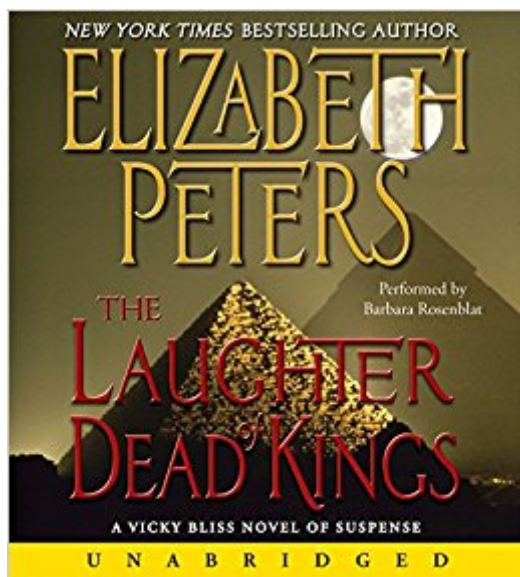


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Laughter Of Dead Kings (Vicky Bliss, No. 6)



Synopsis

“A royal treat. Welcome back, Vicky Bliss!...For readers new to Vicky Bliss’s sassy and distinctively smart stories, *The Laughter of Dead Kings* will mark the start of a beautiful friendship.” —Tampa Tribune
“New York Times bestselling Grand Master Elizabeth Peters’ author of the thrilling fictional exploits of archaeologist Amelia Peabody in the *Land of the Pharaohs* brings back beautiful, brainy art expert and sometime sleuth Vicky Bliss for one last adventure in *The Laughter of Dead Kings*. The incomparable Peters sends Vicky and her colorful entourage racing across modern-day Egypt to investigate the brazen theft of one of the ancient desert land’s most priceless treasures. Smart, funny, evocative, and suspenseful, *The Laughter of Dead Kings* is a fond and fitting farewell to the ever-delightful Vicky Bliss and a superior mystery fit for a King Tutankhamen.”

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Barbara Rosenblat is the perfect performer for a caper that whirls the listener in and out of Egyptian tombs and the glories of Luxor. Some murder and mayhem are tossed in, but they're almost tangential. Rosenblat captures all the wit and deductive skills of Vicki Bliss, an American art curator/detective, but also conveys her down-to-earth side. However, for all her many talents, Rosenblat is surprisingly inept with foreign accents. The overblown German accent of Vicki's boss, Schmidt, works well for the larger-than-life bon vivant, but John, Vicki's fellow sleuth and love interest, teeters in and out of various British accents, and the Egyptian accents of the locals are totally off. Nevertheless, characters' voices are quite distinctive, so don't worry about getting lost in a

verbal desert. Rosenblats overall performance and rapid-fire pacing make this overlong book more enjoyable in audio form than on the printed page. A William Morrow hardcover (Reviews, July 7). (Sept.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Heavy-hitter Peters (named Grand Master by both Mystery Writers of America and the Anthony Awards and recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award from Malice Domestic) resurrects series heroine/art historian Vicky Bliss, last seen in 1984. Vicky, introduced in 1973, is still in her early thirties and still connected to her lover, Sir John Smythe, a former art thief whom Vicky suspects may not be entirely reformed. There's quite a disconnect in reading what is supposed to be a contemporary adventure. Characters speak in an elaborate, archaic, torturously witty fashion. Vicky, even as a first-person narrator, is not the main force in her own life but is dragged about the globe by Sir John. The effect is very much like a 1930s comedy of manners, with very creaky plot machinery. Readers who enjoy that era's mysteries may like this one, but Peters comes across here like someone who hasn't updated her gramophone. The plot revolves around recovering the body of King Tut, stolen from its tomb by some Brits. Bliss, through her current connection as assistant curator of Munich's National Museum, follows Sir John through various exotic locales in search of Tut. The saving grace for this relic comes from Peters' own expertise in the ancient world (she has a doctorate in Egyptology from the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago). For devoted Peters fans who simply can't wait for the next Amelia Peabody novel. --Connie Fletcher --This text refers to the Mass Market Paperback edition.

I read the first books in the Vicky Bliss series years ago and have chuckled and cheered my way through them several times since. When I heard that there was a final book, I couldn't wait to read it. Well, it was worth the wait! Besides Vicky, Schmidt and John, Feisal of "Last Train to Memphis" makes an appearance as do other characters from previous books. Even the author herself has a brief scene. There is a tie in with the Amelia Peabody books that rounds out the end of both series. Do yourself a favor and read your way through the Elizabeth Peters books as soon as possible!!

