



A Quiver Full of Arrows

Jeffrey Archer

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Ordinary Heros,
Extraordinary Deeds

The bestselling author of *Kane & Abel*, *The Prodigal Daughter* and *Honor Among Thieves* once again astonishes, delights, and electrifies his legions of fans.

From London to China, and New York to Nigeria, Jeffrey Archer takes the reader on a tour of ancient heirlooms and modern romance, of cutthroat business and kindly strangers, of lives lived in the realms of power and lives freed from the gloom of oppression. Fortunes are made and squandered, honor betrayed and redeemed, and love lost and rediscovered.

Embracing the passions that drive men and women to love and to hate, the short stories in *A Quiver Full of Arrows* will captivate the hearts and souls of readers of everywhere.

A Quiver Full of Arrows Details

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Author : Jeffrey Archer

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From Reader Review A Quiver Full of Arrows for online ebook

Marty says

Well, here was a total change of pace as our book discussion group delved into a collection of short stories! what a great choice this particular collection proved to be. Archer writes in a style that quickly captures the reader's attention and manages to slip in a twist, or surprise ending, or clever coincidence. I loved all of the stories in this book, although if I had to pick a favorite it would have to be Broken Routine - the twist is delicious! I will definitely be reading more of Mr. Archer's works.

Valerie says

This is a compilation of twelve short stories by Jeffrey Archer, first published 1980: The Chinese Statute; The Luncheon; The Coup; The First Miracle; The Perfect Gentleman; One-Night Stand; The Century; Broken Routine; Henry's Hiccup; A Matter of Principle; The Hungarian Professor; and Old Love.

While I enjoyed one or two of the stories, I felt that there was a weakness in the story punch lines. It would seem that Jeffrey Archer's strength lies in his novel writing.

THE HUNGARIAN PROFESSOR

A young Englishman goes to Hungary and enters a sport competition. He does badly and ends up as a spectator. It is at that time that he meets another spectator, an impoverished elderly Hungarian and a Professor of English at a University there. The old man is starved of the pleasure of having a conversation in English and invites the well-educated young Englishman to dinner in his very modest home. I enjoyed this little story about an old Hungarian man who knows so much about England and English literature. It was a charming story but, again, why can't Jeffrey Archer come up with a good ending to the story? It fizzled out like a squib on a rainy bonfire night. What a shame. How disappointing.

BROKEN ROUTINE

Septimus Horatio Cornwallis runs his life like clockwork. You could set your watch by his routine and really his life is quite boring. His daily schedule is disrupted when his boss has him leaving the office late one evening and he misses his regular train home. Taking a later train, he finds himself sitting next to some youth with a Nazi Swastika and Up Yours emblazoned on his jacket. Septimus is full of contempt even before the youth dares to help himself to his cigarettes and newspaper. Now Broken Routine was a bit boring for the first pages while Jeffrey Archer drums it into his readers' heads how Septimus Horatio runs his life but it gets mighty interesting on the train and I promise you I never saw the ending coming and I burst out laughing. I bet a few of us have had similar experiences in life, thought obviously not the same.

THE CENTURY

A young man is attending Oxford University. He is the son of a famous Indian who had captained Oxford and India at cricket. Wanting to follow in his father's footsteps, the son finds it's not all that easy and that fate keeps getting in the way. I bet The Century could have been a really interesting short story if I had understand a single thing he was telling me about the cricket match upon which the story hinges. As it was, I hadn't a clue what was going on. Cricket fans should fare better. Even so, I understood enough about the ending, I think, to know it was hardly worth bothering.

ONE-NIGHT STAND

Two married men who have been very close friends since boyhood find themselves attracted to the same woman while on business abroad. While they've never experienced conflict during their long friendship, the two friends find themselves competing for her attention and the chance of spending a night with her. Of course, they wouldn't want their wives to find out. One-Night Stand is not my favourite short story by Jeffrey Archer. I thought the ending was terribly disappointing and, to be honest, the subject matter a little lacking. I think the author could have come up with a far better sting-in-the-'tale' ending. I know I could have.

