



A Place of Hiding

Elizabeth George

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An isolated beach on the island of Guernsey in the English Channel is the scene of the murder of Guy Brouard, one of Guernsey's wealthiest inhabitants and its main benefactor. Forced as a child to flee the Nazis in Paris, Brouard was engaged in his latest project when he died: a museum in honor of those who resisted the German occupation of the island during World War II.

It is from this period of time that his murderer may well have come. But there are others on Guernsey with reason to want Guy Brouard dead: his wives, his business associates, his current mistress, the underprivileged teenagers he mentored—any of whom might have harbored a secret motive for murder. As family and friends gather for the reading of the will, Deborah and Simon St. James find that seemingly everyone on the history-haunted island has something to hide. And behind all the lies and alibis, a killer is lurking. In order to bring this person to justice, the St. James must delve into Guernsey's dark history—both past and present—and into the troubled psyche of someone who may have exacted retribution for the most unspeakable crime of all.

In **A Place of Hiding**, bestselling novelist Elizabeth George marks new territory in the darker landscapes of human relationships. She tells a gripping, suspenseful story of betrayal and devotion, war and remembrance, love and loss...and the higher truths to which we must all ultimately answer.

From the Hardcover edition.

A Place of Hiding Details

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From Reader Review A Place of Hiding for online ebook

Lorraine says

Another great read from Elizabeth George. This book involves Deborah and Simon St. James. Cherokee Rivers, brother of Deborah's great friend China Rivers, appears at their door one rainy November night. He asks for their help in finding the U.S. Embassy and says that China has been imprisoned for murder on the island of Guernsey. Of course the St. James' drop everything and go to Guernsey with Cherokee to find out what has happened. They discover that wealthy Guy Brouard was suffocated with a small amulet after swimming in the ocean early one morning. There are two witnesses who saw China following Guy down to the beach. Cherokee, Deborah and Simon look for clues and interview people in the hopes of finding the real killer.

A lot of people have disdained this book as it involves Simon and Deborah, with only small appearances of Thomas Lynley and none of Barbara Havers. I really like the character of Simon St. James, and hope that Deborah will improve with age.

Em says

The novel previous to this in George's oeuvre was a tremendously tedious slog, with most of the story pertaining to a death of a child decades before and how it pertained to recent unexplained deaths. This one too was a bit of a slog that George loaded with red herrings. I will admit the primary reason it took me so long to finish it was due greatly to the number of hours I worked between Thanksgiving and the New Year, but the second factor is that it concentrated almost entirely on Simon St. James and his wife Deborah as they tried to aid her American friend from her college days who has been arrested for murder while on holiday in Guernsey. Deborah is beckoned to assist by the brother of her college friend and St. James insists on accompanying them. China (the friend) and Cherokee Rivers (the brother) from southern California, arrived as paid couriers delivering architectural plans to a wealthy man on Guernsey, and it is of his murder that China has been fingered as the killer.

Deborah cannot believe it of her friend, who helped her so much after she aborted Lynley's child and tries to convince Simon she's been framed and they start to look into the death. Trouble is there are many with good motive to have killed this man who was a womanizer, and made grand promises he didn't keep. In the course of trying to clear Deb's friend, it is the brother Cherokee that is arrested as only his prints are on the vial of the substance used to render the dead man unconscious before killing him. And then Deb is equally sure that Cherokee Rivers isn't a killer. And as I hinted at, George provides at least nine potential other killers to keep the reader guessing and I must say right up to the moment the killer is revealed there is not one solid clue to whom it was.

But after these last two novels it is my fervent hope that George returns to Lynley and Havers. The St. James' just don't have the power to enthrall like Lynley and my personal favorite relate-able character, one Sgt. Constable Barbara Havers.

Jane Stevenor says

Even though this is not a Lynley/Havers book, I read it because of George's ability to create characters and subplots. All the characters except the main characters ring true and were developed well. Cherokee and China, though, didn't garner my sympathy, and St. James and Deborah need to grow as a married couple and as individuals. I wanted to see Deborah stop throwing tantrums.

I did, however, learn from her how to structure plot. Because I didn't focus on the main characters like I do when Lynley and Havers are around, I was able to watch how George develops her stories and uses them to advance or subvert the main plot line. George is brilliant in how she brings it together

Rbucci says

I enjoyed the story line of this book, liked the mystery, and learned some history, which is great. However, I felt the story dragged a bit.

Alice says

This was a tragedy! Not only did George attempt to develop the character of Deborah St. James and turn her from a sympathetic supporting character into a harpy from hell who is as irritating as she is selfish, spoiled, and childish - BUT, the plot strained the reasonable credibility one expects in a murder mystery.

