



Death of a Snob

M.C. Beaton

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When health farm owner Jane Wetherby is frightened by an astrologer's prediction of her imminent demise, she offers Police Constable Hamish Wetherby free room in exchange for his protection. Then the prediction proves accurate about the crime, and Wetherby must enliven his distinctively sleepy style of policing to solve the death of a snob.

Death of a Snob Details

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Author : M.C. Beaton

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From Reader Review Death of a Snob for online ebook

Julie Davis says

Reliably enjoyable fluff, made a bit more so by the romantic novels which keep popping up as read by the various characters. This bit of commentary adds to the tongue-in-cheek fun for those who know the author began as a romance novelist. One does wish she could move past it since every Hamish MacBeth and Agatha Raisin read as much like a romance novel as a mystery, but as I said they are enjoyable fluff so there's no harm in it.

Tracy says

3.5/5

Greg says

This is the first audio book I've ever listened to and I can't say why: all the hundreds of thousands of miles I've driven and not once did I think of listening to a book instead of music. I have no other audio performances against which to judge Davina Porter's performance, but I do think she did a good job with the language as each character was easily understood, especially compared to the TV show with which I needed a few episodes before I was able to "get into the groove" of the speech patterns/words. The plot was solid and it was great that Beaton uses an Agatha Christie trick and then has a character acknowledge Christie as the source. And that trick: Beaton ups the twist, as it may or may not lead the wonderful Hamish to the solution of the murder. In this series, Beaton has Macbeth and Scotland: Beaton could simply barhop through an entire novel and it would be fine. A few of Beaton's plots have been a bit weaker than the one here (I've read nine so far), so with a good plot AND Beaton AND Scotland, I enjoyed this book. Simply solid entertainment: I'll read more of Beaton's work. (Or perhaps try another audio book.)

RebeccaS says

The Hamish Macbeth series is like a comfort food. When I need a book I just know I'll enjoy reading (and listening to) that is interesting, but not too crazy. I know I'll be both satisfied at the end, but also already looking forward to the next one. It's also a series where I know I don't HAVE to read them in order (I just grab whichever is available on my library's overdrive).

This book did not disappoint. Hamish ends up going to a "health farm" for Christmas (because we know Hamish can't turn down a free holiday with free feed), but ends up investigating a murder. I liked his side-kick in this story, though I miss his sleuthing with Priscilla. He is sometimes clumsy, but very smart and always seems to read people extremely accurately. I was stumped with this one and intrigued with the way Hamish figured it out. The very ending of the story was kind of meh and I wish more for Hamish than his tangled web of feelings for Priscilla. I hope to read another one soon, but I don't want to go through the series too quickly.

Jessica says

While Hamish is trapped solving a murder in the wild north, Priscilla finds herself spending the holiday with Hamish's family in Rogart!

Avid Series Reader says

Death of a Snob by M. C. Beaton is the sixth book of the Hamish Macbeth mystery series set in Scotland. Hamish is a gentle, unhurried soul who enjoys quiet mountain village life as the sole police constable of Lochdubh. As Christmas approaches, he's got a head cold and he's feeling lonely. When a friend of a friend invites him to what he assumes will be a lavish holiday dinner at a health resort, he eagerly accepts. The purpose of his visit, which must be kept secret, is the owner's fear that someone is trying to kill her. The incidents seem like accidents; he doesn't mind going along and enjoying himself while calming her fears.

However, from arrival he can sense tension on the remote island. The other guests are no picnic either. Heather is a horrible snob, rude and condescending at every opportunity. Only writer Harriet is a friendly type; Hamish is attracted to her. When Heather goes missing and is later found killed, no one grieves, not even her husband. Nevertheless, as a police officer Hamish must investigate and find the killer.

Much of the story on the island is pretty dull, until several quirky plot twists at the end. Cute quote from a fellow police officer: "Hamish was Scotland's answer to Kojak".