THE PERFECT GENTLEMAN

An Englishman who works for a publishers is in New York trying to track down an American author whose work they wish to publish in England. While there, the publisher's agent meets an older and kindly gentleman by the name of Edward Shrimpton whose claim to fame is that he was once a backgammon champion in the late 1930s until he lost an important match to the rather brash Harry Newman who was nowhere in his league. And thereby hangs the tale... I enjoyed this rather didactic story where we have to make up our own minds about what actually happened. While the ending isn't exactly a memorable shocker, it was certainly unexpected. Not sure what I expected, actually.

THE FIRST MIRACLE

It's just turned 1 A.D. and a young boy is living abroad and worrying about keeping out of trouble. His strict father works for the Emperor of Rome and his family are there to bringing changes to the locals, teach them the right way to live. The boy has already been in trouble and now is worried about eating a Pomegranate that his father would have wanted. His mother sends him to the village some distance away with a grocery list and a couple of coins. He must be back before dawn. He is doing so well too until something, someone, on the road home attracts his attention. The First Miracle is a short and sweet story about a boy who is never named, written in third person. I was a bit disappointed by the ending which seemed a bit of a cop-out to me but I found the 'encounter' curiously fascinating.

THE COUP

Distinguished, stylish, and arrogant Senior Eduardo Francisco de Silveira is the chairman of one of two powerful companies in Brazil. His opposition, Manuel Rodrigues, was less so - more a gum-chewing, jeans and t-shirt man with a casual approach - but nevertheless with an astute business head firmly screwed on. Eduardo always goes out of his way to avoid the man for whom he has nothing but contempt, paying others to ensure that they would never meet. So, who would have thought that when de Silveira landed in Nigeria to negotiate a major business deal with the Head of State that he'd bump into gum-chewing Rodrigues in a hotel lift. I usually avoid things with a political theme but this story is more about prejudices, obstacles, and compromises. The story is a good read and in many ways it's amusing but I thought the very ending was more than a bit lacking. I was expecting metaphorical fireworks.

THE CHINESE STATUE

Sir Alexander Heathcote had an appreciation of Ming dynasty art although he wasn't fortunate enough to have any of it in his private collection. When he was made the British Ambassador to China at the time of Empress Dowager Tsu by Prime Minister Gladstone he, quite by chance, came across a tiny statute of the Emperor Kung. It was in the possession of an aging and impoverished craftsman in a small village fifty miles from Peking, and had been treasured for generations. When Sir Alexander carelessly spoke his thoughts aloud that he would like to own such a thing, it immediately placed the poor craftsman under an obligation to give it as a gift. Feeling terribly guilty for his undiplomatic blunder, Sir Alexander felt equally obliged to reciprocate with a wonderful gift for the Chinaman. Generous to the last, the craftsman pointed out that the statue of the Emperor Kung had no base but he selected an ornate one from a box of bases used for his own

artwork and applied it so that Sir Alexander could stand the statue on display for all his friends to admire. Several generations later, the statue finds its way into the auction room of Sotheby's in London. It's got a nice twist at the end which I never saw coming. A splendid story, the size of a small chapter, nicely written, and which made me smile at the outcome.

Sajitha Jayaprakash says

This book is different from his novels as most of these books revolve around two or more individuals who are highly ambitious and strong-willed. Each of these strong characters is shown to be determined to defeat the another to gain power and fortune.

As the name rightly suggests, Jeffrey Archer has impressively put together twelve assorted arrows (short stories) into the quiver (book). Each of these arrows is sharp and leaves a meaningful impact on the readers.

All the stories bring out certain element of human nature! The Chinese Statue is the story that features a Sir Alexander, a British Diplomat who has a priceless statue of Emperor Kung. It is towards the end that we understand the statue is not worth any thing, but inspite of that, it is still priceless. How? Read on! One-night stand is hilarious so is The Luncheon.

Miriam Mathew says

Dear Jeffrey Archer,

Your long novels suck but your short stories are **amazing**.

Your long novels are boring but your short stories are **interesting**.

I always found the twists in your long novels intolerable but the ones in your short stories, you guessed it, were **witty** and **fantabulous**.

To conclude, please write more short stories. I've already read them all and there's no more anthologies to read. Do not bother writing any more long novels as that will waste time that could be spent on creating short stories of beauty.

