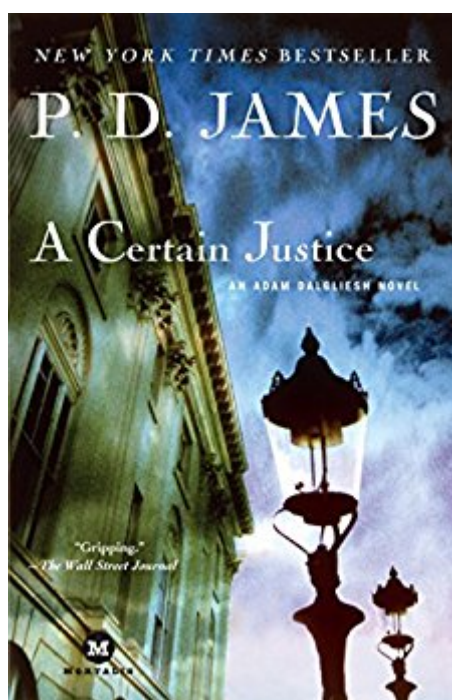


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A Certain Justice: An Adam Dalgliesh Novel (Adam Dalgliesh Mysteries Book 10)



Synopsis

Read P.D. James in Large Print! It begins, dramatically enough, with a trial for murder. The distinguished criminal lawyer Venetia Aldridge is defending Garry Ashe on charges of having brutally killed his aunt. For Aldridge the trial is mainly a test of her courtroom skills, one more opportunity to succeed--and she does. But now murder is in the air. The next victim will be Aldridge herself, stabbed to death at her desk in her Chambers in the Middle Temple, a bloodstained wig on her head. Enter Commander Adam Dalgliesh and his team, whose struggle to investigate and understand the shocking events cannot halt the spiral into more horrors, more murders... A Certain Justice is P.D. James at her strongest. In her first foray into the strange closed world of the Law Courts and the London legal community, she has created a fascinating tale of interwoven passion and terror. As each character leaps into unforgettable life, as each scene draws us forward into new complexities of plot, she proves yet again that no other writer can match her skill in combining the excitement of the classic detective story with the richness of a fine novel. In its subtle portrayal of morality and human behavior, A Certain Justice will stand alongside Devices and Desires and A Taste for Death as one of P.D. James's most important, accomplished and entertaining works.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a wonderful look at modern English society. Here, PD James's focus on the legal system surrounding murder and grievous harm. The rituals of the Inns of Court, and of barristers preparing their wigs and gowns are used to reveal underlying weaknesses of the legal system. The judgment of the court, guilty or innocent are two absolute to describe human behavior. The legal system rarely has the means of determining who is innocent or guilty. The court determines only if the evidence is adequate to prove guilt. Innocence is on a procedural basis. As usual, PD James has provided a wonderful sample of British elocution to discuss the problem of murder. The setting in Inns of Court provides a wonderful setting for considering the problems of guilt and innocence.

Different is not always good but Ms. James delivers another riveting mystery taking the reader deep into the life of the eventual victim. I enjoyed the story but admit to some anxiety concerning the arrival of AD and his team of detectives. I was ready for his cool temperament to assuage the chaotic personalities of the Court.

Something a little different in mystery novels... This was really engrossing. The reader spends a lot of time getting to know the first victim. By the time she got killed (about 1/3 of the way into the story), I was more than ready for it to happen. In fact, I have seldom loathed a fictional character more. And surprise, it turns out there were LOTS of fictional characters who loathed her, too, so there were suspects thick on the ground. This wasn't the case in the subsequent crimes that occurred. Characterization is James' strength, not just physical descriptions but motivations, personality and character. Like this inattentive father: "When the children were at home, Harold got on well with them both. He had never found it difficult to get on well with strangers." She spends a lot of time on physical descriptions of people and of places. Some reviewers complain of this but it didn't bother me. The story takes place almost completely in London, and it's grounded in that city's geography-- the tube stations, the neighborhoods (she calls them villages) the landmarks, the churches. It all adds to feeling that the people, places, and events were real. The time is also real. This is set before cell phones were prevalent (I read the book in 2015, and this jumped out at me), and it might be a different story line with new technology. As to the ending, well, it depends on what your requirements are. I would define the ideal mystery ending as the detective solves the crime, the cops arrest the murderer (or in some cases, he's killed in the chase), and murderer's identity is not the obvious suspect. In this case, I would say we get two out of three.

I have read a lot of her books. She always has a great mystery story and I like the main character Adam Dalgliesh. The one problem with her writing is that it takes awhile for the set up of all the people that would have a reason to kill the murdered person. Additionally, she uses a lot of words in her descriptions. If you are not familiar with English terms, that differ from ours, you might have a little trouble. However, usually you could figure out from the sentence itself, i.e. lift (elevator), flat (apartment), etc. - there are a number of these in her stories.

Living in England in the 80's, I happened on a tele drama series, "Cover Her Face", with the soulful, bright and intuitive Inspector Adam Dalgliesh and I had to find not only that book but every book P.D. James wrote and has written since. This book as all her mysteries does not disappoint. She was a true mystery lover's author. So if you are looking for rich characters, flawless descriptive narrations and the surprising twist and turns that all good detective novels should engage read the book and you too will be wanting more and judging other writers of the detective mysteries by this standard.

This story kept my attention. Her characters are well-drawn, with several of them being possible suspects. There are a number of unsavory scenes, but if you've read P.D. James in the past this won't come as a surprise. She has been one of my favorite mystery writers for decades, but I have to say the ending of this book was unsatisfying. I liked the entire story up to the resolution, so I gave it four stars for the plot and subtracted one because of the ending.

After reading all Adam Dalgliesh novels, I still am bowled over by the plots. The plot thickens and keeps the reader interested.

Good plot line. Less romantic novel-character development to dilute the fact that you purchased a detective fiction story. Soapboxing the cast's background may be a fun exercise, but lessens the reading experience of this genre. Very nice conclusion to the story!

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