

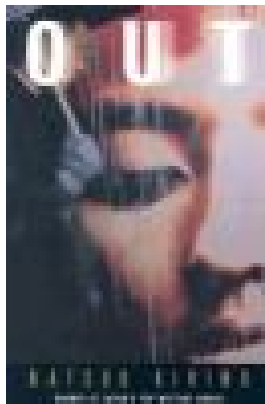
## Read It!: Japanese Noir

Much like the distinct traditions of American crime fiction and the innovative styles of French film noir, there is a certain allure to the strangeness of crime in other places. There is no better example of this than **Japanese noir fiction**. Despite globalization of the arts, there still seems to be a Western fascination with the Other, here represented by Eastern cultures.



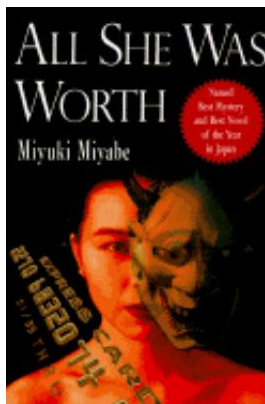
[In The Miso Soup](#) by Ryu Murakami

This book represents possibly the darkest of popular Japanese noir fiction. Murakami's protagonist, a tour guide to the seedy underbelly of Tokyo, leads a suspected homicidal maniac on a voyage of vice and taboo.



[Out: A Novel](#) by Natsuo Kirino

This award winner for a mystery novel, again, focuses on the strange nightlife of Japan. Four nightshift workers find themselves in a predicament when one woman kills her husband and turns to her friends for help. Although superficially, this novel appears to be another mystery, it also explores women's roles in the workplace and other social implications.



[All She Was Worth](#) by Miyuki Miyabe

Another crime novel that has insightful social critiques under the surface. This novel also reflects a sharp economic crisis mirroring our nation's present recession. Miyube deftly explores a whole generation of middle to upper middle class Japanese attaining huge personal debts in order to live a life of comfort and luxury. Stolen identity, hoaxes, and murder are described throughout this gritty novel.