

The Quiet Gentleman

Georgette Heyer

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Unscathed from the wars, Gervase Frant finally returns to his father's estate to claim his rightful title. Now he must establish himself as the new head of the house and ignore his family's rising hostility. Bonus features include a glossary for the Regency period and Regency rituals. Reissue.

The Quiet Gentleman Details


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Author : Georgette Heyer

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From Reader Review The Quiet Gentleman for online ebook

Carol ?? says

I was all set to read my Arrow copy - until I took a good look at the picture.

Apparently St Erth returned from the Napoleonic Wars in 1816 & decided to dress in his late father's clothes. As Lady Caroline Bingley would say, I was all astonishment!

So I pulled out my old Pan instead.

Pretty decent shot of Gervase & Marianne, I thought.

This book is a little too Austenesque & not Heyerish enough for me. Don't get me wrong I *love* Austen - when Jane herself writes it! For example, (& as a few members at the Georgette Heyer Fans group have commented) the Dowager's characterisation is very close to Austen's Lady Catherine de Bourgh, so much so that I kept picturing the actress from the Colin Firth version when reading about her!

& the pace at the start was rather slow, so I didn't do my usual bolt through my read.

Still much to like though, especially some wonderfully witty lines.

Mr Warboys, without putting himself to the trouble of deciding which of the more ferocious animals his friend resembled, stated the matter in simple, and courageously frank terms. "You know, old fellow," he once told Martin, "if you had a tail, damme if you wouldn't lash it!

& both romantic couples were very appealing & I liked that both Gervase & Marianne, extremely attractive themselves (view spoiler)

Lots of wonderful secondary characters, especially the above quoted Barny Warboys & Marianne & Drusilla's parents.

But the book has (for me) two major flaws.

(view spoiler)

Enjoyable enough for 4 weak stars though.

Review written Dec 2015, edited May 2016

Anne says

Am I the only one who didn't see through the mystery?!?!?! I did not think it was predictable at all!!! But, oh!!!! So frustrating!! I loved this book, but it did not end the way I wanted it too...it didn't feel concluded. How I wish we could have been given more insight into the romance! It only unfolds in the last pages, which makes it come out as really unexpected and random. I wanted to read about the change of opinion Gervase had of Drusilla, Because at the beginning he finds her boring and unattractive; I would have liked to know when he changed his mind, what happened ect...Aaahh it's too bad, because it was a pretty good read anyways. Maybe not the best place to start reading Heyer, as this one is more of a mystery than an actual romance (but without being classified as a mystery) and is just in general not perfectly representative of what a TRUE Heyer novel is (read "The Masqueraders" for that!). Loved Gervase though, even if he had a weird name (like somebody pointed out: only Heyer could have a character named Gervase and still make him sound hot!).

Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

3.5 stars, rounding up. Gervase Frant returns home in 1816 from the Napoleonic wars to assume his role as the Earl of St Erth. Trouble and resentment await him in the form of his imperious stepmother and his spoiled and truculent younger half-brother Martin, who were rather hoping Gervase would die in the war so that Martin could inherit. But do they resent him enough to actually kill him? Because some very odd (not)accidents are starting to happen to Gervase.

This is one of Heyer's Regency mysteries with just a little bit of romance mixed in. The romance is definitely understated and the villain wasn't too hard to suss out, although there was a good stretch in the middle of the book when I was completely confused. There were also some slow parts to the story where I was tempted to start skimming. But there was enough witty dialogue and humor to carry me through.

Gervase's stepmother, the Dowager, is almost the spitting image of Lady Catherine de Bourgh from *Pride and Prejudice*, steamrolling everyone around her and humorous in her vanity, and I liked all of the other characters, even--in his own way--the immature and embittered Martin. There's a heroine who isn't your typical gorgeous lady, Gervase's quiet sarcasm and strength of character grew on me, and there's a cute secondary romance that causes more heartache for the beleaguered Martin ... and perhaps for others as well.

The Quiet Gentleman is, I'd say, one of Georgette Heyer's lesser lights, but worth the time to read if you're a fan. I wouldn't start with this one, though. (Try *Venetia*, *Frederica* or maybe *The Grand Sophy*.)

Abigail Bok says

On her worst day, Georgette Heyer is better than any other writer of Regency romance I have read. She invented the genre, and it's possible that nobody should have tried to follow in her footsteps. Within the canon of Georgette Heyer novels, however, there are some that succeed better than others. For me, *The Quiet Gentleman* is not one of the more successful.

