



Lord Peter Views the Body

Dorothy L. Sayers

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In this delightful collection of Wimsey exploits, Dorothy L. Sayers reveals a gruesome, grotesque but absolutely bewitching side rarely shown in Lord Peter's full-length adventures.

Lord Peter views the body in 12 tantalizing and bizarre ways in this outstanding collection. He deals with such marvels as the man with copper fingers, Uncle Meleager's missing will, the cat in the bag, the footsteps that ran, the stolen stomach, the man without a face...and with such clues as cyanide, jewels, a roast chicken and a classic crossword puzzle.

Lord Peter Views the Body Details

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From Reader Review Lord Peter Views the Body for online ebook

Bev says

Still taking a break from Middlemarch (I'm finding it a bit hard-going). I decided to read some nice classic Golden Age short stories from the hand of one of the queens of British mysteries, Dorothy L Sayers. Her collection, Lord Peter Views the Body, is a delightful gathering of stories featuring Lord Peter Wimsey. I have put together a brief note on each story. I enjoyed them all, but I will say that my favorites are "The Vindictive Story of the Footsteps that Ran," "The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste," and "The Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head."

"The Abominable History of the Man with Copper Fingers": A story of jealousy and a well-known sculptor's plan for revenge. Fortunately, Wimsey is on hand to prevent the artist from completing the second half of his masterpiece.

"The Entertaining Episode of the Article in Question": Wimsey proves that a little knowledge of French can go a long way towards capturing a jewel thief.

"The Fascinating Problem of Uncle Meleager's Will": A clever old man leaves clues to his will in a crossword. Wimsey proves himself frivolous enough to decipher it.

"The Fantastic Horror of the Cat in the Bag": A high-speed motorcyclist gets a nasty surprise when he opens a bag picked up from a cloak room.

"The Unprincipled Affair of the Practical Joker": Wimsey uses a lovely bit of sleight of hand to silence a blackmailer.

"The Undignified Melodrama of the Bone of Contention": Wimsey delves into the mystery of the death coach--a ghostly coach pulled by headless white horses and driven by a headless coachman.

"The Vindictive Story of the Footsteps That Ran": His lordship solves a murder by noticing which way the footsteps ran.

"The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste": Will the real Lord Peter please stand up? Or at least correctly identify six varieties of wine. A story of not one, not two, but three Wimseys.

"The Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head": Wimsey and his nephew find an old pirate treasure. My favorite of these stories--I love the interaction between LPW and "Pickled Gherkins."

"The Piscatorial Farce of the Stolen Stomach": Great Uncle Joseph chooses an unusual hiding place for his wealth.

"The Unsolved Puzzle of the Man with No Face": Wimsey solves a murder using clues provided in the discussion amongst his fellow train travelers.

"The Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba": Lord Peter is reported dead....and events that follow lead to the capture of a gang of criminals.

The stories are fun. Not a lot of detail, but that's to be expected with short stories. Sayers does manage to pull the reader right in regardless. Four stars--but, then, I am biased. I love all things Wimsey.

Orinoco Womble (tidy bag and all) says

It hurts to give Miss Sayers and Lord Peter only three stars, but I know it's my own fault. I simply don't care for the short story format, particularly when Lord Peter is such a Deus Ex Machina in that form. In this collection, sometimes you don't know if he's a detective or a 007 wannabe. The business about his famous palate for wine, for example, made me roll my eyes. A couple of the stories, while they had some good red herrings, were bordering on the silly, and put a foot over that border more than once.

We do get to see a much younger Wimsey in this collection, taking holidays for his nerves to deal with post-war shellshock (what we now call PTSD). Again, some mild racism (anti-Scots and anti-Italian particularly) is put into the mouths of Wimsey and Parker; whether this reflects the author's personal view, or simply to show ideas of the time, I don't know.

I got the impression that Miss Sayers used the short stories to try out ideas that would later appear in full-length works. Some of them were awfully familiar. However, mustn't grumble, I had the treat of listening to the irreplaceable Ian Carmichael once again. (One tiny criticism of Mr Carmichael is his tendency to pronounce Wimsey's name "Death" as "dee-ath", when we are told in more than one of the novels that it is "deeth to rhyme with teeth"--unless Mr Carmichael called his own choppers tee-ath?)

