



Lord Peter

Dorothy L. Sayers

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Lord Peter Wimsey, eccentric amateur sleuth.

I Lord Peter Views the Body (1928) 12 stories: The ..

1 Abominable History of the Man with Copper Fingers

2 Entertaining Episode of the Article in Question

3 Fascinating Problem of Uncle Meleager's Will

4 Fantastic Horror of the Cat in the Bag

5 Unprincipled Affair of the Practical Joker

6 Undignified Melodrama of the Bone of Contention

7 Vindictive Story of the Footsteps That Ran

8 Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste

9 Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head

10 Piscatorial Farce of the Stolen Stomach

11 Unsolved Puzzle of the Man with No Face"

12 Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba"

II Hangman's Holiday (1933) 4 stories: The ..

1 Image in the Mirror"

2 Incredible Elopement of Lord Peter Wimsey"

3 Queen's Square"

4 Necklace of Pearls"

III In the Teeth of the Evidence (1939)

1 In the Teeth of the Evidence

2 Absolutely Elsewhere"

IV Striding Folly (1972)

1 Striding Folly

2 The Haunted Policeman

3 Talboys

* Sayers, Lord Peter and God by Carolyn Heilbrun

* Greedy Night, A Parody by E. C. Bentley

Lord Peter Details

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Abbey says

***This massive collection of Sayers' complete output of Wimsey short stories is well-worth the investment of money and time. All the stories are strongly plotted and superbly crafted, with many of her usual characters but each has an edge to them and a sharply succinct quality that makes the reading fly along. Includes my all-time favorite Sayers story, "The adventurous exploit of the cave of Ali Baba", and several others are quite stunning, especially the superbly paced "The unsolved puzzle of the man with no face".

The abominable history of the man with copper fingers
— a tale told by a man in a club, after dinner, one of her best
The fantastic horror of the cat in the bag
— sleight of hand, mistaken identities, gory doings
The unprincipled affair of the practical joker
— refined blackmail leads to cheating at cards, and vice versa
The undignified melodrama of the bone of contention
— lovely lost will story, wrapped in village myths and cliches
The vindictive story of the footsteps that ran
— love can certainly be murder
The bibulous business of a matter of taste
— winetasting with a vengeance, a mite "precious", but fun
The piscatorial farce of the stolen stomach
— an odd old man, some diamonds, and a very peculiar bequest
The unsolved puzzle of the man with no face
— splendidly twisted tale of murder for an unusual reason, a zinger at the end
The adventurous exploit of the cave of Ali Baba.
— Wimsey as a "regular guy" burglar, one of the best stories

note: on checking my notes I find there should be 21 stories listed here, and I need to reread several of them and add them to the above list.

Douglas Wilson says

Just fun.

Christy says

I had read the first three Lord Peter novels and fallen in love, not only with the writing and wit (Dorothy Sayers has an incredible vocabulary, rarely seen elsewhere, her Oxford education in languages shows in all sorts of glory) which grew with each new book, but also with the depiction of life and crime-solving in 1920's England, and of course, the goofy and lovably brilliant Lord Peter.

This book was sitting on my daughter's bookshelf, and, having borrowed it I was more than delighted to

realize it included the complete stories in Lord Peter Views the Body- book four in the series (these are the first twelve stories in this edition)....and more. The story Talboys, being recently discovered, written in 1942, appears in this volume in print for the first time, for example.

I am not normally a fan of short stories, and while a few of them I could have skipped, I was surprised by how much I hated to lay this volume down! As I said, I do enjoy the novels quite a bit more, but this little gem is a very worthwhile read, and not just for those who enjoy the series. The names of the stories are incredible in themselves-from The Pictorial Farce of the Stolen Stomach to The Entertaining Episode of the Article in Question and The Undignified Melodrama of the Bone of Contention. Of course, while some stories are far more interesting than others-I particularly enjoyed The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste-I highly recommend this for the die-hard Wimsey fan as well as anyone who loves to read the English language used in such masterful and playful ways.

Jane says

I hadn't read these stories in many years so while they seemed familiar, I really didn't remember all of the "who dunnit" or why they did it details so it was almost like getting a bonus dose of Lord Peter. If you like cosy mysteries from the genre's golden age, then you will enjoy these.

Jacqueline O. says

This is a collection of all the **Lord Peter Whimsey** short stories, including those published in *Lord Peter Views the Body*, and *In the Teeth of Evidence*.

The twenty stories in this collection vary widely, from extremely good to average. However, the novel is a good introduction to the classic crime-solving aristocrat, Lord Peter Whimsey, and it's a great deal of fun to read.

Stories that I particularly enjoyed were:

"The Fascinating Problem of Uncle Meleager's Will" which revolves around a will with a very unusual clause, and spooky legends in an English village.

"The Pictorial Farce of the Stolen Stomach" another unusual will and an even more unusual theft.

"The Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba" in which Lord Peter fakes his death and goes undercover to catch a notorious ring of thieves and robbers.

"The Image in the Mirror" a fascinating story of "Gothic horror" that, in the end, has a perfectly logical explanation anyway. I particularly loved the moody-quality of this story and how Lord Peter figured it out.

