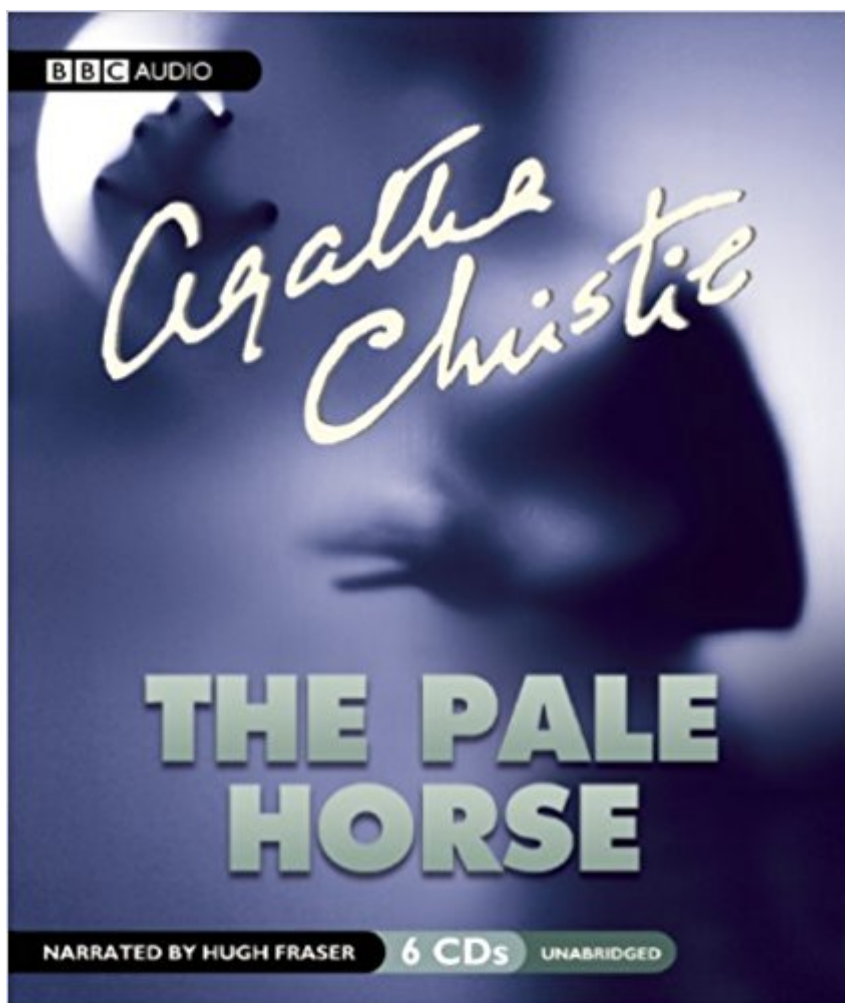


The book was found

The Pale Horse



Synopsis

This is a dark offering from the queen of crime. This represents the world-famous author's most successful foray into the dark world of murder and black magic. To understand the strange goings on at The Pale Horse Inn, Mark Easterbrook knew he had to begin at the beginning. But where exactly was the beginning? Was it the savage blow to the back of Father Gorman's head? Or was it when the priest's assailant searched him so roughly he tore the clergyman's cassock? Or could it have been the priest's visit, just minutes before, to a woman on her death bed? Or was there a deeper significance to the violent squabble which Mark Easterbrook had himself witnessed earlier? Wherever the beginning lies, Mark and his sidekick, Ginger Corrigan, may soon have cause to wish they'd never found it!

Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: AudioGO; Unabridged Edition edition (March 9, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1602836663

ISBN-13: 978-1602836662

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 5.1 x 1.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 114 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #1,400,780 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #45 in [Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > \(C \) > Christie, Agatha](#) #2113 in [Books > Books on CD > Mystery & Thrillers](#) #2568 in [Books > Books on CD > Literature & Fiction > Unabridged](#)

Customer Reviews

'Wholesale murder by black magic...highly ingenious, wholly enjoyable.' Evening Standard
'The acknowledged queen of detective fiction' Observer --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

When an elderly priest is murdered, the killer searches the victim so roughly that his already ragged cassock is torn in the process. What was the killer looking for? And what had a dying woman confided to the priest on her deathbed only hours earlier? Mark Easterbrook and his sidekick Ginger Corrigan are determined to find out. Maybe the three women who run The Pale Horse public house, and who are rumored to practice the "Dark Arts," can provide some answers? --This

text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I am presently reading all of the Agatha Christie novels. The Pale Horse was published in the 1960s and is a fine murder mystery. The book deals with the murder of a priest who was on his way home from hearing a moribund woman's dying confession. The novel features Ariadne Oliver who is a friend of Hercule Poirot. She bears a striking resemblance to Agatha Christie. This is the only novel in which she does her sleuthing on her own! The cynosure of the action occurs in The Pale Horse a rustic inn in a small English village where live three women who claim to have the powers of witches. A good and light read to pass a few hours in a comfy armchair with a nice cup of tea. Enjoy!

Only Ariadne Oliver, mystery book writer, was familiar to me, although I see other reviewers have pointed out other characters who appear in her novels. Essentially, however, this is a non-series work, one of those delightful tidbits that Dame Agatha turned out every now and again to vary her output. I found the book to be delightful. There is a suitably perplexing plot, stirring hero and heroine, assorted character actors of distinctive qualities, and a suitably Christie denouement. All this in crystalline prose which, whether listened to (as I do) or read, carry one along effortlessly from one act to another until the very satisfying end. I commend the book to all who find the Classic Mystery Tradition still part of the core of the genre as well as to any others who seek a readable story without the writing crutch of unnecessary sex play, vulgarity or sappy romance. (In the hands of a Hammett, Chandler or contemporary versions of these Masters, of course, elements out of place in the Classic style are artistically handled and suitably integrated into the web of characters and story.)

I had never read this particular story but thanks to 's listings, I was able to obtain a lovely 53 year old copy. Don't think I can add anything further to the story line as explained by other reviewers, but I will say this was just another excellent Christie. It could be described as somewhat spooky and a definite page turner. I loved it, and would absolutely recommend adding this to your must read list.

The beginning of the book really captured me. However, once the three women from The Pale Horse were visited and their story began to unfold, I lost interest. The fact that the main character and the vicar's wife actually somewhat believed the three women's "power" could be responsible for the murders was silly. I did not like the in-depth description of the seance at all. The whole thing was

ridiculous. But, I enjoyed Christie's classic twist in revealing the true murderer, and the ending was good. Overall, decent read, but not one of my favorites.

A pleasant surprise. Her stories are compelling, but not so drawn out as those of Willie Collins. A true mystery until - poof! - it is solved, with a minimum of explanation. I was happy to be surprised and cared enough about the characters that I was pleased at the denouement.

This story has special meaning for me, because it happened to be the very first Agatha Christie story I read. And it is not an Hercule Poirot story, nor a Miss Marple story, nor a Tommy & Tuppence tale. The only recurring character is Mrs Oliver, and she's not the main character. So, I view this story with fond memories. I was fascinated by the plot: three odd women (witches?) claim to have the power to enhance anyone's innate death wish; there is a man in an office, far removed, that is prepared to bet that the person WILL die. And then -- they die from various and sundry illnesses. We follow the hero (protagonist) through the story, and, as I said, I remember it with fondness, and amazement at the various twists that I now know (with hindsight) as common to Agatha Christie's mysteries.

Although this book was first published in 1961, it harkens back to Dame Agatha's young adventures of the 1920s. A priest is murdered after administering last rites to a dying woman. Before the priest died he compiled a list of names. What does it mean? At least some of the named individuals have died of natural causes. Due to a few too many coincidences, a bored scholar, Mark Easterbrook becomes enmeshed in the investigation. The story requires intelligent people to be credulous when faced with witchcraft and dubious psychology, but the clues are cleverly implanted in the story and the denouement is a gem.

Not really the type of plot that I'm used too with Agatha Christie books, different but not bad. I feel like the end should have been obvious to me in the beginning, but it wasn't and I was surprised in the end.

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