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Murder On The Orient Express



Synopsis

Just after midnight, a snowdrift stopped the Orient Express in its tracks. The luxurious train was surprisingly full for the time of the year. But by the morning there was one passenger fewer. An American lay dead in his compartment, stabbed a dozen times, his door locked from the inside. With tension mounting, detective Hercule Poirot comes up with not one, but two solutions to the crime

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Ah, yes. The world famous case of the "Murder on the Orient Express" (MotOE). It is so famous, even people who have never read Christie know who did it. I first read it 12 years ago even though someone had already revealed to me the identity of the murderer. I've never forgiven him. But I read it anyway to find out for myself how Agatha Christie constructed the story in order to fool her readers. Christie was probably inspired by the true story of the 'Lindbergh baby' kidnapping. Charles Lindbergh (he who flew across the Atlantic alone) had an infant child who was kidnapped and murdered even after the ransom had been paid. The background to MotOE is also similar to the Lindbergh case. The victim is revealed to have been involved in a kidnap-murder case a few years back and got away with it. Was he punished for his crimes at last? Was he murdered for something totally unrelated? Or was he a victim of mistaken identity? The usual suspects remind one of the typical English drawing room murder mysteries: an English colonel, a Russian princess, a count, a beautiful mysterious woman...they are all here. And Hercule Poirot has to discover who the murderer is and why, all by using his "little grey cells, mon ami." The revelation in the final pages will surprise the reader yet it will not strain belief too much. MotOE has been accused of being

incredulous and downright silly but I disagree. Those who feel that way probably forgot that they are reading a fiction novel. I am sure one will find it a lot of fun if only to find out who from among the varied cast did it. You'll be gobsmacked, I assure you :)The solution will also show the reader why MotOE is famous in its uniqueness and has never been copied (no writer dares to).

One problem with audiobooks is the dialogue. Very often an author does not supply the "he said/she said" before or after each quotation and the listener is often at a loss as to who is speaking. David Suchet, the ultimate Poirot, gets around this by using a different voice for each character. He had accomplished this in his reading of the complete "Death on the Nile" for Audio Partners and he does it again with a superlative for that same label. This set was designed for a release to coincide with the CBS dramatization of the classic whodunit, but Audio Partners need not have bothered. That telecast was an utter disaster with a lusterless Poirot, a cast that for the most part could scarcely create a character, and an updating of the decor (among other ludicrous changes) to the present. So the older film with its starry cast can rest unchallenged; but the public is entitled to enjoy the original and this audiobook is just the ticket. Christie uses the usual "closed environment" setting (an island, a cruiser, a train) to give us a small number of suspects; and then she hits us with Poirot's "gather everyone together while I explain the solution" scene. One of the gimmicks of this novel is that Poirot comes up with two solutions! But for the sake of those very few who do not know the ending, I will say no more. And even for those who do, there is always the joy of Suchet's reading. I have the CD edition, a format that makes it difficult to find where you last left off since each full chapter is usually given a single track number. Here Audio Partners has thoughtfully broken each chapter into several tracks so you pretty much can get back to where you were with a minimum of trouble.

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