



Miss Pym Disposes

Josephine Tey

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To Lucy Pym, author of a best-seller on Psychology, the atmosphere at the college where she is lecturing is heavy with tension. Beneath the so normal surface run sinister undercurrents of rivalry and jealousy. Then comes tragedy. An accident? Or is it murder? Respectable, law-abiding Miss Pym discovers some vital evidence - but should she reveal it?

Miss Pym Disposes Details

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From Reader Review Miss Pym Disposes for online ebook

Tijana says

Ludo zabavna knjiga. Nominalno, ovo je krimi?, ali zlo?in se desi tek negde na tri ?etvrtine knjige i odmah je jasno (?itaocima, ne pripoveda?ici) ko je po?inilac - ali ne zbog nekakvih gusto posejanih nagoveštaja nego zbog motivacije likova koja je vrlo bri?ljivo razra?ena u prethodne tri ?etvrtine teksta.

U me?uvremenu mo?emo da u?ivamo u:

- a) retko zabavnoj junakinji - g?ica Pim je usedelica koja je bukvalno slu?ajno napisala bestseler iz oblasti popularne psihologije, retko duhovita (?esto na svoj ra?un), oštrog oka za detalje, ali mnogo fleksibilnija i tolerantnija nego npr. g?ica Marpl, i, avaj, manje autoritativna,
- b) ambijentu - engleski ?enski internat u me?uratnom periodu (neka kombinacija DIF-a i Više medicinske), sa živo prikazanim u?enicama i nastavnicama, blago nezdravom atmosferom neprekidnog takmi?enja i krajnjeg telesnog i umnog naprezanja,
- c) vrlo realisti?nom adolescentskom beskrajnom lo?enju na pojedine nastavnice i/ili drugarice - ovde striktno platonsko ali svejedno *beskrajno* lo?enje sa (naravno. roman je ipak iz 1946. godine) stravi?nim posledicama,
- d) engleštini koja varira od onog simpati?nog ponošenja doma?om kuhinjom (doma?om. kuhinjom. doma?om ENGLESKOM kuhinjom. To vam je pravi patriotizam.) do ni?im izazvanih "a sad pola strane predrasuda o lenjim Velšanima" momenata.

Sve u svemu, preporuka za kišni dan uz šolju... ne mora ?aja, mo?e i tople ?okolade... i obavezno neki keks.

PS Muških likova ima nešto malo (2,5) i *totalno* su nebitni.

Morgan Gallagher says

If this had been the first book I'd ever read, by Josephine Tey, I'd never had read another one. The reader should be aware this is not representative of her usual work.

It was, in terms of language, well written, although missing some of Tey's usually faultless description. The characters were very well drawn, one of Tey's greatest strengths. However the narrative... oh, the narrative! Editors failed Tey in allowing this one to pass. For a whodunnit it takes FOREVER to get to the crime. And I mean, forever. We're well over two thirds of the way through the book before 'it' happens, and as 'it' has been signalled since chapter one... oh how boring the wait gets. You're tempted to put the book down and walk away because it's all so obvious, and yet at the same time, you never get there.

The structure of the book is completely out of whack. Ploughing through more and more description of the people and doings of a physical training college wanes as you lose hope that you're ever going to get anywhere. And then when you do get there, it's tired and worn and Not Very Interesting. The denouement (such as it is) leaves a sour taste in the mouth. Very disappointing read

One can't help wondering if it would have been better written as a play. It certainly fails as a novel. Sorry Miss Tey: Could Do Better.

Jemidar says

This is not so much a murder mystery than a 'psychological' study of the inhabitants of a women's Phys. Ed. college in post war Britain by Miss Pym, a visiting author of a successful pop psychology book. Having said that, there is a crime committed but it comes very late in the book and the main concern seems to be not in the solving of the crime (although it is solved) but with the moral issues surrounding it.

Tey herself attended a PE college and taught it before becoming a writer so it is familiar territory for her which shows in the minutely detailed setting. The prose style and characterisations are excellent but the narrative moves at snails pace. This is definitely not a page turner, although there is a nice twist at the very end which did surprise me.

The writing itself probably deserves more than the three stars I've allotted it but I found the detail of the lives of these young women and teachers excessive to the point of being, at times, boring and the leisurely pace of the novel frustrating. As much as I'd like to, I really can't justify giving it more.

Buddy read with Kim :-).

