

# Hugo Duchamp Investigates: Un Homme Qui Attend

GN Hetherington

<http://www.hugoduchampinvestigates.com/>

*Hugo Duchamp Investigates: Un Homme Qui Attend* introduces a French policeman who has been working abroad in London as an investigator for over a decade; but when he's called home, it's not for family reasons but to investigate the death of a child - an event replete with town politics and special interests.

As if a child's deliberate murder wasn't enough, the protagonist of Hugo is quite gay, romance runs through the story line, and the story's sense of place is immersed in the sights, smells, and sounds of France: *"He exhaled and inhaled again, taking in his first proper gasp of Parisian air for over a decade. Or was it longer? It was true, he believed, that each city, each country had their own smell. Centuries of history left their imprint on atmospheres. Paris, like London, was old and the pages of its history were littered with sense memories that hung in the air, never able to truly dissipate. The smell of wars. The smell of souls that had come and gone."*

The result is a powerful saga that does more than describe a veteran investigator's dilemma: it's infused with the culture of France, gay sexuality, and foods, wines, and characters who are steeped in the French countryside: *"The mayor had laid on a beautiful spread, local wines, cheese and baguettes that were all delicious and reminded Hugo of the lavish lunches that had been served at his Grand-Mère's plush home."*

All this is part of what serves to make *Hugo Duchamp Investigates* such a vivid read: even those who have never set foot on French soil will find themselves involved in politics, investigative processes, and personalities that are uniquely French, from village residents to reporters to investigators: *"They are investigating this tragic death, they are not paid for by the French public to answer your quite irritating, and pointless questions which are centered more on discrediting me and my office than the real reason we are all here."*

As Hugo peels back layers of long-held town secrets, powerful individual special interests, and the specter of possibly more children in danger, he edges ever closer to a truth that might ripple out and destroy long-held secrets and Hugo's world alike. It all boils down to what will be done for love and revenge, and what will be wrecked in the process.

The feisty detective work of Hugo, his French culture, and his love life promise something satisfyingly different in the world of investigative mysteries, and making this especially recommended for readers who enjoy a firm sense of place and a protagonist whose interests and life don't exactly fit the norm.

D. Donovan, Senior Reviewer, Midwest Book Review