Seriously, a civilian would be allowed to investigate like that? The rest of the novel and plot were interesting and, I dare say believable IF a real police officer were involved.....

My biggest regret about the book, is that George simply didn't kill off Deborah. She now ruins every book she appears in because I cannot forget what an immature, shallow creature she turned out to be.

If George wanted a break from her regular characters, she should have just written something completely different.

Lobstergirl says

Sadsack ginger Deborah St. James and her maimed, domineering husband Simon enjoy madcap adventures and rekindle old friendships on the island of Guernsey as they try to figure out who stuffed a rock down an elderly Jew's throat after his morning swim. I wish I could say this one had a happy ending, but both St. Jameses were still alive and resolved to work on their marriage as the curtains drew closed.

Note: This is *not* the one where Tommy Lynley impregnates Barbara. Barbara isn't even in this one, and Tommy only has the tiniest cameo. Boo!

Lisa says

This novel in the Lynley/Havers series focuses on Simon and Deborah St. James, who are called to the island of Guernsey when an old friend of Deborah's is arrested for murder. The book contains George's usual felicity with characterization, red herrings, description, and plot--I didn't guess whodunit until the person was revealed, which is a fine accomplishment. And, oh blessed day, we get to page 300+ before there's any gratuitous sleaze, and that is short-lived, and there's not any more. I realize that there are going to be offensive things about 20th-century police investigations, but it was wonderful to get George's formidable talent without much unfortunate language and without the unnecessarily graphic stuff--except in the one brief instance. Deborah seemed to me to be taking everything Simon said and did in the worst possible way, which is not a good strategy for happy marriage, and I don't think he deserved that treatment--but the author gives us enough about the issues she may be working through to make her childishness tip the balance slightly toward credible and away from contrived (as a plot device). There are some wonderful characters here--I hope I never forget Margaret Chamberlain, for one. The information about Guernsey, its history, and its inhabitants may be of interest to fans of *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, although this is a very different book in tone and approach. Certainly the inhabitants of the Channel Islands endured a great deal while occupied by the Nazis during World War II, and their history is not told as completely as that of other aspects of the war, so this adds a little more--but the mystery is the centerpiece. Well done.

Blaire says

Elizabeth George has been one of my favorite mystery writers since I read her first book. The thing I like best is her ability to create several related strands of plot and, by the end of the book, weave them together into a coherent whole. Often each strand affords Ms. George an opportunity to examine a different aspect of whatever she has chosen for her theme, aside from the murder. It gives her mysteries a depth and complexity that most murder mysteries don't possess. In this book, Ms. George has chosen to examine familial relationships; particularly sibling relationships. And she does it well. I enjoyed this book slightly less than most of her others because I found myself becoming really annoyed with the two protagonists, Simon and Deborah. Unfortunately, I became really annoyed really early in the book. For one thing, the dialog between them doesn't ring true. For another, they're both so extremely prickly and tightly wound that they tiptoe around each other all of the time. I found myself wondering what they are doing together since they never seem to relax and enjoy themselves. Enough venting about that. On the whole, I enjoyed the book and would recommend it to my friends (with the above-mentioned reservations.)

Raymond says

As I began reading *A Place of Hiding*, I realized that I'd read the book a few years before. Knowing who did the crime gave me the chance to explore the story in ways other than as an armchair Sherlock. I was not disappointed. As much as I remember appreciating the book the first time through, I don't think it compares with my appreciation for the book this time through.

The first time through, I only noted the wonderful depictions of some of the minor and even major characters and their relationships with each other.

First, there are Deborah and Simon St. James, sometimes-minor characters in Ms. George's Inspector Lynley

Series. This time out, they are in the center of the action, trying to find out the truth about the death of Guy Brouard and at the same time, trying to adapt to each other's insecurities in their relationship.

There are five or six explorations of the relationships between parents and children and brothers and sisters. There are explorations of that ephemeral thing call "friendship."

Some of the more fascinating characters are Frank Ouseley and his goal driven father, Graham.

Margaret Chamberlain, long divorced wife of the victim and their son Adrian Brouard are locked in an odd battle where she seems more concerned about his inheritance rights than she does.

China and Cherokee Rivers, American and half-siblings caught in a web of murder and intrigue.

There is, too, the question of what is the exact nature of the relationship between Guy Brouard and teenager, Paul Fielder and why the museum that had been promised to be built to commemorate the victims of the War on the island is suddenly endangered.

What part does Ruth Brouard, the sister dying of cancer play in the estate left by Guy?

Woven in among all these are other dreams and relationships shattered by Guy's death.

Ah, but the second tasting of the book is even more delectable than the first.