Suzanne says

Josephine Tey is not as well known today as others from the Golden Age of mysteries, which is a shame.

This is not one of her best works, but none of her works is less than "good." I won't repeat the plot; others have done that. I would not compare this work with "Gaudy Night." Other than the fact that it takes place in a school, there is no comparison, and even the school setting is not the same. What it does compare with, very strongly, is Agatha Christie's "Cat Among the Pigeons," which was published some 13 years later. And in that comparison, Tey comes out ahead. Her strength as an author is her ability to draw fully-rounded characters and to provide an insight into their personalities and psychology. The motive for murder in her works is never as simple as money or sex, and this work is no exception. Even if it were not necessary to spend the first two-thirds of the book developing the characters and their relationships in order to provide an adequate motive for the murder, the exploration of those characters and relationships would be worth the time, as would the introduction we get to another place and time. As someone else said, those who finish the book know pretty much all there is to know about the world of physical training in 1946.

Tey's weakness, and one of the reasons she is not as well known, is that she is locked into her time. Her understanding and presentation of psychology, which is a foundation of the work, is quite dated. The resolution relies on certain psychological "principles" which are simply not accepted today.

On the other hand, those who are looking to completely immerse themselves in the world of Britain in the 1940s, and are willing and able to suspend their modern sensibilities, will be able to do that without any problems.

Leslie says

Witty, sharp, and very well-written. Tey is less interested in writing a mystery novel than in using the conventions of the mystery novel to examine time, place, and character. And to throw out a few questions. How much do we really know about other people? Is it possible to read character on the face and in the body? And where are we to find first causes? The attempt to assign responsibility and to understand the causation of human behaviour is fruitless; in this story, Miss Pym is able to trace back the cause of what happens to at least six different people, including herself. That complexity makes the very idea of justice a frightening illusion.

tom bomp says

I've gone back and forth on my thoughts of this a lot. First, it's not a traditional mystery - the thing doesn't happen for ages and there's very little detecting. There's a few instances of nasty casual racism just randomly dropped in. The "main" story is... weird.

I liked the writing and characterisation a lot - they're very good for a genre novel. I liked that the characters were almost all women. I found the description of life in a physical education college surprisingly interesting. I felt pretty caught up in it all. And then the book just sort of comes to a halt without a good wrap-up - things are *explained* but it just feels cut short with a lot happening even in the last few pages. Massive ending spoilers and all book discussion (view spoiler) There are also a few random male characters introduced in the 2nd half that have no relevance to anything or anyone and just weirdly clutter things? Found this v confusing.

I liked it a lot up to the ending and then it was just... blurgh. Like yeah obviously you can write novels where justice isn't served but I don't actually like that in genre novels and it felt badly handled and frustrating as heck.

Rachel Hall says

Having seen Josephine Tey recommended as one of the generation of golden age crime writers that often goes underread and is not given the credit she deserves, I was keen to read some of her work after several enjoyable experiences with Agatha Christie. *Miss Pym Disposes* is my starting point and is not strictly a crime novel in the traditional sense, with the fateful incident that comes to define it part accident and not occurring until eighty percent of the way through the novel, although the build up offers plenty of hints as to what to expect. Written in 1946, I did notice rather more dated references in contrast to some of Agatha Christie's 1930 novels but I was surprised how relevant some of the issues raised still remain.

The story begins when a legacy leaves French teacher, Miss Lucy Pym, in a comfortable position to become a lady of leisure and sees her set her mind to writing a treatise of psychology, which becomes an unexpected bestseller. Prized as a guest speaker, when she is invited to lecture by a sixth-former who once saved her blushes as a timid fourth-form student and is now the principal of a college of physical training she is happy to repay the kindness. Not that Miss Pym feels she has much to offer the students of Leys Physical Training College, a community that rouses at 5:30 a.m. and moves seamlessly through a series of exhaustive physical pursuits and works the Seniors into a heightened state of anxiety in the week of Final Examinations and the

Demonstration. Housed in the student block and eagerly welcomed as a refreshingly interesting, modern and entertaining guest speaker, the Seniors are buoyed by Miss Pym's presence and implore her to stay until the day of the Demonstration. Accepted amongst their number and is no shortage of demand, Miss Pym finds it rather pleasant to be a novelty and wanted item, in contrast to her relatively lonely London existence. As she moves between the staff room and student numbers, Lucy observes all of the Seniors at close quarters and becomes almost as invested in their hopes for the examinations and future employment postings as any of the staff.

