



## Aunt Dimity and the Duke

*Nancy Atherton*

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## **Aunt Dimity and the Duke** Nancy Atherton

Emma Porter is forty, fat, frumpy, and a passionate amateur gardener. When her longtime lover dumps her for a younger woman, Emma escapes the cloying sympathy of family and friends by setting out on a summer-long driving tour of England's glorious gardens. A Dimity-contrived coincidence brings her to Penford Hall, a sprawling Gothic mansion in Cornwall, where she finds a duke in search of a missing lantern with extraordinary powers. Suspecting there's more than one mystery to be solved at Penford Hall, Emma accepts the duke's invitation to stay on and restore the once glorious chapel garden to its former beauty. The dark rumors surrounding a rock star and the near-death of the duke's beautiful cousin confirm Emma's suspicions, and set her--with Aunt Dimity's ghostly guidance--on the path to Penford Hall's secrets and the pleasure of unexpected love.

## **Aunt Dimity and the Duke Details**

Date : Published (first published 1994)

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Author : Nancy Atherton

Format : Kindle Edition 308 pages

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## From Reader Review Aunt Dimity and the Duke for online ebook

### Barbara ★ says

I liked the first half of this book but then it just got too confusing and started rambling. Aunt Dimity appears once for a short conversation in the prologue and her name comes up once or twice but other than that she's not in this one. And what happened to Lori? She never makes an appearance nor is she mentioned so I'm not sure how this book actually connects to the series. This is more a romance than anything else. I've only read three books in this series but this is my least favorite. I will continue the series but I probably won't read another for a while.

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### Kate says

Oh, 1994, your requirement that I suspend my disbelief to about the height of a high wire was worth it. Atherton's Dimity books are the coziest of cozies, and this one is very pleasant, including castle ruins, gardens, not-so-young lovers, secret passages, and intricate and mostly pointless plot elements. I seem to have read two books in a month where unqualified tourists are drafted to design ancient gardens and have the freedom to postpone all sorts of responsibilities in order to stay in luxury with wealthy homeowners. Why has this never happened in my life?

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### Tammy says

This book tells the back story for series lead, Lori Shepherd's best friends and how they became a couple. Emma Porter is a frumpy, amateur gardener going on a garden tour of England when she meets the twin Pym sisters. The sisters and Aunt Dimity send her to Penford Hall where she finds a mysterious duke and a handsome carpenter.

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### Inara says

Nice and light read about a mystery in the English countryside with a 39 year old spinsterish heroine and likeable characters. A perfect book in between when I don't want to overuse my brain for a while...

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### Almeta says

This is a good solid cozy type mystery that is not syrupy or formulaic. (Well the romance is but not the mystery element.) There is also a paranormal element, but it is so unobtrusive, that I was able to pass its appearance off as mere coincidence.

There are some passages which brought me out of the story because of its dated times . For example: The protagonist remarks to herself that it is odd that household staff would be carrying tetherless telephones,

affordable only by the rich. (The book was written in 1994, the year that digital cordless phones were introduced.)

On reflection it was amusing to consider how advanced our technology has become in just these couple of decades. AND of course, how outdated we will be in just 20 ourselves.

A step above the usual cozy, I thoroughly enjoyed Aunt Dimity and the Duke, the denouement never to have been deduced by any reader.

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### **Cyndi says**

Aunt Dimity works her magic behind the scenes. A 40ish year old American woman embarks on a tour of the gardens in England. But she finds two little old ladies who are twins and finish each others sentences. They are sitting on a bench in the middle of a maze. Sounds like a Stephen King novel, but in this one the twins aren't creepy. Apparently Aunt Dimity sent them to meet our American lass and send her to repair the gardens of a Duke.

More mystery and romance. Lovely story! ???

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### **Cloak88 says**

Somewhat underwhelming cozy-mystery. 2.5 stars

This second novel is a bit of a departure, characters wise from the previous novel. With few familiar characters returning, this felt al a bit out of place. Especially because the title character: the famous 'Aunt Dimity' is almost more implied than an actual character in this novel. With two new protagonist/ love-interests: Emma and Derek this novel felt a stale.

In all there wasn't all that much mystery, and far more half-baked and rather chaste romance. There was little tension and rarely any wonder at the mystery. The biggest negative with this novel however wat that as the story progressed my level of annoyance grew with every outlandish (and implausible) theorize sprouted by the MCs. Non of them made sense and then at the climax, the big reveal.... Things just imploded and left me regretting listening all the way to the end.

In the end this was a rather inoffensive novel, but one I did not enjoy. A mystery should actually be a mystery, not just a series of implausible theories, followed by a lackluster reveal of nothing but empty air.

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### **Sandy says**

The second book in the Aunt Dimity series, however in this book Aunt Dimity seemed to be more of an afterthought than a key figure. If I hadn't read the first book, I'd have no idea who Aunt Dimity was. Even having read the first one, I wasn't sure exactly how she fit into this story. I think I liked the first book better. I'm starting the third one in the series and have found connections to the first book and it's characters, which I like.

This book was a fun quick read, but I felt that sometimes things happened too quickly without adequate

development.