An interesting parallel subplot concerns Priscilla, the woman Hamish loves. She's completely off-limits (so far in the series) due to her wealth and high-society status vs. his modest life. She promises to drop off Hamish's dog at his parent's farm, so he can go help her friend on the island. Priscilla ends up stranded there with his family for the holidays, due to a major storm, and has the time of her life. I hope this will lead to significant changes in their relationship...

I'm very fond of the series, which is just like a cozy mystery series, except the protagonist is a policeman. I recommend read from the beginning ("Death of a Gossip") to fully enjoy the character background and development.

Karen says

A light book in between, and as far as cozy mysteries go, this is a good series. Bits of humor dispersed throughout, a bit of Scottish slang thrown in, and a tenacious, though somewhat silly, police constable make for a pleasant read.

Bookworm with Kids . says

This is another murder solved by P.C. Hamish Macbeth. Again, others think it is an accident but Macbeth

proves otherwise. One for cozy mystery fans.

Bobby Underwood says

Down with a cold, an already grumpy Hamish Macbeth discovers he can't go home for Christmas in one of the most hilarious yet poignant entries in this marvelous mystery series by M.C. Beaton. This is one of my all-time favorites in this delightful series set in the Scottish Highlands. Feeling sorry for himself and n'ye on the verge of death - at least in his own mind - Hamish will see a light at the end of his predicament which will lead to a windy and eventful holiday.

When a miserable Macbeth discovers he can't go home for Christmas because a relative who intensely dislikes him is also coming, things could not look bleaker for our favorite constable. Even a visit from Priscilla can't cheer the bloke up, especially since she is sending an acquaintance by for him to help in spite of the fact he is so near death's door! Jane is all cleavage and legs, espousing trendy babble from magazines, so Hamish quickly dismisses her suggestion that someone wants her dead this holiday season. Once he discovers there is a big Christmas feast planned at her Happy Wanderer health farm, however, the always eager-to-mooch-a-meal constable decides the lass may need protecting after all.

The guests include Jane's ex and an odd assortment of people which prove to be the ingredients for murder. It is not the fun holiday Hamish had planned. A cookbook writer named Harriet offers a nice distraction for a time, but when someone is discovered with their neck broken on the hillside, and the local constabulary rule it an accident, Hamish puts in a call to Jimmy. The call brings the bane of Hamish's existence, Blair, to the health farm, just in case Blair's least favorite constable is correct in calling it murder.

Switched jackets and a trashy romance novel muddy the case, keeping Hamish working through the holiday. If that isn't enough to make Hamish's Christmas a blue one, Priscilla offers to deliver his presents to his parents and siblings, and ends up having the best Christmas of her entire life! In fact, a fun feel of Christmas pervades Death of a Snob, and there is more than a touch of poignancy at the conclusion in Glasgow.

This is an early one in the Hamish canon. Macbeth still has his dog Towser for company when the romantic disappointment of the lovable constable rears its ugly head. Beaton always writes with a keen and observant eye for human nature, and never have the situations been quirkier or Hamish's reactions to them more bitingly hilarious than in Death of a Snob. Fans of this wonderful series will find humor and charm at the description of him speaking quite seriously to a Fiat truck! A real winner in the series, and one of my personal favorites.

Nancy Wilson says

I am a lukewarm Beaton fan and Hamish Macbeth usually makes me want to smack him, but for some reason he behaved a bit more adultly this time around. Beaton does seem to be possessed with the need to always have her characters involved in some adolescent romantic behavior, but the mystery itself was good and fairly complex.

Anna says

I was decidedly underwhelmed by the plot in this book -- and frankly, I think the author structured things in a way that breaks a "rule" I consider fundamental to detective stories. It almost seemed like Beaton had written a significant part of the story before deciding how to resolve certain plot problems, but didn't go back and revise the opening chunk accordingly.

I also continue to be frustrated with Beaton's characterizations. Hamish and his mooching ways aside, most of the characters end up being either unambiguously sympathetic or rotten. You rarely feel torn about them as people -- or their fates. (At one point in the story, I had a sense Beaton was fattening the victim for her kill.)