Head Senior, Pamela ("Beau") Nash is a wealthy girl with grace and good fortune, best friend Mary Innes a self-contained, intelligent and somewhat aloof individual and fanciful Teresa Desterro (The Nut Tart) a fiery Brazilian dance student. Tey devotes much of the early proportion of the novel to fleshing out the entire group in detail offering plenty of pithy amusement and drawing self-deprecating comparisons from Miss Pym. However as Miss Pym unobtrusively goes about her day she is well positioned to observe the claustrophobic environment which causes her to wonder if it is quite as sound for the mind as it is for the body. Principal Henrietta Hodge tells Lucy that, "when a human being works as hard as these girls do, it has neither the spare interest to devise a crime nor the energy to undertake it". However Miss Pym, a keen interpreter of facial expressions, recognises the tired and emotional state where the potential for a careless comment to become a grievance nursed looms large. She herself comes to subscribe to the view of Miss Lux, "Sweating oneself into a coma may stultify the reason, but it doesn't destroy the emotions."

With principal Miss Hodge in charge of directing job postings repercussions are set in motion when an unpopular girl and undoubtedly not the most suitable candidate is selected for a prestigious vacancy at Arlinghurst, the female equivalent of Eton, much to the chagrin of students and staff alike. Lucy Pym is a compassionate and sensitive character, able to sympathise with the girls and offer them an adult sounding board outside of the teaching staff. As she finds herself caught up in examination week and this revelation that shoo-in candidate Mary Innes has been passed over, Lucy has seen enough to know where her sympathies lie. The ensuing moral questions leave law abiding Miss Pym in a position to offer up her own knowledge and potentially incriminate a young girl who meant no permanent harm or keep her counsel and let God dispose. The mental gymnastics are fraught with difficulty and despite the world of academia having changed, basic human emotions such as rivalry and jealousy ensure that this novel is still pertinent. I did detect several hints towards what could be interpreted as lesbianism within the novel but these are never explored and I did have lingering questions as to whether this was a factor in Miss Hodge's decision.

Readily absorbing, the reader is able to see from the off where the story is heading but this does nothing to spoil a gloriously entertaining read and within the space of 250 pages Josephine Tey manages to bring an English country summer to life, provide a distinct cast of students and teachers and infuse a growing sense of angst into events. The moral questions and one final twist make for a breathtakingly good finish. Not obviously as comfortable or seductive reading as the Agatha Christie that I have read, I am glad that I persevered through the early usage of dated references, as there is a witty, increasingly gripping and thought-provoking read waiting to be discovered.

Emilia Barnes says

As with the other non-detective Teys, this isn't really a classic mystery. That's to say, there isn't a murder in the first chapter, that is then solved. Rather, the incident that is the climax of the story happens quite late into the book, and its solution proceeds quite quickly afterwards. The psychological portraits are drawn beforehand, and they are what is interesting about this novel. They are also fairly uneventful, and if

psychological portraits aren't your thing, you'll be bored. I like Tey's writing, she's witty and clear and I wasn't bored reading her. But there is an unbelievable amount of casual and unnecessary racism here, which makes for uncomfortable reading for a person from the 21st century, and it is more than what I'd seen in her other writing, which is why I was surprised.

Carla Estruch says

Reseña completa en Fábulas estelares.

La señorita Pym y sus disposiciones han resultado ser una auténtica sorpresa. Me esperaba una novela al uso a lo Agatha Christie y al final ha sido todo muy psicológico, gimnástico y entrañable.

Kim says

First published in 1946, this novel isn't a conventional murder mystery and doesn't feature Tey's detective Inspector Alan Grant. Rather, the Miss Pym of the title serves the function of detective, without actually being one - either amateur or professional - at all. Rather, she's a high school teacher turned best-selling author of a pop psychology book who visits an old friend who is now the principal of a women's physical training college. Miss Pym becomes interested in the lives and personalities of the college students and their teachers and ultimately becomes embroiled in what on the surface appears to be an accident, but which which may well prove to be a crime.

