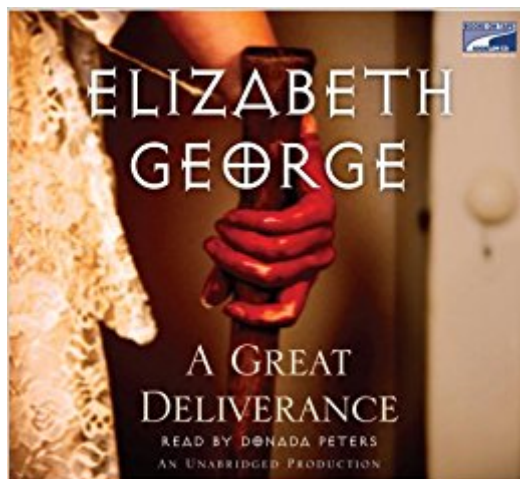


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A Great Deliverance



Synopsis

The quiet life of the Yorkshire countryside is shattered by a brutal murder and the shocking revelations unearthed by Scotland Yard investigators Barbara Havers and Thomas Lynsley. Read by Derek Jacobi. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Contemporary

Customer Reviews

In her debut novel, George too often plays to the gallery with characterizations broad enough to border on caricature. The legend harking back to violent events in Cromwell's time that surrounds local Keldale Abbey pales in comparison to a modern-day crime committed in this quiet corner of Yorkshire, England: Roberta Teys, a silent, obese adolescent, is accused of killing her church-going father with an axe. The detectives sent by Scotland Yard to investigate are a mismatched pair. Inspector Thomas Lynley is smooth, attractive and utterly upper-class; "stubby, sturdy" detective-sergeant Barbara Havers, conscious of her plain appearance and lower-class origins, considers Lynley a "sodding little fop." Thrown together, they weigh the general conviction in the village that Roberta could not possibly have wielded the bloody axe against mounting evidence that damns the now catatonic girl. In sifting slowly through the ashes of the past, the detectives find enough horrific skeletons in every closet to lead them to a climax unexpectedly loaded with fire and fury. While Lynley seems rather bland despite emotion roiling beneath the surface, it is Havers' painful secrets and driving rage that encourage one to overlook decidedly uneven passages in this essentially intriguing psychological thriller. 35,000 first printing; \$50,000 ad/promo. Copyright 1988 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

"Spellbinding...a truly fascinating story that is part psychological suspense and part detective story." — •Chicago Sun-Times "Pure entertainment from its insidious beginning to its gripping end." — •The Washington Post Book World "Exceptionally assured and impressive...highly entertaining." — •Newsweek "Awesome...immediately thrusts the author into P.D. James' dark orbit." — •Kirkus Reviews From the Paperback edition. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

As an avid reader of mystery series, why have I never picked up one of Elizabeth George's Inspector Lynley books? After all, she's one of the most successful mystery writers now on the scene. I've finally remedied my oversight by reading the first book in the series and the writer's first novel, *A Great Deliverance*. I won't wait so long to peruse the second book in the series, because this was a terrific read. Here are a few of the things that I liked about the book: The setting. Yorkshire, with its gray, windy moors and small, insular villages is a dark and mysterious place all on its own. Here, George takes us to the little village of Keldale where a local respected farmer has been found decapitated in his barn, his dead body slumped over the also dead body of his old dog whose throat had been slit. Most shockingly, his daughter is seated on an upturned bucket nearby with an axe on her lap. She says, "I did it. And I'm not sorry." Okay, end of mystery, right? No! It is only the beginning. The development of character. The two main characters are Inspector Thomas Lynley, who is also a member of the aristocracy as the eighth earl of Asherton, and Sergeant Barbara Havers, who is definitely blue collar and it's not just the color of her uniform. She was raised and still lives in poverty with her parents. I was fascinated with the way that George chose to reveal these characters to us. She essentially shows us both through the eyes of Sgt. Havers who is an embittered and unhappy woman. Havers has just been demoted from detective back to a uniform policewoman because she is so irascible and ill-tempered that she is unable to work with any of the inspectors. Then the head of a Scotland Yard unit gives her a second chance. He picks her to work with Inspector Lynley on the decapitation case. Havers is both elated and appalled. Appalled because it's Lynley. She hates Lynley! She sees him as an upper class twit, a fop, and, moreover, a relentless womanizer who seduces every attractive woman he meets. Which means that Havers is perfectly safe because her image of her own body (like that of so many women who have been taught to be self-loathers) is that she is ugly, pig-like even, a perennial loser. Donald Trump would have a field day mocking her. The problem with Havers' perception of Lynley's personality is that it is her own projection. His reputation as being a carefree sex machine is more than a little overblown. As we eventually learn, he has actually been celibate for the past year since breaking off his

