



Mad About the Boy?

Dolores Gordon-Smith

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“Recaptures the vitality and insouciance of the Golden Age of writers.”—Robert Barnard

It's the height of summer, 1923. At a ball in Sussex, former Royal Flying Corps pilot Jack Haldean investigates an apparent suicide, but everything is thrown into chaos when a group of Russian revolutionaries becomes involved in the affair. In a case involving deception, greed, jealousy, kidnapping, torture, and more murder, Jack will face an agonizing choice.

Dolores Gordon-Smith is the author of *A Fete Worse than Death*, the first in the Jack Haldean series. She graduated from the University of Surrey in 1981. She lives in Cheshire, United Kingdom.

Mad About the Boy? Details

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From Reader Review Mad About the Boy? for online ebook

Carolyn Rose says

Light, fluffy, and fun. It's the kind of book you can clear your palate with before moving on to a more intense thriller.

Fran says

This perfectly-crafted murder mystery was published in 2008, but is set in 1923, and author Gordon-Smith gets everything just right -- characters, setting, tone, pacing, dialogue. This is the best period mystery I've ever read. I had to pause every 20 pages or so to catch my breath and admire the author's skill and attention to detail.

Damaskcat says

Jack Haldean is staying at Hesperus, the country house belonging to his Uncle and Aunt, Sir Philip and Lady Rivers. They are celebrating their Silver Wedding anniversary with a large party. The celebrations are marred by the death, apparently by suicide, of one of the guests. Jack is not convinced that it is suicide and he is concerned about various other events which seem suspicious.

This is a complex story with many strands and some exciting chases, both by car and on foot. I thought it was well written and the characters were well drawn as is the nineteen twenties background. Jack Haldean, in this second book in the series, is turning into a likeable character with more depth to him than many amateur detectives in fiction.

If you like crime stories set in this era that you are likely to enjoy this series. They can be read in any order.

JodiP says

I did not finish this book. I don't know if Gordon-Smith is British or not but the writing was over the top in trying to replicate upper-class British slang and mannerisms. It was pretty distracting. I think I'll just go back to Lord Peter Wednesday. It's the real deal.

Jessi says

Jack Haldean is back and this time he's working to protect his friend Arthur from murder. Arthur is in love with Jack's cousin, but she turns down his proposal and accepts one from Malcolm Smith-Fennimore, the famous racecar driver. Then, there's a murder and Arthur, who still suffers from shell-shock (and resents Jack

for putting him into the hospital), is found standing over the body. Then Arthur escapes through the window as Smith-Fennimore fires his gun at him. Add some Russian mobsters and it's a fun story.

Chris says

Another fun outing for Jack Haldean. For the second time the setting is the country house of Jack's aunt and uncle. What starts off as a weekend party to celebrate the couple's silver anniversary turns into murder and mayhem with a bit of a love triangle thrown in for good measure. One of Jack's friends has taken a job as secretary to a rather overblown munitions dealer. One the nigh of the big party, the friend is found in his employer's room an apparent suicide. But Jack just doesn't believe it. The more he digs the more things look strange, especially when various Russians keep popping up out of the shrubbery. Meanwhile Jack's cousin Isabelle is trying to decide between two men, both of whom will come to have a role in the growing mystery. Even if you think you know how the bad guy or gal is, there's enough to keep you interested right up until the end.

Avary says

OK. I like the time and setting.

Donna says

This is the second book in this series. It's 1923 and Jack Haldean is visiting Hesperus, the family home. The plot seemed busier than it really needed to be: murder, greed, kidnapping, revenge, shell-shocked soldiers, amnesia, bolsheviks... It just felt a bit overdone at the end. I still enjoy the time period and it's a quick read so I plan on continuing with the series.

Barbara says

(kindle)....good yarn

Val Sanford says

Men survived the Somme, but many of those survivors never recovered their health, or their nerves. The terror of WW1 trenches left their mark, this time on a promising officer who faced the German lines again and again to rescue is men. Arthur and Jack are headed to the country for Jack's Aunt and Uncle's 25th anniversary party. A gay affair until the first body is found, an apparent suicide by Arthur and Jack's friend, Tim. Jack can't leave it alone and all too soon more bodies are appearing along with a few too many Russian communists. Jack's near-supernatural stamina and ability to get out of a scrape are, well, a little too convenient, but that doesn't spoil an interesting and intriguing mystery full of human drama, frailties, greed and misguided loyalty.

Diane says

I liked this one even better than the first one. The romantic subplot added to the mystery plot, instead of just being a separate element. The title is great, although the ebook cover leaves off the question mark. These are wonderful books.

Liz V. says

A silver anniversary ball is the scene of a supposed suicide, followed by a murder of which a shell shocked veteran is suspected. Amateur sleuth Jack sets out to prove or disprove his friend's innocence.

Anita says

Set in 1920s England. Reads like something written by Christie or Sayers. Not a cute imitation.

Tory Wagner says

Mad About the Boy is a British mystery taking place right after WWII. The setting is a typical country house during a Silver Jubilee party. Several party goers are murdered and mysterious Russians seem to be involved. An amateur detective attending the party gets involved and successfully solves the mystery.

Mary G. says

It was very enjoyable and reminded me of the traditioanl British mystery. Hope to see more Haldean's adventures.

Karen says

This is a very nice gentle murder mystery set in the country house style.

No swearing and no sex. Gee, I can let Mom read it!

Really would have liked a map and a cast of characters.

Jack sets out to prove his friend Arthur has been set up to take the blame for a death which is originally declared a suicide. No one believes that as Tim showed no signs of distress beforehand. So murder it is, and the evidence all shows up in Arthur's room.

The solution is to determine who was where when, and whether the shot that was heard really is placing the correct time of death.

Lots of suspects and a side of romance.

I borrowed a copy of this mystery from my local library.

Joan says

Love books about this era. Makes me want to read book 1. A little intense in parts.

Susan says

Jack Haldean's best friend Arthur Stanton has problems. He's still suffering from shell shock from his battlefield experiences in World War I, and he's just been rejected by Jack's beautiful cousin Isabelle, who is in love with another man. It seems like too much to stand when he's suspected of a murder--just because he's found with bloody hands in a room with a dead body--and someone has shot him. Jack has to find out why an old friend committed suicide, and whether someone is framing Arthur--and how! Gordon-Smith takes readers back to the Golden Age of detective fiction, complete with a house party, sinister Russians, and a set of twins nicknamed Bubble and Squeak.

Anna says

what a fun read! it's 1923 and another of Jack's friends is found dead during his aunt and uncle's anniversary weekend party ... add multiple engagements, a mysteriously sinister uncle, Bolshevik plots and plenty of red herrings to get a wonderful tribute to the classic mystery stories of that time.

Rae says

This is a new author and I really enjoy her writing. Her books are murder mysteries set in London post WWI. Her characters are very witty! ... and they are 'quick reads'. Perfect for summer or when you've been reading way too many intellectual non-fiction books and need to clear the brain.
