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When Herbert Wynne is found dead, with a bullet in the forehead, the obvious explanation is murder. But how could it be when the only possible suspect is Herbert's frail Aunt Juliet? Posing as Juliet's private duty nurse, the Homicide Bureau's Hilda Adams develops grave suspicions. Why is the maid terrified of every dark corner? And if a mad killer is on the loose, who will be targeted as the next victim? Reissue. .

Miss Pinkerton Details

Date : Published February 1st 1998 by Kensington (first published 1932)

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Author : Mary Roberts Rinehart

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From Reader Review Miss Pinkerton for online ebook

Ryan says

Before anyone starts to sigh and grumble about having two Mary Roberts Rinehart reviews in a row, I'll let you know there is one more coming this week as well. There will be another one in between, but I'm having to get caught up on these or I'll drown under a sea of read books. Besides, how can you complain about one of the greatest mystery authors to ever walk the surface of the Earth.

Now while Miss Pinkerton is the name of this wonderfully crafted mystery, it's not the first book to star Miss Pinkerton, Hilda Adams. I will say that the next review of her books is another Miss Pinkerton novel. I have a sneaky suspicion that reading these in order would have been better, at least as far as following her relationship with the inspector. Other than that point, I think reading these out of order is just fine. It's the mystery and the characters that seep through the pages and into you brain, not the timeline.

Hilda is one of those characters that I can imagine myself having tea with, before a roaring fire, and having a chat about anything that came to mind. She is intelligent, determined, and loyal to her job and her patients. She doesn't shirk from duty, even if it appears to put her life in danger. She may complain about the long hours and lack of sleep, but she loves every second of it. Despite her lack of police training, Hilda has a keen eye to see underneath the layers of red herrings and the personal facades of those she is around.

This particular mystery that Hilda finds herself involved with is one that I think Mary Roberts Rinehart is brilliant at telling. I would say 95% of the action takes place in the Mitchell House. Because of that, Rinehart is able to build such a claustrophobic experience for the characters and the readers alike. It keeps everyone on pins and needles waiting to see what comes down a darkened stairwell or out of room that should have been empty. The atmosphere hangs over the heads of everyone involved, making them suspicious of each other and just a bit paranoid.

It's a mystery crafted with skill and precision. A mystery that involved characters that are never what they appear to be and enough clues and misdirections to have even the great Hercule Poirot confused and in doubt of his own reasoning skills. It's the type of mystery that Rinehart is at her best, and I love every second of it.

Eileen says

Great story full of twists and turns and many, many suspects. I love how there are other issues beyond the murder playing into the secrets the various characters keep, which making discovering the truth very difficult since everyone seems suspicious.

The main character was very business-like and professional, but also realistic. Her personality wasn't loud or overbearing, and it was a little difficult to gauge her feelings sometimes. I suspected an interest between her and the Inspector which wasn't put into definite words until the end, and I was so happy to see that part. I'm not sure if there are more books with the same characters, but I definitely want to read them if there are.

The biggest drawback was the author's heavy hand with foreshadowing. The whole first chapter was a little overkill with the hints at something going wrong, and the rest of the story had ominous warnings about what would happen sprinkled throughout, which wouldn't have been necessary, certainly not as many as were

present. Overlooking that, though, the book was good.

Pamela McLaren says

Really strong characters and stories! This is a wonderful compilation of two novel length stories and two short stories by a very strong writer. Mary Roberts Rinehart has created a nurse detective with brains, good instincts and great deductive powers and these stories are timeless classics about how a nurse can be situated within a family and find out all sorts of things. Wonderful reading!

Nancy says

It is always a delight to revisit Mary Roberts Rinehart, In this little volume there are two short stories and two novels. The short stories are The Buckled Bag and Locked Doors. The novels are Miss Pinkerton and Haunted Lady. Her nurse detective is Hilda Adams who is nicknamed Miss Pinkerton by the police inspector who hires her to work for him on difficult cases involving the wealthy or the once wealthy. There is always a murder to solve much like the Agatha Christie stories. A nurse herself, Rinehart is very competent in plot, pace, story and character development. She is a joy to read and not always transparent as to the solution.

