



A Christmas Journey

Anne Perry, Terrence Hardiman (Narrator)

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Readers of Anne Perry's bestselling suspense novels revel in a world that is all their own, sharing the privileged existence of Britain's wealthy and powerful elite in West End mansions and great country houses. It is also a world in which danger bides in unsuspected places and the line between good and evil can be razor thin. This new novel features Lady Vespasia Cumming-Gould--one of the most memorable characters from the Thomas Pitt series--who appears here as a lively young woman, the ultimate aristocrat who can trace her blood to half the royal houses of Europe.

A Christmas Journey Details

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Author : Anne Perry , Terrence Hardiman (Narrator)

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From Reader Review A Christmas Journey for online ebook

Geraldine Gust says

I was surprised by the fascinating tale and journey that followed. Such a gripping story of courage & friendship between two women who were thrown together because of words that were spoken on a fateful night.

I was surprised by the fascinating tale and journey that followed. How two women were thrown together because of a fateful event that bound them as friends forever.

Melissa says

The story and major characters are fleshed out well, and "A Christmas Journey" boasts an actual plot unlike the short Christmas-related trifles that many popular authors knock off between novels. The observations of and insights into human beings are interesting and could spark some rumination about deeper subjects. The premise is unusual, though I would note the contrast between Isabel's journey to cleanse her sin and Jesus' coming to cleanse us of our sins because we cannot wipe them clean. Still, the themes of redemption and the way human beings treat one another are thought-provoking and give this novella some weight that is welcome alongside the characters and mysteries that already make it an enjoyable read.

Carrie says

For a book classified as a Christmas novel there really wasn't Christmas in it. I was actually disappointed to be honest, it may have been a fast read but it wasn't overly satisfying. Maybe I was expecting more Christmas in the book.

Ana T. says

I found this book a really interesting read. It is set as usual in the Victorian period. Lady Vespasia Cumming-Gould attends a house Party with some friends, there is some gossip and some less than friendly emotions going round and when one of the guests - Isobel Alvie - makes a cruel remark to another, that will apparently lead to the suicide of the latter.

As Isobel is shunned and condemned by all except Vespasia the owner of the house as the idea of proposing an expiation journey for Isobel - to take the dead woman's last letter to her mother who leaves in the highland of Scotland - and if she is sucessful everyone will abide by a pact of silence of not speaking of it again nor condemning her socially.

I found the idea of the expiation of a crime very interesting and found myself wanting to know more about it. As Vespasia and Isobel start their journey to find Gwendolen's mother not only is the journey dangerous but is also an emotional difficult one as Isobel will have to tell her part in the tragic events. Vespasia is the character we get to know better, she is a sensible and kind woman (sometimes a bit too kind to be real) of her time who will gain a better knowledge of herself with this journey. And as the journey progresses not only is Isobel's behaviour analysed but they also start suspecting that more things may have been tormenting Guendolen.

If I have a complaint about this story is how short it was, a bigger story would have allowed for more analysis on the character's feelings and the burden of guilt that most of them seem to carry.

Grade: B+

Kellie says

I am still scratching my head after reading this one. I read it in an evening. It is a story about a group of "high Society" English people who are spending the holidays at an estate. It definitely shows the snobby side of the English back in the days when you can hear a lady coming by the sound of her skirts dragging on the floor behind her. Vespasia, a character from one of Perry's series, is in the midst of a tragedy at the estate when one of the women jumps off a bridge into a pond. Everyone thinks Gwendoline was driven to suicide after Isobel made a comment about her intentions towards this gentleman she was involved with. The group of people present at the estate decide to do a pilgrimage of expiation. If Isobel takes the suicide note that was left by Gwendoline to her mother and accompanies the mother back to the estate, then all is forgiven and not a word will be spoken about it. So, Isobel is convinced to take the trip especially since Vespasia agrees to go with her. The story is definitely not a Christmas story. It drags out and I was left puzzled at the end. Would not recommend this and hesitate to continue to read books by Perry as a result.

