



A Daughter's a Daughter

Mary Westmacott (Pseudonym) , Agatha Christie

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Finally Available Again--Three Classic Novels by Agatha Christie writing as Mary Westmacott

First published between 1930 and 1956, the six novels written by Agatha Christie under the name Mary Westmacott, regarded by some as the writer's finest work, show a very different side of her talent. What they share with her other fiction is Christie's gift for sharp observations about people, the ambitions that drive them, their relationships, and the conflicts that erupt between them. This omnibus edition brings together three of the Westmacott novels:

A Daughter's Daughter: A daughter's opposition to her mother's plan to remarry threatens to destroy their relationship

Unfinished Portrait: Bereft of three people she has held most dear, Cecilla must decide if she has the strength to come to terms with the past.

The Burden: The burden of one sister's love for her younger sister--whom she's sworn to protect--has a dramatic effect on both their lives.

A Daughter's a Daughter Details

Date : Published 1974 by HarperCollins (first published 1952)

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Author : Mary Westmacott (Pseudonym) , Agatha Christie

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Genre : Fiction, Romance, Mystery, Classics

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From Reader Review A Daughter's a Daughter for online ebook

Dana says

I picked up this book thinking it to be a detective fiction. But I was surprised to see that it was not of the crime genre but that of drama. I had my doubts as to whether Agatha Christie can do a good job. But looks like she can! The book should be appraised for its originality and the depth of the characters.

Antara Ghosh says

Hard hitting and cynical. Typical Mary Westmacott.
Agatha Christie had to sweeten up when she started writing popular novels.
This is before that time, a very interesting read.

Laura Palmiz says

Il destino degli altri è una delle opere di Agatha Christie che non hanno a che fare con misteri e delitti. Nonostante ciò, non mancano i colpi di scena e si resta col fiato sospeso durante tutta la seconda metà del libro.
Non si tratta di un banale romanzo rosa, poiché questa è una storia che parla di sacrificio, di odio, di quel rancore che anche nei rapporti più duraturi non viene mai in superficie ma resta lì, in profondità, e si nutre di noi, dei nostri pensieri e delle nostre migliori intenzioni.
È una storia che parla delle verità che nessuno vuole sentirsi dire, della necessità di confrontarsi e di che cosa avviene quando si è costretti a fare i conti con i propri sentimenti (soprattutto quando si è madre e figlia), mentre tutti - quasi tutti - pensano che sia meglio vivere dentro ovattate e confortevoli bugie.

Magdalena says

Trzy cz??ci jak trzy akty sztuki, fabu?a rozgrywaj?ca si? g?ównie przez dialogi. Tak! Po raz kolejny wida? fascynacj? Agathy Christie teatrem. Powie?? „A Daughter’s a Daughter”, wydana w t?umaczeniu Marii Grabskiej-Ry?skiej jako „Córeczka”, doskonale nadaje si? do wystawienia na scenie.

AKT I

Anna Prentice ma niewiele ponad czterdzie?ci lat, dziewi?tnastoletni? córk? i od wielu lat jest wdow?. ?yje z maj?tku, jaki zostawi? jej zmar?y m??, wychowuje Sar?, do pomocy ma gospodyni? Edith, t? sam?, która opiekowa?a si? ni?, gdy by?a jeszcze dzieckiem. Kiedy rozmy?ła nad swoim ?yciem, pojawia si? w jej g?owie my?l: „Dawniej córki by?y po to, ?eby us?ugiwa? rodzicom, nie odwrotnie”[1].

Jak? matk? jest Anna? Nadopieku?cz?, nadskakuj?c?. Nadal us?uguje, ale teraz ju? nie rodzicom, a swojemu dziecku. „Nadskakiwanie rodzicom przez dzieci czy dzieciom przez rodziców nie wp?ywa?o na ich wi??. Ona i Sara bez w?tpienia kocha?y si? mocno i szczerze. Czy to samo ??czy?o j? z w?asn? matk?? Z perspektywy czasu stwierdza?a raczej, ?e pod wzajemnymi czu?o?ciami kry? si? ten w?a?nie ?yczliwy brak zainteresowania, który dopiero ostatnio wszed? w mod??”[2] – zauwa?a.

