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Posted on 06 January 2019 By Ngaio Marsh

[Free] ? Death at the Bar ? Weplayit.co

After a very slow build up, we finally have a corpse after almost eighty or so pages and the introduction of Marsh's hero, the aristocratic Roderick Alleyn. Having said that, once Alleyn and the faithful Fox turn up, the action really starts and this becomes an engaging and worthwhile read, perfect for a couple of hours in the garden on a sunny day. Barrister Luke Watchman is a far from attractive character and probably deserves to be bumped off whilst spending a rural idyll with his cousin, another annoying theatrical type beloved of the equally theatrical Marsh and the usual array of types. A mix of aristos and champagne socialists, it takes Alleyn less than two days to solve what is apparently a fiendishly difficult crime and one that has evidently baffled the local plod. While I knew that I had read this entry in the Inspector Alleyn series, as I have read all the Marsh books on my shelves at some point in the past 35 years, when I saw the audiobook on Hoopla read the blurb it didn't sound familiar. Once I started listening though, it came back to me. Ironically, I spent about 2/3 of my time listening to this mystery sure I knew who the murderer was only to find it was someone else. Wanda McCaddon does an excellent narration and this Golden Age mystery stands up to the test of time well in my opinion. [Free] ? Death at the Bar ? Popular Book, Death At The Bar Author Ngaio Marsh This Is Very Good And Becomes The Main Topic To Read, The Readers Are Very Takjup And Always Take Inspiration From The Contents Of The Book Death At The Bar, Essay By Ngaio Marsh Is Now On Our Website And You Can Download It By Register What Are You Waiting For Please Read And Make A Refission For You I don't quite understand people who like Marsh's books as much as, say, Dorothy L Sayers. Alleyn just doesn't have the same depth of characterisation as Wimsey, and while the character of Troy is quite fun, she doesn't seem to have come into it as much as Harriet. It is true that Wimsey books go buy without Harriet, though usually there's Parker and Bunter, the Dowager Duchess and plenty of other supporting characters who pop up repeatedly. In these books, it seems to often be just Alleyn and Fox, and the possibilities of that partnership are limited. The mystery itself is okay. It takes some time to build up a set of characters to theorise about first though I hope they're not intended to be likeable as such, because most of them are not, which at least adds a bit of interest. I do like the way crime mystery stories can be used as a character study. I found the ending ridiculously drawn out enough red herrings, let's have the culprit, please. I think Ngaio Marsh's books, properly spaced out, will keep me entertained well enough, but I'm probably going to avoid reading them back to back. They're just too dry, and Alleyn isn't enough of a person to me. Originally posted here. Alleyn investigates a murder at the Plume of Feathers, a Devon pub. The murder happens during a game of darts, and all those in the bar come under suspicion. Alleyn and Fox arrive from Scotland Yard to quiz the suspects and follow up their stories. Although I liked the country pub setting, this mystery took an age to get going and I

