



# The Queen's Accomplice: A Maggie Hope Mystery

*Susan Elia MacNeal*

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**Spy and code-breaker extraordinaire Maggie Hope returns to war-weary London, where she is thrust into the dangerous hunt for a monster, as the *New York Times* bestselling mystery series for fans of Jacqueline Winspear, Charles Todd, and Anne Perry continues.**

England, 1942. The Nazis relentless Blitz may have paused, but London's nightly blackouts continue. Now, under the cover of darkness, a madman is brutally killing and mutilating young women in eerie and exact recreations of Jack the Ripper's crimes. What's more, he's targeting women who are reporting for duty to be Winston Churchill's spies and saboteurs abroad. The officers at MI-5 quickly realize they need the help of special agent Maggie Hope to find the killer dubbed the Blackout Beast. A trap is set. But once the murderer has his sights on Maggie, not even Buckingham Palace can protect the resourceful spy from her fate.

## The Queen's Accomplice: A Maggie Hope Mystery Details

Date : Published October 4th 2016 by Bantam

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Author : Susan Elia MacNeal

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# **From Reader Review The Queen's Accomplice: A Maggie Hope Mystery for online ebook**

## **Crittermom says**

The Queen's Accomplice is no light historical mystery that is easily read and forgotten. It is a chilling thriller that is pertinent today, despite being set during WWII. We would like to think we live in a more enlightened age, but the reality is that violence against women is all too prevalent. Sadly the speeches of certain politicians railing against women read much like the excerpt from Mein Kampf placed at the beginning of the novel.

During WWII, women had to take the jobs left empty by men fighting in the armed forces. Their work was essential, but that doesn't mean it was always appreciated. Susan MacNeal has done extensive research, and it shows clearly in her writing. Maggie Hope, though working for the SOE is seconded by MI-5 to assist in the search for a serial killer targeting professional women working for the SOE. The killer emulates Jack the Ripper, mirroring his brutal techniques.

The Queen's Accomplice draws many issues into the open that are as important today as they were at the time. Through challenging the Nazi vilification of the Jews, she challenges current vilification of various religious and ethnic groups. She challenges readers to question themselves - Would you sacrifice ideals, accept and even perform heinous acts if it meant comfort and survival for you, for your family? Would you do the "right" thing, even if it meant your suffering and death?

The Queen's Accomplice is as engrossing as it is troubling. It is a stark reminder of the problems facing women today as opposed to an opportunity for escapism. The Queen's Accomplice is not a cozy. What it is, however, is an amazing novel vividly depicting the experiences of women during WWII. Realism permeates throughout, making Maggie Hope and the other characters live and breathe. It is easy to forget that The Queen's Accomplice is fiction - a worthy accomplishment for any author.

5/5

I received a copy of The Queen's Accomplice from the publisher and netgalley.com in exchange for an honest review.

--Crittermom

Visit [Muttcafe.com](http://Muttcafe.com) for more reviews

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## **Laurien Berenson says**

I love Maggie Hope! Every book in this wonderful series is well worth reading. And re-reading.

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## **Bonnie says**

Susan Elia MacNeal just keeps getting better and better at telling her adventures of Maggie Hope. The

Library Journal states: "With a smart, code-breaking mathematician heroine, abundant World War II spy intrigue, and a whiff of romance, this series has real luster." And, as usual, leaves a hint about the next in series. MacNeal dedicates the book to the memory of Violette Szabo who was posthumously awarded the George Cross and the Croix de Guerre for SOE agents who did not survive their missions. Maggie has returned from Washington, D. C. to find herself decoding messages again in London. The Blitz has stopped, but not the blackouts, which allow the killer known as the "Blackout Beast" to strike fear in the hearts of Londoners. Hitler has turned his fury away from England toward Russia. Factories, docks, and railways are still burning when Vera Baines, an ARP warden, is walking her beat in Regent's Park in March, 1942, when she stumbles on a dead body of a young woman who has been slashed in a copycat rendering of Jack the Ripper with the words, "Jack is back" scrawled on a brick wall. When the second and third body surface, the police and MI-5 realize they have a highly trained killer on their hands. In addition, young women had been disappearing after spending the night at a house for women named The Castle Hotel For Women who didn't have a place to stay.

