



Lion in the Valley

Elizabeth Peters

Download now

Read Online ➞

Lion in the Valley

Elizabeth Peters

Lion in the Valley Elizabeth Peters

The 1895-96 season promises to be an exceptional one for Amelia Peabody, her dashing Egyptologist husband, Radcliffe Emerson, and their precocious (some might say rambunctious) eight-year-old son, Ramses. The long-denied permission to dig at the pyramids of Dahshoor has finally been granted, and the much-coveted burial chamber of the Black Pyramid is now theirs for the exploring.

Before the young family exchanges the relative comfort of Cairo for the more rudimentary quarters near the excavation site, they engage a young Englishman, Donald Fraser, as a tutor and companion for Ramses, and Amelia takes a wayward young woman, Enid Debenham, under her protective wing.

But there is danger and deception in the wind that blows across the hot Egyptian sands. A brazen kidnapping attempt, a gruesome murder, and an expedition subsequently cursed by misfortune and death—all serve to alert Amelia to the likely presence of her arch nemesis, the "Master Criminal," notorious looter of the living *and* the dead. But it is far more than ill-gotten riches that motivate the man known as Sethos. The evil genius has a score to settle with the meddling lady archaeologist who has sworn to deliver him to justice . . . and he's got her dead-on in his sights.

Replete with edge-of-the-seat suspense and scrupulous archaeological and historical detail, all delivered in Amelia Peabody's unique, wry voice, *Lion in the Valley* is a classic installment in Elizabeth Peters's beloved mystery-adventure series.

Lion in the Valley Details

Date : Published 2001 by Robinson (first published March 1986)

ISBN : 9781841192161

Author : Elizabeth Peters

Format : 360 pages

Genre : Mystery, Historical, Historical Fiction, Fiction, Northern Africa, Egypt, Historical Mystery

 [Download Lion in the Valley ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Lion in the Valley ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Lion in the Valley Elizabeth Peters

From Reader Review Lion in the Valley for online ebook

Terran says

I read the first few Amelia Peabody books on an indirect recommendation. I was basically looking for a fun read and to branch out of my primary reading fields a bit (F&SF and non-fiction science). I've read relatively few genre mysteries, aside from some Sherlock Holmes, a few Agatha Christies, and a couple of Tony Hillermans. So I was interested to learn a bit more about this field.

These were ok. They were fun, and very much on the light end of the scale. The Egyptology was definitely fascinating, and I'll give them that they had a better justification for the mysteries than some cozy mystery authors come up with.

My problem is that the characters were *radically, drastically* implausible. Especially "Ramses", the "precocious" six- or seven-year-old child of the protagonists. He goes beyond precocious to the point of utterly shattering my suspension of disbelief every time he opens his mouth. He makes Ender look like a retiring and somewhat inept prepubescent, going through petty growing pains. The other characters are also overblown caricatures, but they are at least occasionally fun to read and don't take themselves too seriously.

I get the impression that Peters wrote the first book with amusingly exaggerated characters but that when the series took off, she felt a need to successively exaggerate the characters and scenarios with every book, until by the fourth book, it's difficult to read them.

On the flip side, she does poke fun at a number of mystery genre tropes. (I love Amelia's offhand comment that she doesn't read mysteries because the characters are always solving things with incredible leaps of illogic. Pot? Kettle? Black?) And the Master Criminal, when he is revealed at the end of the fourth book, is such an absurd piece of work that he *has* to be a spoof on Evil Villain tropes. (At least, I choose to believe so and laugh, rather than gag when I read him.) I get the sense that there's more satire of the genre going on here than I'm entirely catching -- that if I'd read more in the genre, I could appreciate these better.

On the whole, they were fun light reads, but I don't feel compelled to read further in the series. It's a bit disappointing, really -- the world of the 19th century Egyptology craze is fascinating, and it would be neat to read really well developed mysteries in that era. As it is, I kept wishing that the characters would take their petty mysteries and get out of the way, to let the rest of us appreciate the surroundings.

Mike (the Paladin) says

This is the first book in the series (of which I "listened to some but not all) where The Master Criminal's nomdeplume (or for the purists who will insist this means "pen name") alias is revealed...however if I put it here it will constitute a spoiler...soooooo, I'll just say it refers back to Egyptian mythology.