engagement with the woman he loved. The woman he still loves. The woman who has just married one of Lynley's best friends, a man about whom he feels enormous guilt because his friend was crippled as a result of an auto accident when Lynley was driving. In fact, we learn through Lynley's actions that he is actually a caring and sensitive man and a detective who is passionate about his job. But will Havers ever be able to see that? Plot surprises. George plays fair. She sprinkles her clues throughout and the eagle-eyed reader may certainly suspect what is at the bottom of the secrets and mysteries that are buried in the village of Keldale. Still the denouement is pretty devastating as all the secrets are finally revealed. Language. The writer is able to weave in literary and historical elements into her story. Her use of Shakespearean allusions seemed particularly apt. But I was especially pleased with some of the \$25 words used by George, words that I was unfamiliar with and had to ask my Kindle to define. Such a joy to learn new-to-me words, although most often the words themselves were quite old. Relationships. I found the development of the prickly relationship between Lynley and Havers fascinating to watch. These are two very damaged people. One can hope that the strengths of one will offset the weaknesses of the other. That's what their boss at Scotland Yard saw and what he is hoping for. There are other important relationships that play a role in the plot. For example, the ones between that dead farmer and his two daughters and the wife who left long ago, as well as his relationships in the community. Other tangential relationships are sketched by George with a minimum of words that are nevertheless cogent and well-chosen and give the reader a clear picture of the situation. By the way, was that impish nine-year-old girl with her pet duck an homage to Martha Grimes? I choose to think so! All in all, I found this to be a remarkable first novel by a talented writer, and I look forward to reading more about Lynley and Havers.

Originally written in 1988 this is the first of the Lynley/Havers novels. It was necessary for Ms. George to introduce the characters to the reader. It was also necessary to introduce them to each other and begin to develop their characters. The author develops the main characters and their own personal struggles very well. I had read some novels in this series, so some dialogue was repetitious, though necessary. The novel entwines a few families, including police, in the investigation of the murder of a baby and later a farmer. The cast is rather large and can become confusing if not paying attention. The novel, in Ms. George's style, is very well written; taking place in the UK. The most enjoyable part, I found, was the ending. It doesn't come quickly. It builds slowly to a crescendo which will surprise more than one person. Both suspects and police persona come to light and a good deal of characters' personalities are revealed. The ending in this book is excellent. One thing is

seriously lacking and really does not involve the author. In the Kindle edition, one wonders if anyone bothered to edit the e-reader edition. You'll find changes in scenes, characters. and storylines. One paragraph runs into the next without a chapter change or even a page break. It can become confusing and it's through the entire book.

Great way beyond being a creative joy to read. This book tells of the beginning of the Thomas Lynsey and Barbara Havers team. While Havers is filled to the brim with career us to her abrupt and criticizing style, Lynley forestalls many objections most people might have and considers the justifications that Havers may have for exploding in fury. For example..one night Lynley's amorous adventure in an adjoining hotel room kept Havers uncomfortable awake all night. Although her accusations go way beyond anyone's right to speculate on Lynley's private life, Lynley still gives Havers a "way out" put being "sacked" from the police . Even Havers asks why she is not being "sacked" immediately. Many incidents between Lynley and Havers would test anyone's patience but Lynley's determination to look at his own part of many situations s a remarkable lesson in looking beyond your own feelings of annoyance and credit the feelings of another. Personally I learn quite a bit from the Lynley character and find this book embraces the heart of kindness towards others

This book was a psychological thriller with both a surprise and a sad ending, in my opinion. The twists and turns made it a very interesting read, and I would recommend it for anyone who likes mysteries. The author used the characters to form a spell binding hold on the audience, and I had a hard time putting it down once I got into it. Very interesting, but at times a difficult read.

I had seen the tv series before I read this first book. I wish I hadn't though. I liked the tv series a lot but this first book (and I expect the rest will be the same) has so much more depth to it than a show ever could. The characters have so much substance and realty and I'm looking forward to how they evolve in this series...hopefully into better, more whole people.

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