Teraz by?my powiedzieli, ?e dopad? j? syndrom opuszczonego gniazda. Wyjazd Sary na trzy tygodnie daje jej przedsmak chwil, gdy córka wyjdzie za m?? i odejdzie z jej ?ycia. Anna, która przez lata spe?nia?a si? w roli matki i pani domu, traci grunt pod nogami.

Czym wype?ni sobie ?ycie?

Weralizuje obawy przed przyjació?k? Laur?, pe?ni?c? rol? g?osu rozs?dku, mistrza i terapeuty. Wydaje si? ona w tej historii jedyn? naprawd? doros??, dojrza?? osob?. Po koniec powie?ci objawi si? jeszcze druga taka posta? i b?dzie dla czytelnika nie lada zaskoczeniem. Anna wyznaje: „Mówi?c szczerze, Lauro, ?ycie wyda?o mi si? zupe?nie bezcelowe. Czeka? mnie d?ugie lata i ?adnego celu, którym mog?abym je wype?ni?. Jestem tylko g?upi?, bezu?yteczn? kobiet?...”[3].

Do syndromu pustoszej?cego gniazda dochodzi syndrom zamykaj?cych si? drzwi. Anna pragnie mie? troch? ?ycia dla siebie, wszak dziewi?tna?cie lat po?wi?ci?a na bycie wzorow? matk?, na stworzenie córce domu. Jak?e współczesne s? jej problemy, jak dobrze mo?e zrozumie? je kobieta ?yj?ca w XXI wieku. Christie po mistrzowsku kre?li portret psychologiczny bohaterki, przerzucaj?c pomost ponad dziesi?cioleciami. Gdyby Anna wyj??a z torebki telefon komórkowy, nie zauwa?y?abym ?adnej ró?nicy, tak ma?o istotne s? szczegó?y, a tak wa?ne to, co dzieje si? z bohaterami.

Kiedy Sara bawi na nartach w Szwajcarii, Anna prowadzi ?ycie towarzyskie. Poznaje Richarda Cauldfielda, wdowca, i zakochuje si? w nim bez pami?ci.

Czy po powrocie z wakacji córka, wokó? której do tej pory kr??y?o ?ycie matki, zaakceptuje tak wielk? zmian?? Co robi Anna, gdy b?dzie musia?a dokona? wyboru?

AKT II

W akcie drugim patrzymy na sytuacj? w domu bohaterki z perspektywy Laury, która po d?ugiej nieobecno?ci powraca do Londynu. Anna i Sara rzuci?y si? wir towarzyskiego ?ycia, jakby chcia?y zag?uszy? niewygodne my?li. Zmieni?y tryb ?ycia i styl ubierania si?, przemeblowa?y mieszkanie. Sara jest ju? doros?? kobiet?, natomiast Anna... gdyby by?a m??czyzn?, zapewne kupi?aby wy?cigowy, obowi?zkowo czerwony, samochód.

Richard znikn??, Sara ma nadal ten sam dom, a Anna usuwa skubn?? z tortu, który nazywamy ?yciem, bodaj kawa?eczek dla siebie. Obowi?zki towarzyskie s? bardzo wyczerpuj?ce, wi?c kobiety mijaj? si? w domu tak, jak obecnie czyni? to dwie zaharowane pracownice korporacji. Nie maj? czasu na rozmow?. Nie maj? czy nie chc? mie??

Wychowana w ?lepym pos?usze?stwie wobec rodziców Anna daje swojej córce ca?kowit? wolno??, tak?, jakiej pragn??aby dla siebie, jak? cz??ciowo uda?o jej si? uzyska? w dojrza?ym wieku.

AKT III

Sara wysz?a za m??, ale nie jest szcz??liwa. Laura, jak wyrzut sumienia, oskar?a Ann? o to, ?e nie zapobieg?a nieszcz??ciu. O to samo oskar?a j? równie? Sara. Ta us?uguj?ca najpierw swoim rodzicom, a pó?niej córce kobieta nie potrafi, a mo?e nie chce wypl?ta? si? z narzuconej jej s?u?ebnej roli. Z po?wi?cenia czyni sens ?ycia. Nie potrafi te? dorosn?? na tyle, aby bez biegania do przyjació?ki po rad? zadba? o swój los i by? oparciem dla Sary, która stan??a na skraju przepa?ci.