Wanda says

Actual rating: 3.5 stars, but rounded up to 4 because I just appreciate Dorothy Sayers so much.

I hadn't realized that this was a book of short stories, but I enjoyed being able to read a little bit, put it down to do something else, and return when I was done, not having to worry that I'd forget some crucial detail in the meanwhile. I also enjoyed the vast range of subjects that Peter Wimsey displayed his knowledge in—as disparate as poker, wine appreciation, jewels, and crossword puzzles. Obviously Sayers had wide ranging interests and was able to indulge them through Lord Peter.

I'm also enjoying Peter Wimsey's evolution over the course of these books—he started out a bit dim, rather like Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster, but he has gradually become much more like an Agatha Christie protagonist or Conan Doyle's Holmes, being able to put the puzzle pieces together faster than the average person, when the picture is still a bit hazy. Obvious when he points it out, but he's the first to see the whole picture.

There's a reason why Sayers, Christie, and Conan Doyle retain their popularity in the 21st century. They give us memorable characters and create mysterious crimes for them to solve. We still enjoy a good puzzle, no matter what time period is chosen for the story.

Moonlight Reader says

I'm not the hugest fan of short stories, although several of these were entertaining. I needed a book with a vest on the cover for a challenge, which is why I selected this to read - I already had it on my kindle from a

Peter Wimsey binge buy when the prices dropped to \$1.99 each.

booklady says

Lord Peter Wimsey is my favorite sleuth. From his humorous name and distinctively British upper class mannerisms and speech, to his 'ugly, beaky appearance' and passion for books, especially old rare ones, he entertains me like no other detective and few other literary characters. Each time I begin another Dorothy L. Sayers' mystery I brace myself to be disappointed in case she slips in some quality about him which has to be endured rather than admired.

Lord Peter Views the Body is a collection of nine mini-mysteries each involving a body—or parts thereof—resulting from suspected murder or foul play. Although none of these 'events' could happen today as described due to advances in forensic science as well as corresponding restrictions concerning suspect/evidence protection, crime scene access, information release, etc., each gem holds its place in the annals of crime detection history.

In addition to going back in time, the cases transport you all over England (geographically) and a few other places as well: from bathing along the south coast of England on bank holiday in [The Unsolved Puzzled of the Man with No Face](#) to fishing in Scotland in [The Piscatorial Farce of the Stolen Stomach](#). In [The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste](#), the real Lord Peter proves himself against two impostors vying for the same information by his infallibility as a sommelier in France.

Ms. Sayers's stories are savory and meant to be delighted in. And if her characters, situations, titles, and vocabulary aren't enough, then treat yourself to Ian Carmichael's audio rendition of these tales. Mr. Carmichael could be the inimitable Lord Peter, or anyway, his voice.

Happy listening. On to Hangman's Holiday: A Collection of Short Mysteries!

Bill says

This book contains 12 mysteries featuring Dorothy Sayers' famous sleuth, Lord Peter Wimsey and each was unique in its own right and all were interesting and entertaining. I've grown to like Lord Peter very much as I've begun to explore this series. Short stories can be so hit or miss. It all depends on how quickly the author can get into the story and grab your attention and then come to a satisfying resolution. Dorothy Sayers succeeded with this much to my satisfaction. Lord Peter is such a wonderful character and the stories helped develop his character even more. He loves a mystery, loves to snoop and explore diverse situations, and is intelligent at coming up with logical solutions. I loved each story and was very surprised by the last one, *The Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba* as it was quite different from all of the others. Excellent, entertaining read. (4 stars)

Pamela McLaren says

A delightful collection of short stories featuring Dorothy Sayers' wonderful gentleman detective, Lord Peter Wimsey. Like Sherlock Holmes, Wimsey uses what he sees, the actions of the people involved and keen

perception and figures out just what happened, why and by whom. A pure delight

Katherine McCauley says

One hundred earth years of pleased sighing as I am welcomed back into the strong and capable arms of my polite aristocratic gentleman sleuth, those of the inimitable LORD PETER WIMSEY—sometimes manacled, always monocled.

