



# Guard Your Daughters

*Diana Tutton*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online ➔](#)

# Guard Your Daughters

*Diana Tutton*

## Guard Your Daughters Diana Tutton

Guard Your Daughters by Diana Tutton is a 1953 novel about a family of five daughters living in the country – or rather four daughters since one has recently escaped by marrying and it is Morgan, Cressida, Teresa and Thisbe who are still at home with their parents. Their mother stops her daughters going to school or making friends. But because she tends to make scenes or retire to bed, her family do all they can to avoid defying or upsetting her; yet they do so in a continually light-hearted, cheerful fashion.

## Guard Your Daughters Details

Date : Published October 19th 2017 by Persephone Books (first published 1953)

ISBN : 9781910263150

Author : Diana Tutton

Format : Paperback 264 pages

Genre : Fiction, Classics, European Literature, British Literature, Literature, 20th Century, Novels

 [Download Guard Your Daughters ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Guard Your Daughters ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Guard Your Daughters Diana Tutton**

---

## From Reader Review Guard Your Daughters for online ebook

### Ali says

The Harvey sisters are unconventional, unschooled and oddly named they have been brought up at quite some distance from the rest of the world. Living with their famous detective writer father, and their fragile mother, they have been one another's friends – with hardly any experience of people outside their family. Pandora the eldest has recently married and moved away to London – and this change seems to highlight for the sisters the peculiarity of their lives. Our narrator is Morgan, the nineteen year old middle sister, a pianist with a keen imagination. The eldest of the sisters still at home, and next in age to Pandora, is Thisbe, a beautiful and sharply tongued poet. A year younger than Morgan, is eighteen year old Cressida, sensible and domesticated, she seems most keenly aware of the oddities in the Harvey's existence. The youngest sister is fifteen year old Teresa, romantic and dreamy she is very much the baby of the family.

Coming back to visit her family after her marriage, Pandora fears for her sisters – fears they won't be able to marry or have lives of their own. Her removal from the family has increased her unease of the way the sisters have been brought up.

"I sighed. I knew where this was heading. Pandora had decided in her own gentle and inexorable way that poor Teresa ought to be at school. It was shame, I thought. I said: "Dearest, being married is making you very conventional. You never used to worry about our education."

"I didn't realise quite what anachronisms we all were. It's so extraordinary that you all submit to this – this captivity."

"But we're all frightfully happy," I said. "I can't see that it matters. Have you talked to Thisbe like this?"

"Yes last night. She came back into my bedroom. She agrees."

With their parents existing very much in the background, the five sisters have made their own entertainment and learnt to look after themselves and one another really very well. Their father divides his time between his writing and his wife, who he dances attendance upon constantly ensuring she is not upset. This fragile absent mother is a strange character, at first she appears merely cosseted and spoilt, her husband and daughters adoring her without question. The sisters have been sheltered from the world to a ridiculous degree, but when two seemingly eligible young men come into the sisters lives; their lack of social experience becomes obvious. However there are darker undercurrents to this unconventional household. Throughout this novel, woven into the humorous and charming story of the relationship between five sisters – there is a definite shadow. For me there was always something unexplained, remaining unspoken till the end. This element is brilliantly done, well plotted it adds something quite special to what could have been a fairly ordinary story. Yet the story is not ordinary, it's heart-warming, funny and memorable, and the final twist utterly brilliant. *Guard Your Daughters* is in many ways very like Dodie Smith's *I Capture the Castle* – a book which I have read twice, loved, and which continues to enjoy huge popularity. Diana Tutton's first novel was published just a few years after *I Capture the Castle*, and in it, she appears to refer to the earlier novel in a scene about dressing for a cocktail party at the house of the local gentry. I think that *Guard your Daughters* is every bit as good as *I capture the Castle* and it is very surprising to me that it remains out of print. It is understandable that there are comparisons made between the two novels, *Guard your Daughters* has a similar feel to *I Capture the Castle*, it is a heart-warming nostalgic type novel. It is certainly the type of novel I can imagine re-reading, wanting to meet those sisters again and again. I do think, however, that *Guard your Daughters* has something more serious to say than *I Capture the Castle*. Tutton understands her characters beautifully; the gradual unravelling of the past and the motivations and consequences of the Harvey parents is possibly what sets it apart. I am so very glad I have had a chance to read this novel, and must thank Kerry from librarything again, for sending it to me.