Sincerely,

An apologetically honest fan

P.S If you didn't get that I liked your short stories but not your novels, please read through letter again and ruminate deeper.

P.P.S You can write anything that you want. Even long novels. I'm just cranky at how disappointed I am with your novels after reading through the creativity and finesse of your anthologies.

P.P.P.S You are **absolutely brilliant** Mr. Archer. Can I have an authentic autographed anthology of short stories from you, please?

P.P.P.P.S That last story of yours? *Old Love*, I think it was? That was my favourite. So sweet and yet so sorrowful.

Goddess Of Blah says

I wouldn't usually pick anything by Archer – but some (not all) of the stories here were immensely satisfying to read. However, considering I was 17 at the time (when I read them) I'm not sure of my 30 year old mind would appreciate the, now. However, if you want something short and captivating than this is quite a good collection (however, please remember I was a kid when I read it!).

Casey Hampton says

Eleven short stories with a twist at the end to hammer it home. These are fun, and the humor is rather English, so it's pretty damn delightful. As for writing style, it's clipped without lacking, and each story feels like something you might hear told over a whisky in a club with deep leather chairs.

I laughed out loud on more than one occasion. And that's saying something.

I think "Old Love" might have been my favorite.

A good introduction to Jeffrey Archer. I'll be picking more of his work up in the future.

Angelica Watson (psst! amrutha) says

'A Quiver full of Arrows' is a wonderful book to make a beginning to your Jeffrey Archer Shelf. This is the first book, written by him that I have read and I seriously loved it. It's completely worth all the time you spend on it, even if it means ignoring the teacher in class and reading in secret.

All his short stories, begin by making the reader curious and end....well endings are so unexpected that I promise you will never fail to smile.

Each story has a strange twist that makes it different and more unique when compared to the others in the same book. Except one, (he doesn't mention which one) all the tales in his book are based on true life incidents, which make them even more delicious to read.

For those who want make a simple beginning, a small book but with some very memorable anecdotes, its the perfect choice.

:)

Read it yourself and be surprised.

Moirira Fogarty says

Thank goodness Jeffrey Archer got a Baronetcy in 1992. The man has an unhealthy preoccupation with rank, status, and money (as this collection of short stories will attest).

Written in 1980, these are vignettes of a simpler time, before email and cellular phones and Twitter and Facebook cluttered up our lives. When wealth and luxury were marked by Rolls Royces, leather chairs and Cuban cigars rather than hybrid vehicles, recycled furniture and vegan meals.

There's something deeply comforting about an Archer story. They're full of wry surprises and parlour tricks. No shock and awe tactics are ever employed, just a soothing compendium of light surface description and blithe plot. Sex is obliquely referred to as "making love" with a breast here and there, but is terribly perfunctory - Archer never lasts more than a paragraph or two - and there's certainly no talk of emotions. Violence is always offscreen, a distant assassination, no direct hits.

The reader is flown graciously across continents in a show of cosmopolitan worldliness. Over a dozen tidy tales, we are taken on a global tour from China to London, New York to Nigeria. We meet captains of industry, bankers, military commanders, foreign diplomats, Empresses and Presidents. Lord Jeffrey makes sure to introduce you to people from all the right social circles, *dah-ling*.

The writing style is clean, masculine and unapologetic. Archer employs a unique image, usually a simile repeated for emphasis, as a hook that pulls you into each story. It's clever authorial sleight of hand. Look over here, at the woman I've described as the White Queen with cottage loaf hair. Don't worry about the looming punchline. Observe this fleet of black Mercedes that I've likened to a land-bound crocodile. Never mind what those macho Brazilian men are up to.

If you're a fan of Ocean's Eleven, or any story populated by scoundrels, thieves, gamblers and tricksters, Lord Jeffrey will delight you. He'll drop names and make too-casual mentions of fancy brands, institutions and corporations as a personal resume of aristocratic tastes and upper-crust associations, with heavy emphasis on Oxford and Eton.

These stories steer clear of heavy themes and social commentary, focusing rather on cognac and cricket: the male equivalent of chick-lit. In the end, you may not read a great work of literature, but you'll have passed a pleasant few hours on a plane or in a waiting room with a cozy sensation of nostalgia, wit and borrowed glamour.