Never before have I said this but I found that the introduction printed in my edition (from the ineffably beautifully designed Hodder & Stoughton 2016 printing, which I have obtained through semi-sketch measures but have fortunately not yet been apprehended for importing) really enhanced my enjoyment of the volume. Christopher Fowler perfectly summarized the Lord Peter Wimsey Experience thusly:

I first encountered Sayers in a way that could have put me off for life, reading *The Nine Tailors* too young. For her critics the problem is that virtually the whole of the book's first half is about campanology, the art of bell-ringing. What they failed to realise was that this becomes one of the great enjoyments in reading Sayers. She seizes upon a subject and really digs into it with gusto. After you've read that novel you'll know what a Kent Treble Bob Major is, but more importantly the weight of her research makes the story far more enjoyable. Who doesn't like a well-written essay on something they knew little about?

This, in conjunction with Lord Peter's undeniable and multifarious charms, is what makes these books so fun: their wholeheartedness. I find it so wild that Sayers so disliked my beloved *Murder Must Advertise* on the basis of its having taken place in a world that she had no real experience with, because her enthusiasm for the story she's crafting and her research into the real-life background of same are always, with perhaps the exception of the somewhat reprehensibly dull *Five Red Herrings*, enough to carry any story into the realm of the exquisitely enjoyable. All of these stories are pretty odd and most involve exceptionally convoluted wills. But Sayers had fun with them, so you can't help but do so as well.

Metodi Markov says

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Evgeny says

Me and Lord Peter Wimsey cannot get along. I consider his stories entertaining enough, but only moderately good. Good enough to continue reading them when I am in the right mood. I said it before and I will say it again: a detective can make or break a mystery story.

Sherlock Holmes, Nero Wolfe, Hercule Poirot can beat Lord Peter Wimsey with their right hands tied behind their backs in terms of being interesting characters. Even Miss Marple can do it. Do not let me get started on

noir: Philip Marlowe, Sam Spade, and nameless Continental Op are miles ahead of him.

Now that I explained the reason for the rating, on with the review. This is a collection of twelve short stories featuring the guy I just discussed.

"The Abominable History of the Man with Copper Fingers".

A story of a famous sculptor and his model. An interesting way to dispose of a dead body. Otherwise totally predictable.

"The Entertaining Episode of the Article in Question".

Lord Peter Wimsey uses his knowledge of French to catch a jewel thief. The French clue was so subtle I missed it (I live in French-speaking part of Canada). This would not work in modern language.

"The Fascinating Problem of Uncle Meleager's Will".

A rich guy hid his will and put clues in a crossword puzzle. Do not even attempt to solve it: it is impossible. Half of the crossword clues were explicitly explained in footnotes; the rest were equally incomprehensible.

"The Fantastic Horror of the Cat in the Bag".

A high-speed chase resulted in very gruesome discovery. This one is otherwise so forgettable I have nothing more to say about it.

"The Unprincipled Affair of the Practical Joker".

How do you silence a blackmailer? By blackmailing him back of course. Lord Peter Wimsey counter-blackmail seemed a little crude.

"The Undignified Melodrama of the Bone of Contention".

Probably the best story of the bunch. A disappearing dead body, a carriage floating in the air and driven by headless horses and ridden by an equally headless coach, a cursed place all animal avoid - what else is there to ask for? I feel the Gothic atmosphere could be done better, but I still like the story.

"The Vindictive Story of the Footsteps That Ran".

Can you solve a murder mystery by listening to footsteps? Lord Peter Wimsey can. So could Father Brown (I am too lazy to look up his name of the story). Very predictable, but with one nice twist.

"The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste".

Agatha Christie was an undisputed Queen of Mystery. Her international conspiracy thrillers were below average however. What do you know? It seems Dorothy L. Sayers firmly followed her steps and wrote an equally underwhelming international conspiracy thriller. It looks like there are three Lord Peter Wimseys around - two too many. Which one is the genuine article?