Moving on...

If you've read any of my other reviews on this series of books you know that I believe them to be very well written, but just don't enjoy them in some ways, primarily this is due to the fact that I somewhat dislike the protagonist Amelia Peabody. The attitude that the author writes for her about the "Master Criminal"

character is probably one of the reasons. I cannot abide husbands or wives who (taking a version of what Rhett Butler said) "Won't be physically untrue to their 'spouse', but can't be mentally true to him/her". Amelia carries on a continuing flirtation with "the Master Criminal" throughout much of this series...I can't help but identify with her husband, and would probably have been slightly more, insistent that she make up her mind as to her stance on criminality and monogamy. Again I recognize that some will like this plot point and enjoy the books more because of it...to each their own as they say.

So, antique thefts and secrets revealed if you like this series this is an important entry. It is well written as are the others and as with the others I listened to I finished it and it is a well done mystery that hangs together. The 3 star rating reflects my lack of enjoyment here, not technically insufficiency. Some of you will love this book.

Celia says

"You were talking in your sleep last night, Amelia."

"What nonsense, Emmerson! I never talk in my sleep. It is a sign of mental instability. What was I saying?"

Ah, love the banter.

Awww - I love these books. Amelia's capture and rescue was quite thrilling, and I enjoyed her musings about the Master Criminal being like the pharoahs, a lion in a valley of goats. About to commence the carnage, one assumes. I am even enjoying Ramses now, who at first I found rather insufferable, but an insufferable character is much more endearing when it is apparent that his own parents find him rather insufferable (or at least, Amelia does). It makes me wonder whether Ramses is one of those characters that authors speak of that emerge in their mind, and then rampage through their stories doing whatever they like.

Also, listening to this as an audio book makes me begin speaking with a rather English accent, much to my husband's bewilderment.

Sarah Sammis says

Two stars off for the annoying Ramses.

Emma says

3.5 stars. The mysteries never seem to matter in these books as the interest comes from the attitudes and dynamics between Peabody and Emerson and of course the insufferable Ramses.

Algernon says

[7/10]

Have I mentioned to you, Peabody, that one of the reasons why I adore you is that you are more inclined to beat people with your umbrella than fall weeping on your bed?

Amelia Peabody returns to Egypt in the company of her husband, Professor Emerson, and her darling offspring Ramses, now eight years old and more disruptive than you can imagine (*Ramses seldom disobeyed a direct order, but he had a diabolical facility for finding a loophole in my commands.*). The plot follows the formula set up in the previous three books: the Emerson family sets camp on an archeological site and starts digging. Pretty soon the dead bodies outnumber the mummies discovered on site and the whole family participate in the investigations and speculations as to the identity of the guilty party - three Sherlocks for the price of one, with young Ramses eclipsing both his parents when it comes to lengthy discourse and far fetched theories. Jumping to conclusions is the favorite sport of the amateur sleuth family and much of the charm of the story lies in proving their theories wrong. As usual, there's a sideplot of young people who might fall in love if they were not among the suspects. The situation prompts Amelia to assume her matchmaker role and to work to bring them together whether they will it or not:

"You are not leaving my employ, Mr. Nemo. What — do you suppose that, having once placed my shoulder to the wheel and my nose to the grindstone, I will leave the furrow unplowed? I have sworn to redeem you and redeem you I will, with your cooperation or without it. In principle, I am in full sympathy with the right of every Englishman — or woman — or, come to that, any man or woman of any nation ... What was I about to say?"

Nemo's frown had been replaced by a blank, almost imbecile stare. "I haven't the slightest idea," he mumbled.

"Oh, yes. I believe firmly in the right of the individual to seek or leave employment whenever he or she chooses. Any infringement of that choice constitutes serfdom, and liberty is the inalienable right of humankind. However, in this case your right to liberty must be laid aside temporarily in favor of a higher good."

