



The Case Is Closed

Patricia Wentworth

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The Everton murder case has long been closed. The culprit has been charged with the murder of his uncle and has served a year of his sentence already. Or has he?

The evidence against Geoffrey Grey is convincing but his wife believes in his innocence. And so does her young cousin, Hilary, who decides to solve the mystery herself.

But when Hilary herself is nearly murdered she turns in desperation to her ex-fiance for help. He calls upon the services of Miss Silver to help solve another mystery, which she does in her own original style.

The Case Is Closed Details

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From Reader Review The Case Is Closed for online ebook

Hannah says

3.5 stars. An enjoyable classic British mystery; I've been thirsting for one with a tad more romance after *The Mystery of the Blue Train* and this did the job admirably.

I've always found that the romances in Christie's mystery novels tend to be intense and capture the imagination but leave very much unsaid - not a negative by any means, particularly since they are *crime/mystery* novels first and foremost, but once in a while I also enjoy a more straightforward romance as a side plot. I found that in *The Case is Closed* with Hilary and Henry's youthful romance, which I thought adorable. There is a certain appeal to Henry's fierce desire to protect Hilary - other readers may find it a little outdated and caveman-like, but I didn't think it was overdone here.

More than the romance, however, what I liked best was Hilary Carew, the heroine of the piece. Hilary's frequently immature and act-first-think-later, but she's also incredibly charming and spunky with a good head in difficult situations - it's hard not to like her. Together with Henry, they supply a lot of the action in the book and remind me slightly of Tommy and Tuppence. That's never a bad thing.

Onto the downsides, which unfortunately includes Miss Silver. In a long series with only a recurring detective, it's quite important to *like* the detective. Unfortunately we barely got a glimpse of her here; my only impression is that she coughs a lot (it's a wonder she hasn't hacked up a lung, actually) and that she knits constantly for an inexplicable reason. The mystery, too, was so easy to figure out that I knew who the murderer was long before the halfway point. Marion Grey, a key figure in Hilary's motivations for solving the crime, was cold, withdrawn and difficult to sympathize with, while we were never acquainted with the actual villain and it therefore elicited little emotion when their crimes were uncovered. The issue that bothered me the most was the *enormous* chunks of information that we were given at various points in the story - when Hilary reads the files for the Geoffrey case, the readers were actually greeted with the same material. And that means *all* the statements taken, the court proceedings, the witness' examinations. These are details that could have been cleverly woven into dialogue or Hilary's internal ruminations, so nothing could displease me more than being tasked with slogging through pages of court proceedings.

The last problem aside, however, the rest could all be improved upon in later books and I really did enjoy the light sprinkling of romance with mystery, so I'm looking forward to trying more Miss Silver novels. There's something charming about classic mysteries that modern ones cannot replicate.

Kris - My Novelesque Life says

4 Stars

Geoffrey Grey has been convicted of his uncle's murder but his wife and wife's cousin think he is innocent. Just before his murder Geoffrey's uncle, James changes his will to a nephew he has always disliked. Upon telling Geoffrey that he no longer his heir the older man is found dead in a locked room with the knife in Geoffrey's hand.

Hilary, Marion Grey's cousin is heartbroken over the conviction and what it is doing to her cousin. When on

a train she is confronted with James's cook she begins to think there is more to the story than what was presented in court. As the young girl gets deeper into solving the murder she also becomes a target. Her ex-fiance hires Miss. Silver a P.I. who steps in to help.

This is the second novel in the Miss. Silver and I am hooked. Unlike other novels from the era the knitting P.I. has a smaller role in the books, She is often called on the case halfway through the novel. The book focuses on the character involved in the novel. If you like cozy mysteries, noir, old time radio programs this might be the novel for you.

Sally says

What a wonderful premise for a book - beginning with a closed case of murder and a conviction and imprisonment of one who is hoped to be innocent. The moods of despair mingled with hopefulness was excellently done in this story. Although the first book in this Miss Silver series had her only playing a small role, she begins to come to the forefront as a discerning "inquiry agent", that is a private detective interested in cases where the results are that finally the truth comes out. Miss Silver is slightly reminiscent of Agatha Christie's Miss Marple, but I think she is much more clever and not so doddering. I like, too, the element of romance which is not central to the story but brings a bit of anticipated and satisfying happiness at the end.

Richard Derus says

Rating: 3.5* of five

Sexist, silly, and slow.

Trust in me all in all, or trust me not at all, folks, this offers the modern reader mysteries few of the pleasures we presently expect. The pace is killed dead as a rock by the documents the author plops right in the beginning, and later the documentary urge is revived right at the end. It's deadly dull because it goes on too long. It works to get dreary information fed to you, the reader, but wowee toledo does it bog the pace down.

