



The Clue of the Twisted Candle

Edgar Wallace

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'The Urbane T.X. is back in this locked-room mystery by British master storyteller Edgar Wallace. The renowned mystery writer John Lexman is charged with murder and sent to prison. His friend T.X. Meredith, employed by Scotland Yard, tries to prove his innocence.

The Clue of the Twisted Candle Details

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Author : Edgar Wallace

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From Reader Review The Clue of the Twisted Candle for online ebook

Dianne says

On recommendation of a friend, I decided to download this free book to my Kindle and have a go. What a fun read! If you like British mysteries and thrillers, you will no doubt enjoy this, too. Wallace wrote the short story on which the movie King Kong was based, and wrote the screenplay, too, I believe. He wrote a lot of mysteries in the style of the Twisted Candle, and I see myself dipping into them from time to time.

Charlotte says

A gripping crime novel from a master crime writer. This novel features interesting characters, locked rooms, cellars, several deaths, along with other crimes. The novel is mostly set in or near London along with some more exotic locations. The main character is a Scotland Yard detective who uses his own methods (sometimes outside the law) and vast knowledge to solve crimes. The plot has many twists and turns and working out who did what and why is only part of the fun - how it was done is the real mystery.

Pamela says

Back in his day, Edgar Wallace was one of the major writers of popular fiction--much like Jonathan Kellerman and those of his ilk are today. The difference is that Wallace could write a gripping story with good characters, edge of your seat action, and pacing that could blow you away. (OK. The pacing is a tad slow by today's standards, but back then--WHEW!)

The "closed room murder" in Twisted Candle is one of the best I've read. All the clues are there, they just need to be put together in the right way--a very clever way. A very clever way that will cause a major face palm when you read the solution.

The only problem with reading Wallace is that I feel like such a fool for having paid top price for Kellerman's latest when Wallace's are either free or less than \$5.00 each. (e-books)

If you like a good mystery that you can't put down, give Wallace a try. You will NOT be disappointed.

Scot says

Much better than the Wallace novel I read just two days ago (The Daffodil Mystery). This one has a positively horrid but oh so handsome Albanian villain who combines a genius for true sadism with proficiency at politics and a knack for unfettered capitalism -- a combination, one notes, that then as now seems to make those with no morals incredibly rich. We encounter a competent crime novelist and his

adoring wife in a cozy British cottage, blissful newlyweds as the story starts. Enter the Albanian...T.X. is the brilliant and droll Scotland Yard investigator and behind-the-scenes diplomat who steps in when the horrors escalate, and there's a plucky aristocrat ingenue in disguise as a secretary to help fight the forces of darkness (and demonstrate love at first sight) as well. This tale has getaways in aeroplanes, exotic candle tortures from the Pindus Mountains, a mysterious one-armed man, hidden rooms, blackmail of the powerful, abuse of the powerless, and that magical feeling when finally touching the hand of the woman you love: Mr. Wallace, you have been redeemed.

Myrna says

I started this book when I went to bed ... had a hard time putting it down. Got a few hours of sleep and on awaking finished the book. Enjoyed all the twists and turns!

Rory says

BEYOND bizarre, considerably more violent (or at least sinister) and wackadoodle and transparent than I was expecting it to be. One of the first "locked room" mysteries. Worth reading if you're a fan of the genre--otherwise, it just makes good "can you believe this sentence?" read-aloud material.

Jeffy Joseph says

It's an excellent read if you are looking for some light material. After having seen several mystery series and movies that were written by people inspired by the writers of the mystery genre's golden age, one might not be as thrilled as it might have been to it's first generation of readers. But even then it does have a pretty good story. The super-villain, having disappeared from the contemporary works in the genre, is the most captivating element of the novel.

icaro says

qualche inevitabile 'anticaglia' qua e là ma ottimo divertimento

Bre Teschendorf says

This mystery was rather different in approach than others I have read. Not unenjoyable, just different.

The "who-dunit" was rather obvious to me and not as important to my mind as, "What happened all those years to him, who-dunit". Of course, there was also the vast importance of the classic locked room, "How was it done"....

However, I was able to guess most of the story that it was possible to guess from the over-abundance of clues given. The rest, I had a vague idea about, which the reveal confirmed, but of course with more detail than it

was possible to guess from the given information.

There were two touches of the love story in this book, which were rather fun. Who doesn't love a bit of romance?

I wasn't in love with T.X, the hero-detective. He was rather mean to his subordinates and I don't like that kind of arrogant quality. I couldn't find any kind of attractive self-confident James Bond stuff in him. Just a middling-detective who was rather full of himself.

I finished the book in one enjoyable day. I wasn't sorry I had read it. I loved the good happy end. I have read one other Edgar Wallace book, The Secret House, which, in my opinion was worse than this one. It would have put me off of Edgar Wallace completely, if I hadn't decided to go for a second.... This second was evidence of why the man is a master.

Lucy says

I picked this Wallace at random having discovered how enormously popular he was in his time. I can see why, it's an entertaining easy read, and well enough written. The plot is ridiculous, the characters stock, but it works. Not serious reading, but ideal for a wet afternoon when you can't be bothered to think.