---

### Rosemary Atwell says

A gentle, bittersweet and very English coming-of-age novel narrated in the slightly arch and dotty style of Nancy Mitford and Dodie Smith. A lost world. Lovely.

---

### Eve says

**"I'm very fond of my new friends, but I do get angry when they tell me how dull my life must have been before I came to London. We were queer, I suppose, and restricted, and we used to fret and grumble, but the one thing our sort of family doesn't suffer from is boredom." —Morgan**

So Morgan Harvey sets about describing the idyllic life of her family of five sisters in the English countryside. Dad's an author, and Mom's a sensitive beauty who everyone handles with kid gloves. Everything seems much like it's been plucked from *Pride and Prejudice*, as the girls are at turns reserved, spunky, and opinionated. However, when the eldest of the Miss Harveys marries, she realizes just how odd and secluded her family really is, and attempts to stir things so that the girls (who are of marriageable age) get out to meet future husbands and make friends, like normal people do. The repercussions are both hilarious and a bit sad. Hmm.

This reminded me of so many good books I've read. I love reading about the insular lives of a household, especially sisters that are close in age. It's why I love *Little Women*, *The Makioka Sisters*, *Pride and Prejudice*, and *I Capture the Castle*. Also why I know I'll love Nancy Mitford when I finally read her! I might also add, that it's what fascinated me about *The Virgin Suicides*, but also left me frustrated. I feel like had Eugenides included the reader in the lives of that set of sisters, I would have been more inclined to love it.

There's one particular bathroom scene that just warmed my heart. All the sisters are reunited, including the recently married, Pandora, and as they prepare for bed, they all take turns drawing baths, brushing their teeth, combing their hair, and catching up on each other's lives in a much practiced routine. It was such a sweet scene. I was prompted to draw a bath for myself afterwards, which I haven't done in ages, as I much prefer a shower. I wish I could jump into another book in this same thread...and if it's set in the 50s, like this one was, even better! So after a little research, I was referred to *The Constant Nymph*, which I will definitely be purchasing.

---

### Jane says

Pity these poor adolescent sisters in post-war England: their prospects are blighted not only by their class and era, but by a monster of a mother whose husband has allowed her to nurture her anxieties until she's grown an impenetrable bower - like Sleeping Beauty's - around her girls. Still, they manage to learn, to enjoy themselves, and even to meet a few young men. In the end, they prevail and their dragon mother is stripped of her power. Tutton writes well and has a terrific ear for conversation. If you enjoyed *I Capture The Castle*

by Dodie Smith, you'll like this one.

---

### **Lauren LaTulip says**

Superficially the story of an upper middle class family of eccentrics surviving post-war deprivations, this tale of five sisters morphs grows into something Gothic and disturbing. I thought it would be a funny fluffy book, dated, but it is a dark and insightful period piece.

---

### **Lady Drinkwell says**

What could be better than a book about an eccentric literary family living in a ramshackle house in the country? I loved this book but as I read it I realized that this family of girls were no Little Women.. nobody was going to help poor villagers and this "marmee" wasn't even going to invite the neighbours round for tea. This book has a bitter twist of lemon in it. The girls are snobs, but snobs in a very small society, consisting just of their own family... so they look down on almost everyone who is not exactly like them.. and consider themselves to be extraordinary.. There is an interesting scene where they are at a party and are surprised nobody is paying them any attention.. and wonder if they really are outstanding after all. Although the family did irritate me I personally think that Diane Tutton was being very clever when she wrote this book, she doesn't want us to like this family but to understand them. Guard your Daughters has the air of being a jolly romp like Capture the Castle, but actually there is a dark tinge of psychological drama in it. It is a very thought provoking read.

---

### **Hilary says**

I loved spending time with these sisters, they were so entertaining, their characters interesting and all so different. The writing has a great sense of humour, the relationships are so well observed. The story is narrated by Morgan, and begins shortly after her sister Pandora escapes home to begin married life. Although mummy is controlling to the extreme, their family life and the relationships between the sisters are lovely, so close but not without usual sibling problems. If only mummy could get over whatever the problem was this could have been a really nice place to grow up. The first half of the book was stronger I felt, I hugely enjoyed the girls adventures but the hints towards what mummy's problem really was, made me think (view spoiler) however the rest was just so good it didn't affect my enjoyment that I found the plot a slight anticlimax.

