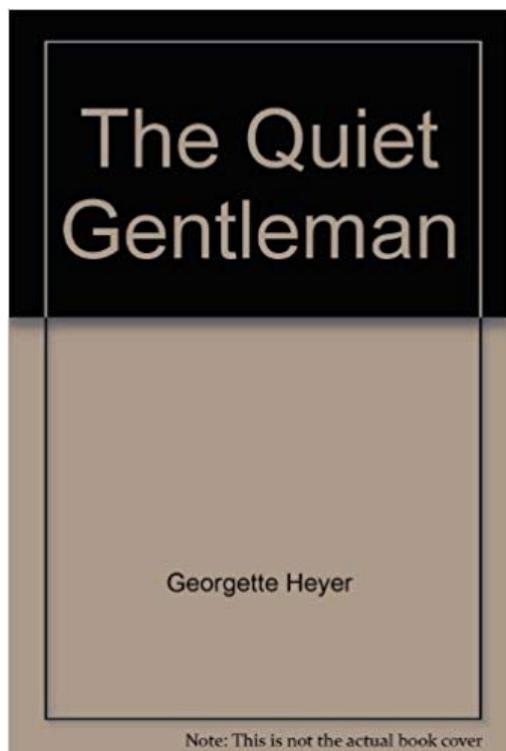


## The Quiet Gentleman *by* Georgette Heyer



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## Reviews of the *The Quiet Gentleman* *by* Georgette Heyer

### Oghmaghma

'But this is Gothick, Frant, quite Gothick!'

Unlike most of Heyer's novels, this is not primarily a romance, and it has a good deal of plot. That is probably why I enjoyed it despite having recently given up on Frederica. The protagonist is less worried about who he will marry and more about who is trying to murder him.

Gervase Frant has returned alive from the wars, in which most of his relatives hoped he would perish, and claimed his inheritance. No sooner has he arrived in the same house as his sullen half-brother, awful stepmother, and protective cousin, than strange, potentially fatal accidents start to befall him. Meanwhile, his best friend visits him, the local belle is pursued by everyone, and a furtive, slangy valet attracts suspicion. The identity of the culprit is quite easily guessed (I was sure

before I was halfway through) but the quiet final revelation is still emotionally effective in terms of both the betrayal involved and the reasons the culprit turned out the way he did.

There are two romantic subplots, one involving a flirtatious young girl whom everyone is in love with and whom the half-brother twice tries to force himself on- of course, everyone and the narrative think she's at fault for flirting in the first place. However, she gets a nice happy ending with a much nicer man. The other romantic subplot involves the hero and a highly sensible girl raised by progressive parents, who are gently laughed at by the text, but who are noted to have given their daughter a strong sense of duty toward her dependents. Her practicality, however, is all her own. Though for plot reasons she must be kept out of the finale, Drusilla Morville does save the day when Gervase is shot, and afterward argues with herself amusingly:

'He would have liked me better had I fallen into a swoon!' argued Drusilla. 'Nonsense! He would have been dead, for well you know that no one else had the least notion what to do!' said Miss Morville.

But this is Gervase's story. By the end the title has a double meaning, but it certainly refers to Gervase, a "quiet gentleman" in his easygoing manners and fear of scandal, but the most obstinate man his friends (and foes) have ever known. He has a steel backbone and canny way of outwitting others and getting his way despite appearances, all of which serves him in good stead as he matches wits with his unknown enemy.

'...I am really very much harder to kill than any of you can be brought to believe.'

### **Morlune**

Another terrific romance by Georgette Heyer, masterful writer of period romances. While not hysterically funny like my favorite Heyer, "The Grand Sophy", this more romantic book has lots of wonderful characters, many of them in love, and a terrific plot involving repeated attempted murder. For some reason I tumbled to the real criminal about halfway through, as unlikely as that person seemed, but even that didn't disturb my enjoyment of the book as it unwound. In less than 350 pages Heyer creates nearly a dozen distinct and amusing characters. I didn't find Gervase, the lead, all that quiet, but he was a wonderful romantic hero. The main female lead has wonderful common sense and restraint, a challenging set of qualities to make come alive, but one roots for her all the way through. The dreadful older aristocratic woman who tries to control everyone is rather too close to some of Jane Austen's characters, rattling on about how she would have been an excellent horsewoman, had she cared for that sort of exercise. The servants are even given personalities and affectations. Once she has established that certain characters are dandies she spends remarkably little time carrying on about clothing, which pleases me. I love the way Heyer captures the language of the times without making it a bit hard to read or understand.

Altogether an excellent book, fun for a rainy day or beach read. I'm stretching out her books, reading a couple a year, hoping to make them last, but it's hard not to just read them all at once.

### **Sironynyr**

Took this novel on a river cruise in France for some light reading, and it perfectly fit the bill. Along with the typical Heyer humor and well-researched social and cultural mores, there was an engrossing plot to carry the story along. Frankly, the "romance" is very thin on the ground, but that was fine by me. It reminded me of her novels like *The Masqueraders* and *The Foundling*, which I find vastly superior to, and more enjoyable than the rather saccharine pure romance of some of her other works, where everything focuses on the "will he, won't he" and the "will she, won't she" tedium of

“love.” It’s all happy endings, of course, which is what we want and expect from Heyer, so heartily recommend for a relaxing, untaxing reading experience.

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