Deb says

Deborah's American friend China Rivers has been arrested on the island of Guernsey for the murder of a prominent wealthy citizen. China's brother Cherokee appears on the St.James's doorstep asking for Deborah's help. With a great deal of reluctance, Simon accompanies his wife to Guernsey to investigate. This is a complicated mystery involving a WWII museum, a missing painting, and a will, the contents of which leave everyone baffled and upset. I really miss Lynley and Havers, and I am a bit tired of the Deborah/Simon set of insecurities. It was a good story, but it's not the best in the series.

Jamie Collins says

This one left me a bit cold, but I think I was just not in the mood for George's particular brand of miserable and/or despicable characters. Plus I missed Lynley and Havers - this book focuses on St. James and Deborah, who are trying to solve a murder mystery on the Channel Island of Guernsey.

The island setting was nice, and so was the little dose of WWII history. The murder mystery itself was so-so, obfuscated by George's typically bizarre characterizations. I like St. James, but this constant bickering with Deborah ("Don't treat me like a child!" - "Stop acting like a child!") is getting on my nerves.

aPriL does feral sometimes says

Simon St. James is a bit anxious about his wife, Deborah. Deborah is extremely upset. Her old friend, China River, is in trouble and being held by the police on the Island of Guernsey in the English Channel. Now, Cherokee River, her brother, is in London suddenly in their home pleading with Deborah and Simon to help China. He has already tried the American Embassy, but they are limited in what assistance they can offer.

Deborah becomes as desperate as Cherokee, thus Simon's worry. He has more of a scientific mind than Deborah, a photographer, and he knows it is better to not jump to conclusions or judge until all of the facts are known. However, Deborah remembers how China helped her years ago, when Deb was desperate, pregnant and confused about Thomas Lynley, her boyfriend back in the day, before she realized it was Simon she loved and wanted to marry. China stood by her when Deborah fled to California to think, and get an abortion, and they are still close friends. So in learning that China is being held by the police on Guernsey on suspicion of murdering an extremely wealthy 70-year-old, Guy Brouard, with a reputation of womanizing, Deborah can barely wait a minute before she is packing. Simon tries to reason with her, but in the end, they all soon are on Guernsey.

Oh oh. Deborah and Cherokee are right to be worried. As Simon and Deborah investigate, it becomes apparent the evidence against China is strong. Simon continues to maintain a stance of taking no sides, but Deborah's faith in her friend remains. Soon Simon and Deborah are squabbling because as Deborah points out, there are obviously at least 5 other people who had reason to kill Guy, and Simon's calm demeanor is driving her insane. They separate to conduct different investigations, following up on clues along different lines.

Soon everybody is upset, particularly Guy's first ex-wife (Guy has three) who has flown in to find out about Guy's will, Guy's employees and adult children who are expecting to receive some money, and a number of business associates to whom Guy had made many promises to support financially in the building of a war museum. Guy's sister, Ruth, is very helpful, but she is dying of cancer. She knows where all of Guy's money is supposed to be, but after a discussion with accountants, maybe not. Adding fuel to the fires, a black-cloaked wraith is floating about whenever mayhem breaks out.

Deborah and Simon had better get to the bottom of this mystery before someone else dies...oooops.

'A Place of Hiding' is book 12 in the series. Although it can be read as a stand-alone, one of the pleasures of this series is the continuing soap opera between Deborah and Simon, and Inspector Lynley's family and friends. None of that drama is much explored in this book, though.

Charles says

This is a reluctant 3 stars, but after 5 months away from the Lynley series (because the previous novel, *A Traitor to Memory*, was so dreadful), I found this one much more tolerable. George has a penchant for overly long descriptive passages, especially annoying when certain characters and/or circumstances are uninteresting, but at least this novel intrigues and builds interest to an, alas, unsurprising denouement. And all this despite excluding my two favorite characters entirely (Havers and Helen). This focuses almost entirely on Deborah and Saint-James, especially much needed Deborah back story.

Jeffrey says

In order to read a George novel you have to clear the deck. Her dense prose and rich characters mean you need a supreme effort to gear up for each book, and then she spins a tale in which gradually each suspect is shown not to be the killer, while at the same time showing that each was hiding something. But sometimes that many characters, that many hidden things, that many red herrings are just too much. I suffocated on her red herrings.

icaro says

mi domando per quale ragione, periodicamente, io senta il bisogno di sottopormi alla tortura di leggere un libro della George. A fronte di alcune letture piacevoli la maggior parte dei suoi gialli sono delle menate pazzesche (In questo ho desiderato la morte di Deborah Saint James per tutto il tempo). Troppe pagine e in più personaggi fissi che si avvolgono e si svolgono fastidiosamente e invasivamente nei loro risibili drammi psicologici. A quanto pare anche nella mia vita c'è un risibile dramma psicologico...