Maggie is in charge of women operatives who had been sent to Berlin to spy and she receives an odd message from Erica Calvert that doesn't contain her usual sign off. She takes her suspicion to Colonel Gaskell and he shrugs off the suggestion that something is wrong by declaring, "Fiddlesticks, Meggie! Er Maggie. When you hear hooves, think horses, not unicorns!" Brady, second in command, lends more credence to her concerns when he tells her that there had been the murder of another young lady last night. The killer is targeting women who are reporting for duty to be Winston Churchill's spies and saboteurs abroad. Maggie is the one chosen to set a trap to catch the killer.

Friends from Maggie's past show up to share a the house she inherited from her grandmother and bring a more lighthearted cast to the darkness. Maggie had worked for the Queen on another occasion and is invited to Buckingham Palace for dinner, but the Queen is obeying the rations rule and serves beets, liver pate, and other disgusting food. This is not a book where great food abounds. But, it is a marvelous spy novel and the best of this series.

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### **Jonathan says**

Another riveting book in a series set during World War II. This book was just as readable as the last five, and I will eagerly await the next one! One star was deducted because I don't care for the transformation of one character (I don't want to say what it is, because it'll spoil a part of the book!). Overall a wonderful book with above-average writing and excellent characters.

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### **Kaitlyn Dunnett says**

There is much to admire in this book, not the least the parallels between 1942 and today when it comes to attitudes toward women, but two things really bothered me. One, the title is misleading. Although the queen does play a crucial role at the end of the book, Maggie is in no way her accomplice. This may, of course, be the publisher's decision, not the author's. The second problem, though, could have been resolved. There are no fewer than four subplots left hanging until the next book in the series. Granted, they are loosely connected, but I found it exceedingly annoying to reach the end of this book and realize I was being asked to wait an entire year for Maggie to be told about her father, for the issue of Maggie's sister to be resolved, for the problem of a missing spy in France to be resolved, and to find out if a team being sent in as spies would survive.

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## **Kelly Bridgewater says**

World War II. London. Blitz. Murder. Jack the Ripper. Sounds like a great novel to spend a couple of hours with. I really enjoy all of these separate categories, and when an author puts them together, magic happens. I really enjoy historical mysteries, but with Susan Elia MacNeal's newest book in her widely popular Maggie Hope mystery series, *The Queen's Accomplice*, I didn't really like it.

First, the writing was strong and concise. There was no point of view shifts. Since the story is told from four different point of views, I really had no problem following who was the character speaking at the moment. I had no problem imagining the scenes before me and enjoying becoming Maggie for a short period of time.

Since I have only read one of MacNeal's other books, I really didn't have a lot to compare the story to, but it wasn't one of my favorite historical writers. While the story did elude to a number of historical elements like the Blitz and a concentration camp, I felt like this story could have happened yesterday. With the technology that Maggie was using, it read like a CSI episode. While the bibliography at the end of the story was pretty extensive, I wished the story would have felt more historical in nature.

Maggie, as the heroine, was a strong woman character, but she had flaws. For instance, she appeared to not like men at all. Every man she met, she criticized and had them say hateful things about women at every turn. I know the murderer didn't like women, but MacNeal made every single male egotistic and annoying. I wish there would have been more moments with the serial killer's perspective; it would have captured my attention.

As for the mystery, like I mentioned earlier, it felt like a modern day mystery. There really wasn't a lot of looking for clues. Maggie would hunt for clues on the dead body when a new body was discovered, but she really didn't seem to care when the bodies weren't in front of her. She didn't really interview a lot of people or do any research. The story dragged, and after a while, I skipped through the pages. Plus, I figured out who the bad guy was pretty early on.

Not the historical or mystery novel I am used, Susan Elia MacNeal's *The Queen's Accomplice* really didn't grab my attention. If you are a fan of serial killers' novels, I recommend trying Steven James' Patrick Bower series. If World War II fiction is your choice, I recommend Sarah Sundin; she really brings the 1940's to life.

I received a complimentary copy of *The Queen's Accomplice*, and the opinions stated are all my own.

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## **Kevin says**

Maggie Hope becomes embroiled in a murder investigation of a serial killer mirroring Jack the Ripper. Best yet in this series.

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## **Cameran says**

I really wish the focus of this series would shift to Elise. And only Elise.

