



Defend and Betray

Anne Perry

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"A richly textured and timeless novel of suspense. Her Victorian England pulsates with life and is peopled with wonderfully memorable characters."

Faye Kellerman

Although esteemed General Thaddeus Carlyon meets his death in a freak accident at home, his beautiful wife, Alexandra, confesses that she killed him. Investigator William Monk, nurse Hester Latterly, and the brilliant Oliver Rathbone, counsel for the defense, work feverishly to break down the wall of silence raised by the accused and her husband's proud family. With the trial only days away, they inch toward the dark and appalling heart of the mystery. The final act is a courtroom masterpiece, through which we dare not breathe too deeply, lest the precarious balance of a woman's life be lost.

Defend and Betray Details

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From Reader Review Defend and Betray for online ebook

Lectrice Hérétique says

Avec ce troisième volume Anne Perry nous replonge à nouveau dans une époque où les inégalités sociales sont à leur paroxysme, et nous dresse le portrait d'une société victorienne scindée en deux univers qui cohabitent mais s'ignorent. Lorsque la veuve d'un général respecté avoue son meurtre, rien ne va plus dans la famille du mort. Les membres ont chacun une idée de la situation et certains préféreraient voir la coupable enfermée chez les fous plutôt que de se voir exposés sur la place publique lors d'un procès. Sollicitée par l'une des sœurs de la victime, Hester Latterly fait appel à Oliver Rathbone et William Monk afin d'établir l'innocence de la veuve. Celle-ci se montera fort peu coopérative et éveillera les soupçons de Monk et de Rathbone, incitant ces derniers à enquêter pour découvrir le véritable mobile du meurtre et ses tristes circonstances. Si le lecteur devine plus ou moins le vrai mobile, rien n'est pourtant certain et Anne Perry réussit malgré tout encore l'exploit de nous mener en bateau à peu près jusqu'à la dernière page, et n'hésite pas pour cela à développer une scène de procès d'une folle intensité, d'une efficacité confondante. Encore une fois l'enquête se poursuit en parallèle du procès, une course contre la montre qui rythme une intrigue déjà poussée et dense et nous bombarde de nouvelles révélations. Nous nous retrouvons pour ainsi dire au sein du procès, anticipant les réactions des protagonistes face aux nouvelles révélations. Redoutable, glauque et haletant, peuplé de personnages fouillés et réalistes, ce troisième volume est un vrai régal.

Ingela says

Review written July 1, 2018

4 Whodunnit Stars - Terrific and in the end truly worth it

????

Book #3

Maybe is this *William Monk* series my favorite historical mystery serial right now. So far has it been a already happened deadly crime when each book starts, for me maybe the best kind of old fashioned whodunnit mysteries. The crime scenes are also in those fine, but quite stiff, grand upper classes, the ones we so much loves in British historicals. Set in *London, England* in late 1850s (a few years after the *Crimean War*) with three so far interesting main characters to follow.

- The quite complicated police investigator **William Monk**. A man nearly without friends or a normal social life. A man who losted his memory in a accident just before this series started. We truly don't know much about him and he is himself still seeking for his past me. The question is: is Monk he a man to like or not?
- Here is also **Hester Latterly** the clever and for past times very strong young lady who has a past as a ambitious "Florence Nightingale" nurse in the Crimean War. Monk's future love?
- In a mer secondary character is a great and brilliant lawyer, **Oliver Rathbone**. A clever man who defends

suspected and accused appearing here. A work he does with quite enviable success and in grand style. Will he get Hester's heart?

My thoughts...

As I wrote in a update: This mystery novel has one of the worst type of crime plot with a horrible whodunnit storyline including the darkest of abuse. I usually try to avoid books, movies or news articles on the subject, but sometimes is this terrible topic (which also is a dark, cruel reality for too many) there, and it is just to breathe deeply, cross your fingers and wish for the best.

And? — As a serial mystery book could it of course been a little bit shorter, lesser pages and a tiny bit faster developed ... but on the other side was I my self never ever bored or tired of it. No, this was a very good 16 hours audiobook listening. I sometimes enjoy this kind of long winded storytelling, endless crime investigation, thoughts and clues and a huge bunch of witnesses and relatives to suspect etc etc. I feel for all main characters (the suspected poor woman) and wanted to know more about their history, life, future and feelings.

All in all a good one. — It will be more... many more, there are a countless lot of William Monk books to read and I'm a hooked Monk-fan by now.