Nancy Ellis says

Anne Perry is one of my favorite authors, and I love re-reading her Christmas novels, although I guess they're considered more novellas since they are quite short. This is the first and is a story about one of her favorite characters, Lady Vespasia, in her younger days, who accompanies a friend on a journey of repentance and expiation for her part in bringing about the suicide of another young lady. An enjoyable "escape" read for the holidays!!

Donna Simpson says

Please note that the description of the book here at Goodreads has a significant name wrong; Gwendolyn is the young woman who commits suicide. Isobel is the young woman who sets out on the journey of expiation. The 'Christmas Journey' is much more about a journey to forgiveness, self-awareness and friendship than it is about a journey to Scotland and back.

This is the first I have read of Perry's Christmas stories, and it won't be my last. If you are expecting a puzzling mystery or a sweet Christmas tale, this will not be for you. However, if your favorite things about

Perry's books are her complex character development and strong moral center, then you will enjoy it.

That said... there **is** a mystery at the heart of it, and I guessed the solution fairly early on, but it did not take away any of my enjoyment. I loved, as I said, the moral complexity, but also the vivid and wonderful descriptions of the Scottish countryside, and the final scene at Christmas were brilliantly realized. I enjoyed it very, very much.

Paraphrodite says

3 stars.

We have a much younger Lady Vespasia (from the Thomas Pitt series) at a pre-Christmas house party where another female guest was found drowned in the lake. Everyone believe she committed suicide because of some cruel remarks by another female guest. The host then suggests a journey of expiation for that female guest to deliver the news of death to the mother, who lives in north Scotland. Vespasia decides to go as support and we eventually learned the reasons why the woman committed suicide.

This is a much younger Vespasia, already married with children but living very much apart from her husband and considered to be the most beautiful woman in England. We get to know more of her inner thoughts and can see how she will become that indomitable grande dame of London society we see in the Thomas Pitt books.

A thought-provoking novella on how some unthoughtful words can have disastrous consequences and whether we should always look for ways to forgive and forget...

Evelyn Morgan says

This is Anne Perry's first Christmas novel and features two young women, Lady Vespasia Cumming-Gould and Isobel Alvie. After another young woman commits suicide, they set out on a journey to inform the young woman's mother of her daughter's death. It is a mission of expiation for Isobel, who feels somewhat responsible, since she had made a particularly cruel remark to the young lady shortly before her death. The two ladies find the trip much more of a struggle than they could have ever anticipated, but are determined to fulfill their duty.

Susan says

A good story that I enjoyed.

Kathryn says

This was a very quick read - more a novella really - I started and finished it on Boxing Day - and read other books as well! It was...interesting, but not gripping. Not sure whether it makes me want to read more Anne

Perry or not... I think I would read one more - if it is like this one, I may not read any more, but I have hopes a full-length novel would be more developed.

Tierney says

I thought that the best thing about this book was that it was short. It takes place in mid-19th century high society England - a young girl, Gwendolin, mysteriously drowns during a weekend party and her death is deemed a suicide. The guests ridiculously blame a woman named Isobel for the whole tragedy because of a rude comment she made just before the girl's death - apparently in society England, rude comments are nearly equivalent to attempted murder. Isobel is then sent with a friend on a bizarre "expiation" journey to absolve her guilt so that she is not permanently socially ostracized for her infraction. From there, little happens worth noting. The author spends about 80% of the book describing the harsh conditions these pampered wealthy women have to endure as they journey through the Scottish highlands - we get it, it's cold and wet. I kept expecting something interesting to happen to redeem this book as a mystery, but the "grand revelation" that comes at the end is underwhelming, to say the least. Basically, imagine Jane Austen meets Agatha Christie without the gripping mystery, well-drawn characters, or significant social commentary. Perry is a popular author so maybe this isn't her best...