It's not that I expect stories like this to be realistic, but the very thing that makes Hamish so engaging and likeable, even in the midst of a plodding, implausible plot, is his endearing, and very human, mixture of shrewdness and self-interest, decency and guile. If only Beaton wrote more characters like that.

Charlotte (Buried in Books) says

I needed something quick and easy to keep me company on a train journey of a couple of hours and I managed to get halfway through in just 2 hours.

Hamish is invited to spend Christmas at a health farm that is closed for the holidays by the lady that runs it - Jane, as she believes someone is trying to kill her.

Priscilla spends Christmas with Hamish's family (after his mum asks him not to come because his Aunt from America is coming over and she doesn't seem to like him), she gets snowed in delivering his presents. She's worked herself into the ground at the castle.

The actual death doesn't take place until about halfway through, so for a short book, it takes while to get going. There is a small group of acquaintances' that Jane has invited to join her at the health farm, one woman in particular is awful (Heather), she tries to dress like Jane and just tries to tear everyone down. She upsets everyone.

So it's not surprising that she's found at the bottom of a cliff with a broken neck. But was she the one the killer was after? Or was it Jane?

It was alright, nothing special.

Lady Clementina ffinch-ffarowmore says

This is book 6 in the Hamish Macbeth series by Beaton, though the first in the series that I have read. This one finds Hamish ill in bed with a cold, looking forward to going home for Christmas, only to be told that he can't go home because an aunt who hates him but has supported his family is arriving from the States. Grumpy and upset, Hamish then accepts an invitation to spend Christmas at the Happy Wanderer health farm, the owner of which is Jane Wetherby, a friend of Priscilla, Macbeth's former love and still friend. Jane

is convinced by some happenings in the village of Eileencraig where the farm is located, including the reading of her tea leaves that someone is out to kill her, and while Hamish is not as convinced, he agrees to go anyway, having nowhere else to spend the holiday. But while Jane seems to be ok, there is a suspicious death after Christmas nonetheless, and only Hamish seems to suspect that it is murder. He sets out to investigate, assisted by Harriet Shaw, a writer of cookbooks and also a friend of Jane Wetherby.

This was a light-hearted, pretty much cosy murder mystery which I found to be great fun, and which I enjoyed far more than the author's Agatha Raisin books (of which also I have read only one so far). I loved the Christmassy atmosphere—the book isn't heavy on it, but there are the preparations going on, the tree being decorated, the Christmas dinner at the health farm, and the presents which felt nice and 'warm' in the otherwise snowy and bitter cold place. And I also enjoyed the Scottish setting, all of the mystery taking place on a small island village in a community that hasn't been very welcoming of Jane Wetherby and her farm. While we don't go into very much depth into each of the characters (like some mystery books do), each of them is distinct and the features do stand out. The mystery element was also fairly interesting and fun, and I enjoyed the solution to it, even though it wasn't terribly complex or any such. Still this was entertaining and fun, and I would like to read more in this series. Be warned, this book discusses the entire plot of one Agatha Christie Poirot mystery (I won't say which) with spoilers as to whodunit (though not the why) and while it doesn't give the name, if you haven't read that one yet, it will spoil it for you. I had read the book, so it was much of an issue for me.

This review also appears on my blog at: <https://potpourri2015.wordpress.com/2015/12/25/hamish-macbeth/>

Sandi says

A pleasant entry in the Hamish MacBeth series. This book is set around Christmas and Hamish travels to a remote Scottish island to help the owner of a health farm who thinks someone is out to get her. The plotting and writing were fine and the narration by **Shaun Grindell** was well done.

Diane says

Between classics and Sci-fi fantasy and historical biographies, I love to read some of these Hamish MacBeth books! They are such fun! Hamish is so droll. The Scottish accents and language are great. They are a can't put down, funny read. M C Beaton has, in all her series, an smooth way of writing. If you read one, I'm sure you'll be hooked.