I listened to the 16:23 hours audiobook excellent narrated by Davina Porter. Love her voices and style.

I LIKE - old fashioned crime stories

Bailey Marissa says

This book broke my heart. A lot. The situation that this mother found herself in was absolutely heartbreakingly and especially at this time, where women didn't have any rights.

15+ for emotional and sexual abuse, and some language.

Kathy says

I really love Anne Perry's books about Hester Latterly and Mr. Monk. They are so well written, rich with historical details and the mystery always leads to something unexpected.

Of course, Davina Porter's narration is delightful and absolutely perfect for the story. What a golden voice! Plus I enjoy information about the Crimean War, Nightingale's contributions to military healthcare and the problems that surrounded the beginnings of professional nursing.

Great stories.

Jamie Collins says

I'm continuing to enjoy these Victorian mysteries. I can't deny that they're didactic and tediously repetitive at times, but I like the characters and the setting.

In this book a woman has confessed to killing her husband, and while most people are satisfied by the confession, our investigative team of Detective Monk, Barrister Rathbone and Nurse Hester have doubts about her motive.

The mystery itself was intriguing at first, and then I figured out the motive from obvious clues that everyone was ignoring, and then the author went a little over the top in the big reveal.

But we get the first glimmer of the forthcoming romance between Monk and Hester, when Monk finds himself discomfited by Hester and Rathbone's friendship. I enjoy the way Monk publicly champions Hester while privately being rather blunt and caustic with her.

Alice says

Mlle Alice, pouvez-vous nous raconter votre rencontre avec Défense et Trahisons?

"En attendant que les derniers tomes de la série des Pitt sortent enfin en poche, je continue de faire connaissance avec William Monk et son univers dans ce troisième tome."

Dites-nous en un peu plus sur son histoire...

"Une amie d'Hester Latterly lui demande de l'aide. Son frère, l'estimé général Thaddeus Carlyon, vient de mourir dans des circonstances troubles. Les soupçons se tournent déjà vers sa belle-soeur, mais elle ne peut y croire. Quand celle-ci finira pourtant par avouer le crime, il faudra à Hester toute l'assistance de Monk et de Rathbone pour tenter de lui venir en aide..."

Mais que s'est-il exactement passé entre vous?

"Au-delà du plaisir toujours évident que j'ai à retrouver la plume d'Anne Perry, j'ai apprécié également que l'on suive ici principalement Hester. Cela nous offre un point de vue nouveau et étant donné le caractère bien trempé de l'infirmière, on ne s'ennuie pas. Les thèmes abordés sont également courageux. En revanche, j'avais deviné depuis bien longtemps ce qu'il en était avant que la première pensée n'en effleure enfin le pauvre Monk. Alors je veux bien croire que l'époque n'est pas la même et que ce soit donc moins évident pour lui que pour moi mais toujours était-il qu'en attendant qu'il ouvre les yeux j'ai trouvé le temps bien long. Je dois dire que j'ai lu de bien meilleurs opus de la part d'Anne Perry."

Et comment cela s'est-il fini?

"Le livre s'achève sur un procès, ce qui nous montre là encore un aspect assez peu connu et exploité habituellement. De plus, la tension monte crescendo et toute cette partie est extrêmement bien menée. Lorsque le dénouement arrive enfin, j'en ai pleuré et ça ne m'arrive pas souvent. Une fin qui rattrape donc pour moi les faiblesses évoquées plus tôt."

Gaetano says

Terzo libro della serie scritta da Anne Perry con protagonista William Monk; oltre a scoprire qualcosa di più sul suo misterioso passato, nascosto nei meandri della sua memoria spezzata da un incidente “stradale”, sono stato catapultato in un omicidio apparentemente senza alcun mistero: una moglie gelosa uccide il marito, l’eroico generale Thaddeus Carlyon, proclamandosi subito colpevole del delitto.

Eppure un’ombra aleggia sulla storia, con gli imbarazzanti segreti che scorrono sullo sfondo di quella società vittoriana descritta magistralmente dall’autrice, rivelando una dolorosa verità che animerà il finale del processo alla moglie rea confessata.

Avvincente come i precedenti racconti, anche questo mi ha tenuto incollato al libro fino alla fine.