Wendy Darling says

3.5 stars This 1916 locked room mystery is dated, mostly predictable, and rather forcefully prejudiced, but still so very charming because of the surprisingly witty dialogue, appealing characters, and fun cliffhangers.

Fun facts I learned:

1. vitriol actually is a sulfuric acid, something of which I was vaguely aware but never heard referred to in its literal/physical iteration until this story. (And it's used in a quite exciting manner, I must say.)
2. The author was a prolific crime writer with many films made from his books, but is best known for inventing King Kong, though he didn't live to see it on the big screen.

This is another book I read through the Serial Reader app, btw! This time I read half the book as I waited for a friend to arrive for dinner, and was so eager to finish that I couldn't wait for the rest of the issues, so I downloaded the Kindle freebie. The next time this happens, I'm going to pony up the \$2.99 to contribute towards the premium upgrade, since I appreciate the fact that this app has gotten me to try out books I otherwise wouldn't have time to. (And yes, they're working on an Android version.)

Libbeth says

A good "room locked from the inside" who and how dunnit. It has everything - mystery, adventure, a villain, love, a new romance, revenge, a gentleman detective, a one armed man, small handguns and long knives galore and of course cellars and locked rooms.

First published in 1918 I think.

I downloaded this from LibriVox and converted it to an audio book on itunes. Narrated by various volunteers, this was an enjoyable listen, mostly whilst pottering about in the kitchen.

Ali says

This novel really does have it all for lovers of vintage mystery – a truly evil villain of extreme wealth, a locked room murder, a thoroughly decent, sensible young Scotland Yard investigator, a Dartmoor prison break, and a feisty brave young woman.

John Lexman is a successful writer of detective fiction, newly married to the beautiful Grace, they live in a small cottage out in the country. Unknown to Grace John's slight money worries have led him to borrow money from a money lender, a man introduced to Lexman by new friend Remington Kara, an enormously wealthy Greek Albanian. Grace Lexman has reason to fear Kara, she knows he is an evil man, and is concerned about the influence he is having on her husband. She is right to be fearful; Lexman is soon locked up in Dartmoor for the murder of the money lender. Grace knows Kara is behind the peculiar events of that strange evening. This however is just the beginning of the story.

“Cut a man’s flesh and it heals.” He said “Whip a man and the memory of it passes, frighten him, fill him with a sense of foreboding and apprehension and let him believe that something dreadful is going to happen either to himself or to someone he loves – better the latter – and you will hurt him beyond forgetfulness. Fear is a tyrant and a despot, more terrible than the rack, more potent than the stake. Fear is many-eyed and sees horrors where normal vision only sees the ridiculous”

Lexman’s friend Scotland Yard investigator T. X Meredith is determined to prove that Kara is responsible for Lexman’s incarceration – just as things look like they are beginning to turn Laxman’s way – he is broken out of Dartmoor prison, and he and his wife disappear from the face of the earth.

Two years later, T.X has never given up on Lexman – and is still keeping a close eye on the mysterious Remington Kara, who lives in a fortress like house in London, with a safe like, impenetrable room, bricked up cellars and a telephone that connects directly to Scotland Yard. It is in this secure room of his London home that Remington Kara is found murdered. Lying near to the body are two small twisted candles.

This novel is more of a howdunit than a whodunit – we know Kara is a villain and Lexman a victim. When Kara himself becomes the victim – not only is it fairly satisfactory – but the reader already has a fairly shrewd idea of who the murderer may be – but how it was accomplished is the real mystery. We also need to wait until the end of the novel to find out what really happened to John and Grace Lexman after John was broken out of Dartmoor by monoplane.

This was a great little mystery from the early twentieth century. I suppose it is very much of its time, the villain is a foreigner, the women beautiful and good. Still the suspense is spot on, the plot intricate enough to satisfy without being too confusing. I have discovered many Wallace mysteries are available free as ebooks so I am sure I will be reading more of them in the future.

Kathy says

Description of this book would indicate that the Scotland Yard inspector T.X. Meredith has played a role in other Wallace mysteries, but I don't think I shall spend another minute searching for proof. I was amused by the book, and since it is my birthday I thought I would read a couple books written and published long years prior to my birth and thus feel myself to be young (in comparison?). Or it could be my brain is also partly frozen in 10 degree weather.

This is a locked-room mystery written in the early 1900's by a man who produced books by the ton. It is very extreme in its characters: the most vile, cruel and hateful of villains; the most naive hero who is easily duped; the most fragile and faithful heroine; the sturdiest of Scotland Yard detectives who remains steady over years of trying to protect his friend, the author...and on it goes.

I was amused enough to read about Wallace's colorful life - the man who gave us King Kong but died from undiagnosed diabetes when he moved to Hollywood...and even that was before I was born.

Cyndy Parr says

Free from Project Gutenberg so gets an extra star just for that. Amusing to see what hasn't changed about the mystery genre in the last 100 years (this was published in 1918). And to puzzle over cultural references, attitudes, and classisms that would have been obvious at the time but are pretty inscrutable or at least odd now. A quick, entertaining read.