Maggie has gotten tiring, as have all of those flat characters who surrounded her. Why is Clara Hess still running around London? Why must there be a love interest every book? Why is Sarah so immature? What is the title, when the Queen is only an accomplice in the final chapter? I understand the commentary the author was doing on the misogyny towards woman at the time, but did it have to be so on the nose?

These books never have the flow I wish they'd have. Rather than be cohesive they feel fractured. The best parts were those about Elise, while she is in a concentration camp and her choices after. If stories in the series focused on her there could be much more tension, and an emotional involvement in the war effort. Murders by a Jack the Ripper copycat and mathematics vs gut debates used to solve the murders just do not achieve the emotional resonance I'd get if I followed Elise's journey.

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### **Christine Zibas says**

Where better for World War II spy Maggie Hope to be hanging out, solving her latest crime, than Baker Street? MI5 has called on her services to help them figure out just who is killing the young women of London during nightly blackouts. The killer, dubbed the Blackout Beast, is copying the exact details of Jack the Ripper in mutilating and displaying his murder victims.

These young women are especially vulnerable because most are newly arrived in London. They are also particularly important to Maggie because these women were recruited to work in the office of the SOE, the very situation in which Maggie herself works, designated for intelligence work overseas.

While most readers are likely to suss out who the Blackout Beast is early on, the real enjoyment of this book comes in the atmospheric milieu in which the mystery is set, particularly the challenges that women facing trying to bridge the old and new worlds. While women are needed to help the war effort, that hasn't put many of the chauvanistic impulses of government officials to rest.

For those who haven't followed the Maggie Hope series from the beginning (this is the sixth book in the series), there are some confusing references in this book. There are also plot elements that connect to earlier books without really resolving themselves in this one, thus setting readers up for the next part of the story.

While many may expect this, for readers not willing to make a long-term commitment to the character, this book is likely to be unsatisfying in this regard. Many of the characters make fleeting entrances and exits, many story lines are left unfinished. That said, for those Maggie Hope diehards, this latest in the series is sure to satisfy.

This review first appeared on [ReviewingtheEvidence.com](http://ReviewingtheEvidence.com).

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### **Mahoghani 23 says**

During the time that Hitler was attempting to takeover Germany, the British realize that using women as spies or agents would help them in the battle. However, everyone doesn't feel that way. A killer has come to the surface and he's killing women that work for the government. He's killing them in a way that replicates Jack the Ripper.

Maggie Hope, a MI operative, has been assigned to work with Scotland Yard to catch the killer. Not only does she have to prove that she's capable of handling death scenes but needs to prove that she can do the job as well as any man can.

Jack the Ripper imitator will do all he can to send women a serious message, "Stay home and be housewives; Don't try to take the place of a man.)

Entertaining, showing the suffrage done during Hitler's reign.

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## **The Lit Bitch says**

I've been a fan of Maggie Hope for quite some time now. I read the first book when it came out and fell in love with that sassy red head.

Over the years, Maggie's adventures have been one part spy and one part detective/mystery series. Maggie has also evolved immensely as a character which is both exciting and at times a little sad when you look back on how much she has changed over the course of the books.

I really enjoyed this installment, for one it's set back in England and two, I love seeing Maggie get back to her 'roots' so to speak. She is using math again and relying on other logic to solve a complicated murder rather than spying on the Nazis. I love seeing her logic at work and in this book I was treated to a lot of 'sleuthing' and Maggie's own brand of crime solving.

I don't know that I loved the premise for the murders as it kind of seemed like a 'been there done that' plot but for the most part I think it worked ok and I liked the different twists and ultimately the ending was a surprise.....though I wish some things had been cleared up a little more but it worked.

One thing that I always find myself hoping for is a 'happily ever after' for Maggie. Though she's more of a 'career girl' in the books, she's had a number of different love interests throughout the series and I always keep hoping that she will find someone and fall madly in love. In this book there is a hint of a love interest developing for Maggie but I was sad that it seems to be tabled for the time being.

I wanted more romantic tension and possibly more time for the relationship to evolve for Maggie and her love interest.....whether it's in this book or future books. It just seemed like when this book ended that Maggie and her love interest were going to part ways but it was implied that they would be meeting again in future books.....however I wanted something a little more concrete.