"The Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head".

Lord Peter Wimsey stumbled upon a clue to a lost inheritance. While this theme was already done in an earlier story (and will be done yet again) his coming to the clue was entertaining enough.

"The Piscatorial Farce of the Stolen Stomach".

Lost inheritance again. So obvious one has to wonder about the mental abilities of the heir.

"The Unsolved Puzzle of the Man with No Face".

Lord Peter Wimsey practically solves the murder by listening to its discussion by random people. However it took a stroke of pure luck for him to get a complete picture.

"The Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba".

Sherlock Holmes had Professor Moriarty. Nero Wolfe had Mr. Zeck. Hercule Poirot had Number Four (is it possible to erase my memory of that book existing?). Lord Peter Wimsey had Number One. Just like other famous detectives he managed to beat his arch-enemy at the end.

I already explained my rating. I will continue reading the series.

Amélie says

Je pensais me traîner péniblement à travers ce recueil (que j'ai lu juste parce que je veux passer à travers toute la série), parce que tsé, les murder mysteries format nouvelles -- mais je me suis beaucoup amusée. Quelques scénarios convenus, beaucoup d'exubérance, des huis clos & des portes verrouillées de l'intérieur, & une seule petite histoire tellement mauvaise qu'elle en est gênante : ce serait difficile de demander un meilleur ratio.

Jan C says

This was a re-read for me. I'd forgotten just how much I enjoyed some of these stories. As I read them, I remembered most of them from previous read (s).

The final story reminded me very much of Patricia Wentworth's Grey Mask in her Miss Silver stories. (grumble, grumble. autocorrect is going to kill me yet.) The story before that looked like a precursor to Sayers' own Have His Carcase. Both the story and the novel start much the same but do take different paths.

I think I first read this in the '80s and I have never forgotten them. Some I misremembered. Either in whole or in part.

But it was all still enjoyable.

James says

Sayers joins Christie and Doyle in knocking out a collection of short stories for her detective character, Lord Peter Wimsey. The short-story form appears to have been very popular with authors 'of the day', presumably the stories were generally published individually in magazines before being collected. Again, *Lord Peter Views the Body*, took me by surprise as I hadn't read any of the reviews of blurb before starting; I was assuming another full-length novel. A pleasant surprise nonetheless, as this is a truly excellent collection of short-stories – there isn't a 'dud' anywhere in there.

Not all the stories are murders, not all of them are even always crimes; but each time Sayers perfectly captures her Wimsey. The stories where Bunter features as well are just the icing on the cake. Bunter is the sidekick that Holmes and Poirot fantasise about. Whereas they have to drag their pet through each detection like a teacher with a particularly stupid (but likeable) child, Bunter is there with Wimsey each time. As Bunter is determined that they shouldn't be equals socially, he also doesn't consider himself Wimsey's equal as a detective. But Wimsey is never praising Bunter for the sake of it when he says that he couldn't have

done it without him...

From the frankly gruesome *The Abominable History of the Man With the Copper Fingers* told as a couple of anecdotes, through the series of much more conventional mystery formats: one where the criminal's lack of grammar gives him away, another where Wimsey's encyclopaedic knowledge of wines is the key. Here even the conventional mystery format isn't fixed in stone, Sayers likes to move the target slightly by having one where Wimsey possibly gets it completely wrong (but still plausible), or maybe not. And by far the longest story in the collection, one which requires the entire cast to solve a huge crossword in order to find the location of a second will. Unfortunately, this collection ended with a slightly disappointing story, *The Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba*. Not a bad story you understand, but not up to the standard of the rest of the collection. Again, Sayers appears to be trying to do something clever and different, but it just didn't quite ring true for me. Dragging a nearly 5 down to a clear 4.