Laura Rye says

I really like her stories...This volume contained two shorts and two full length stores....She wrote very well...her mysteries are rather involved, but are more familiar--less police/detective jargon...she's a nurse that works with the Inspector to observe and solve crimes, so the goings-ons are more common, everyday occurrences that are quite readable and easy to follow...and she keeps you interested by using the last sentence of each chapter as a "teaser" for whats to come....

LA Smith says

Nothing but fun in this dated but delightful mystery by one of the genre's best golden age writers. Form factor may have topped my review favorably: reading a 1958 printing 35-cent Dell paperback made me feel like a kid again boosting books from my grandmother's bookshelves.

Rose Griffith says

Since I belong to the Pittsburgh chapter of Sisters in Crime, I figured it was time to read a book by the author for whom the chapter is named: Mary Roberts Rinehart. In a word: we don't write them like this anymore (Although Duncan Simpson's style is very close). Written in 1932, the story features nurse Miss Pinkerton and plunges you directly into an already existing relationship she has working "undercover" with the police

department. As a whodunit, the story keeps you guessing until the end. The writing is tight and I sure like the retro attitude toward no cursing--how refreshing.

Rupa Natarajan says

Urgh. The story itself was good but the narrator is just too dramatic. If every chapter starts with “and I had no idea the horrors in store for me”, it’s easy to just get annoyed. Plus she bills herself as no nonsense but it literally took serious effort to finish this tiny book because she is such so irritatingly woebegone.

Lynn says

Murder mystery from the point of view of a live-in nurse, written and apparently taking place in 1932. This nurse works for the police, when they want an informant to report on a certain household. In this case, she is ostensibly nursing an old lady, after her ne'er-do-well nephew is killed—or is it suicide? By the end of the book two other people from the house are dead, and fourth murder attempt is thwarted, and there are also a couple of love matches in the works, The murderer turns out to be somebody you would never suspect because it's not that interesting and you don't care. But the writing is cute. I love MRR.

It seems this was made into a movie with Joan Blondell as Miss Adams ("Miss Pinkerton" is the Inspector's pet name for her) which I would love to get my hands on.

Jean says

2 novels and 2 short stories--entertaining

Bookworm says

I'm still going to add this to my favorites shelf, because even though the last story left me sitting in a cloud of gloom, the other three were so good! I think the things I didn't like about the last one were, it was written in a different era and hence her characters began reflecting the harder social uppers, and two, the ending, It just felt off. Depressing.

The two short stories and first novel were fabulous as I have found her novels to usually be isn't that a high compliment when you write books about murders? :) Well. Miss Pinkerton, AKA Nurse Detective Hilda Adams, is very human and lovable. I loved the peek into what a case nurses's life was like back in the early nineteen hundreds. <3

D-day says

Solid Mystery from Marey Roberts Rinehart. Miss Pinkerton is a nurse who is called in to look after old Mrs Mitchell after her dissolute nephew commits suicide. Or is it suicide? The Inspector has his doubts, that's

why he has called in Miss Pinkerton- to be his eyes and ears on the inside of the Mitchell mansion. Miss Pinkerton is an interesting literary creation . She is the 'tip of the spear' as it were of the investigation. She is more than just the sidekick narrator to stand between the reader and the detective. She provides input of her own and solves the crime together with Inspector Patton- but she is also the heroine in potential danger, while the police are offstage. A very enjoyable story from one of the earliest female mystery writers

Kim says

"*Miss Pinkerton*" is a novel by Mary Roberts Rinehart written in 1932. The novel is the third in the Hilda Adams series and was written quite a while after the first two, "*The Buckled Bag*" and "*Locked Doors*" which were both written in 1914. Again our main character is nurse Hilda Adams and Inspector Patton is also there. As I'm reading her series about nurse Adams I'm reminded that Rinehart was a nurse herself. She attended the Pittsburgh Training School for Nurses at Pittsburgh Homeopathic Hospital, where she graduated in 1896. She described the experience as "all the tragedy of the world under one roof." After graduation, she married Stanley Marshall Rinehart , a physician she had met there. She began writing after the stock market crash in 1903, I didn't even know there was a stock market crash in 1903. The Rineharts lost their savings and she began writing as a way to earn money.

