



ILLUSTRATED

*Tommy and Tuppence  
Beresford Mysteries*



**THE CLERGYMAN'S DAUGHTER**  
**AGATHA CHRISTIE**

**Agatha Christie**  
**The Clergyman's**  
**Daughter**  
**Tommy and Tuppence**  
**Beresford Mysteries**  
**Illustrated**



"I wish," said Tuppence, roaming moodily round the office, "that we could befriend a clergyman's daughter."

"Why?" asked Tommy.

"You may have forgotten the fact, but I was once a clergyman's daughter myself. I remember what it was like. Hence this altruistic urge-this spirit of thoughtful consideration for others-this-

"You are getting ready to be Roger Sheringham, I see," said Tommy. "If you will allow me to make a criticism, you talk quite as much as he does, but not nearly so well."

"On the contrary," said Tuppence, "there is a feminine subtlety about my conversation, a *je ne sais quoi*, that no gross male could ever attain to. I have, moreover, powers unknown to my prototype-do I mean prototype? Words are such uncertain things, they so often sound well but mean the opposite of what one thinks they do."

"Go on," said Tommy kindly.



"I was. I was only pausing to take breath. Touching these powers, it is my wish to-day to assist a clergyman's daughter. You will see, Tommy, the first person to enlist the aid of Blunt's Brilliant Detectives will be a clergyman's daughter."

"I'll bet you it isn't," said Tommy.

"Done," said Tuppence. "Hist! To your typewriters, Oh! Israel. One comes."

Mr. Blunt's office was humming with industry as Albert opened the door and announced:

"Miss Monica Deane."

A slender brown haired girl, rather shabbily dressed, entered and stood hesitating. Tommy came forward.

"Good-morning, Miss Deane. Won't you sit down and tell us what we can do for you? By the way, let me introduce my confidential secretary, Miss Sheringham."

"I am delighted to make your acquaintance, Miss Deane," said Tuppence. "Your father was in the Church, I think."

"Yes, he was. But how did you know that?"

"Oh! we have our methods," said Tuppence. "You mustn't mind me rattling on. Mr. Blunt likes to hear me talk. He always says it gives him ideas."

The girl stared at her. She was a slender creature, not beautiful, but possessing a wistful prettiness. She had a quantity of soft mouse-colored hair, and her eyes were dark blue and very lovely, though the dark shadows round them spoke of trouble and anxiety.

"Will you tell me your story, Miss Deane?" said Tommy.

The girl turned to him gratefully.

"It's such a long, rambling story," said the girl. "My name is Monica Deane. My father was the rector of Little Hampsley in Suffolk. He died three years ago, and my mother and I were left very badly off. I went out as a governess, but my mother became a confirmed invalid and I had to come home to look after her. We were desperately poor, but one day we received a lawyer's letter telling us that an aunt of my father's had died and had left everything to me. I had often heard of this aunt who had quarreled with my father many years ago, and I knew that she was very well off, so it really seemed that our troubles were at an end. But matters did not turn out quite as well as we had hoped. I inherited the house she had lived in, but after paying one or two small legacies, there was no money left. I suppose she must have lost it during the war, or perhaps she had been living on her capital. Still, we had the house, and almost at once we had a chance of selling it at quite an advantageous price. But, foolishly perhaps, I refused the offer. We were in tiny, but expensive lodgings, and I thought it would be much nicer to live in the Red House where my mother could have comfortable rooms and take in paying guests to cover our expenses.

"I adhered to this plan, notwithstanding a further tempting offer from the gentlemen who wanted to buy. We moved in, and I advertised for paying guests. For a time, all went well, we had several answers to our

advertisement, my aunt's old servant remained on with us and she and I between us did the work of the house. And then these unaccountable things began to happen."

"What things?"

"The queerest things. The whole place seemed bewitched. Pictures fell down, crockery flew across the room and broke, one morning we came down to find all the furniture moved round. At first we thought someone was playing a practical joke, but we had to give up that explanation. Sometimes when we were all sitting down to dinner, a terrific crash would be heard overhead. We would go up and find no one there, but a piece of furniture thrown violently to the ground."

"A poltergeist," cried Tuppence, much interested.

"Yes, that's what Dr. O'Neill said-though I don't know what it means."

"It's a sort of evil spirit that plays tricks," explained Tuppence who in reality knew very little of the subject, and was not even sure that she had got the word poltergeist right.

"Well, at any rate, the effect was disastrous. Our visitors were frightened to death, and left as soon as possible. We got new ones, and they too left hurriedly. I was in despair, and, to crown all, our own tiny income ceased suddenly-the Company in which it was invested failed."



"You poor dear," said Tuppence sympathetically. "What a time you have had. Did you want Mr. Blunt to investigate this 'haunting' business?"

"Not exactly. You see, three days ago, a gentleman called upon us. His name was Dr. O'Neill. He told us that he was a member of the Society for Physical Research, and that he had heard about the curious manifestations that had taken place in our house and was much interested. So much so, that he was prepared to buy it from us, and conduct a series of experiments there."

"Well?"