Perhaps the problem is that she is trying to combine forms that sit uneasily with one another. This book doesn't know whether it wants to be a mystery or a romance, and it winds up not really achieving either goal.

Another of her stories that combines mystery (or at least adventure) with romance is my favorite of all her books, *The Unknown Ajax*, so it's not as if it can't be done. *The Reluctant Widow* is also high on my list.

The story begins with a variation on the "lost heir" theme. The new Earl of St. Erth returns to his rambling ancestral seat after what has amounted to a lifelong exile: he was raised by his maternal grandmother after being cast out by his father, who was angry at his mother's betrayal. The father married again and raised two more children at home. Now deceased, his rejected son has inherited his honors and come home to meet varying degrees of covert to overt hostility from his stepmother and half-brother. A chaplain; his cousin Theo, who is acting as his estate agent; and a visiting young lady, Miss Morville, complete the household.

A few classic Georgette Heyer types are added to the mix—the ridiculously beautiful blonde, the man-about-town, the inarticulate young heir to a country squire—along with some potentially interesting and original characters: a radical couple and a clever businessman on the edge of gentility. Perhaps there are too many elements to manage, but I felt we saw too much of the less interesting characters and not enough of the more interesting ones. The personalities of the protagonists also are problematic: the hero is so devoted to concealment that we get very little sense of his true self, and the heroine is so pragmatic that we don't notice her having any romantic feelings until we are told to do so. There is a big void at the center of the story. Some of the characters, notably the chaplain, feel like stubs: they were never fully integrated into the plot.

(view spoiler)

There is some witty conversation, and some mildly comic scenes, but with so many treasures on my Georgette Heyer shelf, I can't see reading this one very often.

Ruth says

Georgette Heyer novels should be printed with a warning. I have to be careful when reading her novels in public. This is because they inevitably cause a goofy smile to be pasted on my face, and I'll start giggling loudly at random times for no apparent reason to the poor, unsuspecting public around me. *The Quiet Gentleman* is no exception to this rule. Absolutely nothing beats a Heyer Regency romance for the sheer enjoyment factor and witty, intelligent humor. She truly is the closest thing to reading Jane Austen - and is generally more hilarious. *The Quiet Gentleman* is the perfect combination of mystery and romance. The whodunit aspect of the novel is so carefully plotted that the revelation of the guilty party is an eyebrow-raising surprise. And with the romance, Heyer once again succeeds in bringing together two seemingly irreconcilable individuals who turn out to be, of course, perfect for each other. To all you fellow Austen lovers out there - if you've never read a Heyer, and my enthusiasm still hasn't convinced you to pick one up, read *The Quiet Gentleman* for the pure novelty factor that the hero can be named Gervase Frant and still be incredibly hot. Unbelievable, but trust me, it's true.

Andrea says

The romance here is happening in the background, while the foreground is taken up more by a mystery.

Drusilla is a very non-traditional romantic heroine, being described as a 'squab' (her figure has a touch of pigeon) and her primary positive attributes being practical calm and quiet honesty. We definitely see Gervase

come to appreciate her composure, and to no longer think her dull, though any attraction he feels for her isn't as easily detected. She was very well done, with her worn and not even resentful resignation to being completely unattractive - she is someone who has accepted that she will never make any sort of love match, let alone to someone as handsome as Gervase, and so I am always happy when she discovers herself wrong.

The narrator chose an interesting voice for Gervase (who is meant to be very quiet and amiable in his manner). The calm, but archly dandified tone used for him in this book makes him sound more sarcastic than amiable.

Tweety says

I wish I knew what to rate this, but for the life of me I can't! Never mind, 3 1/2

Gervase Frant, comes home after years in the army. He never expected his family to greet him with open arms, but he didn't expect hostility either! The whole castle seems to be brooding over some dark secret...

(Bodiam Castle)

Martin his half brother plainly declares war on Gervase who he views as a usurper. Worse, Martin feels that if it hadn't been for Gervase, his lady love wouldn't have spurned him. It's just too much for a fellow to take! With that the story begins, with a perspective bang.

I liked Gervase, he was at first a bit of a dandy. As the story continued however, he became easier to understand. Martin was a spoiled brat for the most part, yet I do feel sorry for him. (it's the parents fault after all) <

Theo was a kindly, sweet character from the start; he seemed to be truly concerned about the danger Gervase's life was in. He was an odd fish though!

Miss Morville was an unlikely heroine, she was plump, short, of a so-so figure and mousy hair, without being particularly pretty. But she had a heart of gold, I liked her a great deal but, (the inevitable but), she wasn't in it enough. I don't feel like I really got to know her.