Whoops! I am farther into the third book and now realize that the second book is about some characters from the first book, however the second book actually took place prior to the first book. So if your memory isn't good and you don't read them one right after the other, you could get confused, the way I did.

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### **Denise says**

Another quaint mystery by Nancy Atherton. Aunt Dimity has a way of tying a good yarn up in a nice neat magical bow! I can't believe it took me until the Epilogue to recall who Derek and Emma were. This endeared the series to me even more as I reflected back on the part those characters played in the first novel, which actually takes place after "Aunt Dimity and the Duke". I will definitely continue to read more of the series.

This book made me long for the days when I would sit on the floor in the hall outside my son and daughter's bedrooms while reading "chapter books" to them as a nightly bedtime story! I believe Aunt Dimity would have been a perfect choice for reading!

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### **Debbie says**

Aunt Dimity is a nice light read with a touch of magic stirred in. These books make me smile.

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### **MrsJana13 says**

Es war in Ordnung und leicht zu lesen aber wirklich überzeugend war es nicht. Alles zu weit hergeholt und das mit Emma und Derek ging mir echt viel zu schnell und war nicht gerade realistisch in meinen Augen. Lediglich Nell konnte mich begeistern. Kann man lesen, kann man aber auch lassen.

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### **Lorraine says**

An extremely clever and intricate Aunt Dimity mystery. The cast of characters is big, but they all fit beautifully into the story. Nancy Atherton's Aunt Dimity and the Duke is a well written cozy mystery with a bit of the supernatural.

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### **Rhode says**

2.5 really. I found this book appealing but annoying with annoyance winning in the end. Everybody is so NICE. Everything is so NICE. And then we all sit down to eat scrumptious free food while wearing scrumptious free clothes and chit chat a bit...and then get up and all act nicely again. Even the nasty people are nice.

It's a 4layer cream puff drizzled with chocolate and a hot cup of tea in a scented garden. It is a book for reading when life is grey and you just want some comforting, undemanding, warm niceness around you, even if it's dumb. Sadly I made the mistake of reading it on a warm summers day ...and just felt annoyed instead.

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### **Andree says**

I enjoyed this. I was a bit all over the map today, and I just wanted a nice story. This satisfied.

So, here is the thing with this series, I read it, and I recognize it's issues, but somehow the books manage to work in spite of their issues.

This book is another spectacular case of insta-love, which it tries to justify through "Dimity knows all, and has vague supernatural powers," BUT. BUT. It's one heck of a case of instalove. Also, I am not sure that Nancy Atherton can write children, at least not consistently. There were two, Peter and Nell. I thought Peter was well drawn in the first half, and Nell in the second. But sometimes I was side-eyeing them.

I really enjoyed the gardening motif that ran through this. Also, the Pym sisters, and their unorthodox approach to job interviewing were a joy - we shall just sit here in the centre of a maze of a random garden, and interrogate those fellow-gardeners who manage to find us! I also generally enjoyed the Duke (Grayson) and his household. Also, I am a sucker for a secret passage. And Emma and Derek do work, they do. Even if somehow things feel a bit cliched at times with the set-up. Oh, and Syd turned out to be a joy. He started out as stereotypical American manager, but somehow became wise sage/seriously awesome dispenser of advice.

Anyway, towards the end of this, there were times when I was laughing aloud, which I needed today.

The thing is, you could sit down and pick holes in this, but somehow, someway, like Duke Grayson, it sails through on its charm. It just does. Even though he flaws are apparent, at its core, it's an enjoyable read. This was what I wanted to read today. So there.

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### **Chibineko says**

I have to say that I'm still fairly pleased with the Aunt Dimity series so far, even though the series as a whole fairly surprises me so far. Granted I'm only two books in, but Atherton has broken quite a bit of the regular norms of mystery writing as a whole.

First off, there is no whodunit mystery here. Not really. Just like the first book, this is ultimately about people discovering themselves and each other. It's these interactions that make the discoveries and daily actions so much sweeter. The mysteries are just sort of a little side bonus and aren't really that much of a driving focus of the work.

Secondly, Atherton breaks another rule by swapping out the characters almost entirely. Dimity plays a very small role, as do the fabulous Pym sisters, but other than that the cast here is entirely new. There's the potential for them to come back in a further book, but ultimately we have a new set to focus on. They're actually quite a nice set of characters. I liked Emma well enough, but much like the first book the side

characters are the ones that really steal the show.

The other thing I noticed was that you didn't have to have read the previous book to enjoy this one. You'll be a little lost if you aren't aware that Dimity is a ghost, but since she's such a minor character here you won't be too left out. Of course another thing I noticed was that despite this having been written in the 90s, this book aged fairly well overall.

Overall I think I'm going to like this series. They're not your typical mysteries, but that's OK. Sometimes it's good to have something that is outside the norm. I still think that people who predominantly or only read the more hard-core mysteries might find this a little too fluffy for their reading purposes, but for the most part most readers will enjoy this.

EDIT:

I realized belatedly that this book actually goes back into the past of Emma and Derek, who were very much in the first book. I just saw them as different characters since it was set so long before the events of book one and because I suppose this shows that Atherton can take characters you're already familiar with and make them seem like new people in their own right.

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