JBradford says

This is #3 in the Inspector Monk series, read immediately after its predecessors in sequence. Monk and Hester still don’t know that they were made for each other, and Perry is teasing us with a developing relationship between Hester and Rathbone, the great defense attorney they keep turning to. The basic story here is another Victorian household, this one containing only seven people and the usual batch of servants, but the married daughter and her family live around the corner and they all go visiting another family for dinner--at which time, while everyone seems angry about different things, one of the guests, a recently retired general, is discovered on the hallway floor, where he appears to have been pushed off the upstairs landing onto a suit of armor and then, just to make sure, stabbed with the halberd so severely that the point passed through his body and into the floor beneath the rug. The general’s sister asks Hester for help, but then the general’s wife confesses that she did the dirty deed. The police readily accept this confession, but Hester is not so sure; she persuades Rathbone to defend the wife, and Rathbone hires Monk to check things out. Monk sets off to investigate, but keeps running into new clues about his past--the life he lived before the accident which caused his amnesia. Everything leads up to an exciting two week trial, by which time we’re all on tenterhooks.

As before, there is a lot of social commentary in this book. Perry is not only presenting us with a very detailed view of what it was like to live in Victorian London’s social life, as in the preceding novel, but also is making a dramatic case for women’s rights by telling us how little rights women had in this enlightened society. She does it so well, in fact, that I am surprised I never heard of her before!

Meanwhile, it occurs to me that Hester seems to be more effective than Monk, and I keep remembering that it was Evans, really, who resolved the first case. When are we going to see the brilliant sort of detecting for which Monk is supposed to have been so famous?

As always, there are loose ends. This clearly is going to be one long story carried through the entire series of the novels, and I would love to know how much of that total story Perry had in mind when she started. Don’t read books from this series out of order, or you’ll miss the development that is clearly ongoing.

Pat says

I literally could not put this down for the final courtroom scene. I won't give away the final revelations, but they are shocking and riveting. I'm a big fan of Perry, and this is one of her best.

Perry gives us a few red herrings indicating that Alexandra may not be the killer, but the question quickly becomes, why did she do it, not if there is another perpetrator. We know she is sacrificing herself for someone, but who and why? Perry skillfully reels out the line.

The most interesting character is Monk, still grappling with his amnesia. When he finally realizes who is the woman (and lover) he helped exonerate of killing her husband, his self-knowledge grows in leaps and bounds--as does his appreciation of the prickly but courageous and brilliant Hester. Also, his constant realization of exactly what kind of bastard he was before the memory loss, and knowledge that the damage is done, gives him a sympathetic humanity.

The REAL tragedy of this book is how every woman character is victimized in 1857 England, when the Empire was starting to fray (the Indian Mutiny was taking place). It's hard for us to imagine having zero rights to protect yourself or your children and have no alternative to staying with an abusive husband and father. Edith's plight of having to return to her witch mother's home after her husband dies is heartwrenching, as are her attempts to find employment to escape Felicia. The abuse and sacrifices that Hester has to make as a woman who IS employed are outrageous. The true depths of Felicia's and Louisa's monstrousness are not revealed until the final pages, and it will take your breath away!

Christia says

The more I read Anne Perry's books, the more impressed I am with her storytelling. This is the second I've read of her Inspector Monk series and I see a pattern developing where each book proves to be better than the last. I rarely if ever flip ahead in a book, but for the life of me I couldn't resist doing it here, if only to try to get a hint at why the prime suspect was so willing to take the blame for her husband's murder, despite the fact that the motive she provides made no sense. Following a dinner party, the highly respectable General Carlyon, a gentleman with an immaculate reputation, is found dead after presumably falling over a second floor balcony on to a coat of arms below, but did he fall or was he pushed? His softspoken wife Alexandra immediately insists she intentionally murdered him, to the shock of his family, but her explained motive of jealousy makes no sense to anyone. One of Carlyon's sisters just happens to be friends with Inspector Monk's colleague, nurse Hester Latterly, and through Hester, Monk is hired to investigate and attorney Oliver Rathbone is retained to defend Carlyon's wife. I enjoyed this not only because of the plot that had its fair share of twists and turns, (not to mention the descriptive courtroom scenes and shocking motive that finally is revealed) but also because Perry does such an excellent job of describing and providing insights into Victorian life, with all of its challenges to anyone who wasn't fortunate enough to be born a wealthy, upper class male. This was a thoroughly entertaining, great story and I look forward to reading more in this series.

Alisha says

Good writing, carefully plotted, and the main characters are becoming more vivid as the series goes on. However, in this book the revelations that solve the mystery are quite, quite sordid and make it unrecommendable (in my opinion).