One of the first things I was curious about in this novel was the name or should I say nickname of our nurse. It is always Inspector Patton who calls her Miss Pinkerton, it is his nickname for her, we know that her name is actually Hilda Adams. We are never really given a reason for the nickname. I assume it is because of the Pinkerton Detective Agency. I even looked them up to see if they were around at that time, which I doubted and found that they were established in the United States by Allan Pinkerton in 1850, so I'm sticking with that as the reason for her nickname, although I'm not at all sure.

At the beginning of our novel Miss Adams is sent by Inspector Patton to the home of Juliet Mitchell. Miss Adams is thinking on the way to the Mitchell home of what she knows of the family. The Mitchell family had at one time been one of the dominating families of the city, now there was only two of them left; Miss Juliet and her nephew Herbert Wynne. Herbert was good-looking but weak, it was said he had squandered all his parent's money and then when they died he did the same with Miss Juliet's. She had sent him to school and college, but he did no good at either, now he was home, sometimes working at whatever he could find, but mostly loafing.

When Miss Adams arrives at the house there is a police car outside and when she enters Inspector Patton and a few uniformed officers are there, along with the doctor and the medical examiner. Herbert Wynne has been found dead in his room. He was shot in the forehead. The first person she talks to tells her that Wynne had committed suicide, the next person tells her it was an accident, that he had been cleaning his gun. "But if it was an accident or suicide why is Inspector Patton of the Homicide Squad there?" she wonders. Miss Adams finds that it is Miss Juliet she is there to care for. Miss Juliet is lying in her wide old walnut bed, when Miss Adams checks her she finds that Miss Juliet had lapsed into a coma and was almost pulseless. The doctor gives her a hypodermic of nitroglycerin and eventually she improves. So Miss Adams is there for two reasons, to care for Miss Juliet and to discover how Herbert Wynne really died, suicide, accident or murder. That I'm not going to tell you. I will tell you that a few more people end up dead by the last page, but who they are, and who killed who, if they were killed at all, they may have just died of old age after all, is up to you to find out. I will say that I was disappointed with the ending, but overall the book was interesting and fun to read.

Joan - xstitchfan says

Mary Rinehart provided her readers with four very interesting short stories and novellas in this collection. Hilda Adams, a nurse, is hired by Detective Patton to work undercover for him and learn information that the police can't obtain. I made the mistake of reading some of these entries before going to bed. I ended up till all hours trying to figure out the criminal. All of the cases are different. "Buckled Bag" is about a missing 20 yr old girl and her family is withholding information from the police. "Locked Doors" is an eerie tale where Miss Adams is hired to watch 2 small boys in a house with locked doors throughout. She is locked in the nursery with the boys and there are no other servants in this large home. Also, both of the parents seem very frightened and on the lookout through the night for something on the stairs and in the hallways. "Miss Pinkerton" is the third entry in the book and a nickname Detective Patton has given to Miss Adams. A young man has died in his locked bedroom by gunshot. The police are unable to determine if it's a suicide, a murder, or an accidental death. So, Hilda Adams is sent in to look around. The family and servants are acting suspiciously and they seem to be searching for something in the house. Will Hilda be able to find the mystery object first? Next, the well known matriarch of a wealthy family in "Haunted Lady" is sure someone is trying to scare her with the rats and bats that are getting into her sealed bedroom. Even Hilda's taxi driver tells her that Mrs. Fairbanks is having brain trouble and sees bats. Are the bats real or just in her patient's mind? Locked room and cozy mystery lovers will enjoy these stories. like Agatha Christie, Mary Rinehart provides many possible suspects and many red herrings. I didn't figure out the correct criminal one time! I wish you the best of luck!

Elizabeth says

There is no mystery as to why Ms Rinehart is classed with Dame Agatha, she clearly deserves it! This is illustrated once again with 'Miss Pinkerton'. The humor is subtle, the characters interesting in and of themselves, and the plot draws you in and simply won't let go. The main character, Miss Adams, aka Miss Pinkerton, is a no nonsense nurse, smart and with a subtle sense of humor of her own, and a great deal of compassion for those around her.

In short, this period piece sets a standard that few can reach.

Bravo, Ms Rinehart, bravo!!!