"Old Love", the last story, was the one I liked best.

Paul says

Rather dull, and evidence that without his political connections, Jeffrey Archer would be about as interesting as a student in a beginners' fiction-writing workshop. Every story features some feeble attempt at irony that makes it seem amateurish, like the yawner about two middle-aged men who bet about which will be first to

bed a beautiful girl, only to find out she'd been taking bets on them. (Oh, SNAP!) Save your money.

Ian U. Foy says

Lazy review: I'm giving this 4 stars because it started with some boring stories but ended so excellently (I found myself smiling alone upon reaching the last page). This is a book that I borrowed from the library and I swear I want to rip off the pages of *The Hungarian Professor* and *Old Love* and keep them in my own collection because I enjoyed those stories so much. I'm still feeling that weird bittersweet feeling as I'm typing this.

Silver Ivy says

A Quiver full of Arrows

I liked all the stories esp 'Old love' (they r each otherz strength n courage) & 'The perfect gentleman' (ppl like Edward r few in the entire world).

They r al very well-written & interesting. What i esp loved was that none had a weird or a very predictabl ending.

And ofcourse i wud recommended it 2 all.

Annie says

I read this during my Geoffrey Archer phase... and the only thing that has stuck with me is the story 'The first miracle'. It's about a very young Pontius Pilate meeting up with Mary and Joseph on their voyage to Bethlehem. Those who know me, know I'm spectacularly religious/Christian - but this story has just stuck with me. It is so heartbreaking in its simplicity and message. It was published as a separate story years ago, as a fundraiser.

Srinivas says

I simply loved this collection of short stories. Favorites being The Century, Broken Routine, The Perfect Gentleman, The Luncheon and The First Miracle.

It's not only the style and rhythm in writing but also the unexpected twists and ends in the stories that make them so compelling to read.

No wonder Jeffery Archer is called the 'Master Storyteller'.

Gill says

I don't usually read short stories but someone gave me this ages ago and I needed something to read while waiting for my dog to be groomed so thought I'd give it a go. I really enjoyed it. The stories were varied and

some better than others - Broken Routine was my favourite but I would recommend it. I am going to try some more short story collections (just ordered Bazaar Of Bad Dreams by Stephen King) and maybe a Jeffrey Archer novel too.

Plum-crazy says

A very mixed bag here! While I particularly enjoyed the ending to "*Broken Routine*", the rest of the tales were just so-so & as to "*The Coup*" & "*The Century*"....well, I just didn't get them!

Kw says

Just love anything by Jeffrey Archer. These are wonderful reading - varied in many ways, but usually have a little surprise or twist at the end.

Natasha Borah Khan says

I loved the book. It is a collection of twelve short fabulous stories. I liked most 'The Coup' and 'Old Love'. Both are like mini novels. I would love both of them as full fledged novels. The author is surely a seasoned short story writer.

Garvit Garg says

the book always surprises you subtly... has substance... sometimes playful... cleverly written... author drives you to something and you know that you are being directed... you want to move cautiously ahead... but alas he is far ahead of you and comprehends your anxiety much before it arises in you...

Shashank K says

Its a wonderful collection of short stories that captures your imagination and makes you ponder over the little nuances! The broken routine an old love were my personal favourites! Must read if you love short stories!

Aparna says

Stars: 3.5 / 5

Recommendation: Eleven short stories that take the readers through various times and places from the author's mind - a quick read leaving one wanting more.

A Quiver Full of Arrows is a collection of eleven short stories by Jeffrey Archer published in 1980. This was

his first attempt at short stories before the rest of them came out. One such of his future books Cat O'Nine Tales I had read and wrote the review here: <http://inspirethoughts.livejournal.co...> and I had loved it. So here I go again reviewing his very first collection of short stories that take the readers from London to China to New York to Nigeria filling them with tales of ancient world mixed with modern romance, making fortunes and betrayals at every bend.

The first story titled "The Chinese Statue" revolves around a statuette from the Ming Dynasty that had now come to auction., although it was originally purchased by one Sir Alexander Heathcote who was serving for Queen Victoria as a Minister in Peking at that time. He had bought this in 1871 from a craftsman in a tiny village named Ha Li Chuan - a statue that was in the craftsman's family for seven generations. The remaining story tells how Alexander happen to acquire it and why it is being now auctioned over 100 years later.