What a fun, delightful book!! Vintage Elizabeth Peters in what is her 6th and last Vicky Bliss book. I had read earlier books years ago and now must go back and get reacquainted with them. Can be read as a stand alone volume but knowing the primary characters from earlier volumes helps in

understanding them. I can't remember if there was prior reference to John Smythe's relationship to the characters of another Peters' series of books, ie Amelia Peabody and her family. Added another level of enjoyment to the mystery. The book is characteristically well written and edited with many twists, turns and surprises. Humor pervades throughout and the ending does come as a surprise. Unrestricted recommendation!!

I loved this book. I have been a fan of Vicky/John and Schmidt since the beginning. As a long, long time fan of MPM books, this was a satisfying return to much loved characters. I thoroughly enjoyed revisiting amateur sleuth Vicky's world. The mystery and story line were not as in depth or detailed as previous vicky books, but it was still a far better read than most. I thank Ms Mertz for penning another mysterious escapade across Egypt and a happy ending for 2 of my very favorite fictional characters. Sadly, this is probably the last in series, but it did wrap up a couple of 14 year loose ends nicely. And if by some chance there's another book in the future, it too will be on my auto-buy list. I highly recommend this author, all her books are well written, with excellent attention to background information and pertinent trivia. I have every Vicky Bliss and Amelia Peabody book on my keeper shelf.

I may have read this before but won't know until I do read it again. I always enjoyed Vicky Bliss books.

I love the Vicky Bliss novels so couldn't wait to get this latest edition. Within a couple of pages I had the sad realization that this novel does not live up to previous books. The attempt to bring the story into the 'modern' world of various technologies results in those technologies dominating more of the story than they should. I understand that cell phones and computers have a significant impact on how people function, but that shouldn't be at the expense of the story. My next disappointment is that the characters are faded versions of how they were in previous books. There isn't the crispness to dialog, especially between Vicky and John. They now seem more complacent. Schmidt is not as much fun - he's more pitiful than his usual feisty self. There are moments that remind me of previous novels, but this one seems like it was churned out just to satisfy the demand for another Vicky Bliss story. It's not a bad book, but could have been so much better. I know what Elizabeth Peters is capable of and am disappointed in this effort. It's almost like someone else did the writing, trying to imitate Peters' style.

I have listened to a number of Elizabeth Peters' novels, all superbly narrated by Barbara Rosenblat, and read the rest. I am especially fond of the Vicky Bliss series (though I've greatly enjoyed the Amelia Peabody series too), and I find that when I read one of the books, it's Ms. Rosenblat's voice I'm hearing in my head--I absolutely love what she does with the characters' voices, ESPECIALLY Schmidt's (maybe that's due in part to my having been a German major in college). At any rate, I was overjoyed when I heard that there was to be another Vicky Bliss book, and--as always--Ms. Peters did not disappoint. In fact, it wasn't the laughter of dead kings I was hearing throughout the book: it was the chortling of the author herself that I kept imagining I could hear. She obviously had a great time writing it, and it shows. She tied up all the loose ends (even to linking the Amelia Peabody books with the Vicky Bliss series) in a way that made it bearable to think that this might really be the last book, after all (well, almost bearable...). In a nutshell, I thoroughly enjoyed this book and expect to listen to it again and again. I do think it helps to be familiar with both series before reading this one; except for that one caveat, I would highly recommend this book to one and all as an extremely entertaining read.

I like the way she writes. She is clear and interesting.

'Laughter of Dead Kings' is worthy entry into the Vicky Bliss series. In the preface, the author writes about the 'current now', which inserts the central character into the time the book was published without aging her. Readers will notice differences in the events and technology within the series that began in the early 1970s. However, it is easy to pick up again from 'Night Train from Memphis' and just enjoy a good story told. This time John must clear himself of the blame for the theft in broad daylight of a famous Egyptian mummy. Vicky and Schmidt lend a hand and murder and danger ensue. It is a good novel, not as witty as the others and the bad guys were easier to identify, but still an entertaining read. There is a sense that this is the last book on Vicky Bliss. For those who have read all the Amelia Peabody books, look out for references to the lady archaeologist, answers to their relevance to Sir John and some delightful hints that there may be one or more books about the famous Emersons in the future.

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