



Four Red Diamonds

Jason Blacker

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Four Red Diamonds contains the first 4 Lady Marmalade mysteries in one collection. These would include: Poisoned Heart, Loose Lips, Heartless and Misery's Company.

Poisoned Heart

Visiting some friends, Lordy and Lady Apleby turns out to be a dangerous affair. For the kitchen maid at least, who ends up dead.

How did she die and who would want to kill her is up to Lady Marmalade and Inspector Devlin Pearce to determine. Making their work even harder are the five suspects who all had reason to kill her.

The Lord of the manner who was having an affair with her. The Lady who was upset at her cheating husband. Her bastard son, her low life of an ex-husband or the butler who she had spurned.

In the lineage of Agatha Christie, this cozy mystery is set in the late 1940s.

Loose Lips

It's just after the end of the Second World War and Lady Marmalade is looking forward to a nice relaxing holiday in Hightown. The war has been terribly stressful on everyone and Lady Marmalade's good friends, Harry and Genevieve Appleback have invited her over for some much needed R n' R and Irish Sea air.

But what should have been a relaxing holiday turns out to be a workout for Lady Marmalade's little gray cells.

Nana (Maude) Bloomfield, an heir to the Bloomfield Confectioner's dwindling fortune is found murdered in her study. There are a vast assortment of culprits.

Her husband Ambrose is having an affair with Nana's oldest friend, Agnes Bennett. Both of them now benefit with Nana out of the way. But what about Owen Bloomfield, Ambrose's brother. He clearly didn't care for Nana's involvement in the business.

And Rufina Pritchard, Nana's stepdaughter is here from Australia looking for work, which Nana can't offer. Neither can Nana increase her son's stipend. Jasper Bloomfield, the son, is none to happy about that.

Heartless

Lady Marmalade is taking the Flying Scotchman up to York. She needs to attend to some financial affairs related to the estate of her deceased husband, Eric.

It is a time of reflection and Lady Marmalade is eager to get onto the train and away from the cacophony of the train station.

However, the train will not offer the respite she requires. During dinner on the trip to York, Major Jasper Moss is murdered. He wasn't a nice man, but he didn't deserve to be killed.

In the short time before the train makes it to York, does Lady Marmalade have the time to determine who amongst the five dinner guests killed him?

Captain Houghton has motive, he served under the Major in the second war. Winnie Smith has motive too as does the Major's own daughter, Ethel who has accompanied him on this trip. Evan Cross, the waiter has a dark secret that gives him grounds for murder and Mr. Lewis Bryan had a business deal go bad with the Major that gives him incentive too.

Misery's Company

In Misery's Company, Lady Marmalade is having a few guests over for dinner and company at her 'cottage' called Avalon at Ambleside in the picturesque Lake District.

Sir Anthony Gibbons is a teller of engaging tall tales. A retired surgeon who was friend to both Lady Marmalade and her husband Eric, Sir Tony regales the dinner guests with a true story of a murder most foul in Australia.

Lady Marmalade's good friend Jane Howard is one of the guests as is the businessman Ellis Hutchinson and his wife Lily. Sir Tony tells the tale of the murder of Melissa Kay, wife to Roger and mother to James.

At a dinner much like Lady Marmalade is hosting for her guests, Melissa is poisoned by someone who dined with her that fateful night. Not only was Melissa's husband and son there, but her good friend Laura Lynch and her sister Ellie were enjoying the meal too.

The question on everyone's mind, is whether or not Lady Marmalade can be outfoxed and if anyone else can determine the real killer in Sir Tony's tale before she does.

Four Red Diamonds Details

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From Reader Review Four Red Diamonds for online ebook

Rai says

Four Red Diamonds - a great choice for Agatha Christie fans!

Four Red Diamonds is a very satisfying mystery series as each is different from the other in style and setting, but all feel authentic, flow effortlessly, and are cleverly told. A great deal of care and attention has been given to the details of settings, characters and the mysteries at the heart of all of these stories. I enjoy getting lost in the pages of these old-world whodunits.

Poisoned Heart

It follows amateur sleuth Lady Marmalade as she gets caught up in a murder mystery at the English countryside estate of some friends she was visiting. The setting is the 1940s and the sense of place, attention to detail, and the cast of characters in this story serve it well. It kept me guessing to the very end as to who committed the murder and why.

Loose Lips

Loose Lips presents a tricky challenge for our sleuth, Lady Marmalade. There are motivations all over, strange alliances, and hidden agendas. Each suspect has a personal connection and compelling reason to have committed the terrible deed. This was a fun and engaging read filled with different story layers.