"Striding Folly" - a story of nightmares and chess. The dream imagery in this one was wonderful, tho' the actual mystery and its resolution was a bit predictable.

And finally "The Haunted Policeman" and "Talboys" which introduce Lord Peter and Harriet's children.

Lord Peter is a second son, his older brother is the Duke of Denver. As such, he cannot inherit his father's property (his brother did that). However, as an aristocrat - he cannot work for a living. Having returned from service in "the war" (World War I), Lord Peter desperately needs something to keep him occupied, and he soon discovers he's well-equipped to solve crimes. And not simply murders as in most "murder mysteries", but in this collection, many of the stories have to do with stolen objects (such as a priceless pearl necklace) or missing wills. Lord Peter at times seems to be the perfect "upper-class twit" similar to Bertie Wooster -- but he's actually quite clever, he just at times hides his smarts to fit in with what's expected of his class.

Also present in this story is Bunter, Peter's valet, butler and Gentleman's gentleman. Bunter is an expert photographer, and at times seems to be channeling Wodehouse's Jeeves, or to be the ancestor of Bruce Wayne's Alfred. He's competent and level-headed, present to take care of the day-to-day for Lord Peter, as well as providing a needed sounding board.

Other characters from the **Lord Peter** novels make their appearances, including: Parker of Scotland Yard, Harriet Vane (Lord Peter's wife or wife-to-be depending on when in the book series a story takes place), The Duke of Denver (Peter's brother), "Pickled" Gerkins (Peter's nephew and Denver's son), and the Dowager Duchess (Peter & the Duke's mother), among others.

The stories span all of Peter's career -- from young "man-about-town" recently returned from service, to married suburbanite with three young children. Again, despite the skips in time... an excellent introduction to the Lord Peter stories. Recommended.

writer... says

Read *The Unprincipled Practical Joker* for October's Suspense Challenge for my first Dorothy Sayer. Will be reading more for November's "Thanksgiving" titles Challenge.

Letter "A" - Absolutely Elsewhere

Letter "I" - In the Teeth of the Evidence

Letter "N" - Necklace of Pearls , a Christmas read completed for the Christmas Spirit Readathon 2016

Shalulah says

Apologies to Dorothy Sayers, but this was a great bedtime read.

Lydia says

Short stories that get straight to the point. I like it.

Whitney says

[that showed Lord Peter shouting *heil hitler* over the phone and solving the mystery of a dead p

Elizabeth says

I read this for an on-line book group called "Reading Wimsey" over on LiveJournal. I've read a lot of rubbish this summer, and it was such a blissful relief to sink back into Sayers's easy, elegant prose. Sayers's short stories are very different from her novels--she really seizes the opportunity to explore different points-of-view, outrageously improbable situational constructions, her various personal fascinations (wine, printed ephemera, crosswords, etc.). (I bought my copy of this book in 1987 and I appear to have managed to struggle successfully through one entire corner of the crossword. My own marginal annotation of several years later says, "How the bloody hell did I even get this far." ALTHOUGH, I am now able to supply the word "QUAGGA" to Bunter's final query, as my children and I are very familiar with a stuffed example of said animal in the Royal Museum in Edinburgh.)

There are certain tiny details that I just adore about Sayers's writing. The way the "little pool of crimson fire like a miniature sunset," mentioned so casually in a short story in 1928, turns up again nearly ten years later on Harriet Vane's finger in *Busman's Honeymoon*. The way Peter is convinced that the Death Coach can't be real because his horse doesn't shy at it but she DOES shy at Dead Man's Post... it's a given that the supernatural does exist, it just doesn't exist in relation to Burdock. (And what a looooong and rambling story that is. There's a MAP. There's the implication that Peter is in the country as a convalescent. I think she's so good at background!) My favorite story is the last in this collection, "Talboys," which I appreciate so much more now that I have children and houseguests and a career than I did as a happy-go-lucky 22-year-old grad student:

"You may, by taking your husband into your own room and accommodating the two elder boys in his dressing-room, squeeze in an extra person who, like Miss Quirk, has been wished upon you; but it is scarcely possible to run after her all day to see that she is not getting into mischief. This is more particularly the case if you are a novelist by profession, and if, moreover, your idea of a happy holiday is to dispose as completely and briskly as possible of children, book, servants, and visitor, so as to snatch all the available moments for playing the fool with a congenial, but admittedly distracting, husband."

I also find that I am mind-melding Harriet Vane with Anne Morrow Lindbergh in this story, which amuses me, since AML has replaced HV as my role model over the last ten years (most of my role models have been fictional).

Madeline says

Since discovering Lord Peter in college, I've resisted the urge to race through all of his mysteries. There are only eleven, and I prefer to read them slowly, one every year or so, so they can last as long as possible. Knowing that I only have four left makes me sad, but this collection was a nice antidote - with twenty-one stories, it felt like at least three or four novels' worth of mysteries.

