



## Detective Stories

*Philip Pullman (Chosen By)*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

# Detective Stories

*Philip Pullman (Chosen By)*

## Detective Stories Philip Pullman (Chosen By)

Young mystery fans will be enthralled by this compelling volume of classic detective fiction. Not even Sherlock Holmes or Hercule Poirot can solve the dilemma of which one of these fifteen exciting and intriguing short stories to read first. The list of suspects - including such classic and contemporary writers as Italo Calvino, Agatha Christie, Ellery Queen, Damon Runyon, and Andrew Vacchs - may offer clues but no solution. Both the burden of proof and the delectation of detection must fall upon the reader as ultimate sleuth. Stories are vital. There's more wisdom in a story than in volumes of philosophy, and there's a hunger for stories in all of us. - Philip Pullman

## Detective Stories Details

Date : Published April 15th 1998 by Kingfisher (first published 1998)

ISBN : 9780753451465

Author : Philip Pullman (Chosen By)

Format : Paperback 223 pages

Genre : Mystery, Short Stories, Young Adult, Fiction

 [Download Detective Stories ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Detective Stories ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Detective Stories Philip Pullman (Chosen By)**

---

# From Reader Review Detective Stories for online ebook

## James Duncan says

An excellent choice of stories. Some traditional classics, such as Sherlock Holmes and Poirot, and some chilling ones as well as some comic ones. Each story has an introduction by Philip Pullman and they just add to the experience. I highly recommend this book.

---

## Emily says

An excellent selection of detective stories suitable for children and adults alike. It was great to be introduced to some authors I've never considered before, and have certainly added their other works to my "to read" list. The selection is mainly classic detective stories, of both the cosier kind and the hard-boiled. It's intrigued me to read some of the other Red Hot Reads of short stories for children.

---

## Squeaky says

I enjoyed the selection of stories. My favorites were the Isaac Asimov and the Leslie Charteris stories. I grew up watching Roger Moore as The Saint, speeding about in his Volvo P1800.

---

## Abby says

It should have had more Sherlock Holmes, none of the other detectives really impressed me as much.

---

## Jamie says

My dad stopped by for a visit today and I asked him to pick the next book for review. He pulled down this compilation of detective stories by Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, and others. Like all compilations it's got some hits and misses, so I'll go through each short story individually.

It starts off with a strong player, *The Speckled Band* by Arthur Conan Doyle. A woman comes to Baker Street with the story of her twin sister's suspicious death and the violent behavior of her stepfather. In the days up to the twin sister's wedding she reported to her sister of the smell of cigar smoke and a low whistling sound heard in her room. One night the household is awoken by a scream and they find the twin sister speaking of a speckled band before she dies (of fear?). Now the other sister is due to be married, and a sudden round of construction her stepfather has ordered for the house has forced the girl to sleep in her dead sister's room, where she has begun hearing the whistle and smelling cigar smoke.

*They Can Only Hang You Once* by Dashiell Hammett is a Sam Spade and one of the best of the lot. It's clever and has a great twist ending. Two down on their luck cousins are taking care of their wealthy uncle for

all the obvious reasons. But someone attacks the uncle, kills one of the women in the house, and knocks off the butler. Who's the murderer and who's looking to inherit?

I'd read *The Adventure of the Egyptian Tomb* by Agatha Christie somewhere before, I'll probably find it in one of my AG anthologies, but it hadn't impressed me before nor does it now. It is a Hercule Poirot story where he goes to Egypt to investigate a curse killing off an excavation crew, a plot and solution that can now be found in many mysteries (and at least one romance that I've happened across).

The next story is actually an excerpt of the children's book *Emil and the Detectives* by Erich Kästner. It's only the first several pages and it's clear who the perpetrator is from the get go, but the forward to the story insists that it is the greatest children's book ever written. But you couldn't tell that from the excerpt, in which the theft occurs several pages in with nothing else before or after. It's a pass; so sleepy that even the main character dozes through it.

*The Inspiration of Mr Budd* by Dorothy L. Sayers is a sweet little story about a timid hairdresser who is hard up for business, until the day he recognizes his customer as a wanted murderer from a description in the local paper. Not a detective story but a satisfying read; well written if a touch obvious.

*From the Files of Inspector Craig* by Raymond Smullyan isn't a short story at all but two pages of short logic puzzles, all of the 'if A is this and B is that' variety.

*Butch Minds the Baby* by Damon Runyon is, as you will find me saying of many of these stories, not a detective story. It's a first person tale about a team of safecrackers, and Big Butch in particular who's been charged by his wife to babysit for the night. But the score is enough to tempt him and he brings the baby along, which turns out to save his hide when the cops catch him. A good story for the language; I can read this again and again just absorbing Mr. Runyon's skill at creating individual voices.

*Murder at St Oswald's* by Michael Underwood is the story of a group of school boys attempting to poison one of their teachers. They pull it off and see the body in the garden shed, but when school officials look for him he is nowhere to be found. It's good enough, and it's a mystery story if not a detective one since it follows the worried school boys and not the police.

*The Cross of Lorraine* by Isaac Asimov is my favorite of the collection. It involves a group of friends called the Black Widowers who gather for a monthly banquet. The guest of the month puts a riddle to them of a woman he'd met on a train and who had disappeared on him. One of the few detective stories in the bunch, it's solved through discussion and each voice is unique and enjoyable.

*The Newdick Helicopter* by Leslie Charteris is about a detective called The Saint who hears from his friend about a man cheating folks into buying shares in a helicopter business which he holds no patents to. The Saint investigates and sees something the conman doesn't, buying up the controlling interest and out-conning the conman. A good story and, I suppose, there is a smidgen of investigating done near the end.

*Cold Money* by Ellery Queen is a charming detective story about a thief released from prison returning to the same hotel room he was originally caught in. The police discover that the stolen money had been hidden there, and despite staff assuring officers that he'd received no visitors and hadn't left the room since he checked in, the thief is dead and the money gone. But one small observation has the whole case solved in moments. A very good one and it gave me a good turn trying to figure it out, even after the clue came up.

*More From the Files of Inspector Craig* by Raymond Smullyan is another two pages of puzzles in the same

vein as the first.

*The One-Handed Murderer* by Italo Calvino is the retelling of an Italian folktale about a murder pursuing a princess for vengeance. It is brilliant! I wasn't expecting much from it in the beginning as I'd misread the forward as it being a fairy tale, most of which have been either written or edited to make everything the woman's fault. But folk tales are generally kinder to the female sex and in this one the princess is not only the heroine, but she become so despite the everyone around her telling her time and again that she is making the whole affair up, even after she has proven them wrong before (i.e. she proves a murderer has been trying to kill her and the king finally believes her, but when he shows up again in disguise the king goes back to dismissing her terror). That said, it's not a detective story at all and there's not even investigating done in it which a least the others have, so I have no idea why it's here.

*Fingerprinting a Ghost* by Tony Fletcher (from *Memories of Murder* ) is a story of exactly what it sounds. A tale from the memoir of a police fingerprint specialist tells a tale wherein the police are contacted by the Psychical Research Society to print a pair of hands that had been appearing at séances held at a home in South Manchester. The original attempts gain interest among the force as the fingerprints appear as long scratches across the paper, and photographs show creased cushions as though being sat on by someone, until an article in the Daily Mail brings the police chief down on them and puts a stop to it all. Not a detective story so much as a ghost story.

*It's a Hard World* by Andrew Vachss is a about a man on the run outfoxing his pursuers. Not a detective story but I'm not sure what else to call it.

*Maddened by Mystery* by Stephen Leacock is a parody of detective stories wherein the solution is obvious but the ending is all colors of messed up. Good for a quick read but I wouldn't want to sit through a book of them.

The verdict? For a detective story compilation there weren't many detective stories in it. However, the stories were good and some were really great so I'll go ahead and recommended it.

---

### **Tina says**

Nice mix of old-fashioned detective stories--a quick, fun read. Enjoyed the Saint story. And any collection that includes a Damon Runyon story is aces with me.

---

### **Shae McDaniel says**

Weak sauce, Phil Pullman. Weak sauce. They weren't even all detective stories.

---

### **Cleome says**

OMG!!! it is so cool! but at the same time... mysterious..... :D read it!!!!!!!!!!

---

**P.S. Winn says**

Great collection of fifteen great stories that dive into mystery and suspense.

---

**Daniel Miller says**

Some stories were about detectives and some were not. My favourite was the Sherlock Holmes story because it challenged my brain mentally.

---

**Makay E says**

This book had some really good stories but had a lot of stories that i did not count as a mystery. I also thought the last story was terrible! I solved it really quickly while it took the detective four days. But i did really like some stories in it though.

---

**Judith says**

If you like short stories and you like mysteries this is a good book for you. Lots of different authors.

---

**Susan says**

Wonderful selection of detective short stories by various authors. Some I've heard of and read, some I've hear of and not read, while others I've not heard of at all, and obviously not read!

There is a small 2-3 paragraph introduction to each story and nice drawings scattered throughout the book. I am also going to make a note of some authors and look up more of their work - i.e., Simon Templar for one. I have heard of The Saint but I haven't read any of his adventures. And the one here made me chuckle by the end.

Even though this book is geared toward the young crowd, I would recommend it to anyone for a quick read of different samplings of detective stories. Very good!

---

**Sophie says**

I came across this at a used bookstore and picked it up because I'm always up for a short story anthology.

Unfortunately, despite the promising introduction, most of the stories in this book can't even be truthfully described as detective stories; some aren't even mysteries. Their quality varies a bit, but not as much as in most such anthologies, usually falling squarely into "mediocre." I don't know if I'll even bother holding on to it, because if I wanted to re-read any of the stories I did like (namely, the Christie, Sayers, Asimov, and Bentley ones), I could find them in their native collections, which would be better than this one.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle - The Speckled Band - This is one of the most popular Sherlock Holmes stories, if not *the* most popular, but it's never been one of my favorites. It's good, certainly, but the characters just aren't that appealing, and there's not as much detecting going on as in, for instance, "The Red-Headed League" or "A Case of Identity."

Ellery Queen - Cold Money - This is the first Ellery Queen story I've read, and I did enjoy it, though I didn't love it. The plot is terribly predictable, and the solution poorly formed (the murderer could as easily have been someone else, and in fact I thought it was going to be someone posing as the actual murderer).

Agatha Christie - The Adventure of the Egyptian Tomb - This is also the first Christie story I've read. I wasn't expecting to like it, but I did. I actually found Poirot really entertaining.

Erich Kästner - Emil and the Detectives - I've never read this book, though it's mentioned in one of my favorites, Guus Kuijer's *The Book of Everything*, and despite Pullman's assertion that it's "one of the best children's books ever written," this "extract" did nothing to woo me. In addition to the plot being far-fetched and the characters uninteresting, the writing is extremely clunky.

Dorothy L. Sayers - The Inspiration of Mr. Budd - I've read a couple of the Lord Peter Wimsey novels, but none of Sayers' short stories till now. It was fun, and has a marvelous ending, but it's where the book starts to move away from actual detective stories, though it comes closer than much of what follows.

Raymond Smullyan - From the Files of Inspector Craig - These aren't stories at all, only logic puzzles in the form of "Given a few facts about A, B, and C [not stand-ins; they really are referred to as A, B, and C], and given that no one else was involved in a crime, who is innocent, and who is guilty?" Each one is only a couple paragraphs long. Sort of diverting, but not the kind of thing that works in an anthology like this, in my view.

Damon Runyon - Butch Minds the Baby - Pullman actually admits in his introduction that this isn't a detective story, and though he could have made that preface to half these entries, it's particularly true here. It follows the misadventures of a group of New York gangsters. I couldn't even read it because the prose was so over-the-top, but I don't feel as though I missed anything.

Michael Underwood - Murder at St. Oswald's - This also doesn't involve any detecting, only a group of middle schoolers attempting murder. I've certainly read worse, but it wasn't what I call compelling.

Isaac Asimov - The Cross of Lorraine - Again, not a detective story, as there's no crime, though there is some deduction. It was enjoyable on its own merits, though. Although I did feel a prick of annoyance at the male main character running after a woman because he has a crush on her... she's not that into you, bro.

Leslie Charteris - The Newdick Helicopter - Hey, an honest-to-God detective story! It's fun enough and has a cute little twist ending, though it's not really exciting.

Italo Calvino - The One-Handed Murderer - An Italian folktale that involves no detection, nor in fact any

crime, despite the title. I like folktales, but this was just whatever. "Bluebeard" would have been a much more appropriate inclusion.

E.C. Bentley - The Little Mystery - Another actual detective story. Although the broad points of the plot are pretty predictable, especially to anyone who's read the Sherlock Holmes story "The Copper Beeches," the details aren't. The characters aren't super endearing, but they're likeable enough. One of the better stories for sure.

Tony Fletcher - Fingerprinting a Ghost - A (supposedly) true story, though written like a short story. It was interesting, but again wholly predictable.

Andrew Vachss - It's a Hard World - Again, no detecting, just villainy. I gather from Pullman's introduction that we're supposed to find the main character sympathetic? I certainly didn't feel anything for him at all. The mechanism by which he defeats his opponents is clever, but it could have been used in a better story.

Stephen Leacock - Maddened by Mystery - A parody of detective stories, but I found it tiresome and pointless rather than funny.

---

## **Naomi says**

I read this as a break between other novels while trying to figure out what to pick up next.

I gave this a three, because some of the stories I genuinely enjoyed, but others were childish and didn't seem to fit the rest of the collection. The last story, in particular, was one I wish I had simply skipped over.

If you're looking for an easy read that is mildly entertaining, but not challenging, then this is for you. Almost all of these mysteries were easy to solve before getting to the end of the first page or two, but some were still entertaining because of the 'vintage' nature of them. 'Vintage' meaning the old-fashioned style of writing and the inclusion of swashbuckling detectives, etc. However, this is not one I'll be keeping, as I can guarantee I won't be picking it up again.

---