



Death of a Hussy

M.C. Beaton

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"Splendid fun." The New York Times Book Review

A Hamish Macbeth mystery.

Wealthy Maggie Baird is neither nice nor kind nor generous. Once she was beautiful, but now, although middle-aged, she retains the appetites of a beautiful woman. When Maggie's car catches fire with her inside it, suspicion focuses on the five houseguests staying at Maggie's luxurious Highlands cottage: her timid niece and four former lovers, once of whom Maggie had intended to pick for a husband. All five are impecunious. All five had ample opportunity to monkey with Maggie's car. So finding who did it requires all Police Constable Hamish Macbeth's extraordinary common sense and insight into human nature. And lazy lout though he may be, Hamish lets no grass grow under his feet when it comes to solving a murder. Especially when he may be the next target.

Death of a Hussy Details

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Author : M.C. Beaton

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From Reader Review Death of a Hussy for online ebook

Julie Durnell says

A short book thankfully as this Hamish adventure did not thrill me as much as the previous mysteries, but it was good to keep up with his storyline nonetheless; and I certainly still look forward to reading #6!

Selah Pike says

I missed this one because my library didn't have it last year, but they've added it - yay! A pretty standard Hamish Macbeth mystery, but, as always, Shaun Grindell's narration was superb! I figured out the identity of the murderer based on a supposedly "throw away" comment (I've read enough of these to know Beaton's M. O.).

Marcia says

Things are changing in the village of Lochdubh, and our happily and contentedly unambitious Macbeth is right in the middle of things. This fifth installment in the series had a bit of a different feel to it...perhaps because of the changes sure to be addressed in book six and onward.

Greg says

I read a few chapters of Neal Stephenson's "Cryptonomicon" late at night on April 1st, and woke up the next morning having no idea what Stephenson was writing about. So, I read "Death of a Hussy" yesterday morning to clear my mind. "Hussy" is a by-the-numbers cozy, it felt like lazy writing to me, and didn't really feel at all like the first four in this series. I did like the set-up at the end, in which Hamish suggests that a massive estate (owned by Priscilla's family) be turned into a resort for the rich, and I'll definitely read more of these, as Beaton's light humor and settings are refreshing. Now, back to Stephenson.

Gypsi says

A quick, light read, not particularly satisfying or memorable, but fun. In a way, I wonder why I continue this series, but on the other hand, Hamish is so likable.

The Flooze says

Hamish is pushed more to the sidelines in this one - which might be why reviewers seem to harbour mixed

feelings towards it.

Much of the story is from the perspective of a drab, repressed woman whose thoughts waver between spite and helplessness. As such, it's a bit difficult to get fully invested in her fate. In other books, I've enjoyed learning more about the characters. In this, I found myself wishing we'd come back to Hamish.

Overall though, it's a quick read with some interesting developments for Lochdubh. The final chapter heralds a big change for the village - and will probably mean more murders for our clever village bobby.

Karen says

This book is not my favorite of the series. Beaton does create a couple of very interesting characters for this story, but I miss the humor evident in some of the other books in the series.

RebeccaS says

Another fun Hamish mystery with lots of sassy characters. My favorite thing about this series is the setting and characters. They are all unique and stubborn and extremely quirky. This one I was very surprised by the identity and reasoning for the murders and it was a pretty quick story.

Renee says

This, on the other hand, was delightful. And, once again, I read it in a day. I might even admit that I went to bed at 7 last night just so I could spend more time reading it. Sometimes I feel like Hamish's tales are helping restore my faith in the world.

AngryGreyCat says

Death of a Hussy follows a young cancer survivor taken in by her not so benevolent aunt, the so-called Hussy of the title. The aunt is older now but had quite a colorful past which she intends to tell the world about in a no hold barred memoir. Hamish must sort through all the suspects and try to find a motive for the murder while fending off the unwanted attentions of the lonely, somewhat desperate Alison. I found Hamish to be somewhat more standoffish in this book than I remembered him from earlier reads, but I enjoyed this quick cozy mystery.

Charlotte (Buried in Books) says

Another very quick and easy read. Hamish returns to the village after the villagers stage a crime spree to get him back.

This is another story which centres on someone coming into the village who ultimately ends up dead. In this case it's a wealthy woman with a steamy past who undergoes a makeover and then invites 4 past lovers to stay stating that she will marry one of them. Also living with her is her niece - a timid girl.

It's harmless enough stuff.

Badseedgirl says

In this episode Hammish's station is closed, then opened again, he solves the murder of an old whore and an old rock star, and he pulls Colonel Halburton-Smythes but out of the fire, and the endless pining for Patricia continues.

Bookworm with Kids . says

Another light and cozy mystery from Hamish Macbeth. He was not particularly nice in this book as he has been in the past yet I enjoyed the read (!) a lot.

Gail says

Another delightful book featuring the lazy, curious, unambitious Scottish copper, Hamish Macbeth. An Englishwoman living in the Highlands brings her mousy, weak, ill niece to live with her. Alison, the niece, is delighted to have her aunt take care of her and then the paradise she hoped for becomes a torment because her aunt never loses a chance to make a cutting remark, humiliate her, or put Alison down. The aunt, Maggie Baird, used to be beautiful, fun, and someone who could entice men to pay her money and buy her things in exchange for her favors.

After undergoing a physical transformation back to her sexy, slim self, Maggie invites for men to her cottage for the weekend. She boldly tells them that whoever woos her and proposes marriage, will be a rich man (cutting Alison out completely).

Then her car explodes and catches fire with Maggie Baird inside. Hamish, curious as ever, asks questions and seeks information in another intriguing mystery. Light and fun.

Evelyn Bryant says

I really like the whole series of Hamish MacBeth books by M C Beaton. I find them a lot more entertaining than the Agatha Raisin books which I can't seem to get into. I even found the videos of the series but was slightly disappointed that they had (or course) drifted away from the book and some of the key characters, but it was entertaining. I hope the author has not given up writing about Hamish. I like how he goes about making sure he is not promoted since he is content with his lot in life where he is. We could all stand to be a little more content with our lives as they are instead of always trying for something more, something else, something different.

Kathie says

This classic Hamish McBeth murder mystery did not disappoint. So much better than the last one. And yes - I pegged the murderer right away ;)

The Hobbit says

Maggie Baird is fat, bossy, and rich. Hamish Macbeth does not like her or the way she treats her niece Allison. Maggie goes away, returning months later as an altered person - slim, blond, and sexy, just like she used to be years before. She invites four of her former flames to her Lochdubh bungalow, announcing she wants to marry again and make one of them very rich. She also reveals she has a weak heart and may not have much more time to live. Then Maggie Baird dies when her car goes up in flames - she could have escaped, but the autopsy reports reveals she died of a heart attack. Policeman Hamish Macbeth discovers the car was hot wired to explode into flame. Murder!

Unfortunately, except for Hamish, none of the other characters is likable.

Luffy says

My love affair with M.C. Beaton - only figuratively speaking, that goes without saying - is most likely over. I've been reading her two big series side by side. Well, now I've decided to ditch the Agatha Raisin series. I've been as prompt in the past. I've almost always abandoned a well liked series due to a one star rating. It was the case with the Inspector Rebus series and also that of Inspector Rutledge series, and the Gabriel Allon one. I think I persevered only with Joanne Fluke's Hannah Swensen series where I've rated 7 of her books one star.

Despite the 3 star rating for Death of A Hussy, I have contained in my mind, only the negatives from the book which weighed on me. Stuff that faded as the story progressed. I'll enumerate them. Firstly, Hamish Macbeth's searing - or is that 'seering'? - ability to guess when he's being lied to. How easy would it be to solve any case with such a knack. The book does well to gloss over the times Hamish is being lied to by the murderer. So this ability comes and goes, unless one dredges up arguments that do and can sound plausible. This is where I differ from any possible fans of the books. I judge the books on their effect on my brain and the level of hedonistic impact on me as a reader.

I must also say that Hamish's hateful relationship with Blair now has a touch of the farcical in it. It's an abusive relationship, of the likes people like Hamish would recognize and clear off it soon. But I was irked by the revisionism and the fact that Hamish pined for Blair's return. That was totally uncalled for.

Then there's the most important character of the book to talk about...Alison Kerr. She's the one I wanted murdered, yet when push came to shove, I wanted her to escape death. This is what I'd call a well written character. It would have blown my mind if she'd died. Hamish finds it loathsome to be the object of Alison's lust (and also escapes the brief advances of that lady cop, Mary Graham). I have a minor gripe with Hamish's orientation in his love life. His ghostly romance with Priscilla should lead to nowhere. Since that possibility imploded, Hamish has met one or two suitors, and I hope not too many pages are dedicated to his shambolic

and illogical love life. I need the author to focus on the murder investigations. Police cases, when stripped of their trappings, are simply triggers for adventure. As long as the pustular aspects of the Hamishverse are kept at bay I'm happy. Else, he goes the same way as Agatha Raisin.

JulieLaLa says

It's amazing that these short, little mysteries evoke so much: the setting (Scotland), the people, the mysteries AND be able to create important character development (Hamish Macbeth, especially). This is the fifth in the series and my interest continues! Onward to number six!

Kelsey Hanson says

MC Beaton must love the name Peter. I swear that every novel has had a person named Peter in it. Apart from that, it was decent mystery. It had a variety of interesting characters and the mystery itself was pretty good. I also enjoyed the fact that there is continuing storylines going on in the background.
