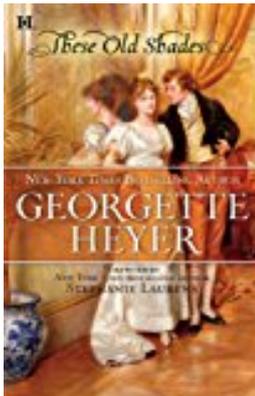


# [PDF] These Old Shades

## Georgette Heyer - pdf download free book

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### Books Details:

Title: These Old Shades  
Author: Georgette Heyer  
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### Description:

*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-as-the devil. On this particular evening, the dangerous rake crosses paths with Léon, 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 Léon 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 Léon (or is it Léonie?) 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 Léonie: 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* --This text refers to the edition.

**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*

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