The second story titled "The Luncheon" takes you to an incident in the past when a struggling writer was invited for a lunch with a lady named Susan who was married to a certain Hollywood Producer. The write reminisces on that incident. This story left me feeling really sad for the writer and angry at Susan for being a conniving woman.

The third story titled "The Coup" shows what a tough situation could bring out in a human being. The author uses Senhor Eduardo Francisco de Silveira and Manuel Rodriguez - two rival business magnates from Brazil - who are forced to spend time together during a very rough situation while in Nigeria. Although it started a little slow and lengthy, as the end came nearer it captures the reader well.

The fourth story titled "Old Love" centers on two students - William Hatchard and Phillippa Jameson - of English Literature from Oxford in the 1930s. It follows their lives from the time they have been freshmen. It's heart-wrenching and beautifully written that makes one ponder a lot after.

The fifth story titled "The Perfect Gentleman" is about Edward Shrimpton who is met at a club in New York by a man from England who was there on business. This man who happens to be a publisher tries to find the hidden story behind a particular achievement by Edward during his youth.

The sixth story titled "Broken Routine" follows the routine of one Septimus Horatio Cornwallis who is a habitual person, and what happens when one day his routine is broken. A very humorous plot, if I must say.

The seventh story titled "One-Night Stand" is just about what it says. However, this is more about one woman being vied by two men from London - Michael Thompson and Adrian Townsend. Well, who gets the girl is what you have to read to know. :P

The eighth story titled "Henry's Hiccup" shows what happens when a rich brat named Henry - Grand Pasha of Egypt - who has never managed a single thing by himself is forced to do so when the countries go at war. That single hiccup is the center of this plot which is set in the early 1900s. Although I must say it left me thinking that somehow it was unfinished by the author.

The ninth story titled "A Matter of Principle" is about Sir Hamish Graham after years of being the Chairman of a successful construction company and also as an honest, hardworking, talented and filled with principles is faced with a dilemma when the world turns its thumb down on those principles. It's amusing to see how Sir Hamish makes his way through this changed world.

The tenth story titled "The Hungarian Professor" reflects on a conversation a student athlete had with a particular Hungarian Professor in Budapest when this student was visiting to participate in a student athlete

meet.

In the eleventh and the final titled "The First Miracle", the author goes biblical by sharing with the readers the one incident through the eyes of a young lad named Pontius - an incident that perhaps could be considered the very First Miracle as the title suggests.

As always Jeffrey Archer impresses the readers with his flair of writing in subjects of all kinds - some that do not resemble his other fictional stories went along. All the short stories are quick reads but they leave us thinking long and wanting more.

A perfect companion for any kind of readers, but specially would appeal for those readers who want to finish a book in a short interval of time.

Spoiler Alerts:

- 1) Although Wikipedia mentions a 12th story, the book doesn't have it. Titles The Century it is said to be based on the famous Indian Cricketer Mansoor Ali Khan "Tiger" Pataudi (aka Nawaab of Pataudi). I wonder if a future printing of the book had included this story, but this first edition I had doesn't have this. Even the Author's note and the Contents speak for only eleven stories.
- 2) Of the eleven stories, ten were known incidents with some embellishment from the author per the privacy law and only one was from his imagination.
- 3) The Luncheon - second story in the book - was inspired by W. Somerset Maugham. It was also made into an episode on the 80s British TV Series Tales of the Unexpected. I have to watch this sometime in future.
- 4) Base on the story Old Love - fourth in the book - a play titled Love Song was made in 1987. It was produced by Richard Bennett for Masterpiece Theater. Something I would love to watch if it ever airs on TV or Theater. (Here is a brief intro on it: <http://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/472338...>)
- 5) Grammatical / Historical / Location / Character / Geographical Errors:
 - a. On Pg. 74, author mentions someone names Beatrice, but the entire plot of "Old Love" didn't have a character named Beatrice.
- 6) The story "Broken Routine" reminded me of a scene from the 2006 hit Telugu film Godavari (= Name of an Indian river).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a58SC...>
