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Mary Higgins Clark

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A glamorous cruise on a luxurious ocean liner turns deadly in the latest mystery from “Queen of Suspense” and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author Mary Higgins Clark.

Fleeing a disastrous and humiliating arrest of her husband-to-be on the eve of their wedding, Celia Kilbride, a gems and jewelry expert, hopes to escape from public attention by lecturing on a brand-new cruise ship—the Queen Charlotte.

On board she meets eighty-six-year-old Lady Emily Haywood, “Lady Em,” as she is known throughout the world. Immensely wealthy, Lady Em is the owner of a priceless emerald necklace that she intends to leave to the Smithsonian after the cruise.

Three days out to sea Lady Em is found dead—and the necklace is missing. Is it the work of her apparently devoted assistant, Brenda Martin, or her lawyer-executor, Roger Pearson, and his wife, Yvonne, both of whom she had invited to join them on the cruise? Or is it Professor Henry Longworth, an acclaimed Shakespeare scholar who is lecturing on board? Or Alan Davidson, a guest on the ship who is planning to spread his wife’s ashes at sea? The list of suspects is large and growing.

Celia, with the help of her new friends Willy and Alvirah Meehan, who are celebrating their forty-fifth wedding anniversary, sets out to find the killer, not realizing that she has put herself in mortal danger before the ship reaches its final destination.

Never, in all her long career as a #1 bestselling suspense novelist, has Mary Higgins Clark been in better form.

All By Myself Alone Details

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Author : Mary Higgins Clark

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From Reader Review All By Myself Alone for online ebook

CD {Boulder Blvd} says

2.5 Stars rounded up - but yeah, I was very tempted to round down...

This was a fast read and was in typical MHC style. The chapters tend to be short - sometimes very short. There are quite a lot of characters who are painted well but includes their daily minutia that sometimes can come off as trivial and not interesting.

There is a main plot of the murder of Lady Em who is a grand dame type of person and her "cursed" emerald necklace that goes missing. The "man of a thousand faces" is supposedly aboard the ship and plans to steal the necklace. Although the plot is decent, it's quite easy to forecast what is to come and who "the man of a thousand faces" is.

There are numerous subplots, our heroine's ex-fiance is embroiled in a ponzi scheme which she is pulled into as a person of interest and which is tarnishing her reputation. There is a man in a bad marriage who goes overboard. There is Lady Em's assistant who has been replacing her jewelry with cheaper fakes and pocketing the difference. There is a potential love interest. However all the little subplots are like the main plot, there is enough foreshadowing that you know exactly how everything is going to end.

So it was a fast and OK read, but I have to wonder if this book wasn't penned by a well known author, would it have been picked up for publication? Although I borrowed this book from the library, I have to make a comment about the price. This is pretty expensive price tag for an OK book that is also fairly short.

Terri Lynn says

I started reading Mary Higgins Clark's books right from the first one in the 1970's when I was a teenager. Her books were exciting to read for a very long time but they have grown more boring to me over the years as she wrote more and more about rich people and had less true mystery, suspense and thrills. They used to be page-turners. Now it takes me days to drag myself through this dry, dull stuff. This book was predictable and I couldn't whip up enough emotion to like, love, or even hate any of the characters. Also, it was about Willy and Alvirah and I hate them. Sorry, I can't recommend this at all.

Melissa A.S. says

Mary, where are thou?

I picked up this book at the library yesterday, where any newly-released Mary Higgins Clark's novels always consist of a long wait time before I can get my hands on them. I was lucky one might say, or maybe vigilant but I managed to snatch "All By Myself, Alone" right after it became available.

It's hard to dismiss the sense of familiarity I often get when I read MHC's books, maybe because the characters almost always come from similar background; there's the wealthy, well-bred, highly-educated

(preferably Ivy League) man, the heroine who has suffered or is currently suffering a tragedy or has gone through or is going through a scandal and will date the moneyed gentleman described above (or one of them if there's a few), the older character equally as affluent and highly-educated who will die at some point, then the personnel who is either fiercely loyal or fermented crooks. The crimes may be different, the motives may change, but it's a recycle of characters and backgrounds, and that's why once I read five MHC novels, I have felt like I have read them all.

There is not much to say about this book, except that it takes place on a cruise ship instead of the usual boroughs of New York and who wouldn't want such a perfect clairvoyance like Alvira's? The disclosure of the killer's identity was child's play, any amateur can do better.

Any silver lining? You bet. The chapters are short and easy to digest making it a pleasant, quick read.

Monnie says

Well-developed, intriguing characters. Interesting plot, albeit with no mind-bending surprises. What's not to like?

