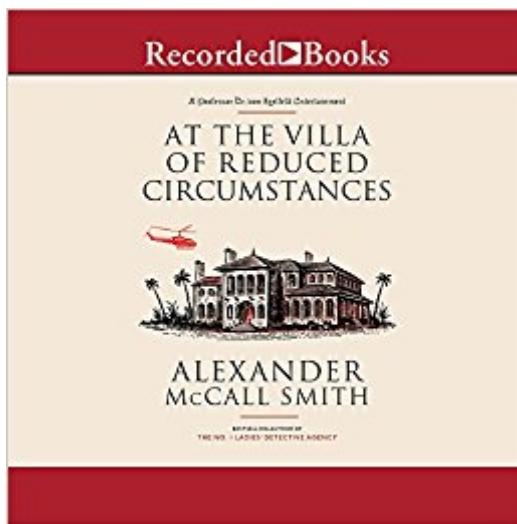


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# At The Villa Of Reduced Circumstances (Recorded Books Unabridged)



## Synopsis

The irresistible wit of New York Times best-selling author Alexander McCall Smith has won over countless fans. His subtle humor and enchanting characterizations are fully on display in *At the Villa of Reduced Circumstances*. Professor Dr. von Igelfeld is pleased with his role as a visiting scholar at Cambridge, even if his English colleagues are difficult to comprehend. They frequently speak in metaphors and make peculiar assumptions, saying such odd things as, "I take it your journey went well," when that is not the case at all.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

...gentle but incisive commentaries on Africa, men and women, and life in general...Not to be missed."

Readers who fell in love with Precious Ramotswe, proprietor of The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency, now have new cause for celebration in the protagonist of these three light-footed comic novels by Alexander McCall Smith. Welcome to the insane and rarified world of Professor Dr. Moritz-Maria von Igelfeld of the Institute of Romance Philology. Von Igelfeld is engaged in a never-ending quest to win the respect he feels certain he is due-a quest which has the tendency to go hilariously astray. In *At the Villa of Reduced Circumstances*, Professor Dr. von Igelfeld gets caught up in a nasty case of academic intrigue while on sabbatical at Cambridge. When he returns to Regensburg he is confronted with the thrilling news that someone from a foreign embassy has actually checked his

masterwork, Portuguese Irregular Verbs, out of the Institute's Library. As a result, he gets caught up in intrigue of a different sort on a visit to Bogota, Colombia. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Alexander McCall Smith should be congratulated for getting "At the Villa of Reduced Circumstances" published. Unlike the previous two books where the "story" was fairly pointless, with this book, the "story" reads like an LSD dream. I fully expected Herr Professor Dr von Igelfeld to suddenly awaken and express his thankfulness for still being in Germany. Alas, it was not to be. The story is what the story appears to be. OK. That out the way, on to a bit more detail. Whereas the first book in the series contained eight mostly unrelated vignettes (i.e., "chapters"), and the second book five slightly more cohesive "chapters," this book consists of a mere two "chapters" that are entirely unrelated to each other. In the first chapter, Professor Dr von Igelfeld is at Cambridge scratching his head at the behavior and politics of English academia. This is actually the good, fairly rational chapter. In the second chapter, he's in Columbia having pipe dreams or something. It's just crazy stuff (and not in a good way). I have no idea why any publishing house would have accepted such a thing and published it. If the technical writing weren't decent, I'd have rated it at rock bottom. But, I'll be generous and give it a merely Pretty Bad 2 stars out of 5. The books in Alexander McCall Smith's "Professor Dr von Igelfeld" series are: 1. A Portuguese Irregular Verbs: A Professor Dr von Igelfeld Entertainment Novel (1) 2. A The Finer Points of Sausage Dogs: A Professor Dr von Igelfeld Entertainment Novel (2) 3. A At the Villa of Reduced Circumstances: A Professor Dr von Igelfeld Entertainment Novel (3) 4. A Unusual Uses for Olive Oil: A Professor Dr von Igelfeld Entertainment Novel (4)

I adore Alexander McCall's many books (what a prolific writer!), but this series bored me tremendously. I didn't care about any of these characters and had to force myself to read each book, thinking maybe the characters would grow on me. (They didn't.) YAWN! I think I've read every other book he's written and have loved the characters (or disliked them because I was supposed to!) and stories. I lived in South Africa for two years and Mc Call captures Precious R. so well you'd think the book was written by a female from Botswana. Isobel Dalhousie is an interesting philosopher and I love that she's a woman philosopher. Bertie tries SO hard and his mother, albeit trying even harder, is the world's most irritating woman and you just want to bundle him up and take him off to live the life of a freer child. As for the other 44 Scotland Street characters, I got so involved in all their lives from book one that I couldn't wait for another book to come out. I've felt that way

about each series, except Portuguese Irregular Verbs, Villa of Reduced Circumstances, etc. Didn't enjoy that series one whit! I'm sure there are people out there who enjoyed this series, but I wasn't one of them, sad to say. I was, in fact, shocked by just how much I did NOT like this series as I was expecting to be enchanted as I almost always am by McCall Smith's books. Mind you, I continue to look forward to books in his other series, but will never buy one about these professors again!

In this book, the latest of the Professor Dr. Moritz-Maria von Igelfeld, the Full Professor of Romance Philology, Smith reaches into the surreal. In the first instance, it should be pointed out that a German professor of Romance languages is almost surreal in itself. The Romance languages, the ones based on Latin such as Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Rumanian, etc. have no relationship to German at all. In fact, English is really the combination of German and Latin. Nonetheless, the good Doctor still exists. And in this adventure, we see a story in 2 parts. The first part describes the Professor's 4 month visit to Cambridge. Smith focuses on the differences between manners, mannerisms, modes of speaking and other idiosyncrasies about England and Germany in relating his story of the Professor's stay at Cambridge. The second part gets even more interesting as the Professor finally gets the recognition he feels he deserves. In fact perhaps he gets just a little more recognition than he bargained for when he is taken prisoner by Columbian Guerilla Fighters in the midst of a revolution. At this point, Smith moves into the dream state of a story unfolding without the protagonist having any control over the outcome. Yet the outcome is indeed a grand one. The book is highly recommended to Alexander McCall Smith enthusiasts. It is also recommended to those who wish to see how academicians sometimes interact with the real world in a very strange manner.

I am a great fan of Alexander McCall Smith's kindly tales of Botswana. This book is a horse of a different color...part of the semi-caustic series about a mediocre professor whose sole achievement has something to do with Portuguese verbs, this book takes out after the pomposity of academic political hierarchies AND the glories of banana republic revolutions all at the same time. A fast read...and one so caustic and so funny that you'll be bound to pass it along (preferably to a peace corps veteran of the new world who is currently a professor...of anything)

Nonsense & Intrigue ...author Alexander McCall Smith's book "At The Villa of Reduced Circumstances " evolves Professor Dr von Igelfeld's unique thought processes...with a few tablespoons of prestige and power as the medicine.....Illustrations (i.e. two expressions of Plank by illustrations by Iani McIntosh) add even more to the book ....abj

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