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Murder In Mesopotamia: Complete & Unabridged



Synopsis

Amy Leatheran had never felt the lure of the mysterious East, but when she travels to an ancient site deep in the Iraqi desert to nurse the wife of a celebrated archaeologist, events prove stranger than she could ever have imagined. Her patient's bizarre visions and nervous terror seem unfounded, but as the oppressive tension in the air thickens, events come to a terrible climax - in murder. With one spot of blood as his only clue, Hercule Poirot must embark on a journey across the desert to unravel a mystery which taxes even his remarkable powers...

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Customer Reviews

This fabulous mystery by Agatha Christie has long been a favorite of mine. It outshines many of her other mysteries due to some wonderful atmosphere and a very likable heroine in Amy Leatheran. Hercule Poirot, though a major force in solving the mystery, plays second fiddle in this most entertaining murder mystery. Murder in Mesopotamia is an adventure set in an exotic land where a murder occurs. The first half of the book almost has the feel of an M.M. Kaye mystery. Though one could not put Christie in the same class with Kaye in regards to romantic description of a time and place, there is certainly atmosphere to spare, and it is only when Hercule Poirot is introduced into the story that we see the classic elements of mystery fiction Agatha Christie invented come to the forefront. Amy Leatheran is a young nurse asked to accompany an archaeological expedition to the Middle East to look after Louise Leidner, the wife of the man heading the dig. Louise is a beautiful but frightened woman capable of both sweetness and offhand cruelty. What she is frightened of is quite vague but may be connected to tensions on the dig. On the surface it is friendly and familiar,

but a dangerous unrest lies just beneath the surface. Amy discovers answers to questions too late to prevent a particularly brutal murder and Christie's famous detective, Hercule Poirot, must solve the baffling puzzle of how the murder occurred. Amy has been asked to put on pen and paper her account of the events which transpired and this is her narrative. Soon she is acting as Poirot's helper and, to her delight and embarrassment, having the time of her life. There are both secret relationships and secret identities, and before too long, another murder. Christie creates a wonderful atmosphere here.

Before the Murder on the Orient Express, there was the Murder in Mesopotamia. In fact, the Mesopotamian murder mystery occurred just before Hercule Poirot traveled to Istanbul and caught the Orient Express. As a team of archaeologists labors away at an ancient Tell, the leader's wife has her head smashed in a room which no one else could have entered or left. The local constabulary is mystified, and Hercule Poirot, who just happens to be traveling in the area, is called in to consult. After some preliminary investigation to get the lay of the land, Poirot decides that everyone on the dig, with the exception of the husband and a recently retained nurse, is a suspect. He then begins his methodical quest to make some sense out of the available evidence and solve the "locked room" mystery of the wife's death. During the course of the investigation the reader comes to suspect every single member of the team, and by the time the mystery is solved, the reader has been thoroughly bewildered by the bizarre turns of events. The solution is both logical and satisfying, and it accounts for all the loose ends quite nicely. Unfortunately, it is so highly improbable as to be near ludicrous. Whoever ultimately prosecuted the case should have thanked his lucky stars that the murderer confessed when confronted by Poirot. Poirot's solution was a work of sheer logic without, as Poirot admitted, a shred of evidence to back it up. Poirot followed Sherlock Holmes' formula of eliminating the impossible. What he was left with, although improbable in the extreme, was what must have happened. Christie entertains throughout, but I have two quibbles: 1. She deliberately misleads the reader in two particulars as the story unfolds, so that the solution becomes all the more surprising. 2.

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