I found the actual criminal investigation and the archeological details in this fourth book were not quite up to the high standards I have come to expect from Peters. The ending was spectacular, but somewhat unoriginal, with the M.C. (stands for master criminal) explaining at length his dastardly deeds. Or maybe I am a victim of my own jumping to conclusions and being proven wrong when the suspect I picked up turned out to be innocent (view spoiler). I didn't feel a letdown though because I had a great time with Amelia's charming commentaries on the role of women in society coupled with her frequent allusion of marital bliss in the company of her husband, not to mention her roving eye at other men's pectorals: a great combination of militant feminism with the sabotage of the Victorian (the book is set in 1895) reticence to mention sexual passion in any form.

There's even some time to poke some fun at the literary trends of the period that can be considered as the source of inspiration for this series. This is also a plea in favour of light reading:

"Mr. Haggard's stories," I explained, "are pure fantasy and do not pretend to be anything else. However rational the mind — and mine is extremely rational — it requires periods of rest, when the aery winds of fancy may ruffle the still waters of thought and encourage those softer and more spiritual musings without which no individual can be at his or her best. These so-called detective stories, on the other hand, pretend to

exhibit the strictly intellectual qualities of the protagonist. In fact, they do nothing of the sort; for in the few I have read, the detective arrived at his solutions, not by means of the inexorable progress of true reasoning, but by wild guesses which turned out to be correct only because of the author's construction of his plot."

That's a bit of the kettle calling the pot black, as the style of detecting employed by Amelia relies more on wild guesses and female intuition than on deductive logic. Logic is the demesne of Ramses, who steals the show every time he makes an entry. My favorite scene involves the precocious eight year old demanding to be told about the birds and the bees:

"I believe I have heard Mama say on several occasions that the relationships between the sexes were badly mishandled in our prudish society, and that young persons ought to be informed of the facts."

"You did hear me say that," I acknowledged, wondering what had ever possessed me to say it in his hearing.

"I am ready to be informed," said Ramses, his elbows on the table, his chin in his hands, and his great eyes fixed on me.

"I cannot deny the justice of the request," I said. "Emerson—"

"What?" Emerson started violently. "Now, Peabody—"

"Surely this is a matter more suitable for a father than a mother."

"Yes, but—"

"I will leave you to it, then." I rose.

"Just a moment, Papa," Ramses said eagerly. "Allow me to get out paper and pencil. I would like to take a few notes."

My fears that the series is running out of steam have been proven unfounded, and I look forward to returning in the future to Egypt in the company of the Emerson family. I consider the series a good alternative to P.G. Wodehouse as a light summer read, apt to put a smile on my face after a hard day at work or after a more demanding author.

Julie says

Lion in the Valley by Elizabeth Peters is a 2008 William Morrow publication. (Kindle edition) This book was originally published in 1986/87.

This is the fourth book in the Amelia Peabody series.

The Mummy Case had been a just a little sluggish, but Lion in the Valley, quickly sets things back on course.

Amelia and Emerson, along with their son, Ramses, are on yet another adventure, but soon find themselves living in fear that the "Master Criminal" could be in their midst, as well as dealing with a puzzling murder in which a young woman finds herself the number one suspect.

In the meantime, the precocious Ramses has become a little nosy, and is old enough to start asking questions about marital conjugal activities, which has Emerson seeking a more private place for him and Amelia to sleep.

Well, I have to say, Amelia really outdid herself in this installment. Her unconventional parenting, marriage, and lifestyle may raise eyebrows, but she is an inspiration all the same. She and Emerson have such an amazing chemistry between them and are absolutely adorable, not to mention, downright hilarious.

The mystery is very interesting and of course, Peabody has been observant as ever, piecing things together and coming up with a solution in her practical, no nonsense manner, but must, on occasion, resort to using her trusty parasol in time of crisis.

Although, there is plenty of humor involved, this installment was pretty suspenseful as well and includes a very interesting plot twist I never saw coming.

Overall, this one was perhaps the most entertaining installment, I have read so far. It's my understanding one can read these in order of publication or in chronological order. Interesting. I'll have to figure out which book I should read next because I think chronological order would be the way to go.

4.5 stars

ShoSho says

The narrator wasn't bad but her Emerson voice was awful and she had long pauses. As for the plot, there was almost no plot! The end was funny and unexpected.

Phrynne says

Number 4 in the series and still totally entertaining.