The author relies quite heavily on coincidence as well as Death by Documents. The number of fortuitous encounters between Miss Hilary Carew and Mrs Mercer! Gracious goodness me, the way they practically bounce off each other like billiard balls you'd think England was some teeny-tiny little island or something! I live on a quite small barrier island off the south shore of a bigger island and I don't coincidentally run into people I absolutely *must* encounter above once a week. /sarcasm

The sexism is really surprising. Miss Hilary Carew wants her big, dashing Captain Henry Cunningham to Save Her from Them! This despite the fact that she does a damned good job of saving herself, thank you kindly, and Henry shows up only when muscle is genuinely required. Dishrag Mercer lives in terror of her abusive husband, who never lifts a finger against her just utters horrifying threats and brandishes a knife there's no evidence whatsoever that he knows how to use. When unwelcome guests invade her home, Mrs Marion Grey simply doesn't throw them out, she endures and endures and then finally, when Miss Hilary Carew her cousin as well as roommate arrives, she simply retires to her room in a State of Nerves. The lower-class women are dimwits and cry positive rivers of annoying, soppy tears. That sexism is there at all is the surprise, since none of the women really need the men to solve their problems. Miss Maud Hepzibah

Silver least of all, of course.

And there's the other latter-day reader's lament. Where the hell does Miss Silver (casually dismissed for being a woman more than once) keep herself? She appears at convenient moments with convenient facts. Outside that, the twenty-first century reader's expectations of becoming intimate with our sleuth is an unmet need. We don't see Miss Silver do diddly in the way of detecting or even walking around, she just seems to use Floo Powder and apparates onto the scene of whatever action she can best bring to a screeching halt as she omnisciently moves the *dramatis personae* into the proper configuration for the ending to occur.

Since I've kvetched this little opus into the weeds, why did I give it three and a half stars? Because it's a surprisingly astute and subtle indictment of the annoying tropes it deploys. Miss Silver, Miss Carew and company aren't dishrags the way the poor women are. There are several quite formidable housekeepers and chambermaids. The latter is the one who asks the question that is at the heart of the (not terribly challenging) mystery. The author, a redoubtable soul in her own right, seems to me to be draping the fig-leaf of sexist silliness onto her competent women. She was sixty the year this book was published...1937...and seems to me to be sighing somewhat impatiently at the continued necessity to pretend that women are silly little chits without the ability to Think in their scatterbrains.

Happen I agree, Ma Wentworth.

Ellen says

The Case is closed (Miss Silver, #2) by Patricia Wentworth.

Hilary Carew is actually the main character in this story and what a character she is! Hilary is beyond dramatic in an almost obnoxious way yet she's a darling of a girl. She was engaged to Henry who is quite the gentleman. That was until they had a spat and Hilary ran onto the wrong train. a train that would be taking her in exactly the opposite direction she intended to go.

Hilary, still pouting about their lovers' quarrel, is confronted in the trains' cabin by a woman who recognizes her. A woman by the name of Mrs. Mercer who gave testimony against Hilary's cousin that sent her brother in law to prison for murder. Mrs. Mercer can't seem to get her emotions under control and she continues to weep and speak at the same time. All of her sorrow reverts back to that horrid trial that happened more than a year ago.

I enjoy this author's style of writing. it reflects back to the golden age of mysteries where the characters emotions are equally as important as their actions. Each expressed in detail. Miss Silver does not enter the story until quite late in the story, but uncovers the hidden clues in such an easy going manner that it's a delight to read.

Highly recommended and thoroughly enjoyed.

Jaline says

Marion and Geoffrey Grey had a wonderful marriage. Geoffrey was well established with his uncle's

Accounting firm, and Marion had been a part-time model until she became pregnant with their first child.

Then one evening Geoffrey is called to his uncle's home and when he arrives his uncle is dead at his desk. A gun that Geoffrey had left in his uncle's care when he got married is lying on the floor near the patio doors where he had entered. Geoffrey picks up the gun and hears a woman's scream outside the door between the office and the hall, shortly followed by pounding on the door. Geoffrey goes to the door and unlocks it to find Mr. Mercer (his uncle's butler) and Mrs. Mercer (his uncle's cook) on the other side.

Fast forward, and Geoffrey is in prison, Marion has a miscarriage, and is a shadow of her former self. Hilary is Marion's cousin and a huge supporter of Geoffrey's. She doesn't believe for one moment that he committed the murder of his uncle. Estranged from her almost-fiance Henry, and shut out by Marion's refusal to talk about what happened, Hilary decides to investigate on her own.

I noticed in the first Miss Silver book that Miss Silver herself does not come into the story until somewhere around the 30% to 40% mark in the book. It is the same pattern in this book, and for me it is a device that adds so much to the book. As a reader, there is a great story unfolding and it's only when things become badly muddled – or dangerous – that Miss Silver is called upon.

