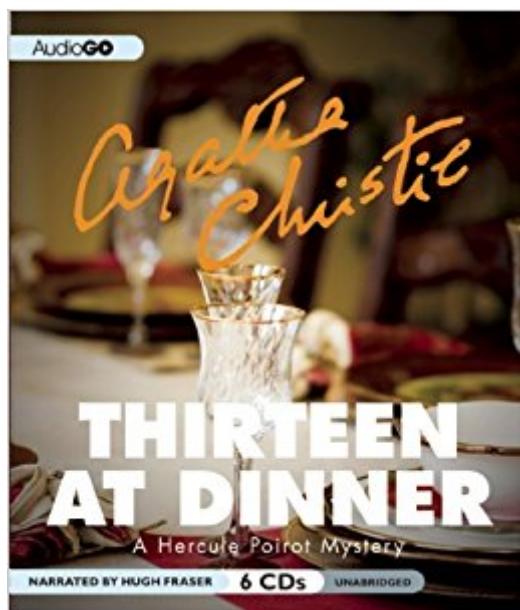


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Thirteen At Dinner: A Hercule Poirot Mystery (Hercule Poirot Mysteries)



Synopsis

Bewitching actress Jane Wilkinson wants a divorce, but her husband, Lord Edgware, refuses. She implores Hercule Poirot to use his famed tact and logic to make her case. Laughing, she tells Poirot if he fails she may have to bump off her husband herself. But it is no laughing matter when Lord Edgware is murdered, a well-placed knife wound at the base of his neck. It will take the precise Poirot to sort out the lies from the alibis.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Agatha Christie was born in Torquay in 1890 and became the bestselling novelist in history. She wrote 79 crime mysteries and collections, and saw her work translated into more languages than Shakespeare. Hugh Fraser is known to millions as Captain Hastings, assisting Hercule Poirot in A&E's Poirot and in the Agatha Christie Mystery! series on PBS.

You can't lose with Agatha Christie. This is a great story, well told, and well worth listening to. I strongly recommend this audiobook!

This is the complete review as it appears at my blog dedicated to reading, writing (no 'rithmetic!), movies, & TV. Blog reviews often contain links which are not reproduced here, nor will updates or modifications to the blog review be replicated here. Graphic and children's reviews on the blog typically feature two or three images from the book's interior, which are not reproduced here. Note

that I don't really do stars. To me a book is either worth reading or it isn't. I can't rate it three-fifths worth reading! The only reason I've relented and started putting stars up there is to credit the good ones, which were being unfairly uncredited. So, all you'll ever see from me is a five-star or a one-star (since no stars isn't a rating, unfortunately). I rated this book **WORTHY!WARNING! MAY CONTAIN UNHIDDEN SPOILERS! PROCEED AT YOUR OWN RISK!**Published as *Lord Edgware Dies* in Britain in 1933, it appeared in the US under the title *Thirteen at Dinner*. Boring as the Brit title is, it's a far more accurate representation of events than is the US title. *Thirteen at dinner* might have been so, but it has nothing whatsoever to do with the actual murder and story, which is that of Hercule Poirot in pursuit of solving Lord Edgware's mysterious and confusing murder. I was first introduced to Agatha Christie around the age of fourteen, when I was off school for the better part of a week, sick and in bed, and desperately looking for new books to read. The only ones available at the time were in the limited library of an older brother, so I got an early introduction to Ian Fleming's James Bond, and to Agatha Christie. It was an Hercule Poirot story that I read then, but I can't for the life of me recall which story it was. I don't think it was this one, but it could have been. Note that Poirot is very much a rip-off of Sherlock Holmes, and he has a foil, Captain Hastings, who stands in for John Watson, and a less than excellent police inspector, Japp, who stands in for Inspector Lestrade. I found this novel charming, a bit confusing, and entertaining, but I suspect that the bulk of the charm and entertainment came from Hugh Fraser's excellent performance in the audio book which I listened to. Normally I rail against the absurd pretension and affectation of publisher's claims that a reader is "performing" an audio book when all they're typically doing is simply reading it. Sometimes it actually is a performance, but such things are rare indeed. In this case, Fraser really turned in a confoundingly spiffing performance, what?! This story doesn't begin with a murder, but with a request from the self-centered and self-absorbed actor Jane Wilkinson, also known as Lady Edgware, who asks Poirot to speak on her behalf to her husband and try and persuade him to grant her a divorce. Poirot does so and discovers, to his surprise, that Lord Edgware acceded to her request six months previously in a letter - a letter which Wilkinson later claims she never received. Then comes the murder. Lord Edgware is found dead in his library with a knife wound to a critical position at the base of his skull. Naturally Wilkinson is the suspect, especially since she was seen entering Edgware's house by two people on the night of the murder - at around the murder time. The problem is that Jane was at a dinner party that night and has multiple witnesses to testify to this. It would seem clear that someone impersonated her. It so happens that Poirot very recently saw another actor, Carlotta Adams, impersonating Jane Wilkinson on stage, and later attended a dinner party at Wilkinson's home to which Adams was also invited. Later, Adams is found dead of an

overdose of a sleeping potion. There's also one more mystery: before the murder, Bryan Martin, an American actor, consults Poirot on the matter of his being followed by a mysterious man with a gold tooth. He also advises Poirot that Wilkinson is dangerous and might well carry out her publicly-voiced assertion that her husband has to die. There are so many red herrings in this novel that I completely lost track of who was supposed to be the prime suspect at any one time. In the end, I could not figure out who dunnit and was a bit surprised to learn the answer! I also watched the Peter Ustinov movie based on this novel. It had been updated to contemporary times (for when the movie was made), and it really didn't work. I did not like Ustinov as Poirot, which is why this isn't a movie/novel review - I only review movies that I like!). Curiously, David Suchet was in that same movie playing the part of Inspector Japp to Ustinov's Poirot. Later Suchet went on to play Poirot in a lengthy TV series, and he was perfect for the role. Much better than Ustinov. I recommend this audiobook.

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