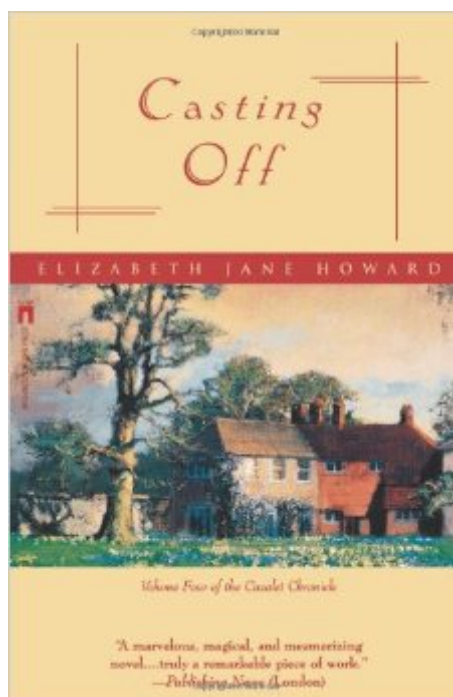


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Casting Off (Cazalet Chronicle) (Volume 4)



Synopsis

In the aftermath of Ve Day in England, the extended Cazalet family endures such difficult events as deaths, weddings, a shattering pregnancy, and divorces. Reprint."

Book Information

Paperback: 496 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (30 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #676,827 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #132 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Botany #233 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Science Studies > Astronomy & Space > Aeronautics & Space #8321 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Science, Nature & How It Works

Customer Reviews

The fourth and final volume of "The Cazalet Chronicle" brings to a satisfying conclusion the story of this much-extended English family. Taking place in the aftermath of World War II, each family member grapples with the rationing, food and housing shortages, and other deprivations the English endured. Marriages break apart and new unions are formed, pregnancy shatters the life of one cousin while another eagerly anticipates motherhood, new careers are begun, family rifts pit brother against brother, and old loves are rekindled as the Cazalets head into the future. Elizabeth Jane Howard writes the intimate details of their lives with a warmth, humor, and passion that is almost magical.

This was, I think, the most touching book of the Cazalet series. After the war their situations are not automatically better, but slowly things begin to improve for some of the Cazalets. Clary and Polly fall in love, Rupert and Zoe try to rediscover each other, and Louise makes peace with her past and takes control of her life. For those in the United States who are having a hard time finding this book (as I did) I suggest you try W. H. Smith On-line. I ordered it from them and it took about a month to arrive from England (cost was about 10 pounds).

I loved this book and have read all the installments. This is the last Volume.- I wish she had written more about this family. If you enjoy stories about Britain during WWII, with a terrific cast of characters you won't be able to put this down. But start with the first Volume "The Light Years" and read them in order. All of her books are really good.

I can't believe this book is out of stock! The end of volume 3 of the Cazalet chronicles leaves you yearning for the final volume (Howard has slowly been increasing the emotional tension with each volume)--and now I'm left in limbo indefinitely! Can't you get some word from the publisher?

The Second World War has ended, but "normal" eludes most of England and, in particular, the Cazalet family and assorted family retainers, servants, etc. Communication between family members reaches a new low, families break apart and regroup, and faith appears as a real issue. Teddy acquires an American bride of the worst type, Louise sheds a famous husband, Villy becomes the odd one out, Polly does not seek but still finds, Angela travels to the U.S. to marry, Christopher becomes his own man, and Neville is utterly charming in his hideously truthful way. Crawling into the covers of this book gives the reader a real sense of the present emerging. The recorded version sounds magnificent, the dialogue is so skillful that I'd love to listen to the books too. And, having read all four books, must we end it here?

I enjoyed these four novels about the Cazalet family. It was very interesting to be able to observe how England changed from the years before World War II to the period after it, going from a calm self-absorption and a reliance on live-in help to everyone listening to news bulletins and servants being almost impossible to get. Rather strange, though, I thought, that so many of the marriages were between young women and middle-aged men. And virtually everyone having an affair -- is this realism, or just overuse of a good technique for revealing character? And I thought Clary's choice of a husband implausible. But in general the books were very believable. I was interested in all the characters and moved by their experiences. They have been absorbed into my mind just as if they were real people. Major virtues of these books are the atmosphere of English culture of the time, and the subtle character development. An unfortunate minor distraction in this book, unlike the three other volumes, were editing errors, for instance characters starting the paragraph with the wrong name, or Christopher's pet Oliver being a cat for ages and then suddenly on p. 478 being a dog!

Casting Off is the last book in a volume of four series. I loved all these books and was sorry to see them end even though I could not put them down when reading...staying up to the wee hours of the morning to see what happened next. The war is over and the Cazalet family is expecting things to go on as before the war ...that does not happen as they have all changed and grown during the war and cannot go back to the way it was. Polly and Clary are sharing a flat in London wondering what happened to their youth. Clary is in love and becomes pregnant only to be devastated with the results...the patriarch has died..there is a divorce as was expected...Rupert returns home after four years and discovers there is tension with Zoe and delight with a new daughter, Juliet. Rachael continues to care take of any and all leaving herself empty of the love she could embrace..this is one of the best series I have read in years. I recommend this to anyone who likes a good read. I got my books from at a great price and you can also.

I loved this series but the final volume was impossible to find when I originally red it a few years ago. (Had to order from the library.) Terrific story in the Downtown Abbey (20 years ahead) genre of an upperclass family before and during WWII. The character development, especially as the children grew up and the varied settings--London, country house, French underground--made for hard-to-put down reading.

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