---

### **Rosemary says**

The five Harvey sisters (or four, now that the eldest is married) live an isolated life with their well-known writer father and their beloved sensitive mother in the English countryside. They have a lot of freedom in some ways--they can read whatever they like and discuss any topic, however 'shocking'--but they don't get to have friends or go to school or have any kind of life outside the family.

The book starts off very light and funny, with nods to 'Pride and Prejudice' and the Mitford sisters, but

slowly develops into something much darker. Not just in relation to the parents--all the family members seem to have a troubled underside that comes out slowly.

For example I loved the narrator, Morgan, the middle sister, at first, but as she started to come out of that little family bubble I realised how snobbish and judgmental she was. I'm not sure if this was intended or if it's just the view from 65 years later. Either way it works as part of a story that brings out the way that we take our family dynamics for granted as children but start to question them, sometimes with a shock, as we grow up. But for this family it happens later than most.

---

### **Mack says**

One of the things I love about reading, especially books written in the previous century is seeing just how much times have changed. Not a lot happens, daily business of living, the Harvey family live in self-imposed exile, leading an eccentric life, close knit and seemingly well adjusted. I enjoyed this book but I loved and hated the five daughters. The Mothers delicate condition (only one fire lit in a draughty house and it is in her room) and it seemed she got upset at any attempt at independence of the part of her daughters who had never been to school or formed friendships. It had a dark edge, lighthearted but murky. Frequent humourous situations that did make me smile.

---

### **Lady Shockley says**

Having read about this novel in advance of Persephone Press' reprinting, I was very much looking forward to reading it. Having devoured it upon its arrival on my doorstep, I must say, it lives up to its reputation. It was a delight.

On the surface, *Guard Your Daughters* concerns the Harvey family, and its five daughters. Brought up "eccentrically" - without a telephone, car, or refrigerator, and without attending school -in 1950s England, the Harvey girls enjoy their secluded circumstances and surroundings with an enthusiasm that borders on glee at times. Being exceedingly well- read, their banter and conversation are littered with literary references and quotations, which is especially fun for readers.

Beneath the the quips, cooking, and fresh air and exercise though, lurks an unspoken fear that affects almost every decision the young ladies make. It drives them to unusual lengths, including outright manipulation and social exclusion and avoidance, in order to keep things calm on the surface.

All told, it was a wonderful read, with flashing wit and energy. Knowing the underlying ills, it certainly calls for a second read.

---

### **Silvia says**

Inizialmente sembra di leggere un incrocio tra "Orgoglio e pregiudizio" e "I Capture the Castle": cinque ragazze con nomi bizzarri vivono in campagna con i genitori, il padre è uno scrittore di gialli e la madre un'artista matta. Man mano che andiamo avanti, però, ci accorgiamo che c'è un che di cupo nella storia: le ragazze vivono isolate, non sono mai andate a scuola e non hanno mai occasioni per incontrare altre persone

perché la madre impedisce loro di uscire o di invitare altre persone. L'incontro delle ragazze con due uomini, Gregory prima e Patrick poi, scuoterà le loro vite e farà capire loro che devono cercare di emanciparsi dal controllo ossessivo della madre. La storia è raccontata dalla sorella di mezzo, Morgan, aspirante pianista desiderosa di conoscere nuove realtà ma che è colta dai sensi di colpa all'idea di disobbedire alla madre. La sua contraddizione caratterizza, più o meno, tutte le sorelle ad eccezione di Pandora, l'unica sposata. Sarà il colpo di scena finale a risolvere la tensione e a permettere a queste ragazze di vivere la loro vita liberamente.

---

### **Tania says**

A charming novel of an interesting family.

There are 5 daughters, all very different, Thisbe is the Poet, Morgan, our narrator, a musician with quite an imagination, Cressida is the conventional one and Teresa, the youngest, is the romantic one with her head in a book. The last one, Pandora has got married and moved out. Their father is a very successful detective novelist and their mother is seen as delicate and very protective of her daughters, wanting to keep them close and keep outsiders away from them. They live an unconventional life and have very little contact with the outside world. This starts to change slowly with the arrival of a stranger in the first chapter and with a visit from Pandora. Once the family is seen through their eyes, the sisters start to realise just how odd their family really is.

Ostensibly, this is a fairly frothy comedy, but towards the end it gets somewhat darker and has a bittersweet ending. I loved reading about the family and watching them try to break out a bit, without upsetting their Mother too much. I'm sure I will revisit them many times.

