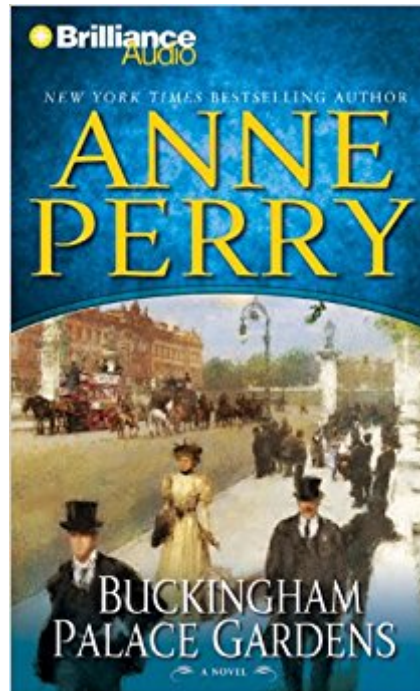




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Buckingham Palace Gardens (Charlotte And Thomas Pitt)



Synopsis

The Prince of Wales has asked four wealthy entrepreneurs and their elegant wives to the palace to discuss a fantastic idea: the construction of a six-thousand-mile railroad that would stretch the full length of Africa. But alas, the prince's gathering proves disastrous when the mutilated body of a prostitute hired for a late-night frolic (after the wives have retired to bed) turns up among the queen's monogrammed sheets in a palace linen closet. With great haste, Thomas Pitt, brilliant mainstay of Special Services, is summoned to resolve the crisis. The Pitts' cockney maid, Gracie, is also recruited - to pose as a palace servant and listen in on the guests' conversations, scan their bedrooms, and scrutinize their troubled faces for clues to hidden rivalries and attachments that could have led to murder. If Pitt and Gracie fail to find out who brutally murdered the young woman - as seems increasingly likely - Pitt's career will be over, and the scandal may just cause the monarchy to fall. With a cast of wonderful characters, among them the gentle Princess of Wales, and a twisting plot that takes us into the hidden world of the royal family, Anne Perry probes deeply the hearts of men and women ensnared by their emotions.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The detecting and diplomatic skills of Thomas Pitt, now assigned to the Special Branch, are tested as never before in bestseller Perry's solid 25th novel to feature the Victorian sleuth (after 2005's Long Spoon Lane). In 1893, the discovery of a prostitute's mutilated corpse in a Buckingham Palace

cupboard after a stag party presided over by the prince of Wales could spell political disaster for the monarchy. Pitt soon eliminates the members of the sizable household staff as suspects, narrowing his focus to the prince himself and his close friends, who, it turns out, have been planning a major construction project in Africa—•a railway that would run from South Africa to Egypt. Though the sensitive nature of Pitt's assignment precludes any active involvement by Charlotte, his wife and partner in earlier cases, he's able to place her maid, Gracie Phipps, on the palace staff to assist him. Perry does a nice job with some plot twists, even if most readers will quickly discount the heir to the throne of England as a viable suspect. (Mar.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

The venerable Queen Victoria remains on the British throne. Her son, the middle-aged Prince of Wales, awaits the time to come for his occupancy of the throne. In the meantime, he fills his days—and nights—with wine, women, and song. One such evening explodes when, the next morning, in a linen closet in Buckingham Palace (the queen, fortunately, not in residence at the time) is discovered the bloody body of a prostitute who had been part of the previous evening's entertainment, when the Prince of Wales hosted a gathering of businessmen to discuss a certain engineering project in which he was interested. Called in to quickly and discreetly get to the bottom of the murder is Inspector Pitt (a recurring Perry character), whose strategy includes installing the maid from his own household as an undercover employee in the palace. In a mystery novel, or any novel, with such a setting, it would have been easy for the author to trip over titles and protocol, but Perry has done her homework and does not stumble. --Brad Hooper
--This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Buckingham Palace Gardens is a straight mystery, meaning it engages the mind more than the adrenaline glands as a mystery/thriller or mystery/suspense would. I haven't read a mystery in years and am embarrassed to admit I'm out of practice. I jumped around from character to character in my thoughts of who slashed a prostitute to death inside the royal palace. Because I'm out of practice, I can't quite pinpoint what it is about this novel that failed to satisfy me. It could be nothing more than I'm not British and couldn't pick up on the clues presented in the very proper dialogue, or it could be that the men involved in the crime were arrested based entirely on conjecture. If I were the prosecutor in the case, I'd be stuck with speculation, because I'd be seriously short of witnesses and physical evidence. A shattered this, a monogrammed that, a mysterious character impossible to identify--add these to potential witnesses who are reluctant or not credible, and I'd have a flimsy

