



Whodunit?: Utterly Baffling Detective Stories

Philip Pullman

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In Whodunit? compiled by Philip Pullman, unexplained disappearances, daring thefts, perplexing mysteries, and the greatest sleuths of all time combine in a page-turning read. From Sherlock Holmes to Hercule Poirot, famous detectives puzzle their way through a maze of alibis and motives in this superb selection of classic and contemporary crime fiction.

Whodunit?: Utterly Baffling Detective Stories Details

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Adam says

Great selection of short stories by authors that have become the "standard" of the mystery genre (Christie, Sayers, Ellery Queen, etc.) that are kid-readable and appealing... but all adult characters so this one is for the at-least-10-and-up crowd for sure.

Adults will appreciate Pullman's short intro notes breaking down the the different mystery sub-genres / story-types.

Shimin Li says

This book has 16 short mysteries, some solved by by famous detectives, some left an open end. But it's still a great book with challenging tales.

You know how criminals are everywhere, detectives are everywhere too. Anyone could be smart and analyze facts and predict and so. That's also what scientists do too.

This book reminds me of my favorite detective stories, by Sir Conan Doyle. Sherlock Holmes was a worldwide famous man lived in London. He's sooooo intelligent! You guys should check him out, lol.

Vlad says

Hm. No.

Amy says

The stories are a lot of fun although not especially diverse in range (and some of the excerpts feel really incomplete when presented as short stories), and the introductions from Philip Pullman give the book a cohesive feel overall. They aren't all classic whodunits in structure and some don't involve any detectives, but they relate thematically with the inherent paranoia and tension that define the genre. As with any collection, the stories are hit-and-miss, and the misses for me all seem to draw heavily on dated racial stereotypes and tropes.

Plainsboro Public Library says

Heart failure, blood poisoning and suicide? All at once? In The Adventure of the Egyptian Tomb by Agatha Christie, Sir John Willard died after he entered an ancient tomb. It was thought to be a heart attack, but other characters die mysteriously as well. One dies of blood poisoning while another dies of tetanus followed by suicide. The curse of the Pharaoh is following those who dishonor the tomb. Hercule Poirot sets off to Egypt

to investigate the “curse” and whodunnit?

Also, in The Speckled Band by Arthur Conan Doyle, Helen lives with her stepfather Dr. Roylott, a very difficult man. Helen’s sister Julia died in her sleep, just a few weeks before she was to marry. Helen, also to be married, finds that her step-father moves her into her late sister’s room. During her first night, she experiences the same eeriness as her sister. And, Sherlock Holmes is approached to save Helen and find out whodunnit?

These stories appear in Philip Pullman’s book, Whodunnit, a collection of detective short stories. Here, the mood follows a pattern. When exiting from a story, the mood is relieved, but quickly intensifies with the beginning of a new one. In these particular stories, the pattern in the mood is exactly the same. The mood is light, yet curious in the exposition when the client approaches the detective and intensifies as the plot continues. The mood is intense and serious at the climax, yet settles immediately as the detectives crack the case.

Whodunnit: Detective Short Stories is a beautiful collection of some of the classic short detective stories. I personally enjoyed reading this book and I would recommend this to all adult and young adult readers. The suspenseful mood that is consistent in each narrative can be understood by anyone, especially because the author, Philip Pullman includes his own views on each short story to introduce the mystery. I enjoyed how Pullman manages to keep the reader puzzled as all of his chosen stories have a uniquely different mystery to be revealed. Whodunnit: Detective Short Stories is enjoyed by many and it will force you to flip the page with every story and find out whodunnit.

~Ishva

Mavis Hewitt says

Like detective stories, so enjoyed this mixture, easy to read, specially liked the Italian Folk tale.

Rhitwick Biswas says

Finished it two days back. Few stories are really good and justify the book title.
Check it out...