Sandra says

No es una novela típica de misterio policial, porque lo que ocurre es un suicidio y quien investiga las causas del mismo no es la policía, por lo que se hace una novela interesante más que nada por el misterio que encierran los personajes que se encuentran involucrados en la historia: Vespasia, Gwendolen e Isobel... MI RESEÑA COMPLETA AQUÍ:

<http://perezosa69.blogspot.cl/2017/03...>

Jaline says

This story was the first in what was to become 15 years' worth of Christmas Stories from the writer, Anne Perry. (So far.) As in her splendidly crafted novels, these stories take place in the British Isles during the Victorian era in the mid-1800's. This is a time and a place that have always fascinated me, and perhaps due to Dickens, seem to be so well-suited to tales of Christmas.

In this story, Christmas happens only at the end – and it ties in nicely with the objectives and challenges assigned and taken on during this story.

Isobel, out of jealousy and foolishness makes a cruel remark to an acquaintance at a long weekend house party. There are serious repercussions and Isobel is given a chance to expiate those she has wronged, but it entails a long – and hazardous – journey into the wilds of Scotland.

Lady Vespasia does not condone what her friend did, but neither can she turn her back on her. She decides to go with her, and their pilgrimage results in great insights and personal growth for more people than expected.

This is a lovely and enjoyable holiday novella with life lessons we can all learn from.

Betty Strohecker says

I really enjoy Anne Perry's Christmas books. After seeing one in the store several years ago, I have made it a point to try to read all of her Christmas selections. They are all different, have an air of mystery or suspense about them, and use the Christmas season as a backdrop to the story.

A Christmas Journey is the first of her Christmas books and takes two women on a journey through the wilds of the Scottish Highlands in an attempt to seek redemption for an act deemed to cause the death of a guest at a Christmas house party in the English countryside. This is a unique way to present a story in which a character attempts to accept responsibility and come to terms with her actions. Perry does a great job in describing the Scottish Highlands during December of the mid 19th century. Travel was difficult at best and not usually attempted during the winter season, so the setting almost becomes a character in itself.

Nicole Romine says

A quick, easy read. In this book, you get a superficial psychological mystery. In fact, I felt like I was reading the outline for an interesting novel rather than a fully developed story. The plot develops not through action, but rather through the guessing of the main character. Unsatisfying.

Becky says

First sentence: Lady Vespasia Cumming-Gould hesitated a moment at the top of the stairs.

Premise/plot: A country-house party in December goes terribly wrong when one of the guests decides to jump off a bridge and commit suicide. The "victim" of this mystery (Gwendolen) was first the victim of a cutting insult. The other guests decide that Isobel (the woman who was 'rude') is to blame. She's to be ostracized from that day forward. But the host (Omegus Jones) and the heroine (Lady Vespasia) concoct a way to "cleanse" her socially. She'll be the one to travel to the mother's home (Gwendolen's mother) to tell her the news. If the mother travels back with her and agrees that sufficient penance has been done, then all will be well--socially.

My thoughts: This is a very odd book. It's Christmas-themed, which could be a great thing. But. It's also supposed to be a mystery. And that is where it falls short a bit. Perry's books usually have at least one or two crimes. And they tend to be DRAMATIC and big. Not subtle and dainty. I liked that this Christmas mystery didn't offer a lot of GRIT and RAGE. On the positive side, it is a very short read! But ultimately it is probably forgettable as well.

writer... says

Narrator a pleasure to follow.

Leilani says

Hated it... Couldn't even finish. Too many people at the start too confusing. I just couldn't do it.

Michele says

Although this was certainly not an uplifting & light Christmas tale, it was an excellent read with plenty of application to our lives today. It is the story of a young woman who is made to feel responsible for the death of another woman due to careless and cutting remarks. She is sent on a journey to Scotland to deliver a letter to the mother of the deceased woman in order to be forgiven for the remarks and allowed back into the Victorian society of which she is a part. If she fails, she will be ostracized and forever be an outcast. She is accompanied on the trip by a friend who is going not only to assist this young woman but also to deal with a secret in her past. The characters are interesting; the plot is unpredictable and has enough twists & turns to keep it engaging.

The lessons -- how words are able to hurt & heal, the need for empathy & compassion, the danger of premature judgement and the need for forgiveness.