What's different in this Heyer is that it focuses mainly of the Hero, the heroine is very much in the background. I'd almost say she was a secondary character. And the mystery was for me at least solved early on, it was hardly a mystery, that's probably why most don't see it and I guess I've read too many mysteries lately, please don't think I'm a snob!

When alls said and done, I liked it, I enjoyed it and I'd skim through it again. But it wasn't my Favorite Heyer. I think The Reluctant Widow, The Unknown Ajax and Cousin Kate were better. Reluctant Widow certainly was. Do I recommend this? Yes, I do believe it or not, but only to people who want a light regency with Gothic undertones. It does have sliding panels, pelting rain, mysterious intruders and unknown enemies.

G, unlike most Heyer's there was no talk of mistresses, gambling, or drinking. Hardly any violence, a few knocks on the head, a pistol wound and a broken arm, that's it!

Sabina says

This is a very different kind of Heyer. The hero and heroine are so atypical that I loved them all the more for it. Let's face it, they are actually more typical of real life than the normal heroes and heroines. Being a 'sensible' sort myself, I've always had a soft spot for Drusilla – now if only I could find my 'Gervase'!

Vivian says

Another countryside romp in this story of succession as the disenfranchised Gervase returns from the battlefields, resigning his commission, and taking his rightful place as Earl of Stanyon. Much to the disappointment of some.

Similar to *The Unknown Ajax* in the general plot line and characters, but there's an added attempted murder to jazz this one up a bit. Definitely more dare-doing and mishaps for the characters. I figured out the mystery portion less than halfway through so it seemed to limp along even while the blood ran hot. If the last Heyer book I read had not been *The Unknown Ajax* then I probably would have enjoyed this a bit more. A couple months is not long enough between story reboots, nonetheless it was entertaining enough. Solid read.

In this one instead of being the country oaf, the long-lost heir is masquerading as a:

"Martin, his affronted stare taking in the number of the capes of that drab coat, the high polish on the Hessian boots, the extravagant points of a shirt-collar, and the ordered waves of guinea-gold hair above a white brow, muttered audibly: 'Good God! the fellow's nothing but a curst *dandy*!'"

Anna says

Gervase returns home one year after his father's death having inherited the title. Estranged from his father because of his mother's behavior, he has spent his adult life in the cavalry and has survived Waterloo. It's not a happy homecoming. He encounters his stepmother's (mother-in-law throughout the book) suspicion and his younger half-brother's resentment. Martin has grown up with his father's affection and indulgence and with shadowy expectations of inheriting.

With the shadow

I wonder if this counts as one of Heyer's mysteries?

Amy says

Love, love, love! Ahhh, Heyer does it again.

This book was wonderful! First, see Sherwood Smith's great review.

Second, I acknowledge this book probably deserves 4 stars, because the mystery *is* clunky and obvious, but I loved the proposal scene so I pushed it up to five stars.

Miss Morville was wonderful. I love Heyer's charming, prosaic heroines. We need more of them these days!

If you like Heyer's *The Talisman Ring*, you will like this one.
I definitely need to buy this book and read it again!

Kavita says

A mystery rather than a romance. In fact, the romance was pretty understated and was only developed at the end, along with the solution. The Earl of St Erth returns from the wars to succeed his father's title and discovers that his family resents him. But who would go as far as to murder him?

The story takes a long time to get interesting and the beginning is very slow. I almost gave up after a few chapters, but glad I stuck with it as halfway through the book, it really picks up and suddenly everyone becomes very much more interesting. At first, I thought I disliked many of the characters, but I began to like the Earl when he showed some emotion and was sad at his brother's outburst. I am thoroughly sick of heroes who are always in control of themselves and their emotions, so it was a welcome portrayal. His half-brother, Martin, too is rash and hot-tempered, while his cousin Theo has his own quirks. His friend who soon joins him has his own peculiarities, while the women in the book are well-developed too. I thought Drusilla dull at first, but she gets a little more interesting in the latter half of the book. I just wish that Heyer would not always equate common-sense with quiet and unassuming. You can be gregarious and sensible at the same time!

The mystery was easily solved because once you realise the red herring thrown your way, you automatically realise who the culprit is. The delight is in actually reading about the day to day interactions among the characters.

The only thing I did not like about the book (other than the slow first half) is the victim blaming of a young girl for being molested. *If you will be so pretty, Marianne, and flirt so dreadfully, what can you expect?* I would expect to be treated with respect and be flirted back in a decent manner, not being physically manhandled!!!! One more reason why I never really liked Drusilla.