This particular incident does not take place until about three quarters of the way through the novel. Tey builds up to it slowly, through a series of psychological portraits of the characters as they interact with each other and with Miss Pym. Tey's prose is witty and sharp and her character development is excellent.* In addition, the narrative contains touches which will mean something to readers who know about Tey and her interests. For example, the description of Shakespeare's Richard III as "[a] criminal libel on a fine man, a blatant piece of political propaganda, and an extremely silly play" reflects Tey's views about Richard III, later set out in her 1951 novel *The Daughter of Time*. There are also references to actors and acting, something with which Tey, who also wrote plays using the name Gordon Daviot, was very familiar.

In reading this novel I learned a lot about women's physical training colleges in England in the early part of the 20th century. It's interesting to learn about something I hadn't known existed before, but after reading this book it's arguable that I now know too much about the subject. Tey attended a physical training college and taught physical training at schools in England and Scotland before becoming a writer, so I suppose she wrote about what she knew.

A novel which features apparently criminal behaviour set in a women's college and having as its central characters a number of students and teachers invites comparison with Dorothy L Sayers' *Gaudy Night*. Frankly, this novel comes off very much second best in that comparison: it lacks the depth and passion which Sayers brought to her work. That said, characterising the novel as *Gaudy Night*-lite does Tey an injustice. It's an engaging read, although quite slow-paced, with an interesting central protagonist and an unexpected twist at the end. (Well, I thought that there probably would be a twist, but I didn't anticipate that particular one.)

I read the book with my friend Jemidar, which is always a delight. It gets 3 stars for the plot and an extra half

star for the excellence of the writing.

*That said, I think it could be argued that in developing the psychological portraits of her characters, Tey relied much too heavily on physiognomy as a reliable indicator of character. This is also very much a factor in *The Daughter of Time*.

Mariano Hortal says

Qué absurdo me suele parecer el esfuerzo de algunas editoriales con elogiar los autores que publican poniendo a parir los que sacan otras de similares características; aquí Hoja de Lata viene a decir que todo el Detection club era muy convencional en cuanto a tramas (sigh) y claro, Tey era la más original con respecto a todo el club; lo cual demuestra un desconocimiento importante por su parte que se solucionaría con conocer un poco de la obra de Berkeley, Sayers, Bentley, Crispin y compañía, además, Tey habría pertenecido al club si hubiera conocido a las personas adecuadas, la inclusión en el club no excluía a ningún autor en este sentido, su simple problema fue no vivir más cerca de la capital (eso especula Edwards en el ensayo del que hable anteriormente); de todos modos, esto no debe ensombrecer que nos hayan traído esta magnífica obra, un policíaco diferente que en sus primeras dos terceras partes tiene un desarrollo no demasiado alejado de las novelas costumbristas británicas (en este caso en un internado femenino) y le sirve como marco al crimen que se produce en la parte final; con una entrometida maravillosa (la señorita Pym) y uno de esos finales que no se suelen olvidar por el vuelco que suponen. Una verdadera delicia.

Poonam says

I have read only one another book by Josephine Tey, it was *Daughter of Time*. I thought it was very impressive work of research and logical reasoning about Richard III. Josephine Tey is one of the pen names of a very private Scottish writer, Elizabeth Mackintosh.

Miss Pym Disposes, evidently, is inspired by author's own experience of attending a Physical training college, which is same as Leys where the plot of the book is set. Characters are built with love and care and plot is made to thicken slowly. It simmers though of promise all the time. As a reader of crime mystery book, I am expectant and eager about the crime to take place but it doesn't until page 180 (when book is only of 235 pages. It is cruel if I may say so.). When the crime does take place, it is almost obscure and you know the true murderer even before it is revealed in the last page of the book.

I though loved the characters and would have liked to see more of The Nut Tart and her Rick and the theater actor Teddy, he was a perfect foil to serious plot.

I have learnt two things about the writer so far from reading two of her books: she does believe in face-reading a great deal and was aware that it is considered less intellectual and that she believe passionately in innocence of Richard III in the alleged crime of murder of the princes in the tower. You can find a passing reference even in this book.

I loved a few quotes in the book, more like very apt observations. For example: As always, the English were moved by a gallant failure where an easy success left them merely polite.

P.S: This is how it felt. Waiting for crime to occur: https://twitter.com/_alps/status/6652...

P.P.S: This para:

“What could never be remedied was the injustice of it. It was Lucy’s private opinion that injustice was harder to bear than almost any other inflicted ill. She could remember yet the surprised hurt, the helpless rage, the despair that used to consume her when she was young and the victim of an injustice. It was the helpless rage that was the worst; it consumed one like a slow fire.”