---

### **Anna says**

hmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm

+

haaaaaaaaaaaaaahaaaaahaaaaaaaaaaaaahaaaaaaaaaaaa

---

### **Catie says**

Recommendation by Furrowed Middlebrow - 10/5/2016

ROMILLY CAVAN, Beneath the Visiting Moon (1940)

<https://www.bloglovin.com/blogs/furro...>

---

### **Karen says**

A 1950's novel about four sisters ( a fifth recently escaped by marrying) who live in the country with their parents.

They believe themselves to be zany and bohemian and throughout the story there are some very funny

descriptions of their life together.

Their father is a successful detective writer and their mother is more or less a recluse who forbids her daughters going to school and making new friends.

Unsuspected at first, there is darker side to this novel which brings the story together at the end.

All the sisters have quirky characters ,which i loved and will remember.

Another great book republished by Persephone Books

---

### **G.G. says**

Many thanks to <https://www.goodreads.com/user/show/2...> for giving me a copy of this utterly delightful novel. I'd never even heard of the author before.

Morgan Harvey, aged nineteen, is the middle sister of five and the narrator of the story. She begins at the end:

I'm very fond of my new friends, but I do get angry when they tell me how dull my life must have been before I came to London. We were queer, I suppose, and restricted, and we used to fret and grumble, but the one thing our sort of family doesn't suffer from is boredom. (p.1)

And indeed, just as Morgan promises, there isn't a dull moment in the novel, which is about the end of childhood and parents' fall from grace.

The action is set in post-WWII England, when rationing is still in force, central heating is a luxury, and an eccentric family like this one might decide to have the telephone taken away because "it worried Mother." The five sisters have been educated at home: as sister no. 2 explains to an unexpected guest, "None of us ever went to *any* sort of school. We regard them as sinks of ignorance and unnatural vice."(p.9) Between taking it in turns to make breakfast, lunch, and tea, they write poetry, play the piano, discuss books, rehearse a play to be performed on Mother's birthday, and try, with varying degrees of success, to persuade their peculiar parents to allow them to accept invitations to cocktail parties and have young men for tea. The outside world is encroaching on paradise, and the author maintains a fine tension between the story Morgan tells and the reader's growing sense that there is much Morgan does not realize, that things cannot go on as they are. The denouement when it comes is surprising but quite believable.

As other reviewers have noted, there's a touch of *The Pursuit Of Love* here, and *I Capture the Castle* too.

What makes Tutton different is her attention to the way that one parent's love for the other can (nearly) wreck children's lives, and the passionate devotion of such children to their flawed parents.

Definitely worth seeking out a copy and reading!

---

### **Alisha says**

Piquant but ultimately rather unsatisfying.

Set in the 1950s, I believe.

There are five daughters in the Harvey family. The eldest is recently married; the remaining four are unsure of what life holds for them. All they know is that their activities and friendships are severely curtailed by

their parents, particularly their mother. They've grown up with this and are fairly content with it. Their parents encourage them in semi-intellectual pursuits, which helps them feel like they are happy. They all more or less recognize that they're not a "normal" family, but they willfully ignore exploring why, until it is forced upon them. Also mysterious to them is why their eldest sister was allowed to get married, when so much of the family life is centered around staying at home and never, ever rocking the boat.

Only a limited amount of resolution at the end.

Rather interesting characters, but kind of a cold book.

---

### **Emily says**

At first I didn't entirely warm to this 1953 novel about an eccentric family of five sisters living a bizarrely secluded life in rural England, because it seemed to be too much a pale imitation of *I Capture the Castle*. Halfway through, though I was loving it. Towards the end, I was in a state where I was enjoying it to a degree that I kept feeling a tremendous urge to go on goodreads and read everyone else's reviews and share the happy enthusiasm, but then had to slap my own hands away from the keyboard because so often that way lie spoilers. It's fairly clear what's going to happen at the end from the first sentence, but one doesn't know how. The sisters, in their different ways, are entertaining company, and the dark undercurrent gives the book some ballast. One I'm sure I'll be reading again.

---

### **Basia Korzeniowska says**

One of the weirdest books I have ever read. Everyone is so nice in it. So kind. Until.....

---

### **Karen says**

Yes, the story took a hard left turn at the very end, but that didn't lessen my enjoyment of all that came before. And that ending made what had been a light read much more thought-provoking. Still mulling it over...

---