



The \$30,000 Bequest and Other Stories

Mark Twain , Frederick Busch (Contributor) , Judith Yaross Lee (Contributor)

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Bringing together 38 tales and sketches, *The \$30,000 Bequest* provides a rare long view of Twain's work, covering virtually his entire career, from "Advice to Young Girls" (a spoof that appeared in 1865, just months before he achieved national acclaim for his "Jumping Frog" tale), to the title story, written in 1904. Whether he is probing the dynamics of a marriage in "The \$30,000 Bequest," or tapping into the nature of hierarchies of abusive power in "A Dog's Tale," Twain's deft craftsmanship brings energy and life to his prose. The more preposterous his claim, the more diligent his proof--as in "The Danger of Lying in Bed," in which Twain argues--complete with statistics--that lying in bed (where most deaths occur) is more dangerous than traveling. The pieces collected here--alternately playful, poignant, and powerful--are all shaped by Twain's rich and unpredictable imagination. This book, the last miscellany published in his lifetime, captures the many facets of Mark Twain's work.

Stories included:

"The \$30,000 Bequest"
"A Dog's Tale"
"Was It Heaven? Or Hell?"
"A Cure for the Blues"
"The Enemy Conquered; or, Love Triumphant"
"The Californian's Tale"
"A Helpless Situation"
"A Telephonic Conversation"
"Edward Mills and George Benton: A Tale"
"The Five Boons of Life"
"The First Writing Machines"
"Italian Without a Master"
"Italian With Grammar"
"A Burlesque Biography"
"How To Tell A Story"
"General Washington's Negro Body-Servant"
"Wit Inspirations of the "Two Year-Olds""
"An Entertaining Article"
"A Letter to the Secretary of the Treasury"
"Amended Obituaries"
"A Monument to Adam"
"A Humane Word from Satan"
"Introduction to "The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English""
"Advice to Little Girls"
"Post-Mortem Poetry"
"The Danger of Lying in Bed"
"Portrait of King William III"
"Does the Race of Man Love a Lord?"
"Extracts from Adam's Diary"

"Eve's Diary"

The \$30,000 Bequest and Other Stories Details

Date : Published December 5th 1996 by Oxford University Press, USA (first published 1906)

ISBN : 9780195101461

Author : Mark Twain , Frederick Busch (Contributor) , Judith Yaross Lee (Contributor)

Format : Hardcover 523 pages

Genre : Fiction, Short Stories, Classics, Humor, Literature, American

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From Reader Review The \$30,000 Bequest and Other Stories for online ebook

Thom Swennes says

A vivid imagination is generally a good thing but even a good thing can turn foul if in excess. Mark Twain's short story 30000 Bequest is a prime example of this. A predicted inheritance places a family in a vulnerable situation as they start making plans before the legacy is actually in hand. Their perceived hypothetical wealth can and does cause them emotional and physical problems. Once again Mark Twain makes the unbelievable, plausible and the unlikely, probable. This quaint story is worth the time and effort and I recommend it highly to every one of all ages.

Kevin says

I 'read' this as an audiobook over many walks over two years. This was "the last miscellany published in his lifetime" and seems to be "whatever was left". Twain can be excellent. He was Heinlein's favourite. And some of that excellence is included. But it turns out he can produce dreck and crapola too, and we get samples of that as well. It's a miscellany also in how it collects so many types, short stories, rants, spoofs, riffs, speeches, even a fairy tale, to name a few.

Do NOT read 'A Curious Book'. It is intended to be a spoof of some comically bad writing style of the age, but it is endless, and yes, bad. The title tale is over-long and "Italian With Grammar" is not as funny as he imagined.

Do read "A HELPLESS SITUATION", which is a witty and clever, faux answer to the prospective author who writes for an introduction to an editor. Also, "A TELEPHONIC CONVERSATION". Imagine a modern comedian riffing on some new faddish tech, now apply it to the telephone. It's a weird, "Things are so different! Things are so much the same!" sensation. Similarly, his "THE FIRST WRITING-MACHINES" sounds just like me bragging about having used a computer with only 4k of ram, except it's Twain about typewriters.

Read selectively, it's 4 stars. But just plowing through the whole thing as I did, barely rates 3 stars.

Beverly Hollandbeck says

This was a book I got free in order to figure out how to use my ebook as an audio book reader, and I got exactly what I paid for. The reader of the book is someone with the "Libri Vox Community," and she is the worst reader I have ever heard. She pronounced the words correctly and paid attention to the punctuation, but she read in a sing-song cadence that had no relevance to the words she was reading. It would make you cringe.

