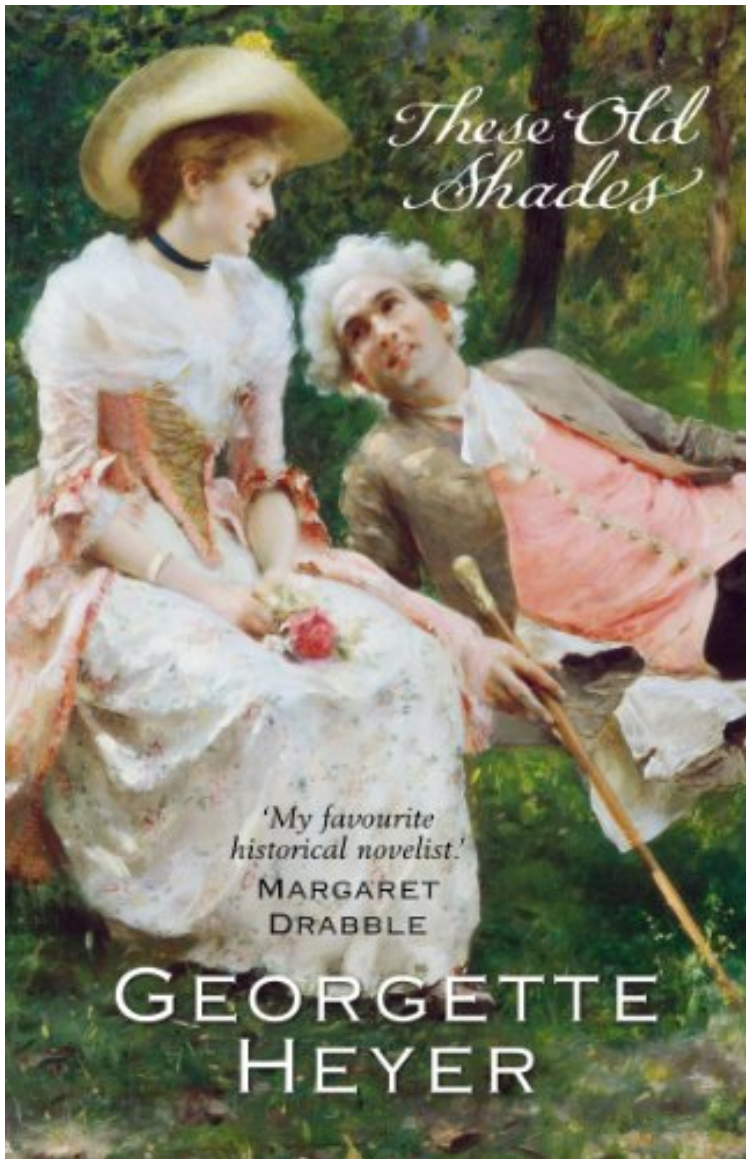


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These Old Shades



Par Georgette Heyer
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Par Georgette Heyer : These Old Shades before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised These Old Shades:

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Description : Description du produitA classic tale of intrigue, adventure and love from the Grande Dame of romantic historical novels set in Regency England.

Prsentation de l'diteurA classic tale of intrigue, adventure and love from the 'Grande Dame' of romantic historical novels set in Georgian and Regency England.Under the reign of Louis XV, corruption and intrigue have been allowed to blossom in France, and Justin Alastair, the notorious Duke of Avon and proud of his soubriquet 'Satanas', flourishes as well. Then, from a dark Parisian back alley, he plucks L-on, a red-headed urchin with strangely familiar looks, just in time for his long over-due schemes of revenge on the Comte de St. Vire. Among the splendours of Versailles and the dignified mansions of England, Justin begins to unfold his sinister plans -- until, that is, Leon becomes the ravishing beauty Leonie ...Yet again Georgette Heyer

shows the qualities that made her one of the most successful and best-loved romantic novelists of her age, and why her popularity endures to this day..com A gentleman was strolling down a side street in Paris, on his way back from the house of one Madame de Verchoureaux. He walked mincingly, for the red heels of his shoes were very high. A long purple cloak, rose-lined, hung from his shoulders and was allowed to fall carelessly back from his dress, revealing a full-skirted coat of purple satin, heavily laced with gold; a waistcoat of flowered silk; faultless small clothes; and a lavish sprinkling of jewels on his cravat and breast.

The gentleman in question is Justin Alastair, the Duke of Avon, known by friends and enemies alike as Satan--the devil. On this particular evening, the dangerous rake crosses paths with Lon, a red-headed youth of low birth who is fleeing a certain beating at his brutal brother's hands. On a whim, Avon buys the boy and makes him his page. It soon becomes clear, however, that Lon is not what he seems, and that Avon has an ulterior motive for bringing him into his household. Set in pre-Revolutionary France, *These Old Shades* follows a twisting course as young Lon (or is it Lonie?) is swept up in a dangerous mystery: how to account for the page's amazing resemblance to the sinister Comte de Saint Vire, for example; and why will this man go to any lengths to get the youth in his power? Georgette Heyer's historical romances tend to fall into two different camps: later novels such as *Cotillion*, *False Colours*, and *Sylvester* feature larger-than-life comic characters and romantic pairings more akin to Beatrice and Benedick than Hero and Claudio. Earlier works such as *These Old Shades*, however, tend to be darker, tinged with mystery and overshadowed by very real menace. What both types share is Heyer's fine storytelling and encyclopedic knowledge of

Regency mores and manners--her books are the next best thing to a time machine. *These Old Shades*'s greatest asset, however, is the charming Lonie: beautiful, brave, and loyal to a fault, with a fondness for swordplay and pistols and a delightfully incomplete grasp of the English language. Heyer herself was so fond of this character that she featured her in two more novels, *Devil's Cub* and *An Infamous Army*. --Alix Wilber
From Library Journal Justin Alastair, Duke of Avon, is called "Satanas" by enemy and friend alike. In the aristocratic circles of both London and Paris he has a reputation as a dangerous and debauched rake. He has the occasional odd whim, however, and when a semistarved, ragged child literally falls into his arms on a dark Paris street, Justin purchases the miserable scrap from his abusive guardian and makes the child his page. Cleaned up and properly dressed, Leon proves to be surprisingly comely, with delicate features and flaming red hair. His delicate manners coexist with a personality that combines innocence and arrogance with a fiery temper and a willful stubbornness. Strangest of all, he bears a strong resemblance to the Comte de Saint-Vire, an old enemy of Justin's. Before long Leon is unmasked as the girl Leonie, but the mystery of her heritage deepens. The strength of the characters rather than the plot fuels this novel. Justin cuts a dark and brooding hero figure; his motives are definitely dubious at the beginning of the story and remain questionable. Even the secondary characters are strongly drawn, distinct, and important to plot development.

Narrator Cornelius Garrett does an excellent job, offering a rendition of Justin that is suitably languid. Highly recommended. Barbara Rhodes, Northeast Texas Lib. Syst., Garland Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc.