



The Mammoth Book of Egyptian Whodunnits

Mike Ashley (Editor) , Elizabeth Peters , Lynda S. Robinson (Contribution by) , Lauren Haney (Contribution by)

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From Cleopatra and Herodotus to Howard Carter and the Curse of the Pharaohs, the investigators in The Mammoth Book of Egyptian Whodunnits uncover the murder mysteries of Ancient Egypt in over two dozen stories. Master anthologist Mike Ashley has gathered hidden gems and specially commissioned pieces from the genre's favorite practitioners like Elizabeth Peters, Suzanne Franke, Michael Pearce, and featuring such favorite ancient-world investigators as Lynda Robinson's Lord Meren, "the Eyes and Ears" of Nefertiti and Tutankhamun, Paul Doherty's judge Amerotke from the 18th Dynasty, and Lauren Haney's Lieutenant Bak of the Medjay police under Queen Hatshepsut, to beguile and confound historical mystery readers.

The Mammoth Book of Egyptian Whodunnits Details

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Author : Mike Ashley (Editor) , Elizabeth Peters , Lynda S. Robinson (Contribution by) , Lauren Haney (Contribution by)

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From Reader Review The Mammoth Book of Egyptian Whodunnits for online ebook

Steve Wales says

A collection of crime stories set in Egypt arranged chronically across the thousands of years of Ancient Egyptian civilisation to the last few archaeology/Egyptology-based stories set in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Margaret says

I always find it difficult to review books that are a compilation of short stories by various authors. Some of the stories were better than others. Some really dragged. Overall, I was disappointed. Several of the stories ended abruptly with only speculation about the solution to the mystery. I also didn't care for how most of the stories centered around the Pharaoh of the time period and his (or her!) court. It seemed to limit the scope of storyline, who the suspects could be and usually involved way too much politics for a short stories. (I had to stop several times and look up various time periods to refresh my memory on some of the events being referred to.) Since I adore Agatha Christie's Egyptian mysteries, I was expecting more than the book delivered.

My absolute favorite story was "No-Name" by R. H. Stewart, especially after reading the historical explanation at the end. I think you need to be a real lover of Egyptian history, as well as mysteries, to enjoy these stories.

Rev. M. M. Walters says

The word anthology comes to us from the Greek. It means a collection of writings, originally poetry and is formed from a Greek root meaning "to pick (flowers)". This word is especially appropriate since gathering flowers could be something of a hit or miss task. For every perfect rose, there are one or two dandelions which could be discarded. And so it is with literary anthologies; they are no composed of works equal in majesty. I guess that is to be expected since the Egyptian mystery story is a genre that does not suffer from overpopulation. With a smaller corpus to choose from, the editor has to be discerning enough to pick the best while at the same time choosing enough to make the book worthwhile, especially if it is given a title like "the mammoth book...". Mike Ashley, the editor of other collections in the Mammoth Book series, does a good job in compiling this anthology. He manages to include the most popular Egyptian mysteries (even if the characters are more used to appearing in novels) while introducing us to authors who are breaking away from their usual occupations, periods or genres.

However, there are some problems here. The most annoying for me was an inconsistency in spelling - perhaps this is not unusual in dealing with different authors writing stories in which English would not be the foundation. Most readers would have only a limited (if not superficial) knowledge of Egyptian culture, so variants in spelling the names of gods or institutions would not help the reader to create a comprehensive picture of the times. A glossary would also have been helpful since some of the authors presume a knowledge greater than that possessed by the reader. Just sorting out the names of the Egyptian gods and their responsibilities would have been helpful. Granted a short-story format does not lend itself to great

explanations, this collection would have profited from a "who's who" at the very least.

I think anthologies are helpful in assisting a reader to determine what he would read next. In that it introduces one to a number of characters who appear in multiple stories or novels, this book serves its purpose very well.

Sarah says

Short stories that are diverse in their style. I like the fact that they're based on historical information, but some are a little hard to get used to.