Heartless

This is a well-crafted murder mystery. It takes place on a train, speeding through a rainy, turbulent night. All is not as it seems on this dark night. I really enjoy how well drawn out the characters are, they each pop with personality and quirks, and the setting is evocative of a time long past. You will feel as though you are right there. Twists and turns will keep you guessing and it's fascinating to see how adeptly our sleuth uncovers the truth behind the lies.

Misery's Company

This is the fourth short mystery story in the Lady Marmalade series and it's different from the rest in how it's told. This time friends gather at the stately home of the amateur sleuth, Lady Marmalade. We are given insight into her world through her friendships and associations and her history and home setting. Those gathered are entertained by the telling of a murder that took place the year before. Each guest is challenged to solve the mystery. It's great fun to read the interplay between the characters and try to figure out the motivations and who the culprit is along with them. A delightful read!

I will definitely pick up **Beggar's Pardon**, the novel-length Lady Marmalade mystery.

Colleen Fauchelle says

I won this book, which was exciting. I am sorry it took me awhile to read, however I really enjoyed this book. It held 4 short murder stories. The clever bit is you can't read what the stories are about on the back

cover because the white words can't be seen against the picture.

Lady Marmalade is the sleth in these stories. They are gentle murders without much fuss and polite sit down solution. I think Lady Marmalade can solve the cases because she is observent and a good listner.

They are easy to read and make good bed time stories.

Johann Coetzer says

Quite a good read, I have won this book of goodreads here and to be honest I can not be to objective towards this book as the author is a fellow South-African and I may be bias towards this book. So hence my only 4 star rating and not 5 stars.

But to get to the point I did in fact thoroughly enjoy reading of this book, I have not really read any of the other mentioned books in the reviews here in Goodreads, so I can not comment on those, but it is almost like the great books from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle with the Holmes books. Though this book could have done with a bit more editing)to no offence to the author), by the publishers and editor, the description in the back is a bit unreadable, no paragraphs, well the fact that every page ends on a full stop makes it easy to mark your last read point, but then again owning a first edition with all the edits is part of this and in the end adds to the value.

Lady Marmalade is quite a "cool" character and not to be reckoned with, She is lovable and very easy going, not precisely the protagonist you would think of, she is a true lady and demands it and is good at what she does. My recommendation is to buy this book if you are able to and not so, then get the Kindle edition, support the author people!.

It is four short stories but it was well worded and written with great explanations, descriptions, (Not to much making it as boring as a Wilbur Smith book) and easy to relate to the characters, though the author could have done a bit more research on locations and events, but they do not really count to much as it is a non-fiction book, and well one as a reader does not really pick it up.

The first short story is bit predictable and it does get better from there and is well worth the money, time and reading. So in the end a full 4.6 out of 5.

Jessica says

I received a free copy of this book through a Goodreads giveaway.

The mysteries in this book are indeed quite cozy. I really enjoyed reading the four mysteries and trying to figure out who the culprits were.

Each mystery was good and the book just got better until the last mystery. I especially enjoyed "Heartless" and "Misery's Company". I like that in "Heartless" the murder occurred in a train, and in "Misery's Company", I like that the case in this story was the one that Lady Marmalade and her friends were being told during dinner.

The mysteries are entertaining, with great writing, and great attention to detail.

Veronica says

Honestly I didn't like it. The stories were just passable but it needs a lot of help. No explanation of who Lady Marmalade was and how she came to be. Also the editing was shocking. No paragraphs, the story flows over itself too much that it drowns the book. The presentation of the book needs a lot of work as the description on the back cover is unreadable. The author needs to do a lot more research on the era and rewrite the whole book. Good try though.

I won this book through Goodreads.

Eleonora says

I've entered the giveaway being lured by the fact that Lady Marmalade sounded a lot like Miss Marple and I've always been a huge Christie fan. However, the book is very different from Christie's ones, even though the author tries to emulate (or pay homage?) to her. The four short stories all have interesting premises, but then they are often developed in a hurry, except for the fourth one, Misery's Company, which was a bit longer and quite original in the way of storytelling.

I think the main problem is that the author gives too little space to details and introspection, never really exploring the human mind and behaviour as Christie does, leaving all the explanation to the dialogue, which is often a bit repetitive. You don't have the time to process the story, to try and guess who the murderer is because the story is already finished and everything has been uncerimonously revealed in an abrupt ending. Maybe a slower pace and a bit more attention to the showing rather than the telling would have been better. Hopefully the author will have the chance to develop these things in a longer form of narration.

Another minor problem is the editing of the book, which is quite upsetting with no paragraphs, no justification and quite some typos.
