



The Affair of the Blood-Stained Egg Cosy

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The theft of the diamond necklace and the antique pistols might all be explained, but the body in the lake - that was a puzzle. Inspector Wilkins is called in to investigate, but it's going to take some intricate sleuthing to uncover who killed whom and why.

The Affair of the Blood-Stained Egg Cosy Details

Date : Published 1978 by Avon Books (first published 1975)

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Author : James Anderson

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From Reader Review The Affair of the Blood-Stained Egg Cosy for online ebook

Ivonne Rovira says

In a re-release of this 1975 gem, author James Anderson has penned a lovely — and loving — send-up of that old chestnut, the British house-party cozy mystery. Gathering for a weekend party at the West Country mansion of Alderley, owned by the stereotypically bluff Earl of Burford, are his diplomat brother, two Duchy diplomats there to conclude negotiations with Britain, a Texan oil tycoon and his wife, a travelogue writer, an insufferable bore, a shadowy French baroness, and a plucky gal-pal of the earl's daughter. What could go wrong?

What doesn't go wrong? A diamond necklace and a brace of semi-automatic pistols that once belonged to Czar Nicholas II both go missing, and a body turns up in a lake on the grounds — plus diabolical espionage and treason. While so many plot points might prove confusing in less deft hands, Anderson handles the high-jinks with aplomb. I couldn't put the novel down, as cliché as that sounds! The novel's resolution proves perfect, too.

Lastly, I absolutely adored the lugubrious Detective Inspector Wilkins, who resembles Hercule Poirot a bit in looks — but certainly not style. There he resembles a British version of the seemingly buffoonish TV detective Colombo; however, like his counterpart, and despite his self-deprecation, Wilkins doesn't miss a thing. How pleased I was to find out that Anderson penned sequels and that I will soon be encountering Wilkins again!

Susanna - Censored by GoodReads says

A nice little cosy, the 1930s English country house murder as French farce.

For a further review: <http://susannag.booklikes.com/post/74...> .

Beata says

A novel that is a truly enjoyable weekend read. Written in the mid-1970s, it recreates the cosy ambience of a pre-war mystery murder story, with the details of the period, language, insight into the social life and a lot of wit. I massively enjoyed reading all parts of the adventures of the Burfords! Good old school!

Deborah says

I'll tell you up front I'm not going to give a plot summary, there are enough of those out there. This book doesn't take itself too seriously but has a complex murder mystery and believable likeable characters. There are three loosely related books in this trilogy. They all take place in a British Earl's country mansion: Alderley, between the world wars and within a few months of each other. I read the third one first but the

order doesn't really matter. The house, family and detective are the same in each but it is really the visitors who are different in each book that provide the entertainment and the mystery. Witty dialogue, misdirection and misunderstanding are the order of the day. I stumbled upon the third book in this series by accident. I don't understand why they are not more well known. And, of course, I did not guess "who dunnit", but then I [practically] never do! I was going to write that my favorite character was Lady Geraldine, the daughter of the Earl, but then the Earl himself, Lord Burford is quite entertaining and his wife, Lady Burford is a formidable character. And of course the detective, Inspector Wilkins, is sharp as a tack while appearing slightly bumbling and confused, and the butler, Merryweather, has some extremely funny tongue in cheek retorts up his sleeve. Very enjoyable!

Bettie? says

bettie's Books

Paul E. Morph says

This was a fun, little murder mystery set in the 1930s. However, my enjoyment was limited by a sense of the book not knowing whether it wanted to be a comedy or not.

While it made several sly nods towards more famous detective stories, it just wasn't funny enough to actually be a comedy. There is humour here but it's so gentle that it's constantly at risk of disappearing in a feeble wisp of early morning Springtime mist.

The book's other issue is the pacing. The murder doesn't even happen until about the 40% mark, by which time even MY patience was starting to wear thin. The action/investigation is rushed through in next to no time and then the book takes forever to end.

I can't say I didn't enjoy it at all but I'm not sure I'll bother with the other books in the series.

Gerry says

A country house mystery set in the late 1930s at Lord and Lady Burford's country pad. Guests arrive, some unexpected, some from overseas and everything is set for an enjoyable weekend. But things go wrong, antique pistols go missing, murder is committed and suddenly everyone is a suspect. Inspector Wilkins, a reluctant inspector, arrives to sort things out but needs the help of one of the guests, who turns out to be not what he purports to be, as do some of the other guests. Wilkins eventually unravels the events, arrests the wrong-doers and then (presumably) gets ready for the next melodrama at Burford Manor ... bring it on!