Czy jest jeszcze dla Sary ratunek i kto jej poda pomocn? d?o?? Jak u?o?y sobie ?ycie Anna?

„Opatulona w mi?kki niebieski szlafrok, pó?le??c na sofie, Anna zapatrzy?a si? w ogie?. Po chwili wesz?a

Edith z tac?, któr? ustawi?a na niskim stoliku obok sofy.

– Pó?niej wyszczotkuj? pani w?osy – oznajmi?a.

Anna u?miechn??a si? do niej.

– Traktujesz mnie dzisiaj jak ma?? dziewczynk?. Czemu?

Gospoia chrz?kn??a zmieszana.

– Dla mnie zawsze jest pani ma?? dziewczynk?”[4].

Agatha znana jest jako autorka powie?ci detektywistycznych, uwielbiam tak?e jej ksi??ki autobiograficzne. Nie zawiod?a mnie równie? w tej historii psychologiczno-obyczajowej, aczkolwiek przez pierwsze 100 stron „Córeczka” przypomina?a babskie czytad?o i mia?am ochot? od?o?y? j? na pó?k?. Kiedy zastanawia?am si?, czy cokolwiek jeszcze mo?e si? wydarzy?, o czym tu pisa? i czy nie umr? z nudów, autorka nagle wy?ama?a si? z szablonu i zaskoczy?a mnie poprowadzeniem wydarze?. Po sko?czeniu lektury zacz??y do mnie przyp?ywa? spod, wydawa?oby si?, do?? p?ytkiego dna kolejne znaczenia, przes?ania i warstwy tej ksi??ki.

Napisana lekkim piórem, porusza ona istotne problemy relacji mi?dzy matkami i córkami. Pomimo realiów powojennego Londynu, w którym toczy si? akcja, nie tr?ci myszk? ani nie straci?a na aktualno?ci, bowiem popl?tane zwi?zki matek z córkami istnia?y dawniej, istnie? teraz i b?d? istnie? do ko?ca ?wiata.

W bogactwie pozycji o podobnej tematyce, które okupuj? ksi?garskie pó?ki, ?atwo zlekcewa?y? ksi??k? powsta?? przez sze??dziesi?cioma pi?cioma laty. Ale je?li si? chwil? zastanowi?, oczywistym jest, ?e pisarka, która tak wiele razy wywiod?a nas w pole w swoich powie?ciach detektywistycznych, by?a specjalistk? od psychologii zabójcy i detektywa oraz da?a si? pozna? jako spostrzegawczy obserwator w ksi??kach autobiograficznych, nie zaserwuje nam przeci?tnego czytad?a. To, co mi si? pocz?tkowo wydawa?o d?u?yzn?, by?o pokazaniem pewnych relacji, które potem zosta?y interesuj?co rozpracowane.

Obecnie panuje tendencja, ?eby od pocz?tku przyku? uwag? czytelnika mocnym akcentem i by? mo?e dlatego obyczajowe powie?ci Christie, które rozpoczynaj? si? w tradycyjny sposób, nie s? w stanie obroni? si? na rynku. A szkoda.

Szczególnie polecam matkom i córkom!

[1] Agatha Christie, „Córeczka”, prze?. Maria Grabska-Ry?ska, Wydawnictwo Dolno?l?skie, 2016, s. 8.

[2] Tam?e, s. 9.

[3] Tam?e, s. 19.

[4] Tam?e, s. 301.

Ferne says

This is the story of Ann Prentice and her daughter, Sarah, an only child. But this story is all the more captivating for the insights provided through Agatha Christie's creation of characters, Ann's friend and Sarah's godmother, Dame Laura Whitstable and Ann's long-time housemaid, Edith with over 20 years of service to the family. The story may have been first published in 1952 but it is an ageless story of a mother and daughter's relationship that turns to turmoil as the mother announces that she will marry again.

Don't miss reading more about the novels by Christie's daughter, Rosalind Hicks...