never really cared who did it The plot is clever and skilfully put together, and the Alleyn and Fox relationship continues to work well However, this didn't really appeal to me and I didn't find it at all memorable. Death at the Bar by Ngaio Marsh is a reread for me Reread is in quotes because I actually listened to it this time Our local library had clear out of all their books on tape about this time last year and I scooped up this 8 cassette rendition read by James Saxon Saxon, by the way is terrific to listen to He manages to give all of the characters their own distinct voice although I think it was a good thing that there were only two ladies one of whom had a nice Irish brogue I am not, generally speaking, an audio book kind of reader Not that I have anything against them, I just process the books much better in print particularly on a first go round But when faced with a weekend trip in the middle of a read a thon I thought listening would be a great way to stay on track for the thon And as mentioned I thoroughly enjoyed Saxon as the reader. But down to cases Attorney, Luke Watchman is headed to Devon and the Plume of Feathers pub for an annual holiday with his cousin Sebastian Parish and his friend Noman Cubitt On the way there he has a minor mishap with another motorist Watchman jumps out of his car to berate the other man on his driving habits and the driver mutters an apology at him and tries to avoid being seen clearly Watchman is somewhat mollified, but gets the impression that he might know the other man and that the driver definitely doesn't want to be seen by him. Watchman arrives at the Feathers and once settled he meets up with Parish and Cubitt in the private bar where he regales them with the tale of his accident and his impressions of the other man The other man is none other than Robert Legge a fellow guest of the pub and a man who has been sitting in a secluded part of the bar Watchman tries to engage him in conversation, but it is clear that Legge does not want to be sociable. During the course of the evening it is revealed that Legge is a masterpiece with the darts and can do all sorts of tricks with the darts and board from playing Round the Clock hitting point sections in order to a circus type move where he can outline a person's hand with darts Watchman doubts his skill challenging him to repeat exactly a set of dart moves from the previous evening and losing money on the bet and then a game of Round the Clock, but shying away from presenting his hand for the circus trick The next evening Watchman changes his mind and says that if Legge can beat him at Round the Clock again, then he will let Legge do his dart and hand trick with him he figures the worst that can happen is a prick from the dart and he's gotten a bit of courage from the brandy bottle produced by the proprietor He would be wrong by the end of the night Watchman is dead and a trace of cyanide found on the dart There was plenty of the stuff about the place Abel Pomeroy, the pub owner, had been using the deadly poison to dispose of rats Someone decided to use it to dispose of Watchman But who The obvious person is Legge because he threw the dart But there are several witnesses to swear that he could not possibly have smeared poison on the instrument When Inspector Roderick Alleyn and Detective Sergeant Fox arrive to assist the local constabulary, they find all sorts of motives lurking about there's Decima Moore and her boyfriend, Will Pomeroy

who differ on politics and who don't appreciate Watchman's attentions to the lovely Decima Parish and Cubitt are legatees under Watchman's will and there are a couple of people who had dealings with Watchman in court. The difficulty is that those with the most motive seem to have the least opportunity. Fox will get a taste of poison himself and be saved by Alleyn before they can bring the crime home to the culprit. The last time I read this one Marsh fooled me. She did it again and this is embarrassing. I'm pretty sure she fooled me in the same way. I latched onto a particular character and, just as one of the characters kept bleating on about how Abel Pomeroy has tried to poison them all he hasn't, I could not get that character out of my head as the villain of the piece. Marsh managed to force the clues on me and I still missed them. I thoroughly enjoyed having the wool pulled over my eyes. Four stars. First published at my blog [My Reader's Block](#). Please request permission before reposting. Thanks.

In *Death at the Bar* by Ngaio Marsh, three longtime friends join together to visit their annual vacation spot in Ottocomb in Devon, where they gather at the Plume of Feathers Pub. All three friends are famous in their own right, with Luke Watchman an elite barrister, Sebastian Darrow a famous actor, and Norman Cubitt a top painter. The pub is a central gathering point for the community, where locals and guests gather one stormy night. They discover that Abel Pomeroy, the owner of the pub, owns three valuable bottles of a high quality brandy, so the group breaks open one bottle. One local man, Bob Legge, has a reputation for being a genius with darts and convinces Luke, who has been sniping at Legge in underhanded hints about some knowledge of a potential criminal background, to let him throw darts between each finger spread out against the dartboard. But in his first ever error, he nicks one of Luke's fingers with a dart, which sends Luke into a near fainting fit, as he can't stand the sight of blood. Just as they try to clean the wound with iodine and give Luke brandy to steady him, the storm kills the power. When it comes back on, Luke Watchman lies dying. Read the rest of this review and other fun, geeky articles at [Fangirl Nation](#) one of the most enjoyable Inspector Alleyn stories I have read so far. A distinguished barrister dies, apparently accidentally, in a pub in Devon, where he is on holiday. But it emerges that the death may not have been accidental after all, so naturally the local constabulary calls in Scotland Yard. There are some very interesting characters, and it is not too easy to guess how the murder was done, and by whom. The romance also is interesting than in most of the Inspector Alleyn books, less predictable. This edition also includes a whimsical early short story by Marsh, which is quite fun.

