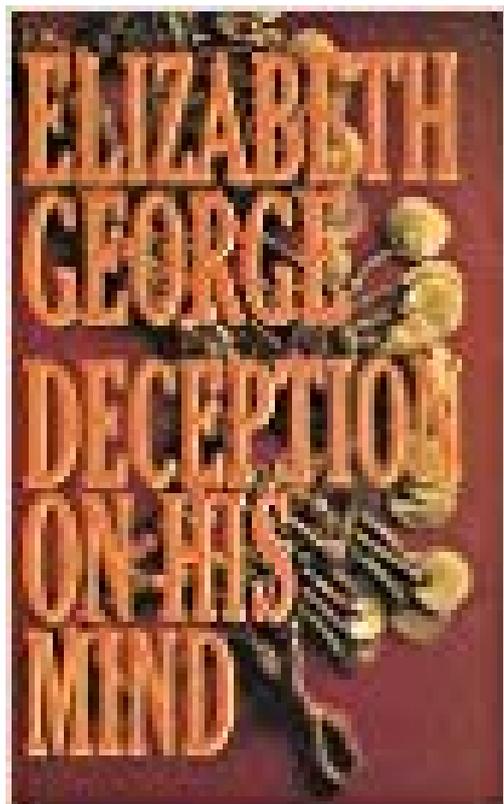


## Deception on His Mind *by* Elizabeth George



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When a member of the small but growing Asian community of Balford-le-Nez is found dead, the sleepy seaside town ignites, and Sergeant Barbara Havers, working without her long-time partner, must find the killer before the price of deception becomes more than anyone can afford



## Reviews of the *Deception on His Mind* *by* Elizabeth George

### **Doukree**

Many of George's women, quite frankly, don't resonate with me. (That's an understatement). I might have considered George a female misogynist if it weren't for Havers, a plump, but plucky inspector who awkwardly contributes to solving the mystery. In this novel (finally), Havers is the star in George's most complicated and page-turning mystery yet! I enjoyed it immensely and was glad to be spared the ravings of the fragile (and possibly mentally ill) Helen and Deborah. I hope to continue to see the rise of Havers in future mysteries! Bravo to Barbara!

### **Stick**

This is my favorite novel in the Inspector Lynley series and Lynley isn't even in it! While Lynley is off honeymooning with his new wife, Lady Helen Clyde, his partner Barbara Havers has an adventure of

her own. Not only is *Deception on His Mind* a good page-turner, it addresses serious themes surrounding immigration and its effects on the host nation, in this case England.

In a down-at-the-heels seaside town that saw its heyday decades ago, a small community of immigrant Pakistanis has uneasily settled in among the Caucasian Brits. This situation sets the stage for a host of values-related conflicts between people of different religions, ethnic backgrounds and customs. Well-meaning people on all sides find themselves at odds with one another, sometimes due to misunderstandings and sometimes to prejudices that stem from long-held assumptions and beliefs about "the other." And there are also a few characters who are not at all well-meaning; in fact, quite the opposite.

Into this mix comes Havers, there to investigate the murder of a newly arrived Pakistani man who was slated to marry into a well-to-do, traditional Muslim family. There are several characters who seem good suspects for the murderer, each with his or her own agenda and all with only a few pieces of the full picture about what's going on in their little town. Author Elizabeth George creates her characters with compassion for each, but also with a critical eye to their shortcomings and their personal biases. It took me until quite close to the end of the novel to figure out 'who done it' and why.

Lovers of intelligent mysteries will thoroughly enjoy *Deception on His Mind* and I highly recommend it.

### **Livina**

I found this a thought provoking book. The mystery unfolding and the characters were well drawn. The plot was intricate but believable. I couldn't say if there were errors in explaining cultural specifics, but the author was even handed in pointing out the commonality of race prejudice within each community. The heat wave aspect was a bit overdone, and I wish there had been a bit more closure on a few of the characters such as the disfigured young woman, and the English man who was romantically attached to the Muslim girl. Bravo to Elizabeth George for yet another gripping story!

### **Honeirsil**

Someone has murdered Mr. Haytham Querashi, a recent Pakistani immigrant, in Balford-le-Nez, a small, economically depressed town on the coast of Essex, England. Mr. Querashi was to soon wed the beautiful Sahlah, daughter of Akram Malik. In the Pakistani tradition, the parents of the bride and groom had arranged the marriage. As part of the deal, Mr. Querashi had become Production Manager in Mr. Malik's mustard factory where he displaced the last non-Pakistani, full-time employee.

Just a few weeks ago Mr. Malik became the first Pakistani on the Town Council when his formidable adversary, the aging Agatha Shaw, was forced to resign due to a stroke. Despite her condition and Malik's appointment, Mrs. Shaw, with the help of her grandson Theo, is determined to obtain the Council's approval for her project. She is resolute in the renovation and development of the pleasure pier to attract tourists, resuscitate the town's economy and thus assure her legacy as savior of the community.

Querashi's death is threatening to ignite smoldering racial tensions, however. The Asian's in general and Malik's son in particular suspect the murder was racially motivated and expect the police will ignore white suspects and blame a Pakistani. Enter Sgt. Barbara Havers, who is conveniently vacationing in the town, to mediate with the Pakistani as police liaison. As the case proceeds, Barbara discovers that nearly all the players have something to hide, including her self. Indeed, the title of this English mystery novel should be "Deception on Their Minds."

Elizabeth George is a master of this genre. Her characters are believable, the events are realistic, the scenes evolve with interesting complexity and the plot is superb, although sometimes I found her style more descriptive and dragging than in her prior novel, "In the Presence of the Enemy." And

unlike her previous novel, I had the killer figured in this one before the cops did.

"Deception" is unusual and outstanding, however, for George's treatment of the culture clash. Her characters cover the full spectrum of personalities one would expect to find in her hypothetical community. Thanks to God and Allah too, she does it without the least bit of moralizing.

### **Rolorel**

Great insight into the cultural differences and our own insidious preconceptions-from both eastern and western sides. At the same time Havers is an admirable detective who sometimes rushes ahead too quickly but in this case, she was in the right- superior officer was not. Punishing Barbara doesn't change the ignorance and misplaced pride of Emily.

### **Goltigor**

This book tackled a subject, racism, that colored the entire investigation. It was done very well. She always has interesting prose and dialogue. I recommend it.

### **Hap**

I enjoyed the first books in this series, but the writing drones on and on. Where is the editor to curb George's ramblings? The character don't really grow.

This is a Barbara Havers novel, which is usually good. She is a remarkable, and a remarkably talented detective. This is not my favorite Elizabeth George novel -- and I am reading them all in order -- but it is a worthy and interesting one. George is extremely talented, and her novels are notable for the depth and complexity of her characters.

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