While I was left wanting more romance at the end of this book, I was excited to see that Maggie's adventures might take her back to the 'spy' role and that sounds intriguing! I can't decide which role I like Maggie in more....a detective solving crimes or an undercover agent spying on the Nazis! She's so good at both! I can't wait to see where her adventures take her next.

I also liked that some new plot lines were introduced in this book. It looks like there are potentially interesting plots developing for Elise, Sarah, and Hugh. I am especially interested in what's going to happen to Elise. Originally I wasn't that into that storyline in previous books but now I am intrigued so I am looking

forward to future books to see what happens to her.

If you haven't read the Maggie Hops books yet, you should really consider them! They are great reads and fans of the Masie Dobbs books will love this sassy red head!

See my full review [here](#)

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## **Nicole Hamilton says**

Oh, Maggie Hope: why do I keep going back to you? I guess there are enough compelling features of this series to keep me hanging on, but this addition to the series had more bad than good.

First: the over-the-top misogyny. Granted, there has always been a "women can do anything that men can do" theme running through these books, but never in the space of one book has Maggie experienced so much outright hostility (which seems convenient, since she is all of the sudden chasing a serial killer who hates women). She's encountered condescension and doubt before, but not this level of hostility -- and seemingly from all directions. She gets sexually harassed while swimming, and also nearly gets raped. And some of it is just cringe-worthy. For example, her cookie-cutter character of a boss at SOE. It was like the author wrote him to deliberately make people cringe in a pandering attempt at getting people to sympathize with what Maggie has to endure -- except it fails because it is unrealistic. I don't seriously think that anyone who had risen to any kind of position of authority in Special Operations would have such an unprofessional response to a request from MI-5 to borrow an employee as "But who will make our tea?!" Also, the hyperbolic women-hating haranguing of the villain at the climax of the story was a little much.

Second: Maggie's feminist theorizing, while accurate, seems anachronistic.

Third: as I mentioned above, some of the characters are not well-developed at all. Granted, some are very well-developed, but there are some that are flat -- and they stick out in an annoying manner.

Fourth, there is a little too much "C.S.I." about the way the investigation proceeds.

Finally, it is a little irksome the way that the story ends in such a cliffhanger. It almost feels like this book was written just as a space-holder between the fifth and seventh books. It is as if the author needed to advance the story-line regarding Maggie's family, and she had to fill it in with this murder mystery for Maggie to investigate.

I will probably read the next book in the series to find out what happens regarding the cliff-hanger, but I hope things improve.

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## **AH says**

I really must go back and read the first few books in this series.

In this installment, Maggie works with MI-5 to investigate a Jack the Ripper copycat murderer - the Blackout Beast.

The author's depiction of WWII England felt authentic, especially the way women in the workforce were



treated.

Full review to come...

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## **Julie says**

The Queen's Accomplice by Susan Elia MacNeal is a 2016 Bantam Dell publication.

I'm nearly caught up with this series so I've been trying to space them out a little, but I just couldn't wait.

This sixth installment in the Maggie Hope series, takes an even darker tone as a serial killer using Jack the Ripper's MO, and calling himself 'The Blackout Killer', is targeting women in SOE, which is why Maggie is asked to help with the investigation.

Meanwhile, Sarah and Hugh are recruited to work together undercover and are headed to France and we finally get a clearer picture of what is happening with Maggie's half -sister, Elise.

I thought this book took on a darker tone, with a gruesome set of murders to solve, making the atmosphere a bit edgy. This one reads more like a traditional crime novel in some ways, but there is still plenty of intrigue, especially where Maggie's extended family is concerned. There were a few jaw-dropping developments along the way that literally made the hair stand up on the back of my neck.

My only complaint is that the plotting wasn't as tight as usual, and apparently some threads will carry over into the next book, which is kind of different.

I did enjoy the introduction of Inspector Durgin and hope to see him in future episodes. I thought he and Maggie worked well together and I picked up on a little chemistry between them.

Overall, this is another solid addition to the series, a little creepier than usual, and as always there is a lot going on, with plenty to mull over and chew on before I start the most recent release- The Paris Spy. I can't wait to read it!!

4 stars

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## **Joan Karasick says**

Loved the first 5 Maggie Hope mysteries in this series. Happy to snap up #6 in October 2016. The author has announced she will be writing 7, 8 and 9 in the series as well. Oh, joy!

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