

Hugo DuChamp Investigates: Les Fantômes du Château
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Hugo DuChamp Investigates: Les Fantômes du Château provides another satisfying investigative piece centered around the colorful and sometimes outrageous personality of Hugo DuChamp, a French policeman who has been working cases in London for years, and who faces a ghostly new case on his own turf.

The first satisfying note here is that readers need not hold prior familiarity with Hugo DuChamp in order to appreciate this second book. Hugo's events and background are summed up in Chapter Two, which paves the way for newcomers and previous fans to enjoy another detective puzzler (the first chapter presents the murder, while the second backtracks a week into London).

The second pleasurable feature of this sequel is that Hugo's character is thoroughly explored in a manner that invites not just reader interest in what happens to him, but creates an emotional attachment that adds a vested interest in Hugo's approaches to life: "This year, 2015, had taught him something that he could not quite put his finger on yet, a sense of freedom, a belief in life that had so far escaped him in his thirty-four years of being alive. He had witnessed all that life had to throw at a person, death, horror, tragedy, love and upheaval. If he had known beforehand what the year's events were going to throw at him he was not at all sure he would not have refused to pack his Louis Vuitton suitcase and instead would have jumped on a plane for destinations unknown and quite far away."

It's Hugo's humanity and psychological profile that imbibe his investigations with a personal touch that draw in readers by revealing not just events, but his deepest thoughts surrounding his choices in life: "He believed now that he had done his best in a situation where the die had been cast much before his involvement. Did he have regrets? He did, and he knew that he would probably wrestle with his conscience for a long time to come, but with the detachment of time, he had come to understand that what had happened was not his fault."

Hugo faces a cast of characters in the course of Les Fantômes du Château; many of whom have special, secret interests in the murder case ("He did not agree necessarily, but could see why there may be concern, but it did not sit comfortably with him. Something was being covered up, he could smell it.").

Family money and spending choices, two murders, the hidden truths behind the deaths and how they are handled - all these facets immerse Hugo in one of the most puzzling cases of his life, just a few months after he's still in shock from his last case's unexpected twists. Hugo might ultimately be forced to decide who to save and who to sacrifice in a rolling saga that embroils readers in a powerful tale that concludes (it should be warned) in

a cliffhanger.

Readers interested in more than a one-dimensional detective story who look for characters who are flawed, human, and different will relish both Hugo and his circumstances, and will find Hugo DuChamp Investigates: Les Fantômes du Château to be a powerful, highly recommended and compelling story that is as much about the man and his psyche as it is about an unusual crime scene and many elusive motivations.