In this case, Hilary's would-be fiancé Henry is acquainted with Charles who was one of the two main protagonists in the first Miss Silver mystery. So when Henry asks for Charles' advice regarding who to hire to help with the investigation, Charles recommends Miss Silver and from there the book takes on a new and even more interesting dimension.

This is the second in this series, published in 1937 – nine years after the first one – and I am so impressed by the quality of the writing and the mystery itself. I very much enjoyed this book and recommend it to anyone who is interested in great storytelling from the Golden Age of mystery writing.

Jane says

Miss Maud Hephzibah Silver made her first appearance in 1929, but readers who met her then had an eight year wait before they could meet her again, in 1937's 'The Case is Closed'.

The story is engaging from the start: Hilary has stepped on to a train, after an argument with her fiancé, Henry, and because she had wanted to make a dramatic exit she had got on to the wrong train. As she watched for the next stop an elderly woman approached her, eager to speak to her quickly, while her husband was out of earshot. Hilary was inclined to think she was mad, but when she asked for news of the friend Hilary was staying with, with real concern, she realised that maybe the woman had a genuine interest. And very real fears.

Hilary was staying with her friend, Marion; because Marion was finding it difficult to cope with the aftermath of her husband's conviction for murder. This was the case that was closed when Hilary described the woman and the incident on the train Marion was able to tell her she was. The woman who had wept in court as she reluctantly gave the evidence that made it inevitable that her husband, Geoff, would be found guilty.

Marion had bowed to the inevitable – the loss of her marriage, the loss of the possibility of children, the loss

of her position in society – and she slipped away quietly to her job in a dress shop where she was known by a name that was not her own. While she was away Hilary began to examine all of the paperwork about Geoff's trial, because she was quite sure that he was innocent.

The story played out beautifully, and though I guessed how the mystery would play out the characters and their relationships were engaging and believable. I was involved, and I wanted to be there as events played out.

I understood why Marion was very nearly broken, and just wanted to be left alone to drift through what was left of her life. I felt for her. I also understood what Hilary, who was lovely and more than a little headstrong, had to find out more and desperately wanted to do something. I liked her, I loved her spirit and energy, but I worried that she would run in to trouble when she began to make enquiries of her own.

Hilary had a very bad scare, and that made her realise that she needed help. She turned to Henry, her sensible, practical estranged fiancé, and he turned to the detective that his good friend – Charles Moray, of 'Grey Mask' fame – had recommended. Miss Silver.

I was delighted that Miss Silver was just as I had remembered her. She presented herself as a 'professional aunt, she knitted at a rate of knots, but she was also a very capable detective. She had followed the case, and she had ideas about how to proceed. Her presence was very low-key though, and it almost seemed that she was steering Hilary and Henry to the solution of the mystery.

And sure enough, a couple of chapters from the end, Hilary had the same thought that I had a couple of chapters from the beginning!

The real strength of this book was the relationship between Hilary and Henry. They had opposite temperaments, but though they squabbled they complemented each other beautifully. I hoped that they'd realise that. And that they'd realise that they loved each other.

So this is a mystery that works because the human story is so good, and because the Patricia Wentworth wrote very well, with warmth and with wit. She picked out exactly the right details, there were some lovely touches, and I particularly liked Hilary's habit of turning her thoughts into rhyming couplets.

I'd call this a lovely period piece. And maybe issue a warning that some of the attitudes to relationships between classes and sexes are quite dated.

My only disappointment was that the story was a little muddled at the end and that it was wrapped up rather quickly. I would have loved to have seen more of everyone's reactions to the revelations and to what happened afterwards.

I'd have liked to have spent a little more time with Miss Silver too; but I see that there are thirty more books in the series. I'm already looking forward to the next one.

Kavita says

Geoffrey Grey is in prison for murdering his uncle, but both his wife Marion and their cousin, Hilary, are

convinced that he did not do it. The world, however, believes that the right man is in prison. When a strange woman accosts Hilary on a train, her suspicions are aroused. She starts poking her nose into the old case, and almost gets murdered for her troubles. She turns to her ex-fiancé, Henry, who in turn turns to Miss Silver.

Just like the first book, Miss Silver is a shadowy presence and only comes into the picture in brief intervals as a consultant. This is not her story, but that of Hilary, and I don't think it is any worse for that. I loved this very typical golden age mystery.

The villains were pretty obvious right from the beginning, but the fun lay in how they are brought to justice. Hilary was a fun character, and while Marion and Henry both got irritating at times, there were still good moments with them. Henry especially was annoying. At some point, I wondered why he claimed to love Hilary when he never believed a single word she spoke.

I am growing into these delightful mysteries by Patricia Wentworth. I am just delighted that I have around 30 more to go!