Two of my bookgroups on Goodreads are reading Ngaio Marsh this month. I read the first, a later title in the series, earlier on technically, last month, and now, this one *Death at the Bar*, published in 1939, is ninth in the Roderick Alleyn series by Marsh, and is also a reread for me. Compared to *Clutch of Constables*, the other title I read, this one has the ordinary format: disliked chap gets killed, police called in, investigates, denouement, and while I liked the different format in *Constables*, this one for me was the interesting read. In this one, London Barrister, Luke Watchman heads down to South Devon for a holiday with his cousin, actor Sebastian

Parrish, and friend, artist Norman Cubitt But while the innkeeper and publican Abel Pomeroy is welcoming, with other guests at the inn and local inhabitants, Watchman's relations aren't as cordial While they don't exactly wish him away, he manages to pick a fight or two and rub some of them the wrong way There are tensions between others too, some over politics, and perhaps other personal issues as well A dart game on the second evening of Watchman's visit goes very wrong, and one participant drops dead A mystery is thus at hand, and when the local police can't quite handle the matter, Alleyn and with him, Fox are called in. Since I read the other Marsh book so close to this one, I can't help comparing the two, and this one as I said stood out as the better one for me on that count I found the mystery itself had much meat to it I certainly did not guess whodunit having read it ages ago I didn't remember it at all, and even on one of the side plots while I guessed somewhat in the right direction, the final answer was not what I thought but something very different But another aspect was pretty much guessable not from the book itself but from the blurb at the back which was a little annoying my ed Was a 1975 Fontana ed But very satisfying as a mystery Again the characters too I thought seem strongly developed and interesting to read about, each with their secrets, insecurities, and stories Another standout in this book for me were the touches of humour including Marsh poking fun at herself She writes, Your novelist too has passed the halcyon days when he could ignore routine He reads books about Scotland Yard, he swots up police manuals He knows that routine is deadly dull and hopelessly poor material for a thriller so, like a wise potboiler, he compromises, He heads one chapter Routine, dismisses six weeks of drudgery in as many phrases, cuts the cackle, and gets to the osses This is an observation by Alleyn, in a chapter titled, what else, but Routine There's also another fun instance, involving the Local PC, Oates, but that I'll leave to you to read when you read the book All in all, this was a very enjoyable mystery read for me The ninth Roderick Alleyn mystery sees three friends meet up for a holiday in Devon Luke Watchman is a top London barrister, his cousin, Sebastian Parrish an actor and Norman Cubitt an artist The three men spent last year staying at the Plume of Feathers, whose landlord is the friendly Abel Pomeroy aided by his son, Will, who runs, The Left Group, a political group with members than you would expect in the small fishing village of Ottercombe Watchman is looking forward to the holiday and to seeing the divine, Decima Moore again His romantic feelings for Decima have not changed, but she is now involved with Will His initial enthusiasm for the trip is also dented, literally, by a run in on the way there with another car The driver, Robert Legge, is staying at the Plumb of Feathers and is very much a member of the local community acting as Treasurer for Will's group and excelling at darts in the bar When he endeavours to try out a dart trick, it ends in a bizarre tragedy and Alleyn and Fox are brought in to investigate a murder Alleyn has to wade through a cast of suspects and motives, to get to the truth, in a case which sees both him, and his faithful, Foxkins, come into personal danger This is a good addition to the series so far I would not say it is one of my favourites, but it is a good, well written, mystery,

with a good cast of characters and a good setting I enjoyed the insights into the relationship between Alleyn and Fox and the greater role that the loyal Fox had in the novel Overall, I am enjoying this series very much and look forward to reading on.

NGAIO MARSH



DEATH AT THE BAR

'A really clever problem in detection.'

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