<https://www.agathachristie.com/about-...>

I am looking forward (*and yet a little sad too!*) to reading the next and last romance written by Agatha

Christie as Mary Westmacott titled, "The Burden."

Rajsi says

Agatha Christie shows a beautiful relationship of a mother and her daughter with all the love, care, affection, loneliness, envy, sacrifice and drama portrayed beautifully. How things change for a mother when her daughter grows up. Here she writes, it is only when Ann's daughter is away for a trip she gets her lone time which she enjoys but as well she realizes that she has been alone for long time now and decides to get married. Ultimately every human is afraid of ending up alone. But for a child it is not easy to see some strange person taking away his/ her parent and the love which is he/she has the right to. It takes Sarah, her daughter, a huge heart to accept the situation. But things don't turn out the way Ann plans it would. Sarah being just a child is jealous and does not want any change around her leading to yet another big sacrifice of letting go of person she loves for her only daughter. A parent is willing to sacrifice anything and everything if it is for his/her child. But the thing about sacrifice is it is not momentary but it is lasting. Which here leads to communication gaps and misunderstandings between Ann and Sarah. The way Agatha Christie portrayed the distance evolved between the mother and her daughter is slow, dramatic, disturbing and heart breaking.

There is one well said quote in this beautiful novel "A son is a son till he gets a wife but a daughter is a daughter for life".

Radhika says

'a son's a son till he gets him a wife. but a daughter's a daughter all you life.'

Beautiful. Simply beautiful. It has got such raw feelings that I lack words describing it. It's no secret that Agatha Christie is a phenomenal writer and I wouldn't go as far as saying that I'm a huge reader of her books. I'm not. I recently started reading Agatha Christie after a friend of mine gifted me one of her crime books. I got hooked so naturally I went on a Agatha Christie spree..I wanted to try new genre of books by her so I picked this book up a few days back and now I can proudly say that I *don't* regret reading this little piece about the crime of heart.

Here is definitely not a big fan of romance but this book touched my soul somewhere. The story of Ann and Sarah itself is a story. The story of a bitter-sweet possessive daughter and the gentle mother at first slowly turning into a war filled with hidden jealousy and fake happiness.

The romance between Ann and Richard was not quite good, if I say so myself. However, the 'thing' between Gerry and Sarah was really deep and I was really feeling for him throughout the second and the third book. Sarah was a very dimensional character, I mean there was more than one side of that girl. During the first half of the book, she was childish jealous and conventional but as years expanded she was turning into something else- what she referred to as 'being gay and lively'. The growth of the character during every incident, good or bad, was perfectly captured by the authoress.

The loneliness of Ann sometimes stung my heart because it was so raw and ignored by everyone; then the sudden change of character was also very surprising and excruciating.

'through the Kensington streets, avoiding the Hammersmith bottleneck by a series of intricate side streets, through Chiswick where traffic was heavy, out at last on the Great West Road, roaring along past tall factories and neon-lit buildings - then past rows of prim houses where people lived. mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, husbands and wives, all their reconciliations, 'just like me', thought Ann, she felt a sudden kinship, a sudden love and understanding for all the human race... she was not, could never be, lonely, for she lived in a world peopled with her own kind...'

I would like to recommend this book to everyone!

Laura says

This is the first book by Mary Westmacott I have read, so far.

I was almost abandoning it but I was curious with the enrollment of the main characters.

The Telegraph: A Daughter's a Daughter shows Agatha Christie's power

The Guardian: A Daughter's a Daughter.

2* A Daughter's a Daughter

TR Absent In The Spring

TR The Burden

Jessica says

I picked this up at the op-shop and finished it in one go, having always wanted to read one of Christie's novels as Westmacott. It's very light, not reaching the level of genius of works like *The Hollow* or *Endless Night*, but has that lovely Christie assurance and wit, especially embodied in the character of Dame Laura.

I especially loved that the central tension, while spun around a romance plot, was between mother and daughter, with the hope of a reconciliation pushed further and further back as resentment, not necessarily misunderstanding, pushed the two women to the brink of desperate loneliness. Not everything wraps up happily, but it does tie up in the end, making it a deeply satisfying read if you're after something firm and unambiguous.