Not much, from my point of view. No, it won't jack up your blood pressure nor keep you anywhere from the edge of your seat. In fact, it's about as close to a "cozy" mystery as you can get without actually crossing that line (although some readers might argue that it does). In short, it's a perfect summer read - on the beach or, in my case, while enjoying spring weather on our back deck as it comes (finally) to our little corner of the world in northeast Ohio.

Admittedly, it got a bit repetitive in spots, and there were a couple of incidents that challenged credibility. As the story progressed, the more it brought to mind the old game of Clue: Colonel Mustard did it with a knife in the library. Or was it Professor Plum with candlestick in the kitchen? Still, overall it was a fun read - just don't expect a complex psychological mystery that will keep you awake nights.

The *Queen Charlotte*, a new, uber-luxurious ocean liner, had just set off on its maiden voyage from the Hudson River to Southampton, England. With a capacity of 100 passengers and a crew of 85, it is the newest ship in the fleet owned by wealthy Gregory Morrison and designed to be an upgrade on the ill-fated *Titanic*. On board are hoity-toity, wealthy passengers like 86-year-old Lady Emily Haywood, nouveau riche like William Meehan and his amateur-sleuth wife, Alvira, guest lecturers like Celia Kilbride, a noted gems and jewelry expert and an international thief known as The Man with One Thousand Faces.

Most of the chapters focus on details of specific passengers; Ted Cavanaugh, for instance, wants to convince the elderly Lady Em to return her famous Cleopatra emerald necklace to Egypt instead of the Smithsonian, as she plans. The necklace, he argues, was stolen from the country by her ancestors and should be returned to its rightful owner.

But not long after departure, one passenger goes overboard. Then three days out, Lady Em is found dead - murdered in her stateroom - and the storied emerald necklace is missing. Are all these events related? Is the international thief really on board and if yes, who is he? Who's got the necklace? Are Roger Pearson, accountant to Lady Em, and Brenda Martin, her long-time personal assistant, really the loyal employees they appear to be? Just about everyone on board, it seems, is hiding some kind of secret; little by little, chapter by chapter, those secrets are revealed and lead up to the conclusion.

Mo says

[And I discovered the answer on the very last page. YOU HAVE GOT TO BE KIDDING!!! THIS was it? This was the crux of the entire story? A

Katie W says

Mary Higgins Clark always writes a mystery that leaves me guessing and changing my mind about who did it throughout the book. In fact, her books make me realize that I wouldn't be a good detective at all! This story is a little different in that it takes place on a cruise ship and with jewel thieves, murderers, and more mayhem about, the passengers are in for the trip of a lifetime...if they can survive.

There are a lot of shady characters roaming this ship and I honestly didn't trust any of them, excepting Alvirah and Willy Meehan because they've made numerous appearances before. I love it when I can try and figure things out, even when I'm proven wrong, right along with the characters.

This story is typical for the author--fun, entertaining, and mysterious, but nothing that completely wowed me.

Content: mild violence (murders, attacks, etc, nothing graphic); very mild romance (implied affairs)

Angie says

3.5 stars

A nice little 'on-board' mystery from MHC. I didn't think it was quite as good as some of her other recent novels, but made for an enjoyable audiobook. It features the MHC standby characters of Alvirah & Willy, who were first introduced years back when they won the lottery. I would recommend to her die-hard fans, and those who enjoy well told, but not necessarily exciting, mysteries.

Gail says

Quick read. Typical "whodunit".

Kirsten says

This is my first book by prolific suspense author Mary Higgins Clark -- and it was very fun.

It includes the new (but more and more used) trope of the woman whose husband has been arrested for

running a pyramid scheme. Ah, progress.

I really enjoyed this book. It follows a fairly predictable - but enjoyable - outline. Instead of an English country manor, we have all of our people isolated on a cruise ship. Instead of norovirus, they have a jewel thief and murderer.

I will definitely read another book by Mary Higgins Clark.

Diana Long says

This book was a delight to read. Very early on I became totally engrossed in the story. Works like this might not be great works of literature but they are easy to read and follow and the writer does remind me of a modern day Agatha Christie. This is my first read by this author but it most definitely will not be my last. What could be better than a cruise ship to rival the amenities of the Titanic on a maiden voyage from New York to Southampton in this novel tale? The author has packed it full of a cast of very creative characters and more than it's fair share of the rich and famous as well as unscrupulous individuals. Very entertaining and I highly recommend for those people who enjoy mysteries/crime without all the gore and erotic shenanigans.

Tamara says

First and foremost you should know that I'm not a fan of Willy and Alvirah. I find them to be annoying when they are the main focus of the book as they have been the past couple of MHC's.

