



Murders in Volume 2: Henry Gamadge #3

Elizabeth Daly

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Third in the Henry Gamadge series. One hundred years earlier, a beautiful guest had disappeared from the wealthy Vauregard household, along with the second volume of the collected works of Byron. Improbably, both guest and book seem to have reappeared, neither having aged a day. The elderly Mr. Vauregard is inclined to believe the young woman's story of having vacationed on an astral plane. But his dubious niece calls in Henry Gamadge, gentleman-sleuth, expert in rare books, and sufficiently well-bred to avoid distressing the delicate Vauregard sensibilities. As Gamadge discovers, the household includes an aging actress with ties to a spiritualist sect and a shy beauty with a shady fiancé.

Murders in Volume 2: Henry Gamadge #3 Details

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Author : Elizabeth Daly

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Terry says

Picked this one up on a total whim due to Elizabeth Daly being Agatha Christie's favorite mystery, or so it says on the cover. I found the premise really interesting – 100 years ago a houseguest disappears; and then reappears in 1941. Or did she? Truly kept me guessing. And now I discover this is a whole series thing – Henry Gamadge. I will read more by Ms. Daly.

Millie Mack says

Agatha Christie considered Elizabeth Daly one of her favorite mystery writers. The style of the book is very similar to Christie's own work. It is definitely a period piece depicting the life of wealthy New York during the 40's. However, it is very well done and very accurate in its descriptions. Daly's detective Henry Gamadge is an intelligent and clever fellow. He is able to take his observations of people along with his gathering of clues and build a solid case for the solution of the crime. An easy and enjoyable read in the Christie tradition.

Christine Cody says

For a gentleman whose only true interest supposedly lies in rare books, Henry Gamadge is a heck of a detective. As with the previous books in this series, once I opened the cover, I was hooked until I read its last sentence. Like Sayers' Lord Peter Wimsey and Allingham's Albert Campion, Henry Gamadge is an independently wealthy young gentleman with a dedicated and faithful staff who provides him with any help he needs. Where he veers slightly away from the other Golden Age "amateurs" is in his very attractive personality, which seems to make everyone trust him. People both young and old take him into their confidence. He works with the police, never at odds with them, and they are always very grateful for his help. Part of his charm is that he never expresses rudeness, sarcasm, insults, threats, violence, insecurity, or any other difficult characteristics that might turn off adversaries. He reminds me a bit of a sober Nick Charles!

Susan says

Henry Gamadge is asked to investigate a ghost--olr at least a young woman who disappeared two hundred years ago, and who seems to have come back again, bewitching a wealthy old man. When she disappears, and he's found dead, his family is faced with s series of unpleasasnt dilemnas. This is a special book for Daly fans, since in it Henry first meets Clara Dawson, who later becomes his wife.

Donna says

Published in 1941, this is a true golden age mystery with the amateur detective Henry Gamadge. Members of a family who were raised with wealth but have squandered much away, bring in Gamadge to meet their still wealthy uncle from whom they all expect to inherit sizable sums. A young girl shows up at his home claiming to be a war refugee, but family members think she's a swindler out to get his money. The story of the disappearance of a volume of Lord Byron's poetry along with a governess 100 years ago--a story known only by the family--is connected to her return. Or is it? Death follows. Lots of clues which I totally failed to see.

Andrea says

On a sunny summer's day in June 1940, Robina Vauregard, a middle-aged woman from a well-known, once powerfully wealthy family, asks Henry Gamadge if she can hire him. At the same time, she asks whether or not he believes in the fourth dimension. Gamadge, an urbane and pleasant man in his mid-thirties, is unfailingly kind and considerate to Miss Vauregard, in response to this unusual request. He sees that she's upset, when she explains further that her elderly Uncle Imrie may be the victim of a dramatic scam, due to his tendency to become involved with unorthodox and eccentric characters.

As it turns out, the entire Vandeleur family is a bit unconventional. Robina's sister, Angela Morton, is an aging actress trying to make a comeback. Angela is married to a younger man, also an actor – Tom Duncannon. Robina herself, while she seems thoughtful and competent, declares herself to be no good at anything. Dick Vandeleur, a nephew of Robina and Angela's, is perhaps the most boring of the group, as he's a lawyer. But the family member that Gamadge becomes most interested in, as soon as he meets her, is Robina's young niece, Clara Dawson, who drives around with her chow dog, Sun.

The problem for the family is that Uncle Imrie is the one with all of the money. The rest of them can indulge themselves without it being a problem. But since they rely on the substantial inheritance that Uncle Imrie has promised them in his will, it is a bigger issue for them if he seems to become too enamoured of ghosts and spirits.

Although Gamadge is a rare book expert, rather than a true detective, he has been involved in crime solving before. Robina Vandeleur has also chosen to seek his advice because the mystery Uncle Imrie has become involved in is connected to a missing volume of Byron's poems.

I was fascinated by the beginning of this book, with its 1940s atmosphere, and the colourful descriptions of the Vandeleurs, as well as the detailed writing about Uncle Imrie's mansion. The ghost story about a missing governess adds a spooky touch. All of this, combined with Gamadge's special mix of compassion and common sense, made for a wonderful reading experience. It made me think of black-and-white movies - of sitting down to watch one on a rainy afternoon, and being completely taken in. While I felt the story fell apart a little as the book went on, I wanted to keep reading, not only to find out who the murderer was, but to find out whether or not Henry Gamadge would get his girl.

Deborah says

1940 upper-class NYC is a fun setting for this cinematic, light mystery. You can almost see William Powell.

Jigar Brahmbhatt says

One star just for the premise - a woman is last seen in an arbor with a book of Byron poetry in her hands. She is never seen again. It is 1840. Hundred years later, in 1940, she re-appears, exactly as she was, having not aged even a single day. Interesting, right? Sadly, the solution that arrives after 260 pages of superficial dialogue, bad unnecessary plot, is plain and stupid to say the least. Glad I majorly skimmed through it and didn't waste more time. The mystery novels of yore have premises that are like sensuous cover-designs of those cheap movies that don't deliver what they promise, but you are tempted to take a look anyway.

A promise to the self: I will not be lured by intriguing premises anymore!

Come to think of it, there is another by Elizabeth Daly in which a mysterious figure of a woman in a sunbonnet appear almost daily. Is this the same woman who died last year? No, no, I am not going to waste my time with this one.

Reminder: I just made a promise!

Lisa Kucharski says

Finally got to read this, as I've read through a great deal of the books and in this one, besides the mystery, we get to see how Gamage meets his wife!

The interesting thing about Daly mysteries is that the death of the victims feels awful. She has a great way of giving you a sense of a person's life, and when it is gone it is palpable. Sadly the ones who die, are not always the mean and nasty ones.
