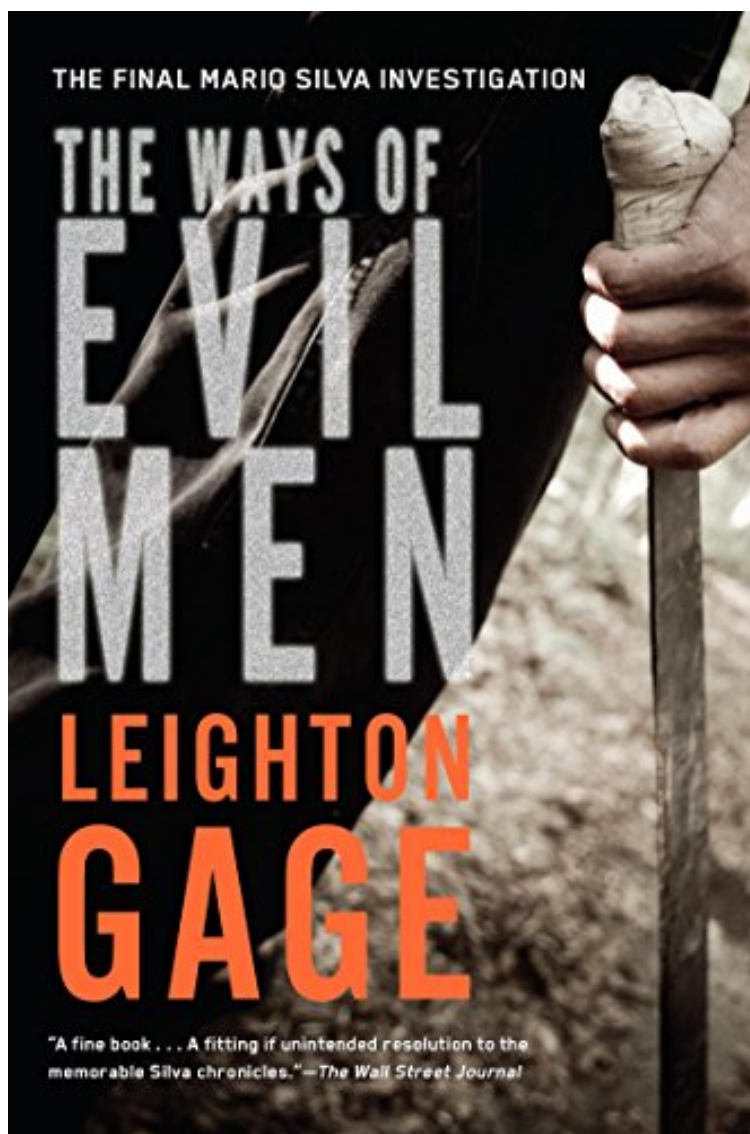


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# The Ways of Evil Men



*Par Leighton Gage*  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurAs Chief Inspector Mario Silva has learned, justice is hard to come by in Brazil, so when his niece tells him about a possible genocide deep in the jungle, he agrees to round up his team and charter a plane to Par to check it out. Thirty-nine natives have recently dropped dead of mysterious causes. Given the tense relationship between the Awana tribe and the white townsfolk nearby, Jade Calmon, Par's sole government-sponsored advocate for the native population, immediately suspects foul play and takes the two remaining Awanaa father and his eight-year-old son into her custody. But when the father is discovered holding a bloody machete next to the body of a village big-shot, just before Silva's arrival, the plot thickens. Why would a peaceful man who doesn't believe in alcohol turn into a drunken killer?ExtraitCHAPTER ONE Sunrise is a brief affair in an equatorial jungle. No more than a hundred heartbeats divide night from day in

the rainforests of Par, a hundred heartbeats in which a hunter must seize his chance. If he shoots too soon, he might miss; if he waits too long, his prey will surely detect him. The boy timed it perfectly. The dart flew true. A big male miqui leaned to one side and tumbled out of the tree. The others screamed in alarm. The boughs began to heave, as if struck by a strong wind, and before Raoni could lower his blowgun, the remaining members of the monkey tribe were gone. \*\*\* The miqui, almost a third of its captors weight, was a heavy load for a boy of eight, but he was a hunter now. Right and duty dictated that he should carry it. Amati helped his son hoist the creature onto his narrow shoulders. To make sure it didnt fall, he made what he called a hunters necklace, binding its hands to its feet by a length of vine. The hunt had taken them deep into the jungle. The sun was already approaching its zenith when they waded through the cold water of the stream and stepped onto the well-worn path that led from the fishing-place to the heart of their village. As they walked, they heard a sound that chilled their hearts: the squabbling of King Vultures, great birds half the height of a man that feed exclusively on carrion. \*\*\* When Raonis father was a boy, the tribe had numbered more than a hundred, but that was before a white mans disease had reduced them by half. In the years that followed, one girl after another had been born, but the girls didnt stay; they married and moved on. It was the way of the Awana, the way of all the tribes. If the spirits saw fit to give them boys, the tribe grew; if girls, the tribe shrank. If it shrank too much, it died. The Awana were doomed, they all knew it, but for the end to have come so suddenly was a horrible and unexpected blow. Yara was lying in front of their hut, little Tota wrapped in her arms, while the buzzards pecked out her eyes. Yaras husband, Raonis grandfather, Atuba, had fallen across the fire, felled in his tracks as if by a poison dart. His midriff was charred and blackened, the smell of his flesh permeating the air. The tribes paj, lay face down below a post from which a joint of roast meat was suspended. The tools of his rituals were spread about him: a rattle, a string of beads, some herbsclear signs hed been making magic. But his magic had failed. The father and his son went from corpse to corpse, kneeling by each. There were no signs of life other than the vultures. They came to the body of Raonis closest friend, Tinga. The little boys favorite