Jokoloyo says

This story is not a pure murder mystery, more like a historical legal thriller. The climax is a court room drama, and I really like the court room scene on the last chapter.

The storytelling itself is not so dense. I've read it years ago (and didn't remember most of the story), and just recently re-read the last 2 chapters, and I still could enjoyed the story.

Not-so-important-note: it is personal taste. This is included in William Monk series, but the climax is delivered by another (secondary?) protagonist character, Oliver Rathbone. This novel made me sympathize with Rathbone.

Hazel says

I've been rereading these early William Monk novels while travelling recently. I appreciate Perry's research and am sympathetic to her views on Victorian social conditions, (poverty, child labour, the position of women). So far, however she doesn't construct the novels well. Every idea, question about motive, puzzle about clues takes pages to discuss. Each lead character has the same internal voice, and they all repeat (ad nauseum) the author's perspective. So the private investigator, the bold Crimean nurse and the civic-minded barrister all tell themselves and us that an upper class lady cannot leave her abusive husband, because she would have no legal right to custody of her children and would be unable to support herself financially etc. Interesting the first time it's pointed out- after that, not so much.

I'll look for the next one though. :-)

Ana T. says

I've really enjoyed the books I read by Anne Perry and I can't wait to continue reading this series. The fact that there are so many books out only makes me more enthusiastic.

Although the summary above mentions Monk as the main detective in this case the truth is that Hester Latterly does most of the investigation. She has been employed to nurse a military man who has broken his leg and, when the story opens, she is waiting to meet her friend Edith Sobell. Edith is General Carlyon's sister and she asks Hester's hell in finding a good lawyer for her sister-in-law Alexandra after she confesses to killing her husband. Hester finds Rathbone who, in turn, hires Monk to find out what really happened.

Although at first the characters entertain the idea that Alexandra may have confessed to protect the real

killer, it is soon apparent that she is the only one with opportunity to do it. So the investigation ends up not being about whom but about the why as no one believes the reason Alexandra gives.

While Monk is the one hired to discover the truth he keeps getting distracted with memories from his past. Visiting Alexandra Carlyon in prison makes him remember another woman in the same circumstances. A woman he can't remember the name but that he knows he cared about deeply. So the main investigation gets a bit side tracked while he goes off to discover who the woman is. I can't help but enjoy the way Perry makes Monk discover his past, he keeps discovering he may not have been a very good person and feels ashamed and embarrassed by it. We are yet to find out what turned him into someone different.

So, it is Hester, due to her ties with the Carlyons who ends up discovering the secrets that are the key to Alexandra's behaviour. I really enjoyed the whole investigative details, how we are given clues throughout the book that make sense in the end, but I especially liked the scenes in the courtroom. Rathbone is a very good lawyer and Perry is excellent at describing these scenes, it felt we were with Hester and Monk sitting right there and watching the jury reach their conclusions.

As usual I think she does a really good job with the atmosphere of the period and inserting details of social, military and economic history. She really brings the period to life. She teases us a bit with a romance between Rathbone and Hester but then, right at the end, it seems it is Monk that is looking at Hester with new eyes. Looking forward to see that development.

Grade: 4.5/5

laninaki says

I found this one hard going and I'm wavering between 2.5 and 3 stars for the rating. It's not as strong a story or as engaging as the first two Monk books. In fact, there is very little Monk in it, which I found frustrating. I want to know more about his past. Also, he's supposed to be this brilliant detective, right? And dogged in his pursuit of the truth, etc. He was neither brilliant nor dogged in this book. In fact, he missed glaringly obvious suspects once the true motive for murder was uncovered. He didn't even consider them!

The first half of the book was a repetition of the same facts, ad nauseum. It took far too long for the story to get rolling - about 150 pages too long.

In spite of my disappointment with this installment, I liked the first two Monk books enough to keep on reading the series.

Frederick Masterman says

In the third of the William Monk Victorian detective series I was very pleased to see the character of Hester Latterly developed with careful expertise. Hester figures so strongly in later novels that I was delighted to see how the author introduced her character in this book with words both eloquent and moving. The conditions of Victorian England, the repression of superbly talented women such as Hester, and her determination to be herself in spite of society's prejudiced, ill-informed attitudes of women, make Defend

and Betray one of the best Perry novels I have read thus far. I never listened to this one on audio tape, as I did many others of both the Monk and Pitt series a decade past. It was a refreshing treat to read the text. Perry's talents were wonderfully expressed in this work, which can stand alone as a novel, but is yet a wonderful transition piece in the story of William Pitt and Hester Latterly.