Obviously they aren't all great. "The Vindictive Story of the Footsteps That Ran" is sort of a letdown at the

end, and "The Abominable History of the Man With the Copper Fingers", while suspenseful and creepy, has a pretty obvious solution that I saw from a mile away. But most of the stories are delightful - "The Fascinating Problem of Uncle Meleager's Will" rests on the characters having to solve a crossword puzzle, and "The Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head" features Lord Peter solving a mystery with his nephew, and it's just as adorable and charming as it sounds. Also, in case you haven't guessed, all of the mysteries have delightfully old-school melodramatic titles, which I am always a fan of. And my absolute favorite of the bunch was, of course, *Talboys*, which involves the entire Wimsey-Vane family and I want someone to make a TV series where Peter, Harriet, and their sons travel the country and solve mysteries. (granted, this story does feature scenes where the Wimseys are super rude to a female houseguest, but since she's the 1930's equivalent of an anti-vaccer hippie mom, their disdain is earned) Also there's a mystery that opens with the birth of Peter and Harriet's first child, which I will proceed to quote almost in its entirety because that's how well it demonstrates why I love these two:

"Good lord!" said his lordship. 'Did I do that?'

'All evidence points that way,' replied his wife.

'Then I can only say I never knew so convincing a body of evidence produce such an inadequate result.'

The nurse appeared to take this reflection personally. She said in a tone of rebuke:

'He's a *beautiful* boy.'

'H'm,' said Peter. He adjusted his eyeglass more carefully. 'Well, you're the expert witness. Hand him over.' The nurse did so with a dubious air. She was relieved to see that this disconcerting parent handled the child competently; as, in a man who was an experienced uncle, was not, after all, so very surprising. Lord Peter sat down gingerly on the edge of the bed.

'Do you feel it's up to standard?' he inquired with some anxiety. 'Of course, *your* workmanship's always sound - but you never know with these collaborative efforts.'

'I think it'll do,' said Harriet drowsily.

'Good.' He turned abruptly to the nurse. 'All right; we'll keep it. Take it and put it away, and tell 'em to invoice it to me. It's a very interesting addition to you, Harriet; but it would have been a hell of a rotten substitute.'"

The book also features an afterword by John Curran, who outlines Sayers' life, and it's pretty cool - she had a baby out of wedlock and successfully kept it a secret! He also goes through the trajectory of the Lord Peter novels, including the Harriet Vane romance:

"Sayers introduced Harriet Vane in *Strong Poison* (1930) and allowed her and Wimsey to embark on a three-book courtship culminating in marriage in *Busman's Honeymoon* (1937). This is the longest - and, some would argue, the most wearisome and embarrassing - courtship in the annals of detective fiction."

record scratch

Excuse you? No one argues that, Curran. NO ONE. If any detective courtship deserves to be called "embarrassing" and "wearisome," it's Stephen Moffat's take on Sherlock's relationship with Irene Adler (yeah, I went there - fight me, *Sherlock* fangirls). Don't step to me on the subject of Harriet and Peter.

"Detective-fiction purists contend that this type of romantic relationship - between detective and suspect - has no place in a detective story," Curran writes. "Other sleuths have managed to meet, court, marry, and produce children without any of the soul-searching in which Peter and Harriet indulged."

You best get out your dueling pistols and choose a second, Curran, because them's fightin' words.

(I honestly considered taking off a star for the pure dickishness of the afterword, but then I remembered that it's not Sayers' fault.)

Rosemary says

A fat volume of detective stories from the masterful hand of Dorothy L. Sayers. These range from the very slight couple of pages to some that run 20-30 pages. All are constructed with intelligence, some very highbrow indeed. One involves a crossword puzzle with esoteric clues in rhymed couplets, another hinges on a mistake in French grammar. Most are rather more down to earth--a couple can even be anticipated by the reader. All feature the dapper Lord Peter Wimsey, a member of the British aristocracy (often attended by his man Bunter), who never seems to be ruffled by any situation and who always figures out the crime. Harriet Vane, Wimsey's lady love and later wife, appears in a couple of stories. I prefer the novels, but there's a lot of enjoyable reading here. Spread it out a bit so you'll have time to savor each story.

Cyn McDonald says

This one's an old friend, and comfort reading. All the short stories in chronological order. If you haven't met Lord Peter Death Bredon Wimsey before, though, I'd really recommend starting with the first novel, *Whose Body?*

Margaret says

Well, I guess I know what series I'm launching myself headlong into now. Truly - dare I say it - deuced good stuff.

Telyn says

I met Lord Peter Wimsey in the "Abominable Affair of the Copper Fingers." I was, I think, 12, and the story scared me stiff. It was a treat to reread this collection of all of the Wimsey short stories, including "Copper Fingers," which is still intensely creepy. The quality is somewhat uneven but even the lesser stories are wonderfully inventive, and there are several gems here. The collection covers a wide range of themes, ranging from puzzlings wills and apparent supernatural manifestations, to murder, espionage, jewel thieves, and even a damsel in distress. As an extra treat, this collection contains Lord Peter's last documented appearance in "Talboys," which gives the reader a sweetly humorous glimpse at the detective's life after his creator retired him. Fun stuff.