Jess Swann says

Un roman très original de la part de la reine du crime. Ici pas d'effusions de sang mais plutôt des sentiments retenus, des non dits et une rancœur rampante entre la mère (Ann) et sa fille (Sarah)... La fille ne se rend pas compte du sacrifice de la mère et la mère en veut à la fille pour la décision qu'elle a finalement été la seule à prendre. Dame Laura, amie de la famille, observe tout cela d'un œil scrutateur... J'aime beaucoup la manière dont les sentiments des deux protagonistes sont expliqués tout comme les interventions extérieures et l'évolution des personnages sur plusieurs années. C'est touchant parce qu'on voit bien la manière dont la mère et la fille, jadis fusionnelles, s'éloignent l'une de l'autre. Au milieu, divers personnages viennent mettre leur grain de sel, comme un signal d'alarme vers les deux femmes. La fin est très jolie sans être parfaitement heureuse et j'ai apprécié cette ambivalence.

Ce que j'aime : la manière dont les personnages évoluent, la fin

Ce que j'aime moins : Quelqu'un aurait du s'en mêler bien avant !

En bref : Un roman qui exploite à fond les faiblesses humaines et la notion de sacrifice

Ma note

7/10

Vikas Singh says

In this novel Agatha takes on the complex mother-daughter relationship. Unlike other novels she wrote under the pseudonym Mary Westmacott, this one is quite fast paced ending in a Bollywood style climax. Interesting characters and incidents build up the storyline beautifully leading to a brilliant end. Must read.

Cassia Watakabe says

The story is extremely engaging and the protagonists, mother and daughter with their dialogues alive and often not so sincere with themselves. Living in a society of appearances and with luxuries trying to disguise age and deceive time.

But I believe we should not blame children or parents for our own and decisions. But in reality, blaming others is what happens most.

Daga says

I loved this book :D I was actually a bit 'afraid' that being a great fan of her crime stories I might not entirely enjoy such a different genre. But it was absolutely fantastic, well developed story with great psychological portraits and thought provoking questions. Definitely worth reading and even more worth a moment of reflection.

One could say that the story is written in a bit (sic!) obsolete mode and thus not applying to the modern (post-modern) world/lifestyle or at least not discovering anything new or appealing in respect of relationships and the overcommercialised notion of happiness. But in my opinion it's exactly the other way around. The fact that this book was written some time ago proves only that the perennial questions remain, no matter how much the world changes and how much we change. To be honest, there were moments which sent shivers down my spine making me think that deep inside we remain very simple, though we find it hard to accept it, expecting more and more and faster and more shiny and godknowswhatelse.

This book helped me to discover a completely different face of Agatha Christie's writing. I shall definitely dwell into it further!

Ingrid Fasquelle says

Ainsi vont les filles est un roman psychologique très différent de ceux auxquels la «reine du crime» nous a habitués. Mary Westmacott y brosse un tableau acide des relations mère-filles. Jalousie, vengeance, manipulation, ce roman à l'humour pince sans rire et au cynisme féroce sonne si juste qu'on pourrait presque s'y reconnaître !

Ann est une jeune veuve séduisante et Sarah, sa fille, sort à peine de l'adolescence. Une solide et profonde affection semble les unir mais lorsque la mère, qui n'est pas sans charme, décide de refaire sa vie, leur relation tourne rapidement à l'aigre... La jeune fille serait-elle égoïste et la mère trop faible? N'aurait-elle pu être heureuse si sa fille n'était pas intervenue? La mère à son tour, n'a-t-elle pas sciemment gâché la vie de sa fille ? L'amour peut-il vraiment prendre si aisément le visage de la haine? Avec l'extrême habilité d'Agatha Christie, Mary Westmacott apporte à autant de questions une réponse surprenante et juste !

Vif, piquant, à la fois léger mais aussi très cynique, Ainsi vont les filles est un petit bijou de sarcasme et d'humour noir à lire absolument !

Charu says

I guess I am going through an Agatha Christie phase and reading her non-mystery books that just describe human relations. This is a great book for all mothers to read, not only those with daughters.