case indeed. Oh well. As the old legal maxim goes: If you can't pound the facts, pound the podium. Because this was one of the books used to illustrate character in Donald Maass's **The Fire in Fiction**, it was one of the books added to my "to read" list--as are all the books in his how-to. Perry's mystery novel is found in Maass's section in the first chapter called, "Cutting Heroes Down to Size." I can't agree with him that Perry cut her hero, Thomas Pitt, down to size, but instead elevated him above many of the other characters occupying a higher social status in British society. She gave him a moral superiority which I appreciated because he wasn't arrogant. He had his standards and refused to be swayed from them, even if the results put his life or his family's in peril. Perry's characters in general were fascinating. She did an incredible job of illustrating the societal pecking order in Britain and the parallels from one caste to another. From the simple prostitute to the Prince and Princess of Wales, everyone is represented either through the characters themselves or through their attitudes toward other members of society. For this alone, the book is worth reading and, for writers wanting to improve the craft, studying.

I have yet to read a Pitt or Monk book by this woman I don't love. Her courtroom scenes leave me aghast every time. And she's not one of those authors that pull the ending out of her butt. You can go back & find the clues yourself!

I first became familiar with Anne Perry's two Victorian series about a year and a half ago. I have since read each of the Charlotte and Thomas Pitt novels as well as the Monk series. I received my copy of *Buckingham Palace Gardens* earlier this week and finished the book within days. For Perry fans, this is Classic Perry. One follows Thomas Pitt as he unravels the mystery within the Palace. What's different with this novel is that it really does primarily take place within the Palace itself during the space of about a week, give or take a few days. I have no idea where the "Gardens" part comes in, as there is no real garden scenes in the book. Would rather have the book titled "Buckingham Palace Prison" to capture how the characters felt. I also want to learn more about Princess Alexandra from the scenes in the book. Gracie SHINES through on this story. She is courageous, she's questioning, she's a detective here. What did I miss in this book? I missed the continued exploration of the relationship between Gracie and Samuel Tellman (Would have LOVED reading what he thought of Gracie at Buckingham Palace! Wished he could have sneaked in to see her disguised as a delivery man or something.), I missed Aunt Vespasia's more meaningful involvement... and of course, the assistance of Charlotte. It is a good story, worth the read, can't wait for the next book! Kyra Author, "Martha Ann's Quilt for Queen Victoria"

I've read many books by Perry and although I like her narrative very much and I enjoy the way she creates the ambience in her novels, she has made me think that Pitt is a very lousy investigator. In this book there were so many things that were lying there and were not asked about (and precaution is not an excuse because Perry makes Pitt even go to the Prince when he thinks he needs it), and it showed that a guest and even Gracie are better than him when investigating. Many times she makes Pitt think more about the consequences of his acts than about the investigation itself. At the end he does not make great collaborations in solving the cases and the greatest ideas come from Charlotte, Vespasia and this time Gracie. Spoiler alert (If you have not read the book I advise you to not continue reading). When wrapping the case there were loose ends: how the murderer did what he did with the bodies if at the beginning they say his time was accounted for?. How the murderer knew the Queens rooms?, why was it that the first suspect was going to be sent to a mad house without trial and then the same thing was not going to be possible with the murderer?. Why did they never look for the women who accompanied the victim?, why the victim was never identified by anyone she knew?, how come he knew from early on about the "buckets of water" and never inquired about it?. When he finds clues he does not follow upon them (Gracie does!). And many many more loose ends. To me it was an interesting book and the description of personalities were finely done, but left a lot to be desired by what she shows to be the talent of the investigative forces.

Many twists and turns to keep you guessing. Anne Perry at her best! Congratulations to Thomas Pitt- detective to the end.

Anne Perry never fails in her Thomas and Charlotte Pitt series. You need to read them in order since the characters progress. Great reading.

Another interesting plot from Ms. Perry! I am reading the series of Thomas & Charlotte Pitt books in order and each one is better than the next. There is a lot of historical info in each and I love being transported back to era. Ms Perry creates the context, issues and texture of the Victorian era so masterfully that I feel like I've time traveled back there and living in it. Most enjoyable!

a good read, as always

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