Penelope says

I really enjoyed this wonderful crime novel. It was very reminiscent of a Christie novel and oozing with

charm and and elegance. The characters were a delight, the plot intriguing and the denouement a surprise. I shall be reading the other books in this series, just a shame there are only 2 more.

Jennifer says

Completely mad but completely and utterly brilliant! James Anderson gently pokes fun at the country house murder mystery genre. I say gently because there is no malice here (Anderson's love of the genre clearly shines through) and it reads just as well as any Agatha Christie novel. The plot was quite complex but I would have been disappointed otherwise and it kept you guessing till the end - now that was a surprise! And I love a book that gives you a plan of the house and a cast of characters at the beginning - nice touch! Lots of red herrings, a secret passageway, strange goings on in the middle of the night, the bumbling police detective, not to mention a bit of romance thrown in as well - all great fun. It's a pity that Anderson only wrote three in this series but he probably couldn't have stretched the point much further.

Ali says

I had this book for Christmas and have been looking forward to a bit of country house murder-mystery escapism. I wasn't disappointed - this novel really has all the ingredients of a good old fashioned style who-dunnit. Aristocrats, people who are not whom they are supposed to be, diplomats, politicians, an American millionaire, a beautiful baroness. Two robberies and two murders, and most of the household creeping around a large country house, in the dark during a thunder storm. A clever intricate plot - with likeable characters - which fairly flies along at a good cracking pace. I will soon be getting hold of the next 2 books in this series which seem available from Amazon.

Libbeth says

Although this book was written in the 70's it has the feel of the era in which it was set, a little before the Second World War. A good old fashioned country house murder mystery, with the emphasis on the mystery, and lots of twists and turns along the way.

Bev says

I love country house cozies and this send up of the Golden Age is wonderful!

Lisa says

A fun and cosy murder mystery that reminds me of a cross between Poirot and Columbo set in an English country manor house.

There are several intricate mysteries that weave together to a satisfying conclusion.

Shauna Hruby says

This is a very fun English country house murder mystery. What I especially liked was how it puts forth a serious face, discussing Hitler, the war, and upper level political intrigue, but then it breaks out into an old fashioned comedy of manners. This contrast between light and heavy hovers in the background throughout. The mystery is complex with clues and motives all over the place, but there really is no way to solve it on your own. That does not lessen the satisfaction of having everything tied up neatly at the end.

Mary Ronan Drew says

Oh, boy! This is a good one. Written in 1975 and reprinted by the Poisoned Pen Press, James Anderson's *The Affair of the Bloodstained Egg Cosy*, set in the 1930s, has it all, starting with a classical-era detective who warns everyone at the very start that he's no good at this job and has been promoted above his abilities and that he yearns to be back on the uniformed force. But this modest, self-deprecating sleuth ("I'm not sanguine. Not sanguine at all" - think Peter Falk's *Columbo*) manages to figure out the most complicated country house murder/espionage case I've ever encountered.

No country house murder is quite right without a map and the book offers one of the second (first if you're English) floor of the house with its many bedrooms, linen closet, baths, and cupboards, along with a picture gallery and a large gun room to hold the earl's firearms collection. You knew there would be an earl. What's a mystery without a little nobility, not to mention a Bertie Wooster sort of fella called Algernon Fotheringay, a gorgeous French countess who drops in unexpectedly, two foreign diplomats who are alarmingly bad at diplomacy, the earl's wife and their jazz baby daughter, her impecunious friend, her uncle (whom the friend has been hopelessly in love with since childhood), a stuffy foreign office type, a dashing sports-car-driving journalist, and a wealthy American couple and their secretary. And of course the butler.

The map is particularly useful because during the night of the murder all the characters except two leave his or her room and visit the bedroom of one or more other characters or the gun room or the downstairs music room. There is a woman's scream, someone is hit on the head, someone goes missing, two characters get into a scuffle, someone is locked in a cupboard, and nobody turns on the lights. Delightful French-farce cum detective story.

I've just scratched the surface here. We have a famous jewel thief who steals the American woman's diamond necklace, two valuable guns are taken, mysterious phone conversations are overheard, the stable clock chimes every 15 minutes, making it easier to keep track of exactly where everyone was at what time. And then there's the problem of the dirt-caked, bloodstained egg cosy. How did it come to be hanging from a branch of lavender in the garden? Who jumped out the window?

This is also a locked room - or locked castle - mystery. The earl has installed a state-of-the-1930s-art burglar alarm which allows the police detective to pinpoint the moment when the murder victim left the house. Or does it? And where is the French countess. This could hardly be more complicated, more difficult to figure out, and more entertaining if Agatha Christie herself had written it with help from John Buchan and Marjorie Allingham. (Did I mention the secret passageway?)

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Coming soon, Stacy Schiff's biography of Cleopatra.
