



A Christmas Most Shocking

Robert Bruce Stewart

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In December 1906, Harry Reese follows his roving wife to Washington for a reunion with the formidable Countess von Schnurrenberger und Kesselheim. There he finds himself entangled in a mystery involving an erotic novel, a meat cleaver, several coded communiqués, a potent female aphrodisiac, a certain bit of anatomy belonging to a certain senator's wife, and, most tellingly, a German count who has mansplained himself into an early grave....

This novel is told in two parts. In the first, Harry provides an account of the crimes, suspects, and clues—including myriad misdirections—as he assists the pompous police detective working the case. In the second part, told by a precocious young girl then staying with the countess, details are filled in, motivations explained, and secrets revealed....

For more information on the series, please visit: **HarryReeseMysteries.com**

A Christmas Most Shocking Details

Date : Published November 26th 2017 by Street Car Mysteries

ISBN :

Author : Robert Bruce Stewart

Format : ebook 200 pages

Genre : Historical, Historical Fiction, Mystery, Holiday, Christmas, Literature, American

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Philip says

The poorest entry yet in this series most books of which I have usually liked. I was very disappointed in this book 'cause I really liked this series and have had many laughs at Harry's dilemmas which are usually caused by one of Emma's enterprises but Emma had very little to do in this story so there is really very little humour and I just found Sesbania completely annoying. Somebody needs to take her out in the woodshed with a big hairbrush. I read this as part of my 2017 Christmas Mystery reading but this book really had very little real Christmassy atmosphere and the story could probably be set in any season. I won't be turned right off of this series but I hope this is just one bad apple in the barrel and I'll sure give another book in the series a chance.

Marti says

An absolutely hysterical afternoon read. After a shocking murder, everyone seems to be trying to muddy the waters of investigation—but no one seems to know why. Be sure to read both versions of the story!

Crystal Harkness says

A Christmas Most Shocking is the first book I have ever read by Robert Bruce Steward. I noticed in the other comments for this book that it is part of a series. While I read the book I did not feel like I was missing any information since I read it before reading the other books. But, I can see how if I had read the other books I might have more of a back story on the characters. It was still an excellent story all on its own. I thought it was a good murder mystery filled with humor and scandal.

Tony Parsons says

12/1906, Dupont Circle (Kalorama Heights). Madame B (30, Dowager Countess, former jewel thief) had married Count von Schnurrenberger und Kesselheim (German Embassy, Washington, DC.).

He had been murdered.

Emmie Reese (wife, nee McGinnis, writer/author) & Harry Reese (husband) were discussing the possible murder.

DS Lacy was assigned to the murder case.

Captain Dumont (30, French, officer of engineers) had left the premises in a hurry.

Emmie, Sesbania (11, girl), & Countess B (widow) were finishing up the Christmas decorations.

All the help had been questioned about the murder.

DS Lacy was looking in Captain Dumont's trunk & someone knocked him out.

Some company had taken the trunk to the French Embassy.

What did Mrs. Quinlan (Senator's wife) reveal to Harry?

What happened to Herr Otto Kirsch?

Sir Conan Doyle would like this author/writer.

Warning: This book contains adult content, violence, &/or uncensored sexually explicit material which is only suitable for mature readers. It may be offensive or have potential adverse psychological effects on the reader.

I did not receive any type of compensation for reading & reviewing this book. While I receive free books from publishers & authors, I am under no obligation to write a positive review, only an honest one. All thoughts & opinions are entirely my own.

A very awesome book cover, great font & writing style. A very well written mystery book. It was very easy for me to read/follow from start/finish & never a dull moment. There were no grammar/typo errors, nor any repetitive or out of line sequence sentences. Lots of exciting scenarios, with several twists/turns & a great set of unique characters to keep track of. This could also make another great mystery movie, or better yet a mini TV series. This 1 was just OK fr me so I will only rate it at 4/5 stars.

Thank you for the free Author; Street Car Mysteries; PDF book
Tony Parsons (Washburn)

Jo-Ann Murphy says

Many of our old friends back again in a different format and adventure. Emmie and Harry spend a shocking Christmas with our old friend the Countess and a cast of entertaining characters.

I love Robert Bruce Stewart's books. They are entertaining and inventive. It is so nice to have a fun read during the holidays.

