love him," and feels that Cuba "appeals to hotheads and the morally impaired. It's the cuisine and the sex. Plantains and women who have intercourse with donkeys." The Seussian comparison isn't that far-fetched: Ellroy's novel, like the children's books (and like the very decade it limns), is flexible, spontaneous, and unabashedly off-kilter. Weighing in at a hefty 700 pages, *The Cold Six Thousand* is a trifle bloated by the excesses of its narrative form. But what glorious excess it is, as Ellroy continues to illuminate the twin impulses toward idealism and corruption that frame American popular and political culture. He deftly puts unforgettable faces and voices to the murkiest of conspiracy theories, and simultaneously mocks our eager assumption that such knowledge will make a difference. --Kelly Flynn

Extrait Chapter 1 Part I EXTRADITION November 22-25, 1963  
Wayne Tedrow Jr. (Dallas, 11/22/63) They sent him to Dallas to kill a nigger pimp named Wendell Durfee. He wasn't sure he could do it. The Casino Operators Council flew him. They supplied first-class fare. They tapped their slush fund. They greased him. They fed him six cold. Nobody said it: Kill that coon. Do it good. Take our hit fee. The flight ran smooth. A stew served drinks. She saw his gun. She played up. She asked dumb questions. He said he worked Vegas PD. He ran the intel squad. He built files and logged information. She loved it. She swooned. "Hon, what you doin' in Dallas?" He told her. A Negro shivved a twenty-one dealer. The dealer lost an eye. The Negro booked to Big D. She loved it. She brought him highballs. He omitted details. The dealer provoked the attack. The council issued the contract-death for ADW Two. The preflight pep talk. Lieutenant Buddy Fritsch: "I don't have to tell you what we expect, son. And I don't have to add that your father expects it, too." The stew played geisha girl. The stew fluffed her beehive. "What's your name?" "Wayne Tedrow." She whooped. "You just have to be Junior!" He looked through her. He doodled. He yawned. She fawned. She just looooooved his daddy. He flew with her oodles. She knew he was a Mormon wheel. She'd looove to know more. Wayne laid out Wayne Senior. He ran a kitchen-help union. He rigged low pay. He had coin. He had pull. He pushed right-wing tracts. He hobnobbed with fat cats. He knew J. Edgar Hoover. The pilot hit the intercom. Dallas-on time. The stew fluffed her hair. "I'll bet you're staying at the Adolphus." Wayne cinched his seat belt. "What makes you say that?" "Well, your daddy told me he always stays there." "I'm staying there. Nobody consulted me, but that's where they've got me booked." The stew hunkered down. Her skirt slid. Her garter belt gapped. "Your daddy told me they've got a nice little restaurant right there in the hotel, and, well . . ." The plane hit rough air. Wayne caught it low. He broke a sweat. He shut his eyes. He saw Wendell Durfee. The stew touched him. Wayne opened his eyes. He saw her hickeys. He saw her bad teeth. He smelled her shampoo. "You were looking a little scared there, Wayne Junior." "Junior" tore it. "Leave me alone. I'm not what you want, and I don't cheat on my wife." 1:50 p.m. They touched down. Wayne got off first. Wayne stamped blood back into his legs. He walked to the terminal. Schoolgirls blocked the gate. One girl cried. One girl fucked with prayer beads. He stepped around them. He followed baggage signs. People walked past him. They looked sucker-punched. Red eyes. Boo-hoo. Women with Kleenex. Wayne stopped at baggage claim. Kids whizzed by. They shot cap pistols. They laughed. A man walked up—Joe Redneck—tall and fat. He wore a Stetson. He wore big boots. He wore a mother-of-pearl .45. "If you're Sergeant Tedrow, I'm Officer Maynard D. Moore of the Dallas Police Department." They shook hands. Moore chewed tobacco. Moore wore cheap cologne. A woman walked by—boo-hoo-hoo—one big red nose. Wayne said, "What's wrong?" Moore smiled. "Some kook shot the President." Most shops closed early. State flags flew low. Some folks flew rebel flags upright. Moore

