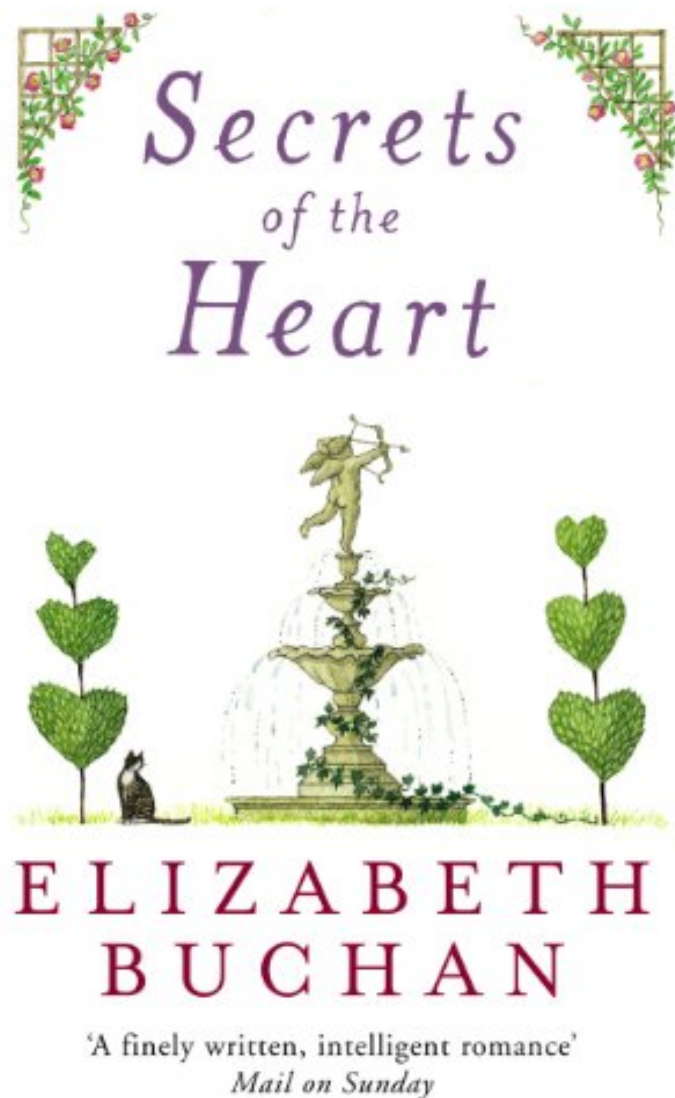


(Library ebook) Secrets of the Heart

Secrets of the Heart

Von Elizabeth Buchan

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Von Elizabeth Buchan : Secrets of the Heart before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Secrets of the Heart:

Kurzbeschreibung Agnes Campion is 30 when she inherits Flagge House from her uncle. Struggling with its upkeep whilst looking after her elderly aunts, juggling her work, and nursing a bruised heart, she doesn't bank on falling for handsome property developer Julian, whose job is everything she despises. But Julian has commitments of his own: Kitty, his long term mistress, won't give him up without a fight: seemingly fragile, she's really as tough as nails. Nor does Agnes imagine that stoical Andrew, whose organic farm is being wrenched away from him by a planning application, will fall for her too. Slowly, surely, a love quartet is developing, but relationships are messy things, and only two people can find happiness at the end of it all ...

Secrets of the Heart has all the impressive observation of Elizabeth Buchan's earlier books, allied to a warm and nuanced sympathy for her characters that is completely unforced. The finest romance titles nowadays have all the requisite elements but are written by authors who are real stylists, with an intelligence and grasp of character that was a rarity 10 years ago. Readers of romantic fiction have every right to expect the very best these days and it is writers like Elizabeth Buchan who have wrought this change. Gone are the days when the genre could get away with slapdash writing and a parade of clichés. In Secrets of the Heart, Agnes Campion has reached the age of 30 when she takes on the squabbling aunts and decaying splendour of Flagge House, which has been left to her. Just maintaining this troublesome property is keeping her more than occupied but she is also dealing with two distinctively different suitors, both involved with other women. Julian is a property developer, suave and handsome, but a man who sets all kinds of ideological alarm bells ringing in Agnes's mind. Andrew, an organic farmer struggling with both a marriage and a business that are falling apart, is an even more tricky prospect. Completing an emotional quartet, Kitty, Julian's deceptively fragile mistress, has Agnes in her sights as an enemy. All four characters are beautifully fleshed out by Buchan with the subtle touches that her admirers have come to know well, and even the slightly predictable schematic of the book (it's clear early on that two characters will find happiness, while two will not) actually adds to the pleasurable juggling with the genre conventions that Buchan does so well. Take the vengeful Kitty's examination of her own motives: The anger never seen by others stirred in Kitty's soul. She knew, from experience, that anger tightened the ligaments in her neck and hardened her features. Oh, Kitty, Kitty, what a sham you are. If she was truthful, and Kitty tried hard to be so, her anger was really a form of grief and impotence, not the strong, cleansing emotion that psychotherapists advised it should be. The author's first book, Daughters of the Storm marked Buchan out as an impressive writer, and when her third novel Consider the Lily won the 1994 Romantic Novel of the Year Award, expectations were very high for subsequent work. If Perfect Love lost a little of the momentum, it is triumphantly regained here. --Barry Forshaw

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