"Of course, at first, I was overcome with joy. It seemed the way out of all our difficulties. But-"

"Yes?"

"Perhaps you will think me fanciful. Perhaps I am. But-oh! I'm sure I haven't made a mistake. It was the same man!"

"What same man?"

"The same man who wanted to buy it before. Oh! I'm sure I'm right."

"But why shouldn't it be?"

"You don't understand. The two men were quite different, different name and everything. The first man was quite young, a spruce dark young man of thirty odd. Dr. O'Neill is about fifty, he has a grey beard and wears glasses and stoops. But when he talked I saw a gold tooth on one side of his mouth. It only shows when he laughs. The other man had a tooth in just the same position, and then I looked at his ears. I had noticed the other man's ears, because they were a peculiar shape with hardly any

lobe. Dr. O'Neill's were just the same. Both things couldn't be a coincidence, could they? I thought and thought and finally I wrote and said I would let him know in a week. I had noticed Mr. Blunt's advertisement some time ago-as a matter of fact in an old paper that lined one of the kitchen drawers. I cut it out and came up to town."

"You were quite right," said Tuppence, nodding her head with vigor. "This needs looking into."

"A very interesting case, Miss Deane," observed Tommy. "We shall be pleased to look into this for you-eh, Miss Sheringham?"

"Rather," said Tuppence, "and we'll get to the bottom of it too."

"I understand, Miss Deane," went on Tommy, "that the household consists of you and your mother and a servant. Can you give me any particulars about the servant?"

"Her name is Crockett. She was with my aunt about eight or ten years. She is an elderly woman, not very pleasant in manner, but a good servant. She is inclined to give herself airs because her sister married out of her station. Crockett has a nephew whom she is always telling us is 'quite the gentleman.' "

"H'm," said Tommy, rather at a loss how to proceed.

Tuppence had been eyeing Monica keenly, now she spoke with sudden decision.

"I think the best plan would be for Miss Deane to come out and lunch with me. It's just on one o'clock. I can get full details from her."

"Certainly, Miss Sheringham," said Tommy. "An excellent plan."

"Look here," said Tuppence when they were comfortably ensconced at a little table in a neighboring restaurant, "I want to know. Is there any special reason why you want to find out about all this?"

Monica blushed.

"Well, you see-"

"Out with it," said Tuppence encouragingly.

"Well-there are two men who-who-want to marry me."

"The usual story, I suppose? One rich, one poor, and the poor one is the one you like!"

"I don't know how you know all these things," murmured the girl.

"That's a sort of law of Nature," explained Tuppence. "It happens to everybody. It happens to me."

"You see, even if I sell the house, it won't bring us enough to live on. Gerald is a dear, but he's desperately poor-though he's a very clever engineer and if only he had a little capital, his firm would take him into partnership. The other, Mr. Partridge, is a very good

man, I am sure-and well off, and if I married him it would be an end of all our troubles. But-but-"



"I know," said Tuppence sympathetically. "It isn't the same thing at all. You can go on telling yourself how good and worthy he is, and adding up his qualities

as though they were an addition sum-and it all has a simply refrigerating effect."

Monica nodded.

"Well," said Tuppence, "I think it would be as well if we went down to the neighborhood and studied matters upon the spot. What is the address?"

"The Red House, Stourton in the Marsh."

Tuppence wrote down the address in her note book.

"I didn't ask you," Monica began-"about terms-" she ended, blushing a little.

"Our payments are strictly by results," said Tuppence gravely. "If the secret of the Red House is a profitable one, as seems possible from the anxiety displayed to acquire the property, we should expect a small percentage, otherwise-nothing!"

"Thank you very much," said the girl gratefully.



"And now," said Tuppence, "don't worry. Everything's going to be all right. Let's enjoy lunch and talk of interesting things."



# About the Publisher



Copyright © 2024  
StrelBooks —  
Strelbytskyy Multimedia Publishing, Ltd  
[WWW.MVSBOOKS.COM](http://WWW.MVSBOOKS.COM)

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed or transmitted in any other form or by any means, including photocopying, recording and other electronic or mechanical methods, without the publisher's prior written permission, except for limited citation and other non-commercial purposes permitted by the Copyright Law.

For information about permission to reproduce this publication, please write to:

[PS@MVSBOOKS.COM](mailto:PS@MVSBOOKS.COM)

Copyright © 2024  
StrelBooks —  
Strelbytskyy Multimedia Publishing, Ltd  
[WWW.MVSBOOKS.COM](http://WWW.MVSBOOKS.COM)

Усі права застережено. Жодна частина цієї публікації не може бути відтворена, поширена або передана в будь-якій іншій формі або будь-якими засобами, включаючи фотокопіювання, запис та інші електронні або механічні методи, без попереднього письмового дозволу видавця, за винятком випадків обмеженого цитування та інших некомерційних цілей, дозволених законом про авторські права. Для отримання інформації про дозвіл відтворення цієї публікації пишть на адресу:

[PS@MVSBOOKS.COM](mailto:PS@MVSBOOKS.COM)