The change in format kept me on my toes. The first part of the book is told from Harry's point of view and the second part is written from Sesbania, the precocious con-artist, who is also a guest of the Countess for the holidays.

Harry details his efforts and theories to solve the shocking murder of one of the household members. Sesbania, then fills in some very shocking details that clarify the events in the house and provide the reader with the information to properly interpret the clues and actions of all the those in residence.

It was quick and fun to read as the action keeps things moving at a brisk pace. A perfect way to escape the stress of the season.

Patricia Ann says

Another fun and challenging read from Robert Stewart! I so enjoy the complexity of Mr. Stewart's plots, the red herrings, the possible solutions. AND most of all, I enjoy the subtle humor presented by his characters. It's a new book in the Harry Reese mystery series. Harry is an insurance investigator in early 1900's. In this new book, Emmie(Harry's wife) has been called to write the autobiography of Countess Von Schurrenberger in Washington D.C. Harry is sent an anonymous letter suggesting that Emmie is having a liaison with the Count!! Harry arrives in D.C. and overnight the count is electrocuted by a diabolical hidden apparatus. The

Countess wants it to be an accident. Sergeant Lacy wants it to be a spy vs. spy so that he can exhibit his Sherlock Holmes detection skills. There are spies, more crimes, another death, accompanied by the machinations and manipulations of Emmie and the young guest of the countess, Sesbania. Sesbania, at age 14 is very worldly wise and like her lawyer father, fights for justice. She raises funds for those she sees as wrongly accused in a, well, way that only a 14 year old daughter of a lawyer could. . As you will see , she (as many lawyers do! !!!) uses every possible trick to achieve her goals. Pay special attention to Sesbania. Initially, the book was written in Harry's 'voice'. Just when I thought the book and story had ended, I turned the page to read the narrative by Sesbania 3 years after the death of the count. AND my enjoyment increased; It was like seeing the events from the other side of the mirror. I loved seeing "the other side", having the little details and puzzles explained.

Joel Bresler says

When I was offered a free review copy of Robert Bruce Stewart's latest Harry Reese Mystery, I said yes immediately. Stewart has a knack for making successive books in the series different enough from their predecessors to keep them from becoming too formulaic, and "A Christmas Most Shocking" is no exception. In his enjoyable prose, we first get a story told through the perspective and experiences of Harry, the linchpin of the series. Harry figures out part of what's going on; but there are forces at work he could not possibly keep on top of. Next, the book gives an account of those other forces through the voice of their main protagonist, presented in the form of a letter written a few years afterward. This is a somewhat unique way to present a novel, and Stewart pulls it off easily. All in all, "A Christmas Most Shocking" is yet another fun addition to an already good series of humorous mysteries.

Peggy says

A bawdy and fun addition to the Harry and Emmie Reese mystery series, this tale is shocking on a number of levels, literal and figurative, with emphasis on the figures involved! Harry Reese shares narration duties here with Sesbania, a terrifyingly precocious schemer of a little girl who manages to get the better even of Emmie Reese. A perfect antidote to all those saccharine children's Christmas tales.

Heidi says

The inimitable Harry and Emmie Reese are back! Back in Washington for Christmas with their old acquaintance, the Dowager Countess von Schnurrenberger, her young protege, the guileful and wise-beyond-her-years Sesbania, and the requisite houseful of guests and servants. The Countess and Sesbania were first introduced in one of my favourite Harry Reese novels, Kalorama Shakedown, but if you haven't read that one yet, don't worry.

Harry has followed Emmie to Washington after receiving a worrisome warning about his wife's apparent extra-curricular activities. Once there, he is reluctantly embroiled in an inquiry into the Count's sudden and soggy demise. The Countess makes it clear to everyone that the whole mess is to be cleared up quickly, and with a minimum of inconvenience.

Enter Detective Sergeant Lacy, who fancies himself a Sherlock Holmesian investigator and prevails upon

Harry to be his Watson. Alternately hindered and aided by the often puzzling machinations of Emmie, Sesbania, maid Genevieve, cook Gustave, butler Thomas and valet Otto, Harry tries to get to the bottom of things while keeping himself in the Countess' good graces.