Hope says

This cozy mystery doesn't really get going till three fourths into the book. The ending will knock you out of the boat. I finished this two days ago and am still recovering.

Emma Rose Ribbons says

This is excellent and utterly different from anything I've read before. The psychological study is minute, the humour sharp and quotable, the characters detached yet devastatingly human. I don't know what to call this insofar as this is as much a character study of various female students in the forties as it is a mystery novel that advocates applied psychology and body language reading to solve crimes. It is a good whodunnit (though I'd guessed the final twist, it was still quite smart) but it's not its primary purpose, its primary purpose is to look at the consequences of murder on people's lives. It's a pity Tey doesn't delve into more politics with such material and such quality writing, there was so much potential of scope there what with the setting with girls being sent to various positions around the country without having any kind of say into it, but I suppose that's why Dorothy L. Sayers' Gaudy Night is a masterpiece and Miss Pym Disposes is a Really Good Book.

trishtrash says

Invited by an old school friend to give a lecture on psychology at a girl’s athletic college, Miss Pym - one of the most approachable fictional mystery-solvers that I’ve ever read – discovers a sinister undercurrent to the driven but seemingly normal surface life of the girls and staff. If Miss Pym is hardly a ‘detective’ in the usual sense, the crime itself is also almost beside the point of the novel; for much of the book, we see hardly any hint of anything amiss at Ley’s, and are content to simply wallow in the amiable guest’s pleasant reception by the girls, and to join her in her character assessment of them. In the end, the character of Miss Pym, as well as the girls, is tested.

The charm of the setting and characters would have made this story an instant favourite, but I also deeply enjoyed the prolonged, relaxed lead-up to the crime; we are immersed in the world of the girls’ studies and career concerns so that when the curiously unlikable and duplicitous Rouse is given the opportunity of a prestigious teaching post over the more natural choice of the brilliant Innes, the impact is properly felt by the reader as much as by their confused and outraged peers.

It’s a lovely work of crime fiction despite the unchallenging plot, with a sort of frothy girl-school good

nature and underlying *human* nature that make an interesting mix, and Tey's writing style is delightful. Its isn't close to the brilliance of the gripping *The Daughter of Time*, but it has so much charm of its own that I enjoyed it thoroughly nonetheless; it would have been an easy five-star rating, if not for the casual racisms thrown in here and there. I have, in the past, rated books with five stars despite this bias against even 'era-appropriate' turns of phrase, but in all honesty, they spoiled my enjoyment of this book a measurable, if small, amount, and I'm choosing (both arbitrarily and pointlessly) to reflect it, because if my enjoyment wasn't perfect, I can see no reason to rate it as if it was.

Jamie Collins says

This is a nice little story, although it isn't much of a mystery, certainly not to the extent that the blurb on the back cover implies. The "fatal accident" doesn't occur until well into the last half of the book, and is not hard for the reader to see through. This is sedately paced and mildly amusing, and it notably has an almost entirely female cast.

According to the brief bio of Tey, also on the cover, she "worked as a physical trainer before publishing her first novel in 1929". That apparently inspired the setting for this book: Miss Pym is a newly successful author who visits a women's "physical training college", where vigorous young women are practicing everything from ballet to cricket to anatomy. Miss Pym lingers on campus, ensconced in an unassuming dorm room where she is surrounded with students and their daily drama. She marvels at the intensity of the education process and becomes familiar with (and makes judgements about) individual students. When the "accident" occurs, she's quick with her own theories about what really happened, even as she hesitates to step forward.

Jeanette says

Wow, just wow! I thought Daughter of Time was the masterpiece. Now I'm not so sure. What a loss that this incredible wit and writer of the most subtle social psychology aware mystery crossover was gone so quickly. No plot summary here. Girls and young women being full humans with barely any love interest in the mix at all. Tey was 80 years ahead of her own time. At least. Oh yes, it does plod- uphill all the way. It was very good when I was almost 30, better when I was just past 50 and great now. And I understand Henrietta's original job offer decision IMMENSELY better now too. Highly recommend. The girls are worth the patience.

Faith Spinks says

According to the cover of the book "Josephine Tey is one of the best known and best loved of all crime writers." She is "the classic mystery writer." Yet I had never heard of her or her books before this recommendation, and by halfway through the book I was still waiting for a crime to happen and the biggest mystery to me was why I was still reading.

