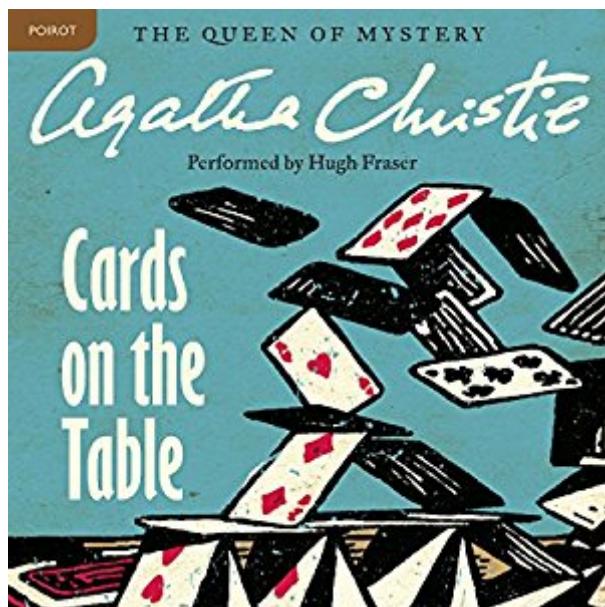


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Cards On The Table: A Hercule Poirot Mystery



Synopsis

Mr. Shaitana is famous as a flamboyant party host. Nevertheless, he is a man of whom everybody is a little afraid. So when he boasts to Hercule Poirot that he considers murder an art form, the detective has some reservations about accepting a party invitation to view Shaitana's "private collection". Indeed, what begins as an absorbing evening of bridge is to turn into a more dangerous game altogether.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book, with its initial copyright in 1936, shows Christie at the height of her powers. One of the coziest things about a Christie mystery - especially those which were written earlier - is that they are set before so many of the great advances in forensics. There's no mention of computer databanks or DNA, no fiber analysis nor hair samples. Now, I'm all for the wonderful things that can be done with forensics for capturing criminals in the real world, and these can make for fascinating reading, too. But novels are sometimes more pleasant when they don't deal with the technical side of things, but let the readers ponder, along with Christie's detective Hercule Poirot, the psychology behind the murder. In *Cards on the Table*, Christie sets up an imaginative, elegant, albeit implausible scenario. Four murderers - successful ones, those who have gotten away with it - are invited to dinner by Mr Shaitana, a rich eccentric who collects only the best - including collections of people. To the same dinner party this Shaitana invites four specialists in crime - a policeman, a man in the Secret Service, a writer of detective novels and of course our protagonist, Hercule Poirot. The dinner is

excellent and Shaitana then makes some provocative remarks, putting the wind up in his quartet of murderers. The two groups - murderers and crime specialists - then divide into two different rooms and play bridge for the rest of the evening. Shaitana does not play, but sits in an armchair by the fire in the same room as the murderers. The evening continues until late. The crime specialists come to bid their host farewell, when lo! - to their great surprise, they find that their host has been murdered in the chair.

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