Susan says

Although I am not really a fan of short stories – much preferring novels – I wanted to re-read the Lord Peter Wimsey books and realised that I had never read this collection. The book consists of the following stories:

The Abominable History of the Man with Copper Fingers
The Entertaining Episode of the Article in Question
The Fascinating Problem of Uncle Meleager's Will
The Fantastic Horror of the Cat in the Bag
The Unprincipled Affair of the Practical Joker
The Undignified Melodrama of the Bone of Contention
The Vindictive Story of the Footsteps that Ran
The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste
The Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head
The Piscatorial Farce of the Stolen Stomach
The Unsolved Puzzle of the Man with No Face
The Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba

These stories have everything a fan of Golden Age Detective Fiction could want – missing wills, organised crime gangs, jewel thieves, bizarre crimes and, often, more bizarre solutions. These are lots of fun, wonderfully written puzzles and you feel that no criminal could remain unmasked with Lord Peter Wimsey on the case!

Leah says

On the back of my copy of this book, there is little indication that these are short stories. As a result, I approached this book innocently assuming I would encounter another full-length Peter Wimsey adventure to delight in. I'm glad it worked out this way, however, because I rarely choose to read short stories voluntarily, and these were just as delightful as Peter's full-length exploits.

I find myself spending each review of a Sayers book comparing her favourably with her more famous contemporary, Agatha Christie. Here, I'll limit myself to saying that each of these stories is fascinating, unique, and different from the last, unlike the aforementioned Queen of Crime's short stories. They range

from death-by-modern-art to a good old-fashioned treasure hunt, from crossword-puzzle wills to the *piece de resistance*, in which Wimsey goes undercover for two years after faking his death to break up a secret society spy ring. This last one is something Agatha Christie has something of a mania for, always with hilarious and somewhat pitiful results, and yet Sayers manages to make me think that these mask-wearing international criminals must have actually existed at the time. Oh yes, it also involves a voice-activated wall-safe. *In 1928*.

Lord Peter as a character is gloriously likeable. He's serious when he has to be, a little distant (a result of the Great War, his uncle tells us in Sayers' appendix to the newer printings of all Wimsey books), self-deprecating and just bloody funny. Someone you'd love to spend a weekend in the country with, if you get my meaning...

But seriously, a consistent detective character who is also not dull as paint is a rare thing, and you should hang onto them when you find them.

Samir Krishnamurti says

Lord Peter Death Bredon Wimsey is arguably one of the greatest characters to grace the pages of twentieth century detective fiction. For some reason, he tends to be somewhat overlooked, although most lists should rate him right up there with Hercule Poirot, Ellery Queen, Father Brown, and the other great luminaries of early twentieth century detective fiction. He is the quintessential English gentleman detective, the one who set the stereotype for the lordly, amateur sleuth. You know the type. But now you know why you know the type. An Eton and Oxford educated, cricket playin', g-dropping, fop-about-town who conceals a tremendous and even ruthless intellect behind a facade of affable facetiousness. He plays cricket like one born to it, excels at the piano, and in one particular book (*Murder Must Advertise*), creates an extremely successful campaign for advertising cigarettes. He also excels with children, by the simple dint of treating them with the same courtesy and attention one would extend to an adult. He is both an expert sommelier and a consummate bibliophile, both of which avocations are showcased in brilliant form in two of the stories in this book (*The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste* and *The Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head*). He appears impetuous, but is actually ruthless, and is a master manipulator, using surface emotions to befuddle others into dismissing him as an irritating wasp in a top hat and monocle. Only Sergeant (and later inspector) Parker and his faithful valet Bunter really know what Wimsey is capable of. The ironic thing though, is that he actually is annoyingly and insatiably curious, often to the point of apparent lunacy, but there is always method behind the madness. Like the time when he pestered the station announcers so much about the mechanics of their system that he accidentally discovered a code bookies were using to send results back and forth.

He looks like you would expect him to, a sort of (in the author's own words) cross between Bertie Wooster and Fred Astaire with blonde hair, a beakish nose, and a vaguely foolish face. Personally, I think Lord Peter Wimsey is a lot more like Psmith. To look at him, you wouldn't think he served on the Western Front during the Great War and attained the rank of major, or was appointed an Intelligence Officer, and successfully infiltrated the staff room of a German Officer. He was that rare breed of staff officer, one extremely popular with his men. Indeed, his faithful amanuensis, one Mervyn Bunter, shares with Wimsey the experience of shell shock and being seriously wounded and whilst in military service. During that time, they arrange for Bunter to become Wimsey's valet, assuming they both survive the war. Which, of course, they do, and Bunter becomes Wimsey's valet and investigative assistant, while maintaining absolute decorum despite the fact that they are extremely close friends. One of the many wonderful features of Sayer's writing is the sometimes gentle, sometimes searing indictment of the British class system as it operated then. More on the

author later though, right now I'd like to stick with Wimsey and the book itself.

Wimsey is a gloriously whimsical and lackadaisical polymath, capable of many feats, each of which is showcased in the short stories that make up this book. In one of my favorite stories (The Adventurous Exploit of the Cave of Ali Baba), he stages his own death and works undercover for over a year, creating, donning, and living an entirely new identity in order to infiltrate and break the most prolific gang of thieves ever to operate in London. Quintessential upper class cloak-and-dagger stuff, one of the best examples there is. His linguistic skills also shine through in "The Entertaining Episode of the Article in Question", wherein the whole case is solved because of a tiny French grammatical error on the part of the thief. To quote the thief directly, "Once more I must congratulate my lord. He is the only Englishman I know with the ability to truly appreciate our beautiful language.". If you're smart enough, you should have figured out what the twist is. Incidentally, he speaks fluent German too.

In The Bibulous Business of a Matter of Taste, possibly my favorite story in the book, Wimsey successfully guesses the names and years of a series of particular vintages in order to obtain war-time intelligence. He doesn't get it, but it doesn't matter. The only other story I've read which comes even close in using blind wine taste-testing with such verve and savoir-faire as the plot mechanism is Roald Dahl's Taste. Which is one story in another absolutely brilliant collection, and one I will definitely review subsequently. There's also a Jeffrey Archer story in one of his books which revolves around wine tasting, but it doesn't match up to either of these.

The rest of the stories are pretty fascinating too, with motifs ranging from solving life-size crossword puzzles to an iron plated mistress, the latter of which added whole new dimensions to the term 'iron maiden'. In some senses, the Wimsey short stories are better than the novels, and in this day and age particularly so, as it provides the reader with nice, bite sized readings, perfect for a metro journey or to idle away sometime in a car or plane. I would highly recommend all of Sayers' work, but Lord Peter Views the Body is probably the best one to start with. The Lord Peter Wimsey books have also been adapted for the stage (in 1947 and 1957) as well as the screen, the most recent being the BBC adaptation in 1987. I'd say it's long overdue for another re-haul, and Benedict Cumberbatch would make a terrific Lord Peter Wimsey.

Before winding up, I'd just like to natter on about Dorothy Sayers for a bit, because, much like her own creation, she was a fascinatingly intelligent person with a varied multitude of talents.

Dorothy Sayers worked in the Benson Advertising Bureau as a copywriter for many years, and was responsible for coining the "Guinness Is Good For You" jingle, as well as the slogan "It Pays To Advertise". Hence the setting of Murder Must Advertise is completely authentic. In fact, that is probably the best thing about the books, they offer a real window of British society in the early twentieth century, The realism is palpable, and forms a great contrast to some of the other authors of the time, who tended to create very idealized world with stereotypical characters, like Agatha Christie or P.G Wodehouse. Sayers' books are also a lot more political, the Wimsey books tackle the great issues of the time - Nazism, the ethics of advertising, and the modern feminist movement, among others. She also said she only wrote the Lord Peter Wimsey books in order to make enough money to support her career as a Christian humanist classicist playwright.

She was also a great Christian humanist, and a classical scholar and her translation of Dante's Divine Comedy is largely considered to be the definitive one. In fact her translation of the famous line "Abandon hope all ye who enter here" is different; she translates it as "Lay down all hope, those of you who go by me." This, according to Classicists, is a much better rendition for not only is it a better literal translation, it also fits into the Italian terza rima rhyme scheme.

Jaline says

Although titled as the 4th book in the Lord Peter Wimsey series, this book is also a standalone. It contains 10 short stories and two small novellas. While I am not a big fan of short stories (always wanting a longer read and more in-depth exploration of a storyline), I found these to be engaging.