Worth a read if you can get past the first half.

Sherwood Smith says

Despite the clumsy murder thread running through this story, it's one of my favorites. It succeeds where I think *A Civil Contract* failed--it gives us the best of Heyer's "plain but kind" heroines, one with a decided sense of humor, who achieves romance on her own power, and without melodramatic suffering, like the supposedly "realistic" *A Civil Contract*. The heroine's parents are a total delight--part of the Lake Poets, having raised their daughter to be practical and republican. The characters are such fun in this story, I just kind of skim past the murder bits.

Pamela Shropshire says

Gervase Frant is now the Earl of St. Erth. He did not have a close relationship with his father, mostly because he resembles his beautiful mother who left the late Earl to be with her lover and died a few years later.

Gervase has been an army officer and only sold his commission recently, a year after his father's death.

Now he has finally returned to the main family estate, Stanyon. His younger half-brother, Martin, very much resents his bad taste in surviving campaigns in both France and Spain. When it appears Gervase may be courting Marianne, childhood friend of Martin, whom Martin obviously hopes to make Mrs. Frant one day, Martin becomes downright uncivil to Gervase.

Other persons at Stanyon include Theo Frant, the son of the late Earl's younger brother; the Dowager Countess; and Miss Drusilla Morville. Theo acts as agent for the earldom and very successfully manages estate business. Miss Morville is a very sensible young lady from the neighborhood staying at Stanyon while her parents tour the Lake District and who the Dowager quite depends on. The Dowager is somewhat like Catherine de Bourgh, but not as obnoxious. Then "accidents" begin to befall the new Earl.

I have read far too many mysteries; I was not deceived in the least by the mysterious would-be assassin. I will confess to being unsure, for a while, as to which lady would eventually win the Earl's heart. The final scene of the book is just excellent.

Seema Khan says

3* for The Quiet Gentleman.

I have read a great many Georgette Heyer books and am a die hard fan of her works, but sadly The Quiet Gentleman did not live upto my expectations.

Though the writing itself is unquestionably signature GH, the overall story failed to keep me intrigued. And the more is the pity because more than romance this is a kind of suspense or mystery novel and a grounding mystery was sadly absent.

The story is about Lord Gervase St Erth of Stanyon who has been alienated by his father from himself since his childhood just because he resembles his mother and he is resented and begrudged by his step mother and step siblings being the heir to the title and Stanyon. When he comes back to take his position as the Earl of Stanyon he is met with rudeness and there is an apparent threat to his existence as attempts are made to assassinate him with the chief suspect being his step brother Martin.

Lord Gervase St Erth was indeed a quiet gentleman, but not engaging enough to make the book exceptionable. He has a quiet way about him and his personality is not very typical GH, it is more like that of the hero who is too beautiful and may be termed possessing womanly beauty. He has his attributes and is very gentle and has a sweet disposition of mind. Also he is very intelligent and forbearing towards his step mother's harangues and his step brother's apparent loud ways that make no qualms in voicing his displeasure.

Miss Drusilla Morville is again one very different heroine. She is always calm and composed and filled in with a great deal of common sense. She is also very obliging and industrious. Nothing can be read from her manners of her feelings, and for that matter even the Earl's behaviour is similar.

I did not find anything much remarkable in the characters, the highlight and energies in the story being amassed only in Martin.

The secondary characters are not bad, the dowager and Martin being a touch brighter than the rest.

The build up given in the beginning is nice but after a while there was no strong grip in the story for me. Had there been a resistance and combat from the villain the story would have definitely gained brownie points from me, but the climax is rather too quiet. One reason maybe because it is about the quiet gentleman! (For the record, I did have a strong feeling about the villain being the villain since the beginning of the book;);p and I was right!)

Romance in the story is negligible and focus pertaining that quarter is more on Lord Ulverston and Marianne than on Lord St Erth and Drusilla.

Overall, the book was just fine with me and any GH regular may want to read it for sure. They may find something worth more appreciation in it than I did.