drove Wayne in. Moore had a plan: Run by the hotel/get you set in/find us that jigaboo. John F. Kennedy-dead. His wife's crush. His stepmom's fixation. JFK got Janice wet. Janice told Wayne Senior. Janice paid. Janice limped. Janice showed off the welts on her thighs. Dead was dead. He couldn't grab it. He fumbled the rebounds. Moore chewed Red Man. Moore shot juice out his window. Gunshots overlapped. Joyous shit in the boonies. Moore said, "Some people ain't so sad." Wayne shrugged. They passed a billboard-JFK and the UN. "You sure ain't sayin' much. I got to say that so far, you ain't the most lively extradition partner I ever had." A gun went off. Close. Wayne grabbed his holster. "Whoop! You got a case of the yips, boy!" Wayne futzed with his necktie. "I just want to get this over with." Moore ran a red light. "In good time. I don't doubt that Mr. Durfee'll be sayin' hi to our fallen hero before too long." Wayne rolled up his window. Wayne trapped in Moore's cologne. Moore said, "I been to Lost Wages quite a few times. In fact, I owe a big marker at the Dunes this very moment." Wayne shrugged. They passed a bus bench. A colored girl sobbed. "I heard of your daddy, too. I heard he's quite the boy in Nevada." A truck ran a red. The driver waved a beer and revolver. "Lots of people know my father. They all tell me they know him, and it gets old pretty quick." Moore smiled. "Hey, I think I detect a pulse there." Motorcade confetti. A window sign: Big D loves Jack Jackie. "I heard about you, too. I heard you got leanings your daddy don't much care for." "For instance?" "Let's try nigger lover. Let's try you chauffeur Sonny Liston around when he comes to Vegas, 'cause the PD's afraid he'll get himself in trouble with liquor and white women, and you like him, but you don't like the nice Italian folks who keep your little town clean." The car hit a pothole. Wayne hit the dash. Moore stared at Wayne. Wayne stared back. They held the stare. Moore ran a red. Wayne blinked first. Moore winked. "We're gonna have big fun this weekend." The lobby was swank. The carpets ran thick. Men snagged their boot heels. People pointed outside-look look look-the motorcade passed the hotel. JFK drove by. JFK waved. JFK bought it close by. People talked. Strangers braced strangers. The men wore western suits. The women dressed faux-Jackie. Check-ins swamped the desk. Moore ad-libbed. Moore walked Wayne to the bar. SRO-big barside numbers. A TV sat on a table. A barman goosed the sound. Moore shoved up to a phone booth. Wayne scoped the TV out. Folks jabbered. The men wore hats. Everyone wore boots and high heels. Wayne stood on his toes. Wayne popped over hat brims. The picture jumped and settled in. Sound static and confusion. Cops. A thin punk. Words: "Oswald"/"weapon"/"Red sympath-" A guy waved a rifle. Newsmen pressed in. A camera panned. There's the punk. He's showing fear and contusions. The noise was bad. The smoke was thick. Wayne lost his legs. A man raised a toast. "Oughta give Oswald a-" Wayne stood down. A woman jostled him-wet cheeks and runny mascara. Wayne walked to the phone booth. Moore had the door cracked. He said, "Guy, listen now." He said, "Wet-nursing some kid on some bullshit extradition-" "Bullshit" tore it. Wayne jabbed Moore. Moore swung around. His pant legs hiked up. Fuck-knives in his boot tops. Brass knucks in one sock. Wayne said, "Wendell Durfee, remember?" Moore stood up. Moore got magnetized. Wayne tracked his eyes. He caught the TV. He caught a caption. He caught a still shot: "Slain Officer J. D. Tippit." Moore stared. Moore trembled. Moore shook. Wayne said, "Wendell Durf-" Moore shoved him. Moore ran outside. - - The council booked him a biggg suite. A bellboy supplied history. JFK loved the suite. JFK fucked women there. Ava Gardner blew him on the terrace. Two sitting rooms. Two bedrooms. Three TVs. Slush funds. Six cold. Kill that nigger, boy. Wayne toured the suite. History lives. JFK loved Dallas quail. He turned the TVs on. He tuned in three