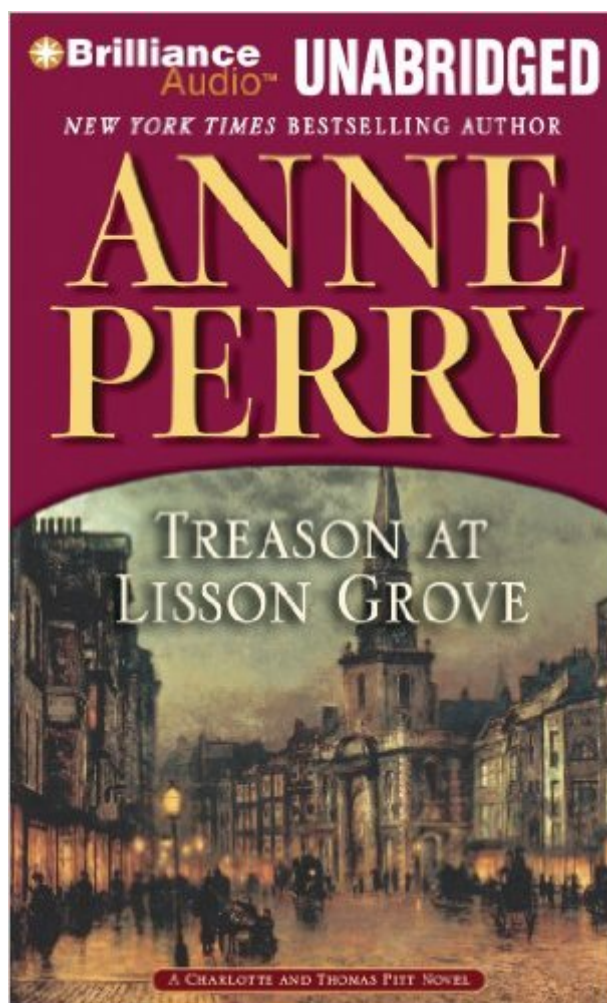


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Treason At Lisson Grove (Charlotte And Thomas Pitt)



Synopsis

The man who lies bleeding to death in a London brickyard is no ordinary drifter but a secret informant prepared to divulge details of a potentially devastating international plot against the British government. Special Branch officer Thomas Pitt, hastening to rendezvous with him, arrives a second too late, preceded by a knife-wielding assassin. As the mortally wounded man's life slips away, so too does the information Pitt desperately needs. The killer in turn flees on an erratic course that leads Pitt in wild pursuit, from London's cobblestone streets to picturesque St. Malo on the French coast. Meanwhile, Pitt's supervisor, the formidable Victor Narraway, finds himself accused of embezzling government funds. With Pitt incommunicado in France, Narraway turns to Pitt's clever wife, Charlotte, for help. The man who badmouthed Narraway and ruined his career with innuendo can be found in Ireland - so Charlotte agrees to pose as Narraway's sister and accompany him to Dublin to investigate. But unknown to Pitt and Narraway, a shadowy plotter is setting a trap that, once sprung, could destroy not just reputations but the British empire itself.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

In Anne Perry's "Treason at Lisson Grove," Thomas Pitt of Special Branch is dismayed when an informer named West is murdered. Pitt and his subordinate, Gower, follow the alleged killer to France, hoping that he will lead them to his co-conspirators. Back in London, Victor Narraway, the head of Special Branch and Pitt's supporter, is relieved of his duties after being accused of embezzling government funds. Victor knows he has been framed, but by whom and why? Since he

made bitter enemies in Ireland two decades earlier, he returns there, hoping to find the person responsible for discrediting him. Thomas's wife, Charlotte, accompanies Victor, hoping that her keen powers of observation and her ability to detect untruths will help Narraway clear his name. This is one of the less impressive entries in the Pitt series. Although Charlotte is outspoken and has been known to flout convention, it defies belief that she would traipse off to Ireland while her husband is away, leaving their two young children in the care of a newly hired maid. In addition, Charlotte poses as Victor's half-sister, a silly and easily detectable pretense. "Treason at Lisson Grove" is talky, repetitious, and histrionic. There is a subplot involving revolutionaries who, led by a unidentified traitor, intend to carry out a daring plan to throw Great Britain into chaos. Perry would have us believe that Charlotte, Thomas, and Victor are the sole individuals who can save the Crown from catastrophe. Perry is a literate writer with a feel for the Victorian era and European history. She has created a truly marvelous character, Lady Vespasia Cumming-Gould. Vespasia is a rich and influential woman who says what she thinks and is as comfortable with servants as she is with royalty.

The Irish have the longest memories in Europe, and it's this sentiment that drives the latest Charlotte and Thomas Pitt novel from Anne Perry. TREASON AT LISSON GROVE is the 26th book featuring the Pitts, and this time out they are involved in dual mysteries that each reveals a plot to bring down the British Empire itself. Thomas Pitt's Supervisor at the Special Branch office, Victor Narraway, sends him and fellow officer Gower in pursuit of a criminal who left a drifter bleeding to death in a London brickyard. They quickly investigate and find out that this was not a drifter but a secret informant who was about to divulge vital information about the British government. Thomas and Gower begin a chase of the murder suspect that takes them to France. The only issue is that this may be a diversion to get them out of the way as the real plot is focused on London. Meanwhile, Narraway is exposed as being an alleged embezzler of government funds and promptly removed from office. He suspects that the reason he's being set up lies in a 20-year-old mystery involving an Irish patriot named Cormac O'Neill. Narraway takes Charlotte with him to Ireland, posing as brother and sister. He suspects that the bitter grudge O'Neill holds over him may be the reason for his public besmirching. The problem will be getting close enough to find out. O'Neill blames Narraway for the murder of his beloved Kate 20 years earlier and the framing of another man. Narraway has always professed his innocence, but O'Neill will be hard to convince after so many years of hatred and resentment. Things get progressively worse for both of the Pitts on their individual adventures. Thomas is turned on by Gower, who tries to kill him on a train back to London.

I'm a long-time Anne Perry fan, and I have especially enjoyed the Thomas and Charlotte Pitt series. That's why this book was such a huge disappointment for me. Quite honestly, I'm betting that *Treason at Lisson Grove* would have been rejected by any self-respecting publisher, if it hadn't been submitted by the already well-established Anne Perry. I gave Ms Perry a pass on *Buckingham Palace Gardens* (I really wanted to like it), I hung in there with *The Sheen on the Silk* (although I struggled to get through it), but this book takes the cake! You know it's a bad sign when your jaw hangs open during the entire reading experience, when you continually ask yourself "huh??", and when you laugh out loud at an ending that was supposed to be both a revelation and the height of suspense. And when an author ceases to respect her own characters any longer, I have to ask myself why I should bother to care anymore either. For me, I believe that my enthusiastic anticipation of the next Anne Perry novel may have finally run its course. I would even go so far as to say that reading *Treason at Lisson Grove* was almost as bad as having waited those twelve years for Jean Auel to produce her horrible *The Shelters of Stone*, in her *Earth's Children* series. I ended up throwing the wretched thing in the trash at the end, and have diligently refused to buy Jean Auel's two-star rated *The Land of Painted Caves*. Ms Perry might want to avoid a humiliation similar to that of Ms Auel's failed conclusion of her once-acclaimed series before making another half-hearted attempt to write for a series that she clearly no longer cares about, judging by *Treason at Lisson Grove*.

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