Shelley says

The \$30,000 Bequest was one of the funniest stories I have read in ages. Sally and Aleck have a happy life with two daughters. They are not rich but are comfortable. Aleck (her nickname) had invested some money early on in the marriage and was a wise business woman. Sally (his nickname) was also thrifty although not as much so as his wife. Everyone admired them and they were just generally good people. When a distant relative sends them a note telling them that he is going to leave them \$30,000 upon his death they are thrilled. Only, they can't tell anyone. Ever. And they can't call to see when the man is dead. He says someone will contact them. And they can't ever acknowledge where they got the money from. He does this, he says, to insure that they are made just as miserable by the money as he has been his whole life. So they wait. But the announcement of his death in the paper is taken out, they don't hear about it. So they start dreaming of how they are going to spend that fortune when they do finally inherit it. Of course, Aleck makes wise and prosperous investments and before long they are so wrapped up in their own fantasy world, the rest of the world disappears around them. They are worth millions and then hundreds of millions. They pass up good marriage opportunities for their daughters because they are too wealthy to marry these boys. Of course the daughters still don't know about the money. This goes on for years. It all begins to crumble when the stock market crashes and they lose ALL of their imagined wealth. But they are satisfied that it was only dreaming and that they did not really have the money. They decide to be happy that they still have that \$30,000 coming their way one day. Except.....when a solicitor comes to the house one day to collect on a bill they failed to pay, he tells them that the "rich" uncle had died years before...destitute. He was so poor that the city had to bury him and the only thing he left to anyone was a broken wheelbarrow to the lawyer. The couple is crushed. They cannot recover from this blow. All of their dreams are gone and they have wasted their lives dreaming of what they never had.

I loved this story. It was funny and sad all at the same time. Made me want to remember to live in the here and now and not pin all my hopes on an uncertain future.

Carol says

It's a serie of short stories, I particularly enjoyed the one about the \$30,000 bequest, which is about a couple that are to receive said bequest and they start imagining what to do with the money. Suddenly you're reading about their vast wealth, but they still haven't got the bequest. I also really liked Adam and Eve's diaries, they are just so much fun.

Linda says

Mark Twain is great at writing about the foibles of people and many of these stories illustrate them quite wonderfully. While other stories don't quite translate into the modern world, others still hold their charm.

Mark Nenadov says

Mark Twain was simply a genius. This is a fine collection of his stories and essays, I believe the last published before his death. I wish more contemporary writers (fiction or non-fiction) had more of Twain in them.

Sotiris Makrygiannis says

A great short story about imaginary millionaires

Dan says

This is a pre-1923 historical reproduction that was curated for quality. Quality assurance was conducted on each of these books in an attempt to remove books with imperfections introduced by the digitization process. Though we have made best efforts - the books may have occasional errors that do not impede the reading experience. We believe this work is culturally important and have elected to bring the book back into print as part of our continuing commitment to the preservation of printed works worldwide.

JennanneJ says

I'm apparently not much of a fan of Mark Twain. I get bored by his witticisms and ramblings. Not always, but in this collection of stories... well, not my cup of tea.

Maria says

I finished this book hours ago and I'm still smiling. I particularly enjoyed How To Tell a Story, An Entertaining Article, and the Extracts from Adam and Eve's diaries. Mark Twain has a convoluted and devious mind, one that I had not appreciated enough until reading An Entertaining Article, which left me so confused that I couldn't tell who had written what, so I read it again. I really had to laugh the second time as I realized just how completely Mark Twain had twisted his own words in An Innocent Abroad to write its review. A remarkable man!

inception333 says

I read it just for the sake of reading it and it had nothing to make me laugh. Sometimes a simple smile seemed to be lost in this book. Twain's best weapon is satire but satire cannot always land you on a joke that makes people laugh out their guts. This book didn't do for me well.

Mohammed Salem says

"Mark Twain" in this book reminds me of "Yousef Idris" a senior Egyptian author, that for them the same way of irony and depth in writing, that the irony that the idea of ??looking for the delivery and reach the goal or what convinced!

in fact , he describes in some of his stories events occurring now in the national!! , I did not feel alienated when reading him, except for the names of people probably did not notice that I was reading a foreign writer, I'll try to read him more.

Michael Hoisie says

This is a collection of short stories by Mark Twain. It includes stories, letters, commentaries, etc... Loaded with Twain's satire and wit. Some of these works are priceless, like Twain's description of early telephones and type writers. My two favorite stories were "A Dog's Tale" and "Was it Heaven? or Hell?"

Jay Phillippi says

A fascinating collection of Twain's short stories. The title story could describe any modern couple anticipating either a boon from a family member's estate or someone planning how to spend their lottery winnings. As with any collection, the stories can be hit or miss. But a miss by Twain is worth reading. The tale of Twain deciding to learn Italian has a sense of whimsy that is truly special.

Frederick says

It seems Mr. Twain's and my respective senses of humor are a rather poor match. Some stories within this collection were acceptable, such as "Advice for Little Girls" and the diaries of Adam and Eve.

Yulia Dibrovska says

Him humor is truly something fresh and different to what I'm used to. Enjoyed almost every page.

Katie Warren says

Wonderful collection of stories

I am just recently getting into reading classic literature, and this was a wonderful way to be introduced to Mark Twain. His stories really make you think, and I look forward to reading his novels after this.

Mark says

Typical Twain--plenty of laughs surrounding intriguing insights.

Adamandcelesteaol.com says

So far, this is not my favorite of the Mark Twain collections. It seems slightly on the serious side, as if he is trying to prove a point regarding morals. I suppose I prefer his more light-hearted novels. Overall, though, it is very entertaining.