Ramses has a very prominent role in this story. He is eight years old now and more precocious than ever. It is a pity his mother never listens to him though. She could save herself a great deal of trouble as he is usually the best informed person around.

Amelia of course never listens to anyone. She has a very high opinion of her own abilities which is actually rarely founded in reality. She is also very amusing, very brave and a credit to womanhood! Her relationship with Emerson is so entertaining and causes many laugh aloud moments.

My favourite character? Bastet the cat of course. I love a truly intelligent cat and this one has intelligence in spades:)

Lion in the Valley is a bit like Agatha Christie in Egypt ending in that familiar final denouement when all is explained. Amelia Peabody shares many personal characteristics with Miss Marple. Altogether very enjoyable!

Sarah Hough says

I've reached the point with Amelia as an unreliable narrator that I find myself wanting to skip ahead to the future books with different narrators just to get a sense of how she's really perceived by all of the ancillary characters who she believes are besotted by her kindness, intelligence and generosity. I'm also past done with clever asides about her boisterous sexual escapades.

Was also very disappointed by the absence of any archaeology in this book, esp. since Emerson finally got the permit for Dahshur. Maybe those stories are in Book 5?

C. says

Few place this below four stars, which I cannot fathom. I can demonstrate why my three stars are a tolerant stretch. I thought we would be settled by volume IV and see action. Depicting an English family in the 1800s, with American expressions instead of "supper": "**The Lion In The Valley**" merely yields witty dialogue. Its humour and familiar personages were very enjoyable but I am stunned by a novel in which nothing happened; barring nonsense that passed for a plot. This is merely a week in the life of a family and their archaeological team between Darshoor and Cairo.

Some people said beautiful descriptions of Egypt and its culture salvaged this but the silver moonlight etc, is carbon-copied; pick any novel. I also solidly remember *Bastet*. We need no remind that she is their intelligent cat! It is nonsense that they can't make rules for eight year old Walter / *Ramses*. Order him to leave neither house nor babysitters without permission. No one selects a mystery series for tales about a brat causing trouble. I choose the compelling atmosphere of discoveries inside ancient monuments. There were none! There was no lion even as a relic, no archaeological finds, and we explored no pyramid, in a series featuring pyramids!!!! *Amelia* retrieved her brat from one corridor.

The whole novel is about waiting for a disguised villain to appear. The absurdly moot point is saying he is enchanted with *Amelia*; after leaving her and her family stuck in a pyramid previously. It was nearly impossible to go a page without the words "trousers", "scarlet", or "crimson" that I loathe. Will authors please stop being fanciful and simply say "red", "reddish", "pants", or "slacks"?! My feeling is that **Barbara Mertz** phoned this novel in, wishing she were writing about 'Vicky Bliss'.

Shiloah says

I always enjoy my night readings of Peter's Egyptian based mysteries. I can always count on cute themes, some cheesy romance, and a somewhat violent climax of men fighting each other. Just fun reading.

Kristen says

I loved, loved, LOVED this book!! Everytime I start the next Amelia Peabody story I worry that Elizabeth Peters won't be able to maintain the extraordinarily intelligent and utterly hilarious banter between Amelia and Emerson. Thankfully, she has not let me down thus far. In fact, each book has managed to add a new

element to the Emerson family's witty idiosyncracies and facility for attracting mayhem that enchants and delights me!

Lion in the Valley develops the character of the "Master Criminal" to whom Amelia ascribes most unlawful activities that take place in Egypt, much to the fury of her dear Emerson. The Master Criminal becomes a large thorn in the sides of the Emersons, impacting not only Emerson's ability to focus on his current excavation, but Amelia's own safety [I won't say more to avoid any spoilers].

The Emersons' son, Ramses is also further developed in this outing, as he is now, at eight years of age, infuriatingly clever and precocious, much to the chagrin and annoyance of his mother. There is a particularly funny scene in which Ramses requests his parents provide him information on the "feelings" he is having about the opposite sex. Amelia deserts Emerson to have this discussion with their son, and the entire scene left me laughing so hard I had tears running down my cheeks!

The mystery in this book is as entertaining as always, as are the supporting characters Peters introduces in this outing. I enjoyed this book just as much as I have the preceding ones, and cannot wait for the next installment.