Sandy says

some of the stories were good, but some of them I didn't enjoy at all, hence the meagre three stars.

HBalikov says

Hard to judge because I know so little about Egyptian history. The stories follow in chronological order through the various dynasties. The "detective" may be a priest, a commoner or a member of the royal household. Some of the later entries cover the archeological digs. Though a mish-mash of styles, most are sufficiently entertaining and, like other historical fiction, educational as well.

Kathy says

If you like to read mysteries set in Ancient Egypt then this book is for you. This anthology includes stories by several of my favorite authors, such as Elizabeth Peters and Lynda S. Robinson, as well as others I am less familiar with. The stories are arranged chronologically starting with the early dynasties, and are proceeded by a brief introduction by the editor to set the stage for us. One of the fun things about reading short stories is that you can read one or two at a time, perfect for bed time reading when you want to know who dunnit without having to wade through an entire novel.

Heather says

This was a particularly uneven anthology. A lot of the stories were dreadful (inaccurate and badly written), but enough of them were really really good that I still thoroughly enjoyed the book.

Kris says

I enjoyed all of the stories in this volume which is rather unusual. A couple were a bit cryptic and the endings left me scratching my head but for the most part they were all well written with interesting and intriguing characters.

Serena says

3.6 stars

Set in Stone by Deirdre Counihan ****

Serpent at the Feast by Claire Griffen ****

the Sorrow of Senusert the Mighty by Keith Taylor *****

the Execration by Noreen Doyle ***

No-name by R.H. Stewart ****

Amerotke] or You Can Drink the Wine...? by Paul C. Doherty ****

Murder in the Land of Wawat by Lauren Haney ***

the Locked Tomb Mystery by Elizabeth Peters ***

Heretic's Dagger by Lynda S. Robinson ***

Scorpion's Kiss by Anton Gill ***

Claws of the Wind by Suzanne Frank ***

the Weighing of the Heart by F. Gwynplaine MacIntyre ****

Chosen of the Nile by Mary Reed ****

the Justice of Isis by Gillian Bradshaw ****

the Wings of Isis by Marilyn Todd ***

Bringing the Foot by Kate Ellis ****

Unrolling the Dead by Ian Morson ****

Heart Scarab by Gillian Linscott ****

Made in Egypt by Michael Pearce ***

My Rating System:

* couldn't finish, ** wouldn't recommend, *** would recommend, **** would read again, ***** have read again.

Darth says

I had read all the Amerotke and Lord Meren books - and this had shorts featuring both - so this was a must read for me.

I expected to enjoy the target stories, but I was surprised how many of the others I really liked - there weren't but 3 or 4 stories that I did not like, so that is definitely a win.

If you like old Egypt, read this book!

S.L. Stevens says

My husband purchased this book for me because I love ancient Egypt and mysteries. I spent the next several weeks with this book close at hand. The 19 crime stories in this anthology span over 4000 years. Most of them take place in ancient times but a few are set in the 19th and 20th centuries. The authors range from unknowns to big names in historical and mystery fiction, including the late grande dame of Egyptological mysteries, Elizabeth Peters. The stories vary in quality, though even the lesser ones warrant a solid three stars. This anthology immediately became one of my most prized books. I will definitely read it again. Sadly it is out of print, but you should get ahold of a copy if you can.

PurplyCookie says

From Cleopatra and Herodotus to Howard Carter and the Curse of the Pharaohs, the investigators in "**The Mammoth Book of Egyptian Whodunnits**" uncover the murder mysteries of Ancient Egypt.

This anthology covers two periods in history - the time of Ancient Egypt which stretches from the First Dynasty in 4000 B.C. to the time of the Roman Empire, and the time of the Discoveries, which covers the Napoleonic and Victorian periods of excavation.

The 19 short stories included are the following:

"Introduction by Elizabeth Peters >> An author's journey to her current career and a brief explanation of the reason why Ancient Egypt is such an inspiration to writers of sensational fiction.