possession, his bow, was tightly clutched in his handas if he couldnt bear to abandon it, as if he planned to bring it with him into the afterworld. Raoni was overcome with fury. He picked up a stone and flung it at one of the vultures. Then another. And another. But the birds were swift and wary. He didnt hit a single one, nor could he dissuade them. They simply jumped aside and went back to what theyd been eatingor settled, greedily, upon another corpse. The anger passed as quickly as it had come, replaced by a sense of loss and an emptiness that weakened his legs to the point where he could no longer stand. He threw himself onto the pounded red earth and cried. CHAPTER TWO Jade Calmon parked her jeep, uncapped her canteen, and took a mouthful of water. It tasted metallic and was far too warm, but she swallowed it anyway. One did not drink for pleasure in the rainforest. Constant hydration was a physical necessity. The perspiration drenching her skin had washed away a good deal of her insect repellent. She dried her face and forearms and smeared on more of the oily and foul-smelling fluid. Then she returned the little flask to the pocket of her bush shirt, hung the wet towel over the seat to dry, and retrieved her knapsack. Inside were her PLB and GPS, both cushioned to protect them from the jogs and jolts of the journey. The PLB, or personal locator beacon, was a transmitter that sent out a signal that could be picked up by satellites and aircraft, and homed-in upon by search teams. You call us before you go into the jungle, her boss had told her when hed given it to her. Then you call again when you come out. Its like making a flight plan. If you get into trouble, push the button. Then sit tight and wait to be rescued. Sit tight? In the middle of the biggest rainforest in the world? Easy to say. Not so easy to do. She glanced back at the road. How ironic, she thought. The damned loggers have actually done the Indians some good. Without that road, she would have had to cut her way through sixty-two kilometers of dense rainforest to reach this spot. Even though the rains had turned much of it to mud and the vegetation was quickly erasing the scars of bulldozers, she could still cover the entire distance from Azevedo to this, the end point, in a little less than two hours, which meant she was able to look in on the tribe twice a month instead of six times a year. She clipped the PLB to the belt of her khaki shorts, switched on the GPS, and punched in the coordinates of the village. Then she hoisted her knapsack to her shoulders and set off. \*\*\* Someone or something stepped on a twig. It broke with a loud snap. A tapir or a man, Amati thought. Nothing else is heavy enough. He grabbed his bow. Stay close, he said to his son. The arrow he chose was one tipped with poison. If it was a tapir, hed kill it for the meat. If a white man . . . well, let it not be a white man. Not after what those monsters had done. But the figure that emerged from the forest was neither tapir nor man. It was a woman, one he knew, but white just the same. And she was coming toward him with a smile on her face. A smile! Consumed with a towering anger, Amati lowered the bow. Why should he waste

