

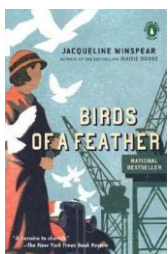
The Maisie Dobbs series

By Jacqueline Winspear



Maisie Dobbs (2003)

Hailed by NPR's Fresh Air as part Testament of Youth, part Dorothy Sayers, and part Upstairs, Downstairs, this astonishing debut has already won fans from coast to coast and is poised to add Maisie Dobbs to the ranks of literature's favorite sleuths. Maisie Dobbs isn't just any young housemaid. Through her own natural intelligence — and the patronage of her benevolent employers — she works her way into college at Cambridge. When World War I breaks out, Maisie goes to the front as a nurse. It is there that she learns that coincidences are meaningful and the truth elusive. After the War, Maisie sets up shop on her own, as a private investigator. But her very first assignment, seemingly an ordinary infidelity case, soon reveals a much deeper, darker web of secrets, which will force Maisie to revisit the horrors of the Great War and the love she left behind.

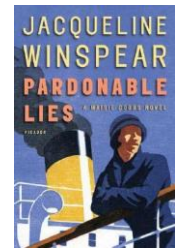


Birds of a Feather (2004)

Birds of a Feather finds Maisie Dobbs on another dangerously intriguing adventure in London "between the wars." It is the spring of 1930, and Maisie has been hired to find a runaway heiress. But what seems a simple case at the outset soon becomes increasingly complicated when three of the heiress's old friends are found dead. Is there a connection between the woman's mysterious disappearance and the murders? Who would want to kill three seemingly respectable young women? As Maisie investigates, she discovers that the answers lie in the unforgettable agony of the Great War.

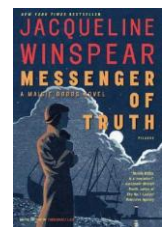
Pardonable Lies (2005)

In the third novel of this bestselling series, London investigator Maisie Dobbs faces grave danger as she returns to the site of her most painful WWI memories to resolve the mystery of a pilot's death. A deathbed plea from his wife leads Sir Cecil Lawton to seek the aid of Maisie Dobbs, psychologist and investigator. As Maisie soon learns, Agnes Lawton never accepted that her aviator son was killed in the Great War, a torment that led her not only to the edge of madness but to the doors of those who practice the dark arts and commune with the spirit world. In accepting the assignment, Maisie finds her spiritual strength tested, as well as her regard for her mentor, Maurice Blanche. The mission also brings her together once again with her college friend Priscilla Evernden, who served in France and who lost three brothers to the war—one of whom, it turns out, had an intriguing connection to the missing Ralph Lawton.

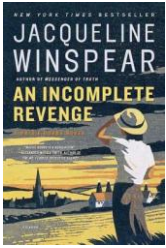


Messenger of Truth (2006)

London, 1931. On the night before the opening of his new and much-anticipated exhibition at a famed Mayfair gallery, Nicholas Bassington-Hope falls to his death. The police declare it an accident, but the dead man's twin sister, Georgina, isn't convinced. When the authorities refuse to conduct further investigations, Georgina takes matters into her own hands, seeking out a fellow graduate from Girton College: Maisie Dobbs, psychologist and investigator. The case soon takes Maisie to the desolate beaches of Dungeness in Kent, as well as the sinister underbelly of the city's art world. She again uncovers the dark legacy of the Great War in a society struggling to recollect itself



in difficult times. But to solve the mystery of the artist's death, she will have to remain steady as the forces behind his death come out of the shadows to silence her.



An Incomplete Revenge (2008)

With the country in the grip of economic malaise, Maisie Dobbs is relieved to accept an apparently straightforward assignment to investigate a potential land purchase. Her inquiries take her to a picturesque village in Kent during the hop-picking season, but beneath its pastoral surface she finds evidence that something is amiss. Mysterious fires erupt in the village with alarming regularity, and a series of petty crimes suggest a darker criminal element at work. A peculiar secrecy shrouds the village, and ultimately Maisie must draw on her finely-honed skills of detection to solve one of her most intriguing cases yet.



Among the Mad (2009)

Christmas Eve, 1931. On the way to see a client, Maisie Dobbs witnesses a man commit suicide on a busy London street. The following day, the Prime Minister's office receives a letter threatening a massive loss of life if certain demands are not met--and the writer

mentions Maisie by name. Tapped by Scotland Yard's elite Special Branch to be a special adviser on the case, Maisie is soon involved in a race against time to find a man who proves he has the knowledge and will to inflict destruction on thousands of innocent people.

The Mapping of Love and Death (2010)

August 1914. Michael Clifton is mapping the land he has just purchased in California's beautiful Santa Ynez Valley, certain that oil lies beneath its surface. But as the young cartographer prepares to return home to Boston, war is declared in Europe. Michael—the youngest son of an expatriate Englishman—puts duty first and sails for his father's native country to serve in the British army. Three years later, he is listed among those missing in action.

April 1932. London psychologist and investigator Maisie Dobbs is retained by Michael's parents, who have recently learned that their son's remains have been unearthed in France. They want Maisie to find the unnamed nurse whose love letters were among Michael's belongings—a quest that takes Maisie back to her own bittersweet wartime love. Her inquiries, and the stunning discovery that Michael Clifton was murdered in his trench, unleash a web of intrigue and violence that threatens to engulf the soldier's family and even Maisie herself. Over the course of her investigation, Maisie must cope with the approaching loss of her mentor, Maurice Blanche, and her growing awareness that she is once again falling in love.

Handout prepared for the Just Desserts Mystery Discussion Group – March 2010
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