Christopher Taylor says

I keep giving Anne Perry books a chance, as my mother enjoys them a great deal and generally speaking she has not only good taste but discernment and always intelligence. The first I read was The Whitechapel Conspiracy which was a well-told tale along the same lines as From Hell by Allan Moore and a few previous books (Murder by Decree, for example).

Defend and Betray is about a former police officer named Monk who butted up against his superior once too often and now works as the investigator for a prestigious and skillful lawyer (solicitor) in London. In this book, a general of moderate repute is killed by being flung over a balcony apparently onto a suit of armor and halberd, but later is revealed to have been stabbed by the halberd when already down.

The case revolves more around a presumptive eventual love interest named Hester Latterly who I suspect stands in for Mrs Perry herself. Much is examined in terms of mid 19th century london social life and the well-to-do, which William Monk moves through comfortably.

The eventual story of the crime was for me a bit predictable but is understandably not immediately recognized by the people at the time until it comes out in court in a typically over-dramatic and legal procedure-mangling set of scenes. As courtroom dramas go, Perry handles it better than most.

However, and here's where spoilers start so stop reading if you don't wish to see them, this is where I become concerned.

Ann Perry seems to have a deep personal problem with wealthy people. Every single novel of hers I've read so far is steeped in deep loathing for the rich, portraying every single such family as riddled with horrible secrets, disturbing and even disgusting behavior, and the worst of humanity covered in a thin veneer of respectability. Not once is anyone except the rich remotely guilty of anything but the most minor peccadillo or error, and not once is there a truly sympathetic rich person in one of her books that I've seen.

Further, her continual portrayal of the women of the time as either brainless twits or utterly independent women who chafe at the social restrictions of the time - greatly exaggerated with a strong author's presumptive assertion that everything she thinks is so obvious every character completely agrees and presumes the same - becomes somewhat wearying to me.

There's no doubt that women were ill-treated by the law and society at the time, but like fish in the water, most of us don't notice the culture we're in or recognize its evils unless prompted by extreme circumstances or outside influence. Most women might be unhappy but not be aware of why or how it could be different, nor the men. And certainly not all women would be miserable or righteously indignant at their lot. Even kidnap victims will sometimes come to like their situation so much they join their kidnappers; human psychology is a mess.

So I doubt I'll be reading any more of these, despite their often interesting historical bits and occasional

charms. They are good enough to keep me to the end of the book, but not good enough to prevent some skipping ahead and wondering why I stayed with it.

Felicity says

This book suffered a little from rereading; there were clues in people's behavior on the night of the murder that were inexplicably not followed up for chapters, despite multiple mentions. There were a few leaps of logic, and at least one plot point I would have suggested editing out. I'm no expert on British law of the period, but some of the courtroom rulings seemed a little capricious or unlikely to me. Monk's retracing of his past seemed occasionally irresponsible in the face of his other duties. And let's not get into the 9 instances of the word "aquiline" that I counted.

However, it still works both as a mystery/courtroom drama and a rather searing commentary on Victorian society. I enjoy the Monk books partially for their flawed, human main characters and partly for the courtroom aspect. In these, Perry continues the story into the potentially frustrating and unjust world of Victorian law, with satisfying dramatic results. In general, I enjoy Perry's nuanced characterizations -- almost no one is fully innocent in her books, and *most* guilty parties have reasons, passions, ample humanity mixed with their turpitude. In this one, the drama comes from untenable situations as well as flawed and floundering humans, and I still found these compelling the second time around.

Tom Franklin says

This book opens with a murder about which very little is known other than the victim's wife openly admits to having killed her husband. No one seems to know why and her only excuse is openly dismissed by everyone.

The next 150 pages or so repeats these minimal facts from various angles and viewpoints. And, really, that's about it.

The final 100 devolve into a standard courtroom drama, although all of the surprises have already been revealed.

I lost count of how many aristocratic characters (a) stood in front of windows, looking out and (b) were described as having "aquiline" noses. As with her other Monk stories, whole paragraphs seemed to have been copy/pasted into later sections with only minimal rewriting.

Unlike the first two Monk stories, this one is really more Hester's story than Monk's. Perry throws in some occasional Monk scenes and a token bit of reclaimed memory, but he's all but forgotten in this story.

Cut the book in half, edit the rest more tightly and decide who the main character truly is and this should have been a much better story.