I cannot recommend this series highly enough! These books are fabulous if you like wonderfully multi-facted, quirky characters, lightning-fast, witty dialogue and over-the-top outlandish but hugely funny plots.

April says

I'm not quite finished with the book yet but wanted to mention this while it was in my head...there is so much sex in this book I cannot believe it. You know what the great part of this is? There isn't a single graphic sexual comment, no sexual language, no crazy euphemisms and absolutely no sex scenes. So how do I know there is a great deal of sex going on here? Well, this author has talent. She has the art of 'hint, hint, nudge, nudge' down pat. She explicitly explains, without actual details, that Emerson and Peabody have a wonderful, loving, romantic and sexually fulfilling relationship. It is clean, safe, family friendly - but so darned romantic and loving that I love it to tiny little pieces! Well played Ms. Peters, well played!

Ok, finished and what can I say? I loved it just as much as the first three. Now I have to hope that her publishers do the same and bundle the rest for sale in nice big bunches like this.

If you like mystery, cozies, a bit of history and archeology and humor and family and love...you should have already read this. If not, rediscover them for the first time.

Alana says

Perhaps my favorite Amelia Peabody Emerson mystery yet! Elizabeth Peters isn't exactly a brilliant mystery novelist as far as the mystery part is concerned, but she does, indeed, craft a fun tale -- and she's created two very charming lead characters whose banter more than makes up for any deficiencies as far as the mystery is concerned. Thankfully any issues which cropped up in the past few novels and proved to be irritating (aka Ramses and his speech defect) have been firmly dealt with and reasonably worked around. True, things are a bit formulaic and yes, there are several things that the reader just needs to accept and roll with, but hey, I felt

more entertained by this book than I have by the previous two installments and this firmly planted me in the pro-Peters camp so that I know I'll keep reading the series, so clearly the book is a very welcome chapter in the lives of Amelia Peabody and Radcliffe Emerson.

In *Lion in the Valley*, the Emerson family heads to Egypt for a season spent excavating at Dahshoor. They acquired this coveted site after events from the previous novel saw them all imprisoned in the black pyramid at Dahshoor and young Ramses may or may not have helped the Director of Antiquities to a rich and exciting find. Even with such glorious pyramids, though, one could not think that Amelia Peabody Emerson would be so content as to ignore the danger from the Master Criminal, that fiend who runs a black-market antiquities ring. Those readers who were growing a bit annoyed at the constant speculation on such a character will be quite pleased with this novel, where considerable progress is made towards unmasking the devil, or at least learning more about his (her?) passions and methods.

The Emersons have a talent for "adopting" down-on-their-luck Englishmen (a role filled just as often by Englishwomen, though) and this holds true here. They run across a young man named Nemo (or such is the name he selects from himself) who is obviously a well-bred Englishman (or Scot) even if he is dirty, dressed as an Arab, and has clearly been smoking opium. After Nemo saves Ramses from potentially being abducted, Emerson insists that they take in this stray and assigns him the role of Ramses-caretaker (no one is much surprised that this post is never filled by one person for more than one book). Not to be outdone, Peabody has her own idea as to who should be taken under her wing this trip when she learns the identity of a young lady named Miss Enid Debenham, an heiress seen in the company of the scheming Kalenischeff. Of course, when Kalenischeff is found dead in her room and Miss Debenham is nowhere to be found, there is some question as to whether or not the lady can look after herself. Naturally, of course, there's plenty of romantic backstory to entangle "Nemo" and Enid and that all plays a role as the Emersons try to determine who killed Kalenischeff, who is behind the antiquities smuggling ring, and who seems to be sending Amelia little tokens of love...