I think your impression of any book you read has a lot to do with your expectations ahead of ever turning that first page. I had been recommended this book as something I would really enjoy and from the blurb I was expecting crime and mystery. I was, to be honest, expecting something with a bit more action and pace

than this. The story is very slow, or "leisurely" as the Saturday Review would apparently have it. In fact the first major event, beyond the lack of a bedside table in Miss Lucy Pym's bedroom or the shock of the school 5.30am alarm bell, seemed to be Lucy invigilating an exam and foiling Rouse's suspected plan of cheating and then Lucy finding and subsequently drowning the tiny cheat book which was to have been used. I felt more like I was reading an Enid Blyton Malory Towers book at times. Now that is not necessarily a bad thing - I used to love the Malory Towers books, but I knew what to expect, what I would be getting when I turned their pages. The difficulty with describing this as a crime or mystery story is that the crime only actually happens right near the end of the book once I had begun to give up all hope. The final part of the book I found more enjoyable and the slowness and feeling of tameness throughout the rest of the book did mean that the story twist at the very end did manage to catch me out.

All of that said it was not a bad book and it was not badly written. I almost wish I could go back and start again with a different expectation so that I could read the book which so many others have given 4 stars to. But I know I can't and I know I won't. Sorry Josephine Tey.

Tracey says

By this point in my reread of Josephine Tey it's more than clear that she did not write ordinary books. The cover blurb clearly gives out that *Disposes* is a murder mystery, but the story is in no rush to do anyone in. And that is brilliant, and cruel. We are introduced to Miss Pym, and become friends. It didn't take long at all to come to care about her – still surprised and honestly delighted at her completely unanticipated fame and relative fortune, at her still-new ability to go wherever and do whatever she pleased. There are times and circumstances in which it is almost as nice (almost) to see good things happen to good people as to have them to oneself; it's lovely to watch Miss Pym as written by Josephine Tey exploring the sort of freedom I'd wish for my own life – and which, come to think of it, may have been a glimpse into Miss Tey's own feelings; there is, apparently, much of Josephine Tey (pseudonym of Elizabeth Mackintosh) in Miss Pym and the girls and ladies of the school: Elizabeth Mackintosh was, according to the Times obituary (via <http://www.josephinetey.net/>) "born and brought up at Inverness and was trained as a physical training instructress at the Anstey Physical Training College, Birmingham".

Along with Miss Pym we meet the inmates of the Leys school for young women, and seeing through her eyes there are perhaps two students who are less than lovely, and one instructor; everyone else is charming, and indispensable. Which is when the memory that this *is* a murder mystery begins to niggle ... Which of these will be the victim? Worse – which will be the killer? For once there is no hint in the blurb (at least in my edition); the hideous cover of my copy makes it look like a student, but covers are notoriously unreliable. It's a different sort of suspense than is often found in the genre – rather than being kept waiting to find out whodunnit or whether this one will escape the murderer or that one escape the law, here it is a wait to see which of these people I've quickly come to like will a) die and b) be responsible. Neither is a more appealing prospect than the other; it didn't take long before I really didn't want any of them dead, nor did I want any of them to be capable of killing anyone. It is sadly rare to read a book in which the characters are so well-made that their plotline becomes genuinely distressing.

Not a negligible accomplishment for the first hundred pages. Tey is amazing.

I maunder on a bit more on my blog.

Graeme Roberts says

A small masterpiece of a mystery, *Miss Pym Disposes* is unconventional in several ways. Setting of the scene, meticulous and entrancing in both the splendid cast of characters and the locale, takes most of book, while the crime and its resolution occurs in last quarter. The eponymous Miss Lucy Pym is a thoughtful, sensitive, and kind visitor to an all-female college of physical culture in pre-war England. She comes to give a lecture based on her new psychology book, but stays on with the encouragement of the girls, the staff, and her old friend, Henrietta Hodge, who is Principal. It's summer, the rural surroundings are beautiful, and everyone seems to love her. I certainly did.

Many mystery books disappoint by disingenuously ignoring obvious clues. Not so here. The clues are subtly placed in the wrenching human drama that Josephine Tey develops as a prelude to the crime. Police are mentioned, but play no part. Miss Pym, who "could never see less than three sides to any question," is left to disentangle some challenging moral dilemmas, which she does with characteristic grace.
