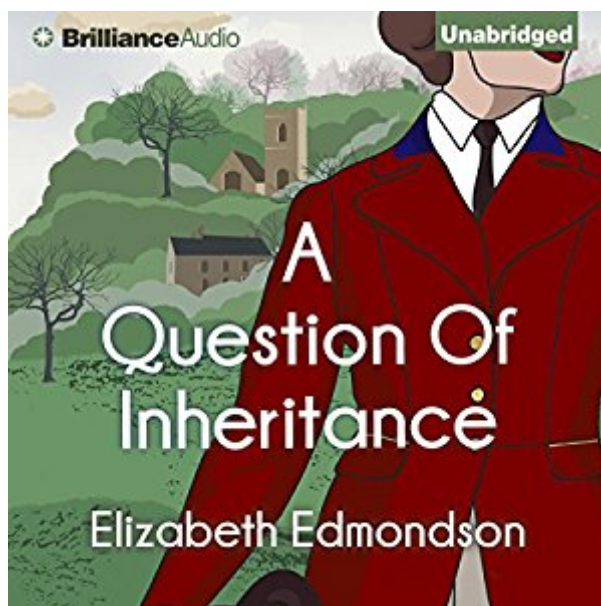


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A Question Of Inheritance: A Very English Mystery, Book 2



Synopsis

December 1953 Hugo Hawksworth is on the tail of rogue Cold War agents at a top-secret government facility, while back home at Selchester Castle they're awaiting the arrival of the new earl - an American, the long-lost son of the murdered Lord Selchester. The town of Selchester, rich in scandal and gossip, is unsure what to make of the earl or his teenage daughters, but they know that his sharp-tongued half-sister, Lady Sonia, furious at being deprived of her inheritance, won't be a merry guest over Christmas. The new Lord Selchester can cope with the strangeness of English country life, but he hadn't expected stolen paintings - or a body in the hothouse. What's the link between Hugo's investigations and the suspicious goings-on in the town and at the castle? And will he and his allies get to the heart of the mystery before the murderer gets to them?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I loved the first book and I was (and still am) enjoying the second book - but a little more than halfway through, the editing just went out the window. Extra words, missing words, sentence fragments - they are all over the place. It's as if the author or editor was making changes to sentences by adding in different words but not taking away the ones they were meant to replace. I love the writing, the time period, the story and the characters, but please go back and correct all those problems! I will look forward to more books by this author.

In the first book in this series, Lord Selchester, not a nice man, was murdered. In this book, a new Earl is installed in the Castle. He's the lost heir, found in America, and quite a nice man. With him are his two daughters, Babs and Polly. Two lodgers are still living in the Castle until they find a new home: Hugo Hawksworth, a government man doing Intelligence work, and his thirteen-year-old, worldly-wise sister Georgia. Installed in the Castle tower, and also in need of a new home is the earl's cousin Freya. It's Christmas 1953, and the Earl's half-sister Sonia invites herself to the holiday festivities at the Castle. Sonia is a difficult personality, as we saw in the last book -- selfish and greedy (although rich in her own right). She brings an admirer with her, as well as an art expert to evaluate some paintings in the Castle. When the art expert is found dead in the hothouse, Hugo finds himself involved in his second murder investigation at the Castle. The post-war era is an interesting one, with shortages of food and housing in England. There are concerns about Russian spies, and Hugo is researching suspects. Another hot topic of the day is the confiscation of artwork from Jews families by the Nazis. This is pivotal to the plot. Unless I missed something (very possible), there are some loose ends in the plot left unresolved. But otherwise the mystery is well plotted. I felt very involved with the characters from the first book and happy to know what they were up to next, although the challenges they face are less intense this time around. But I enjoyed the story and look forward to the next book. Hugo, his brother Father Leo, Georgia and Freya are particularly likable characters.

I enjoyed watching the mystery unfold and the details of the village and castle in the atmosphere of the '50's cold war. I detected a bit of anti-Americanism in this book and in the previous novel that followed the same characters. Did not detract from the storytelling. Am sorry she has passed! We shall have to compose our own stories of whether Freya and Hugo would become closer companions. Thanks for entertaining and sharing your writing talents with us, Ms. Edmondson.

This is the sequel to *A Man of Some Repute*, which introduced Hugo Hawksworth, a British Intelligence agent who had taken a bullet in one leg and was thus forced to move from field operations to a desk job. In the first book he and Freya Wryton, the niece of the late Lord Selchester who has been something of the caretaker of Selchester Castle in the seven years since the earl's disappearance are involved in the investigation of his death when his bones unexpectedly turn up during an attempt to repair the floor of the Old Chapel in the castle. In the process of their investigation they turn up a living heir to the earl -- the earl's son by his first wife, who had left him shortly after she died.

become pregnant (he was Not A Nice Man), emigrated to America, and died not long after her son was born. The new earl arrives in Britain as this book opens, and his acclimatization to his new status and wealth, along with his two daughters adjusting to living in a new country, make up a lot of the story line. (He had been a professor of history at a New England college when he was discovered.) There have been some apparent attempts on the new earl's life, and then in the course of a Christmas house party at the castle (with everyone confined to the town of Selchester by snow) an involuntary guest is electrocuted by a tampered-with fixture, and the question arises as to whether he or the earl had been the intended victim. Hugo uses some of his old contacts in the spy world as part of the investigation. I very much like the characters in this series so far, and intend to continue buying them if Edmondson continues writing them.

This book is the continuation of the story begun in the book length "A Man of Some Repute" and the novella "A Youthful Indiscretion." All three on Kindle Unlimited are well worth reading in order. The writer creates a wonderful cozy mystery read, with excellent characterizations, charming settings and real page turning interest in the plot lines. In the case of this book, though, the story seemed to almost halt abruptly rather than come to a natural conclusion. The resolution of the main storyline seemed forced, more as though a word count had been reached rather than a genuine story ending. Who is the "blank faced" private investigator seen in the village? Is he attempting to kill the current Earl? Where is the blackmail notebook? But, more puzzlingly, why is someone attempting to kill the current Earl, especially with the likeliest suspect now seemingly unlikely to be the origin of the violence. How will the more personal entanglements resolve for the characters? Perhaps a third installment with these characters in in the offing? If so, this reader for one will look forward to another pleasant few hours with this accomplished author and hope for even more from her in terms of plot resolution.

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