About two-thirds of this novel is Harry's narrative of events that include secret codes, German spies, a French novel, another inconvenient dead body, and his speculations. The final third is Sesbania's startling account, by which we discover many pertinent details that Harry was not privy to, and which clears up the mystery in a most satisfying way.

If you are already a fan of Harry and Emmie Reese, you'll love this funny and entertaining mystery. I also think that newcomers to this series will be able to enjoy it just as much.

Evgeny says

'Twas a night before Christmas,
when all through the house
Dead bodies kept quiet
and so did a mouse...

Everybody is familiar with the rhyme above, right? It could be used as an epigraph for this book. Shortly before Christmas of 1906 Emmie Reese received an invitation from Countess von Schnurrenberger und Kesselheim. She left for Washington and her husband Harry decided he could stay at home in Brooklyn. I am not going to spoil it but very soon he decided he needed to check on his wife. And so he came to the capital and forced himself as a guest to the Countess. To give you an idea about how strong his motivation was, Countess was a woman who thought killing a husband is much easier than to divorce one. Still poor Harry had to risk it.

As you might have guessed Countess' guests kept getting killed while Harry ended up right in the middle of the investigation with a dual mission: to help with it and to prevent the truth from coming up. Surprisingly this time this paradox was not created by Emmie. There is one change in Harry from the previous books I noticed: before he kept himself somewhat at distance from all the excitement; this time he appeared not distant, but outright cynical. I guess it was an inevitable result of living with Emmie, or it might be Harry maturing.

The second half of the book switches to a young innocent girl point of view she explains all the things that were unclear up to this moment. This girl is the reason for the lower than my usual rating of an installment of the series. I do not know about the rest of the readers, but from my point of view this young innocent girl is scary. Freddy Kruger, Mike Myers, Jason, Alien, Godzilla, Pennywise the Clown, and Darth Vader combined

look like cute kittens compared to her.

If I ever have a daughter like this I would commit suicide by the most practical at the moment way taking the shame of being a failed father in my grave. Seriously.

So Harry's POV is worth 4 solid stars. The girl is worth 3 stars. What is the final rating? At one point I was about to toss a coin, but then I realized something. Emmie's crazy stunts never failed to bring up the humor

and excitement to Harry's work and life in general. This time she was practically non-existent. She did some crazy deeds, but for her they looked like little harmless fun. This decided the rating: 3 stars; I miss active logic-defying Emmie.

Please do not get me wrong. It was nice to get back to Reese family and the humor makes this a nice read. It is just that this books is weaker than all of Harry's and most of Emmie's mysteries.

Conny says

I was lucky enough to have gotten a copy of the book from the Author in exchange for a review, which I am happy to provide. This may have been the most risqué book of the series, and it was filled with murder, mayhem and of course Harry's dry humor. I would recommend that you read the books in order since some of the characters have appeared in previous books, though you could still enjoy it since the Author goes into some backstory for each of them. The events are also recounted from the point of view of a precocious young girl and her part in all the has happened, she fills in some of the holes that were not fully answered in the retelling of Harry's accounts of what happened. Very funny and most shocking Christmas read yet. I wonder what trouble they will get into next?

Italo Italophiles says

For fans of screwball comedy, with more sexual suggestiveness than allowed in 30s films, however. Harry and Emmie get involved in murder again, and lots of shifty characters. This is a two-part story told from Harry's point of view, and a female character's later account of events as they really happened. The author aims to write as if the books are from the circa 1900 era, but I think he should have avoided the archaic use of ejaculated, despite Conan Doyle being a big fan of it ('ejaculated' was used for 'exclaimed'). As creative and imaginative as always.

Linda Munro says

I received a copy of this novel via a goodreads giveaway.

If you like mysteries; if you like Columbo like material; if you like historical novels, then this is the book for you!

It's December, 1906 in Washington, D.C. New York City resident, Harry Reese, insurance investigator has been receiving interesting letters regarding his wife who is presently staying at the home of the Countess von Schnurrenberger und Kesselheim in D.C.

Harry decides it is time to make a visit upon his wife....Instead of a welcome, Harry finds himself wrapped up in murder and mayhem....

Don't worry if you haven't quite gotten to the who dun it part; part two of the story will complete the scene!

Definitely, a GOOD READ!