"Set in Stone" by Deirdre Counihan >> Taking real life figures from the time of Imhotep, the vizier of the Third Dynasty king, Counihan takes us back to the current royal investigation of a death occurring during the vizier's youth.

"Serpent at the Feast" by Claire Griffen >> Metjen-hotep, the Chief Architect of the second pyramid which now stands in Giza, was murdered. Baki, the Pharaoh's Chief Physician, seeks the murderer. Is it the Chief Architect's adopted son, or the man who serves as his scribe, or his newest wife?

"The Sorrow of Senusert the Mighty" by Keith Taylor >> Egypt's Middle Kingdom's most powerful ruler, Senusert III's life has attempted at for several times. Wine sought to poison him has failed, but will the murderer succeed with a trained man-eater of a lion?

"The Execration" by Noreen Doyle >> A "lector" priest's ceremony of execration gone horribly wrong, at the expense of an innocent life.

"No-name" by R.H. Stewart >> When Queen Hatshepsut's mortuary temple was excavated, the coffin of an unidentified male was revealed. Who was he and what was his importance to Egypt's ruling family?

"Or You Can Drink the Wine...?" by Paul C. Doherty >> A former tutor of the Queen of Egypt has ingested poison, making it appear obvious that she has committed suicide. However, Amerotke, the Chief Judge in the Hall of Two Truths in Thebes of a Hundred Gates, has his own investigation to perform. I always thought that there must be a better title suited for this short story, other than what appeared as

published.

"Murder in the Land of Wawat" by Lauren Haney >> A native of Nubia (then called Wawat) was found murdered. Lieutenant Bak, officer in charge of the Medjay police seeks the truth.

"The Locked Tomb Mystery" by Elizabeth Peters >> The undoing of a man in the hands of the two most powerful females in his life.

"Heretic's Dagger" by Lynda S. Robinson >> Court intrigue and power struggles in the time of the reign of one of the most easily recognizable pharaohs of Egypt, Tutankhamun.

"Scorpion's Kiss" by Anton Gill >> An investigator trusted by Pharaoh above all others (much to the chagrin of his former protege) is asked to know the truth behind the murder of the Chief Interrogator.

"Claws of the Wind" by Suzanne Frank >> The First Prophet of Anubis seeks to find out the truth in a murder case presented before her. The priestess would have to choose between her duty and that what is right.

"The Weighing of the Heart" by F. Gwynplaine MacIntyre >> The Egyptians believed that during a person's death, Anubis would weigh that person's heart against Ma'at, the goddess-feather of Truth. But is such a thing possible when one's ancestor has committed murder to regain riches?

"Chosen of the Nile" by Mary Reed & Eric Mayer >> Herodotus, considered as the father of history, travels to Egypt to observe the customs owing to the worship of the crocodile god of the Nile.

"The Justice of Isis" by Gillian Bradshaw >> A Gabinian soldier has been accused of defiling the altar of Isis but he claims innocence of the crime.

"The Wings of Isis" by Marilyn Todd >> No Egyptian anthology would be complete without including Pharaoh Cleopatra VII. This one follows the ceremony of her ascent as the goddess Isis.

"Bringing the Foot" by Kate Ellis >> A reminiscing of the adventures of one of the early Egyptologists during the Napoleonic era.

"Unrolling the Dead" by Ian Morson >> A murder case which parallels the translation of a papyrus against the actual events at the time of Pharaoh Merykare. I personally hated the dialogue of the "future" time.

"Heart Scarab" by Gillian Linscott >> An examination of the relationship between a renowned Egyptologist and his son who loathes anything to do with Egypt.

"Made in Egypt" by Michael Pearce >> A terrible ending of a story to an otherwise great anthology. This one tries to explore the robbery of the Mask of Thutmose.

There are not centuries but millenia of possible settings and the editor has done a good job of selecting a spread of times and places as well as authors.

Book Details:

Title The Mammoth Book of Egyptian Whodunnits

Author Edited by Mike Ashley

Reviewed By Purplycookie