Of primary importance to me in this particular volume was the fact that Ramses has mostly outgrown any speech defects that rendered his soliloquies quite irritating. Now the boy is merely tiresome, but his parents seem to share the same opinion as this reader and so they are frequently cutting the boy off... of course, this often has the obvious effect of silencing the astute young child when he's about to supply a crucial bit of information, thus leading to confusion and drama, but so it goes. The somewhat harder to swallow storyline involves the identity of the master criminal and his true passions... for even if we can adore Amelia Peabody, let's face it... she was initially described in the first book as a pretty solid spinster entirely out of fashion and unless love has totally transformed her, I'm finding it pretty hard that this mastermind has worshipped her from afar. Be that as it may, at least we do get to interact with this genius of crime and we get to see Emerson fume and fuss with jealousy as Amelia bumbles on, oblivious until it's all immediately in her face (or lap). Peters seems to have allowed herself to be a touch more romance-y in each novel, though it's not like there's anything graphic. Perhaps it's simply that she's a little freer with the jokes on this topic, as with a particularly funny exchange when Miss Debenham comments that she heard such strange noises in the desert during the night... all these cries and moans. It's rather quite cute to see Peters add in those small touches while, thankfully, refraining from totally veering into romance novel territory. As passionate as Peabody and Emerson might be, I rather prefer the pan off into the sunset technique as far as they're concerned.

Since I was a little disappointed with *The Mummy Case*, I was all the more pleased to see that Peters had produced quite a pleasant addition to her series with *Lion in the Valley*. By this point, most readers will have decided if they're jumping ship on the series or sticking it out and, unsurprisingly, I shall continue to read. The good thing, though, is the fact that these don't particularly require the reader to devour them with great speed, so I feel like I can stretch out my enjoyment to savor these books from this point on, dipping into my

stash whenever a rainy day permits.

Petra says

I'm a fan of Emerson family. Their antics and interactions are over the top and entertaining.

This story doesn't disappoint in the antics but it does get more melodramatic than the previous books in the series. There's a lot of mention of Emerson's rippling muscles and fantastic physique.

The mysteries in this series are never strong but practically non-existent in this installment. Not that it matters much but that makes this volume seem more of a filler or place holder for the next than a story in itself.

A fun read but even more fluffy than that others. Fun but not my favorite. I do enjoy the precociousness of Ramses. What a handful that kid would be!

Wanda says

I do love Amelia Peacock Emerson. It's a plus that there is a mystery to solve in each book, because that gives the excuses for the wonderful dialog between Amelia & her husband and for Amelia to start rounding up the strays that she finds along the way during her investigations. They will be assisted whether they want it or not!

A number of people in this installment end up smothering laughter while dealing with the overly serious and literal Amelia, but all seem to realize that her overbearing-ness is coming from a good heart! She believes that marriage should be an equal partnership (and despite his grumbling, Emerson seems to agree with her) and now that she has unexpectedly found her match, she wants the same joy for the others in her life, hence her constant meddling in the love lives of her collection of waifs and strays.

She is also brave, willing to face personal hardship and injury, in pursuit of the truth and the solution to whatever mysterious happenstance is currently on the go.

I adore Emerson, who is always trying to ditch his son and the rest of the archaeological party, in order to get his wife to himself! Their son, Ramses, has developed an intense curiosity about sex and they spend quite a bit of time trying to dodge his prying, making for quite a bit of hilarity. And I was moved when Emerson says, "Have I mentioned to you, Peabody, that one of the reasons why I adore you is that you are more inclined to beat people with your umbrella than fall weeping on your bed?"

I must also put in a good word for 'de cat Bastet,' who displays many uncanny abilities and often un-catlike behaviours. While she is on the case, young Ramses will always be safe.

I am ever so glad that I still have many volumes of their adventures in my future.

Jamie Collins says

A fun read. The plot is ridiculous (these are meant mostly as a parody of adventure novels rather than serious

mysteries) but I enjoy the Emerson family very much. I look forward to watching Rameses' exploits as he grows up. I like Amelia's wary yet resigned attitude towards her implausibly precocious, accident-prone son.

Cyndi says

This book is full of romantic triangles. I would like to tell you all about them but I don't want to ruin the surprises.

What I will tell you is that Amelia and Emerson are excellent and I still love little Ramses. He's 8 now and still precocious. I love his long dissertations on archeology. He always reminds me of Mr. H, my grandson. His thing is space. He's trying to teach me the Latin words for the planets. This involves a chart he has drawn. Did I mention he's 4 years old? Whew!

Rebekah Giese Witherspoon says

My favorite book so far in the Amelia Peabody series. The mystery is interesting and is woven throughout the book. The quirky characters are just as hilarious and engaging as ever. I'm hooked on this series...on to book 5!
