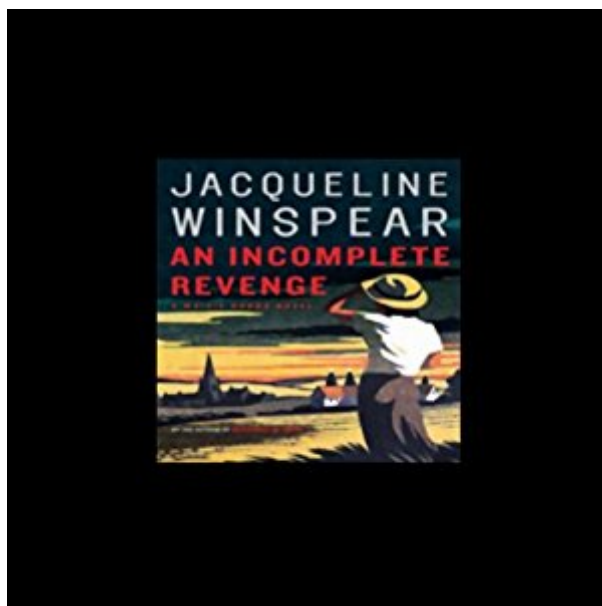


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# An Incomplete Revenge: A Maisie Dobbs Novel



## Synopsis

In her fifth outing, Maisie Dobbs, the extraordinary Psychologist and Investigator, delves into a strange series of crimes in a small rural community. With the country in the grip of economic malaise, and worried about her business, Maisie Dobbs is relieved to accept an apparently straightforward assignment from an old friend to investigate certain matters concerning 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 suggests a darker criminal element at work. As Maisie discovers, the villagers are bitterly prejudiced against outsiders who flock to Kent at harvest time— even more troubling, they seem possessed by the legacy of a wartime Zeppelin raid. Maisie grows increasingly suspicious of a peculiar secrecy that shrouds the village, and ultimately she must draw on all her finely honed skills of detection to solve one of her most intriguing cases. Rich with Jacqueline Winspear's trademark period detail, this installment of the bestselling series, *An Incomplete Revenge*, is gripping, atmospheric, and utterly enthralling.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 9 hours and 18 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Macmillan Audio

Audible.com Release Date: February 19, 2008

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B0014EAHH2

Best Sellers Rank: #159 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Mysteries & Thrillers > British Detectives #1117 in Books > Mystery, Thriller & Suspense > Mystery > British Detectives #1179 in Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Historical > Mysteries

## Customer Reviews

Jacqueline Winspear's *Maisie Dobbs* series is always a refreshing change from the blood and guts that are common fare in most other detective fiction. Maisie, who bills herself as a "Psychologist and Investigator," is unlike any other protagonist in crime fiction. There's nothing the least bit hard-boiled about her. Operating in London and points south,

Maisie works under the ever-present pall of World War I. Though it's now the 1930s, Maisie's service as a nurse at a casualty clearing station near the front line in France was the dominant experience in her otherwise very eventful life. Her fiancé, Captain Simon Lynch, lies in a vegetative state in a convalescent home. They had worked together in France and were wounded by the same German artillery shell. Maisie Dobbs and the legacy of war

In *An Incomplete Revenge*, the fifth book in the series, Maisie is forced to face the lasting pain of her earlier years: the backstory of her family's life, the class resentment she continues to bear as a child of poverty, the tension between her and her brilliant mentor, Dr. Maurice Blanche, and her lover's worsening condition. In the face of all this stress, Maisie takes on what proves to be a challenging case on behalf of her dear friend, James Compton, the son of the aristocratic couple that sponsored her education.

A village where strange things happen

The action centers on the village of Heronsdene in Southeast England. The village lies not far from the estate where she once served as a maid and her father still lives, tending the horses. It's hop-picking season. The fields are crowded with Londoners, a small tribe of Gypsies, and villagers, all seeking to supplement their meager income. It's 1931, and the Depression is well underway. All the land nearby, and the brickworks located on it, are the property of a single owner, who is universally despised in the area. Alfred Sandermere is a bully, a drunkard, and a wastrel. Maisie has come to Heronsdene because James wants her to look into the strange circumstances there, as he is interested in buying the estate. These circumstances include a series of suspicious fires, a rash of thefts at the Sandermere mansion and elsewhere, and the villagers' mysterious refusal to talk about the Zeppelin attack that killed the local baker and his family in 1916. With mystery piled on mystery, this is a case tailor-made for Maisie Dobbs. Naturally, Maisie triumphs in the end, having disentangled the threads of this complicated story and given her friend the green light to proceed with the purchase. But the fun, after all, is in the telling.

I have read all of the Maisie Dobbs books and love them all, some a bit more than others. This one I love most of all. I have just re-read it and once again was moved to tears by a sense of loss, place, and time gone by. These books take place during and after the Great War (WWI) in England for the most part. It is not a time that I know of. Except for these books, and *Foyle's War*, and a few other books. But mostly the Maisie Dobbs books. The way Winspear describes the settings, the clothes, the characters, the times, places the reader right there on the pages and invokes experiences we would never had had. I believe everyone should read at least the first book, "Maisie Dobbs" before reading any of the other books in the series. The best way would be to work one's way through the

series since there are always references to what came before. However, Winspear is very considerate of her readers and makes certain that no matter which book in the series you are reading, you will understand how Maisie has come to the place she has come to in each book. In this book, the references to the gypsies and their way of life and their language and customs is fascinating. And, of course, the secrets held by all of the predominant characters. Maisie can bring you into her life and sometimes hold you at bay, not letting you in at all as she struggles with her own misfortunes. But Maisie is a character one can love and engage with as you go through her life and experiences in these books. Most, Most, Most especially THIS one.

This is a really good series of mysteries that starts on the eve of WW1 in Britain. The lead character is a young girl who comes from the mean streets of London, is placed into domestic service in a wealthy manor home. She discovers a love of books and is in turn discovered by the homeowner as not only an avid reader but someone with an unusually analytic mind. Maisie Dobbs acquires a mentor, a psychologist and investigator who teaches and develops her into an investigator. In *An Incomplete Revenge*, she is called in to research a possible land and building purchase. The case soon involves a town experiencing strange fires, a zeppelin air strike, and gypsies. I HIGHLY recommend you start with the very first novel, though, since references and characters are mentioned in subsequent books and it will all make more sense.

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