poison on a creature like this? Poison was precious, time-consuming to extract. Hed kill her with his knife. Revue de presse Praise for The Ways of Evil Men "Leighton Gage died in 2013, making this fine book, it would seem, the last Silva investigation. Given plot developments that involve an orphaned native youth, the book provides a fitting if unintended resolution to the memorable Silva chronicles." The Wall Street Journal "The late Gage (1942-2013) weaves an engaging plot and psychologically complex characters together with a sharp-edged social commentary on the Brazilian class system; his voice will be greatly missed in the crime fiction community." Publishers Weekly, STARRED "A final gift from Leighton to his readers . . . His voice, his portrayal of vital fictional characters and stories, his outrage at injustices in Brazil and beyond, and his lively participation in the on-line crime fiction community will remain as his testament." Glenn Harper, International Noir Fiction "A fine send-off for a compelling character." Booklist "Gage had it all: social conscience; complex, well-drawn characters; and superb plot development. All he lacked was the gift of another dozen years of writing, to shepherd Chief Inspector Silva safely into his retirement." BookPage, Top Pick in Mystery by Bruce Tierney "Leighton Gage is one of those rare writers who can write about social issues without being pedantic. There are many facets to the issue of the indigenous peoples and their future, both in Brazil and elsewhere. Gage presents those facets within the framework of a well-written police procedural. While there is a solution to the mystery at the end, there is no pat answer to all the questions Gage presents along the way to that solution." P.J. Coldren, in the Evidence "Some of the color went out of the world when Leighton Gage died, but his literary legacy is pure gold. I can't recommend his books highly enough." Cathy Cole, Kittling Books "Irresistible . . . Its sad to think this is the final Mario Silva tale well enjoy. If you haven't read the previous half-dozen installments of the series, do yourself a favor and look them up, too." Black Mask "Gage's last offering is at once dark and light, depressing and uplifting, violent but also compassionate, a tale of dastardly, cowardly evil, but also of quiet, unrelenting heroism." Mystery Scene "I suspect that Leighton put a lot of himself into the character of Mario Silva, both will be sorely missed." Crime Scraps "There are few storytellers as gifted as Leighton Gage, and virtually none with his ability to convey messages of such societal importance in fast-paced, cantput-down mysteries that are not in any way preaching." Jeff Siger, writing for the New York Journal of Books "Highly recommended. I can only urge that readers who appreciate strongly drawn characters and a well-plotted tale not miss this wonderful, final addition to a much-loved series from a writer who will be sorely missed." Midwest Book "This marks the end of one of Brazil's most popular procedural crime series. He [Leighton Gage] will be sorely missed by his many fans around the world." BookLoons "A most rewarding book. Recommended." I Love a Mystery "A fitting farewell to the inspector." Fort Worth Star-Telegram "The complexity of the storyline together with several credible paths of misdirection make this one of the better books in this already very good series; sadly, it will also be the last." Mysterious s Praise for Leighton Gage's Mario Silva series "No one writes the cold glint of evil in bright sunlight the way Leighton Gage does. And there's enough evil here and heroism, too for three lesser books." Timothy Hallinan, author of Crashed "Top notch . . . controversial and entirely absorbing." The New York Times Book "A dark, violent book with characters that seethe on the page . . . Compelling writing. Readers will smell the steam and stench of the and recoil from the torture and depredation from which Gage averts his lens, barely in time." Boston Globe "The Silva investigations have all the step-by-step excitement of a world-class procedural series." The Wall Street Journal