I found out much more about Lord Peter as he continued to solve mysteries in his unique fashion. The third short story in the book contains a crossword puzzle laid out by a clever old man in his will. As I read the clues – a series of rhyming couplets – I was in awe.

I am not good at crossword puzzles in the first place, but these were so obscure and filled with so many literary and historical references, I was convinced that the only person who could possibly solve them would be Andy Carpenter's receptionist/secretary from David Rosenfelt's series. She is a crossword puzzle fanatic and no-one can come near her for cracking the toughest puzzles.

However, somehow Lord Peter and the two people working with him on the puzzle did find the answer to the blank puzzle pictured in the story. For those of us who might be clueless, there is a chapter at the back of the book matching up the right words to the clues as well as the finished diagram of the puzzle.

I already mentioned in my update notes that serendipity had me starting a novella on Hallowe'en and that it featured a luminous carriage being drawn by 'floating', headless white horses and driven by a headless man – all of this vision of shimmering white passing soundless and haunting. Just perfect for Hallowe'en!

The last story in the book even features organized crime as it was in the day, further evidence of Ms Sayers' versatility in her writing. I thoroughly enjoyed this book of short stories and novellas and for people who may be interested in the series but not certain, this would be a good place to start!

BrokenTune says

2.5*

I like Peter and Bunter but the stories in this collection were lacking something - either the development of other characters or a hook. I stand by my hypothesis that some authors are great at creating novels but can't quite transfer the same skill to short stories or - without referring to the format - simply shorter stories.

Still, some fun adventures with Peter.

Now on to the next Wimsey novel...

Elisabeth says

3.5 stars. It's hard to know exactly how to rate these short stories. On the one hand, Sayers is unquestionably a skilled writer and a pleasure to read. The stories themselves, though, are mainly a mixed bag. Not all of them are straight-out detective stories; some are more point-to-point tracing of clues or an exercise in outwitting a wrongdoer, and in the ones where the identity of the culprit is in question, it's not too hard to guess who they are. "The Undignified Melodrama of the Bone of Contention," was probably the most

interesting, and I enjoyed the interaction between Lord Peter and his young nephew in "The Learned Adventure of the Dragon's Head."

One thing's certain, those who are sensitive about gruesome crimes might find a few of the stories off-putting—several times Sayers goes for the most macabre and bizarre incidents, though mercifully she does leave most of it to the reader's imagination rather than indulging in graphic description. And I must say, there's some irony in Lord Peter speaking disparagingly of secret societies in detective fiction in the second-last story...and then plunging into as outlandish a secret-society plot as ever was in the final tale!

Kim says

Spending a bit of quality time with Lord Peter Wimsey always makes me cheerful. I prefer him in the full-length novel environment where his intelligence, wit, humour and humanity can shine to their fullest extent, but there's nothing wrong with meeting him in the short story format. It's rather like having a friend drop by for a quick visit. You may prefer to have him stay for the weekend so you can catch up properly, but a cup of tea or even a chat on the phone is better than not seeing him at all.

Lord Peter appears in all twelve stories in this collection, which was originally published in 1928. Some of the stories are distinctly better than others. However, all of them are readable and all of them are of interest to a true fan of the sophisticated and urbane amateur detective and his equally fascinating creator. A number of the stories play with themes which are central in Lord Peter Wimsey novels published during the 1930s: for example, how a person found on a beach could have been murdered when there is only one set of footsteps to be found in the sand comes up again in *Have His Carcase*, which was published in 1932.

This short story collection is highly recommended for anyone who enjoys the novels of Dorothy L Sayers and is a fan of Golden Age British crime fiction. Anyone who hasn't read Sayers would be better advised to start with the novels and casual readers should know the following. The resolution of one of the stories depends on Lord Peter having a superior understanding of the French language and early in that story there is a long section of dialogue in French without translation. In another, the solution to the mystery involves working out a complicated crossword puzzle (which completely lost me!). In another, much is made of various types and vintages of French wine. None of this will come as a surprise to Sayers fans. Other readers have been warned!