QNPoohBear says

Gervase, the Seventh Earl of St. Erth returns to his ancestral home after successfully surviving the wars much to the dismay of his ambitious step-mother and spoiled half-brother Martin. His cousin and agent, Theo, is pleased to see Ger as is Druscilla Morville, a neighbor and sometimes companion to Ger's step-mother. Ger is quiet and doesn't fight back, therefore his step-mother thinks she can continue to rule the household with an iron fist and send the Earl running for one of his other properties. She hasn't counted on the fact that Gervase didn't survive the war by being weak. He fights back with quiet dignity and a witty manner that wins Druscilla's heart as she attempts to rescue him from someone who may wish to kill him. Gervase, however, doesn't see any cause for alarm and he's quite taken with his beautiful neighbor, Marianne Bolderwood. Both Martin and Ger's friend, Lord Ulverston are both charmed by the pretty coquette and handle their infatuations quite differently. As Gervase and Martin clash over property, authority and ladies, Ger begins to think Martin may be trying to kill him after all and there may be more to the plain Miss Morville than her lack of good looks. This novel has everything to please Heyer's fans: excitement, mystery and romance. Though Gervase is quiet, he's no less dashing and charming than the Corinthians or Bucks. He's very bright and his witty sense of humor is sophisticated, funny and charming. My favorite character is Druscilla. I adore her parents and wish I could know them and I like her for being practical and sensible. The rest of the characters are fairly stereotypical and the plot is classic Heyer. It's too bad everyone else copied her because the plot does feel a bit cliched but Heyer was such a great writer that she could plan red herrings and make things seem different from what they are. This is a great traditional Regency novel from the master of the genre!

Lady Wesley says

Excellent Heyer romance, with a bit of mystery thrown in. Who is trying to kill Gervase Frant, Earl of St Erth? Napoleon's army couldn't do it, but are his spiteful half-brother and stepmother planning to finish the job? And will Gervase steal his brother's sweetheart, the beautiful Marianne, or fall for the less lovely but smart Drusilla?

I've enjoyed almost all of Heyer's books, and this one is no exception. The excellent review at audiogirls.com inspired me to add it to my to-listen list.

Nikki says

I don't know how Georgette Heyer manages to send me into flutters with each new (to me) book of hers I read. This one kept me occupied with a murder mystery as well, which I always like (though strange to say, I don't enjoy Heyer's non-Regency mysteries). It's an interesting set of characters, and an interesting choice of romance -- Heyer really wasn't locked in to any stereotypes of romance, but picked characters that were different enough in each book to avoid too much repetition. I love the ending, too, with Miss Morville's father arguing with the Countess!

This is a quieter sort of romance than in, say, *The Grand Sophy*. It isn't characterised by witty banter and point-scoring, but by a gentle understanding unfolding as *background* to a drama of characters. Characters who I came to love -- even the villain of the piece, though it doesn't help there that his motives seem a little thin.

Andrea (Catsos Person) is a Compulsive eBook Hoarder says

Georgette Heyer group BOTM December 2015.

This was my second read of this title and I have more of an appreciation of the H/h this time around.

A couple of years ago, I had just discovered GH and I went on a bender with her romances and this book and the H/h did not compare favorably when read back to back with favorites such as *Devil's Cub* and *The Grand Sophy* and others MCs with s more forceful personalities.

A common complaint among the casual reader of a GH romance is well... How little romance there is until an abrupt declaration near the the end.

This book was different because I could see the Hs growing regard for the h--and sometimes this is not always noticeable in other titles. The shift in St Erth's feeling for Drucilla was subtle, not something to be hit over the head with, but noticeable to me just the same.

I really enjoyed watching these two fall in love as a process and the low-key growing regard between Gervase (St Erth) and Drucilla so that the love connection didn't seem to come out of nowhere.

St Erth and Drucilla were very mature lovers without any emotional and immature displays.

While this book didn't stand up to GH romances where the MCs had stronger personalities or the books had stronger storyline *The Quiet Gentleman* has its own unique and understated charm.

Also I like that both Gervase and the very young minor character "Marianne Boldwood," both very good-looking, showed a depth of character in falling in love and committing themselves for marriage to a partner

who has other things to offer besides physical beauty.

I like *The Quiet Gentleman* and I'm glad I gave it another chance.

H says

Gervase carried this book, front to back, and more than made up for its weaknesses. I don't know how many times I laughed out loud at his understated sarcasm and witticisms and in how he dealt with his family, particularly Martin and the dowager. He really shone. I enjoyed the story as a whole. I've noticed, though, that when Heyer turns her Regencies into thrillers, the character relationships suffer, and it was so in this. While I enjoyed reading it, there was almost no development of the relationship between Gervase and his lady; it was just there, baldly stated, at the end, no buildup or foundation or admiration. Just flat-out telling. I did like the relationships Heyer developed and showed between Gervase and the other male characters, though--Martin, the Vicount, and Theo. Their enmity and friendships, respectively, were done very nicely, I thought.
