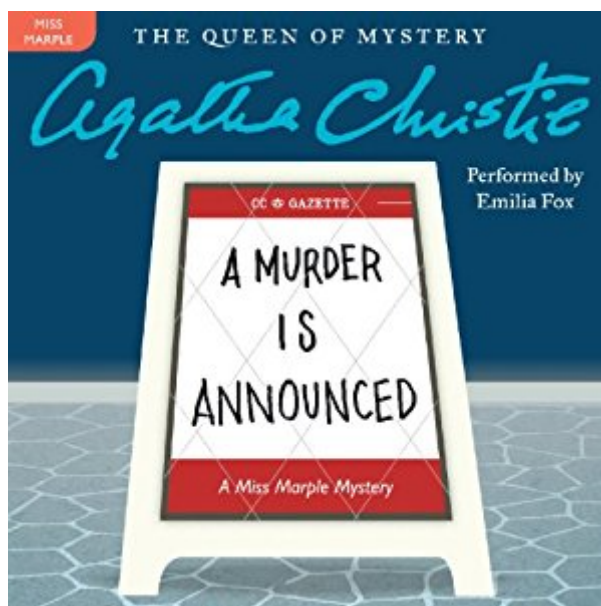


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A Murder Is Announced: A Miss Marple Mystery



Synopsis

The villagers of Chipping Cleghorn, including Jane Marple, are agog with curiosity over an advertisement in the local gazette that read: "A murder is announced and will take place on Friday October 29th, at Little Paddocks at 6:30 p.m." Unable to resist the mysterious invitation, a crowd begins to gather at Little Paddocks at the appointed time when, without warning, the lights go out....

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In her autobiography, Agatha Christie tells of a recurring childhood nightmare involving the terrifying "Soldier." Although the soldier never threatened her in any way, he was horrifying because he was someone she knew and (at the same time) a stranger. She experienced the feeling again as an adult when she learned that her first husband was having an affair and wanted a divorce so that he could remarry. She realized that she knew very little about the man she loved and trusted. The theme of characters who are not what they seem is a popular feature in many mysteries, but particularly in Christie's books and especially in those featuring the gentle, but always suspicious Jane Marple. Long experience has taught the elderly spinster that most people are far too gullible and that even those who appear to be above reproach may be hiding DARK SECRETS. The usual Christie characters are here: the widows, the spinsters, the retired military officers, and the quietly shrewd policemen. The setting is in the years immediately after WWII and (as with all of Christie's stories) we get a good idea of the daily life of the English middle class. Incomes from investments have been slashed, while prices have soared. The traditional servant class has disappeared, leaving those with large houses dependent on cleaning women (primary purveyors of local news)

and foreign refugees unused to domestic service but happy to be out of their war-ravaged countries. Mitzi the wildly dramatic Slavic cook is a delight to the reader (although not to her long-suffering employer!) The disruption caused by the war means that records and photographs have been destroyed, making it even more difficult to prove who's telling the truth. And the ridiculously strict rationing system put into effect in England at the end of the war adds considerably to the problems of crime solvers, since it turns even the most innocent citizens into criminals and liars! Needless to say, there is an elaborate plot with clues liberally sprinkled throughout. Christie's books are so charming I can reread them with pleasure even though I already know who-did-it. This is one of my favorites.

A notice appears in the small town weekly. A murder is announced at 6:30 tonight at a local home. This is your invitation. Several town residents arrive speculating it is a whodunit parlor game and oh don't young people do odd things. The owner of the house realizes that people will show up so sets up some drinks and prepares. At the appointed time, the lights go out, then a man arrives shining a flash light about and telling them it's a robbery. Then a gun goes off. When the lights get sorted out, the man is dead and the owner of the house is shot in the ear. Miss Marple knows the young hold up man because she is staying at the hotel he worked at. She also knows the vicar's wife and so goes to poke around a bit. Did start to suspect the motive, but not the hidden identities of quite everyone.

As people in a small village wake up and eat breakfast, they start reading a local newspaper and notice a strange announcement about a murder occurring that night at 6:30. That evening, many of the villagers show up to see what will happen--some thinking it is a murder game. The lights go out, a gun goes off and a man is shot dead. The police are called and set about figuring out what really happened. Sir Henry Clithering is called in to help and Miss Marple, who is staying in the area, gets involved. Can they unravel all the clues to find out the truth? One of the best authors. Love almost everything she wrote.

A notice appears in the Chipping Cleghorn Gazette - "A murder is announced and will take place on Friday October 29th, at Little Paddocks at 6:30 p.m." Is this some sort of game to be played, a prank or some sort of joke? Curious neighbors show up and, at the appointed time as the clock strikes, the lights go out (naturally), an intruder appears, shots are fired and the police (and Miss Marple) have a murder on their hands. This is a very good mystery. What makes it even more interesting is that it

was written in 1950 when there were still many shortages in England as a result of The War. One sees a few mentions of ration coupons, bartering, black market and shortages that bring the reader into a historic time that may have been forgotten or is unknown to a younger generation. That helps to make this an engaging read. I see many other reviewers complaining of some editions that were poorly edited and were rife with typos. This Kindle edition that I read had none of those problems. It was just a very good Agatha Christie/Miss Marple novel which I enjoyed immensely.

My mother used to take a break every afternoon to read one chapter of an Agatha Christie novel while the smaller children were napping and before the others came home from school. 60 years later I decided to find out what hooked her. The writing is economic. The plotting is brilliant, and it is clear why this is a classic whodunnit. The violence, by the way, is discreetly "off camera," so to speak.

About 1/3 of the book is a set up of the crime and then the crime itself before Miss Marple is even introduced. After that, it gets incredibly slow and boring. The premise was quite interesting but it was executed poorly and just doesn't maintain your interest as you continue the reading. The multiple twists revealed at the end feels kind of cheap and isn't all that satisfying of a way to end the book.

A murder is announced in the local paper. When it actually happens, the Police, with the inestimable help of Miss Marple, gets to solve the matter. In a dynamic plot, with numerous characters and unexpected events, Agatha Christie guides the reader to the answer. One has to pay close attention in order to discover the murderer. This is an interesting plot with a surprising end.

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