Uriel says

this book is about many detective stories cobined in one book and with the writers name wirten in every chapter such as Agatha Christie, Sir. Arthur Conan Doyle, and Dorothy L. Sayers all of this writers and many more agreed on Philip Pullman the Author of this detective book to put it in one whole together. This book tells about a mystery about the crime, murder, kidnnaping, and a little less robbery. Once when your almost done with the crime scene and gave out info, and clues. once the chapter is done and figured out the mystery the killer is revealed and continue to the next chapter of the book and figure out all of the mystery. This detective book is hard to figure once done reading a chapter. Of course the chapter gives clues on what had happen to the suspect but it sometimes confusing as well to the thing its not easy to complete the whole mystery, and what was the point of the suspect doing the crime.

the detective book is awesome it helps your mind to think on what is happenning and to try using the clues for help in each mystery but you have to use memory on what had happen and it would be great for the

readers to read this kind of books and its also exciting by reading and imagining on what's happening

Suzi says

Nice short introduction into the detective genre, might even have tempted me to read a bit more...

Wolf says

Phillip Pullman has chosen some excellent short stories for this attractively packaged collection. Designed with older children, teenagers and young adults in mind - obvious only in two puzzle sections and possibly the choice of an extract from 'Emil and the Detectives' - this book would appeal to anyone who enjoys crime and mystery stories.

Some old favourites appear. Whilst some, such as Arthur Conan Doyle's 'The Speckled Band', will doubtless be familiar to most readers, others probably won't be. Many of the biggest names of mystery fiction are covered: Agatha Christie (with a Poirot story, 'The Adventure of the Egyptian Tomb'), Dashiell Hammett (Sam Spade's most conventional detective story, 'They Can Only Hang You Once') and Dorothy L. Sayers (in fine form with 'The Inspiration of Mr Budd'). There are also stories of crisp deduction from Ellery Queen, roguish adventure from Leslie Charteris and the Saint, and intuition and lateral thinking from Isaac Asimov.

Pullman doesn't confine himself to the usual suspects, however, and there is also an Italian folktale and part of a memoir of a fingerprint expert recalling an unusual request. My personal favourite is 'Butch Minds the Baby', a beautifully deadpan tale of New York criminals.

Well worth buying for any teenagers you know who might be interested - or simply reading yourself.

Note this volume is sometimes also listed as 'Whodunnit? Detective Stories' (with two 'n's) and was previously called simply 'Detective Stories'.

Jessie says

Eh. It was interesting to read outside my usual comfort genres, but most of the stories were just absurd.

Catherine says

I enjoyed many of the stories, but I found myself getting bored towards the end, so I quit reading it. My favorite story was Asimov's "The Cross of Lorraine".

Melanie Au says

includes many short mysteries written by classic mystery writers.

Bethnoir says

A good mixture of stories from a genre I don't usually read. I laughed and was perplexed so I guess it achieved what it set out to do.

Dane Cobain says

Philip Pullman is a writer of extraordinary talent, and so I'd be willing to take his judgement in most matters of art and literature. Here, he reveals sixteen of his favourite detective stories, featuring some of the greatest sleuths of all-time including Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot and Sam Spade.

I wasn't sure what to expect when I first picked this up, but I quickly settled in – in fact, the first story in the collection is The Speckled Band, one of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's best Sherlock Holmes short stories. That was followed by They Can Only Hang You Once by Dashiell Hammett and The Adventure of the Egyptian Tomb by Agatha Christie, both of which are fantastic short stories which will leave you begging for more.

One of the more intriguing short stories in the collection is a non-fiction piece by Tony Fletcher – ever heard of him? I don't blame you if you haven't – he's an ex-copper, who wrote about his experience on the force in *Memories of Murder*. This particular piece recounts the story of an ex-colleague, a veteran of the force, who was called in to fingerprint a ghost – whether you believe in the supernatural or not (I don't), it makes for interesting reading.

And that's not all – other authors to contribute to the collection include Dorothy L. Sayers, Isaac Asimov, Raymond Smullyan, Michael Underwood and Leslie Charteris. Even if you're not a fan of the traditional detective story, this is well worth a read – who knows? You might even get hooked!