Laura says

Free download available at Faded Page.

Geoffrey Grey has been convicted of his uncle's murder but his wife and wife's cousin think he is innocent. Just before his murder Geoffrey's uncle, James changes his will to a nephew he has always disliked. Upon telling Geoffrey that he no longer his heir the older man is found dead in a locked room with the knife in Geoffrey's hand.

2* Beggar's Choice
2* A Marriage Under the Terror
TR The Fire Within
TR Devil's Wind

Miss Silver series:

3* Grey Mask (Miss Silver, #1)
4* The Case Is Closed (Miss Silver, #2)
2* The Ivory Dagger (Miss Silver, #18)
4* Out of the Past (Miss Silver, #23)
3* The Benevent Treasure (Miss Silver, #26)
TR Lonesome Road (Miss Silver, #3)
TR Danger Point (Miss Silver, #4)
TR The Chinese Shawl (Miss Silver, #5)
TR Miss Silver Deals With Death (Miss Silver, #6)
TR The Clock Strikes Twelve (Miss Silver, #7)
TR The Key (Miss Silver, #8)
TR She Came Back (Miss Silver, #9)
TR Pilgrim's Rest (Miss Silver, #10)
TR Latter End (Miss Silver, #11)
TR Wicked Uncle (Miss Silver, #12)
TR The Case of William Smith (Miss Silver, #13)

TR Eternity Ring (Miss Silver, #14)
TR The Catherine Wheel (Miss Silver, #15)
TR Miss Silver Comes to Stay (Miss Silver, #16)
TR The Brading Collection (Miss Silver, #17)

Sue Dix says

Read this for a reading challenge. It is a good old fashioned murder mystery. Patricia Wentworth wrote many Miss Silver mysteries and I can't think of any more pleasant pursuit than reading through all of them. Although Miss Silver is the private investigator, in this book, the other characters play vital roles in uncovering the solution to the crime. It was a very exciting and satisfying story and I look forward to reading more Miss Silver mysteries.

Damaskcat says

When I first started reading Patricia Wentworth's Miss Silver books several years ago I somehow managed to miss this one out. I'm glad I have now come across it and read it. It is an interesting and well plotted mystery. Geoffrey Grey is in prison for murder on what seemed at the time to be incontrovertible proof of his guilt. But his wife, Marion and Hilary Carew, who lives with her are convinced he isn't guilty.

Hilary sets out on a quest to find out who is guilty or at least find evidence which will exonerate Geoffrey but it seems that someone else doesn't want her digging around in an old case and she escapes death herself by the skin of her teeth. Henry, her fiancé, calls in Miss Silver and between the three of them they set out to clear Geoffrey's name.

The solution to the mystery is ingenious and I didn't work out who was responsible and how it was done until quite close to the end of the book. I like Miss Silver, like Miss Marple she relies on her knowledge of human nature and acute powers of observation as well as the fact that elderly ladies tend to be overlooked and underestimated by many people - which is an advantage to a detective. The Miss Silver books can be read in any order but if you want to read them in order this is the second book in the series.

Mo says

3 1/2 stars

The author relies a bit too much on coincidence, but I just don't give a hoot! This series feels easy and breezy and just plain fun!

Bettie? says

Description: *This Miss Silver mystery focuses on the struggle for power in male-female relationships - on the light-hearted side, in the signature "nice young couple" (Hilary and Henry), while a villain displays*

dominance and abuse. We gain a picture of life among the well-bred if not well-fed as we follow Hilary's attempts to clear her cousin's husband Geoffrey, who has been convicted of the murder of his uncle. The attitudes and sensitivities of a different time are on display as Hilary's cousin copes with the degradation of having to earn a living as a couturier's model, and the loss of not only her husband, but the children she had hoped to have. Henry is not at all sure that the conviction was unjust, but the villains behave sufficiently suspiciously that he brings in governess-turned-private-enquiry-agent-Miss Silver, who discovers a decidedly dated motive for the down-trodden housekeeper's behavior. Some near escapes, tricky timetables and elaborate plots complete this tale from mystery's Golden Age.

Sharla says

It's funny how two people can read the same book and come to such opposite conclusions. It's almost like we didn't read the same book. So one of my goodreads friends said this book is "sexist, silly and slow". I guess there are sexist elements but that's pretty common in books from that time period (it was published in 1937). Personally, I think it's difficult to make that assertion since the detective is a strong female character, Miss Silver. I honestly didn't find it silly although perhaps a bit melodramatic in a few places. From my point of view it isn't slow at all. There is plenty of action and suspense, more than in most Golden Age Mysteries. Sure kept me turning the pages. I enjoyed reading this one a great deal and would recommend it to anyone who likes mysteries from this time period.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

The Case Is Closed (Miss Silver #2), Patricia Wentworth