channels. He caught the show three ways. He walked between sets. He nailed the story. The punk was Lee Harvey Oswald. The punk shot JFK and Tippit. Tippit worked Dallas PD. DPD was tight-knit. Moore probably knew him. Oswald was pro-Red. Oswald loved Fidel. Oswald worked at a schoolbook plant. Oswald clipped the Prez on his lunch break. DPD had him. Their HQ teemed. Cops. Reporters. Camera hogs all. Wayne flopped on a couch. Wayne shut his eyes. Wayne saw Wendell Durfee. Wayne opened his eyes. Wayne saw Lee Oswald. He killed the sound. He pulled his wallet pix. There's his mother-back in Peru, Indiana. She left Wayne Senior. Late '47. Wayne Senior hit her. He broke bones sometimes. She asked Wayne who he loved most. He said, "My dad." She slapped him. She cried. She apologized. The slap tore it. He went with Wayne Senior. He called his mother-May '54-he called en route to the Army. She said, "Don't fight in silly wars." She said, "Don't hate like Wayne Senior." He cut her off. Binding/permanent/4-ever. There's his stepmom: Wayne Senior ditched Wayne's mom. Wayne Senior wooed Janice. Wayne Senior brought Wayne along. Wayne was thirteen. Wayne was horny. Wayne dug on Janice. Janice Lukens Tedrow made rooms tilt. She played indolent wife. She played scratch golf. She played A-club tennis. Wayne Senior feared her spark. She watched Wayne grow up. She torched reciprocal. She left her doors open. She invited looks. Wayne Senior knew it. Wayne Senior didn't care. There's his wife: Lynette Sproul Tedrow. Perched in his lap. Grad night at

Brigham Young.He's shell-shocked. He got his chem degree-BYU/'59-summa cum laude. He craved action.

He joined Vegas PD. Fuck summa cum laude.He met Lynette in Little Rock. Fall '57. Central High desegregates. Rednecks. Colored kids. The Eighty-Second Airborne.Some white boys prowl. Some white boys snatch a colored boy's sandwich. Lynette hands him hers. The white boys attack. Corporal Wayne Tedrow Jr. counters.He beats them down. He spears one fuck. The fuck screams, "Mommy!"Lynette hits on Wayne. She's seventeen. He's twenty-three. He's got some college.They fucked on a golf course. Sprinklers doused them. He told Janice all.She said, "You and Lynette peaked early. And you probably liked the fight as much as the sex."Janice knew him. Janice had the home-court advantage.Wayne looked out a window. TV crews roamed. News vans double-parked. He walked through the suite. He turned off the TVs. Three Oswalds vanished.He pulled his file. All carbons: LVPD/Dallas County Sheriff's.Durfee, Wendell (NMI). Male Negro/DOB 6-6-27/Clark County, Nevada. 64?/155.Pander beefs-3/44 up. "Well-known dice-game habitue." No busts outside Vegas and Dallas."Known to drive Cadillacs.""Known to wear flamboyant attire.""Known to have fathered 13 children out of wedlock.""Known to pander Negro women, white women, male homosexuals Mexican transvestites."Twenty-two pimp busts. Fourteen convictions. Nine child-support liens. Five bail jumps.Cop notes: Wendell's smart/Wendell's dumb/Wendell cut that cat at Binion's.The cat was mobbed up. The cat shanked Wendell first. The council set policy. The LVPD enforced it."Known Dallas County Associates":Marvin Duquesne Settle/male Negro/Texas State custody.Fenton "Duke" Price/male Negro/Texas State custody.Alfonzo John Jefferson/male Negro/4219 Wilmington Road, Dallas 8, Tex. "Gambling partner of Wendell Durfee."County Probation: (Stat. 92.04 Tex. St. Code) 9/14/60-9/14/65. Employed: Dr Pepper Bottling Plant. Note: "Subject to make fine payments for term of probation, i.e.: every 3rd Friday (Dr Pepper payday) County Prob Off."Donnell George Lundy/male Negro/Texas State custody.Manuel "Bobo" Herrera/male Mexican/Texas State custody.The phone rang. Wayne grabbed it."Yeah?""It's me, son. Your new best buddy."Wayne grabbed his holster. "Where are you?""Right now I'm noplac worth bein'. But you meet me at eight o'clock.""Where?""The Carousel Club. You be there, and we'll find us that burrhead."Wayne hung up. Wayne got butterflies.Wendell, I don't want to kill you.