I like W & A in small doses, but having to continuously hear about them winning the lottery and Alvirah being so tight with money (Go ahead, A, splurge every once in awhile for a first class plane ticket- you can't take the money with you when you pass away!)

So, I almost didn't purchase this book when I saw they were in it. In this book, they have a pretty big role, but not as big as the previous book or so- so I just tried to deal.

Overall, I liked the mystery. It was entertaining. I also liked some of the characters, though, I was wishing an extra character or 2 would be visited by The Man With The Thousand Faces. :)

It's easy reading. Short chapters. Enjoyable, but it won't be a book I think about over and over again.

Sara says

Okay enough is enough. I want Mary Higgins Clark to go on record and admit that one of the grade school aged grandchildren she's always thanking in her acknowledgements is now writing her books because if a third grader did not write this book I will eat my socks!

Beautiful Celia Kilbride was not always by herself, alone. She was once with someone, together.

Unfortunately that someone turned out to be a Bernie Madoff knockoff who swindled her and a lot of her friends out of money and in an effort to avoid her problems she has decided to give lectures on a luxurious cruise ship on the history of gems that are about as insightful as the book jacket summary for this yawn a minute "mystery." But wackiness ensues when she becomes embroiled in an international jewel thief's efforts to steal a magical necklace once worn by Cleopatra from my grandmother when she was getting on in years and kept making cracks about minorities in a weird faux British accent and waxing poetic about the "good old days" when people knew their place in the world and she had lots of money.

Fortunately there are lots of other subplots to bore you to tears including but not limited to; my grandmothers assistant (is she trying to put one over on my grandmother!?!?!), a creepy butler (ohhhh he's creepy!), a guy who wants my grandmother to give her necklace back to Egypt because tomb robbing is bad (he's handsome and good!), a couple who HATE each other (married people are supposed to be happy! They must be bad guys!) and some other stuff I cannot remember.

This book is awful. Everything about it is just awful. Please don't read it.

I'm begging you.

Julie says

All By Myself, Alone by Mary Higgins Clark is a 2017 Simon & Schuster publication.

It seems like it has been a while since I touched base with Alvirah and Willy, so it felt good to hear from them again.

In this eleventh installment in the series, Alvirah and Willy are celebrating their forty-fifth wedding anniversary by taking a cruise aboard a new luxury cruise liner, so opulent it could rival the Titanic.

Also on board is: Celia, who is there to give a series of lectures, but who is also trying to forget her ex-fiance, a con man who stole money from her friends, and has now implicated her in his plot- and 'Lady Em', an elderly woman carrying a priceless emerald she plans to donate to the Smithsonian.

But, once they are out to sea, Lady Em is found dead and the emerald is missing...

I enjoyed this one, which was little change of pace for our favorite lottery winners, because it was set aboard a cruise ship, which created the opportunity to introduce a variety of different characters, and of course the murderer has to be on board!!

There is no shortage of suspects or surprise developments along the way. I can't say Alvirah and Willy were as hands on in the investigation as they sometimes are, and I felt Celia's story was the more prominent one, but they make their fair share of contributions to the story.

For those unfamiliar with the Alivrah and Willy mysteries, they are always fun, very light, whodunits. With the exceptions of some mild language and adult themes, these stories are clean, and go very easy on the violence, making them a great choice for mystery fans of all ages and tastes. In fact, they could easily be categorized as 'cozy mysteries'.

If you are familiar with the series, you know what to expect and will find this one on par with the previous installments.

Others, who may be expecting a novel along the lines of Clark's stand-alone books or similar to her collaboration with Alafair Burke, may feel a little confused by its much lighter tones. So, I feel I should stress that these are very easy to read, are not terribly deep, and perhaps they should simply be enjoyed, taken at face value, and not over-analyzed.

Overall, I found this installment to be one of the better ones in the series and think fans of the author or of Alvirah and Willy, or cozy style mysteries, will want to check this one out.

3.5 stars

Tiffany_Reads says

Another great Mary Higgins Clark novel. :)

Donna says

The maiden voyage of the luxury cruise ship The Queen Charlotte commands a list of wealthy passengers including Lady Em who intends to wear her priceless emerald necklace. Lady Em is surrounded by her companion, her financial advisor and his wife, lawyers, and an Interpol agent determined to stop a thief from stealing the infamous necklace. Lottery winners Alvirah and Willy are on board as well as guest lecturers on gemology and Shakespeare.

This ship is luxurious but obviously quite different from a Disney cruise. Mary Higgins Clark gives us the motivations of numerous people who had reasons to kill. Many of the chapters are very short, even less than one page as they are narrated from different points of view by the passengers and crew. This allowed me to read the book in what seemed to be record time. I didn't get a sense of suspense but I found the book entertaining.
