



Anyone for Edmund?

Simon Edge

Lightning Books (May 1, 2021)

Softcover \$15.95 (256pp)

978-1-78563-191-7

Simon Edge's rollicking novel *Anyone for Edmund?* romps through Medieval British history with style.

A team of archaeologists discovers the bones of St. Edmund, the English king and martyr, beneath tennis courts that are near the ruins of an old abbey in Suffolk, England. Hannah, a dig volunteer, is excited to participate in unearthing the long lost bones of the patron saint of England, which have been buried since the days of King Henry VIII.

In her excitement, Hannah shares the news with her aunt, who then shares it with her son Mark, an aspiring political aide. Desperate to save his flagging career, Mark offers his demanding boss, MP Marina Spencer, a way to appeal to an inflamed post-Brexit electorate. He suggests touting the English-born St. Edmund as a potential patron saint for the United Kingdom. To appease non-English residents in Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, Mark takes advantage of the fact that little is known about Edmund; he creates fraudulent evidence on Wikipedia. Mark's plot soon unravels as suspicions mount. Deadly repercussions result from the unleashing of the supernatural powers of the disinterred saint. Mark, his cousin Hannah, Hannah's archaeologist friend Daisy, and a wise old monk worry over reining in the destructive forces that have been awakened.

This clever comedy pokes fun at the cutthroat atmosphere of contemporary political life, which it juxtaposes with the life-and-death maneuverings of medieval rivals. Its settings are detailed in rich terms, conveying the atmospheres of an archaeological dig, within the halls of power, at a shabby monastery, and in a regal cathedral. Lighthearted and highly entertaining, it captures the mood of Edmund's freshly freed medieval ghost and today's attitudes.

Led by flawed, lovable characters, *Anyone for Edmund?* is a consumable novel that delivers a dose of history with flawless comedic timing and pacing.

WENDY HINMAN (May / June 2021)

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