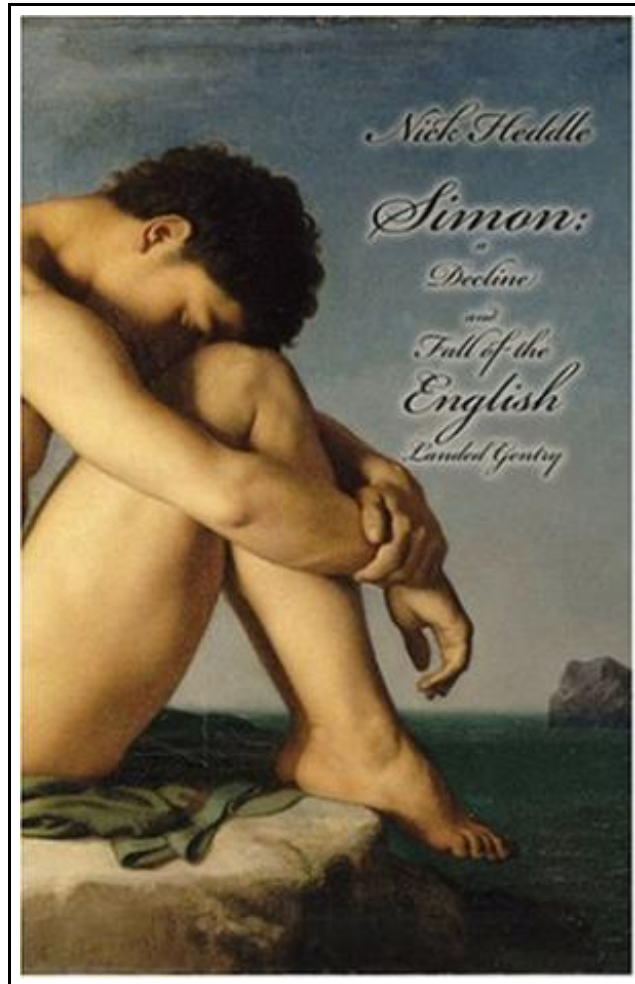


Simon: A Decline and Fall of the English Landed Gentry



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Reviews

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SIMON: A DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ENGLISH LANDED GENTRY



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Melrose Books. Hardback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Simon: A Decline and Fall of the English Landed Gentry, Nick Heddle, 'Simon: a Decline and Fall of the English Landed Gentry' is an imaginative, enjoyable but also poignant and touching novel. Set against the last gasp of a decaying old world and the first caterwauls of the new, it paints a portrait of an England which is in gentle decline, but is in some ways an improvement on the old. Thoughtful, slow paced and absorbing, it makes for a subtle, interesting read. The key genesis of this novel arose from the author's questions: 'Why did the aristocratic families, previously occupying stately homes, simply die out?' 'What if the heir and the spare both turned out to be gay in the late 1950s?' 'Would the family tree then end, the stately home falling into decay?' The story follows the young heir Simon, a very intelligent and forward-thinking man who is training to be an atomic scientist. Finding himself under the radioactive rain-cloud after the Windscale fire in 1957 could change his life and ambitions. This gorgeous 23 year old is also in search of romance and he falls deeply in love with a local farmer. Simon is faced with trouble from all angles; his homosexual lust could lead to his life imprisonment and, in his own words, through radiation poisoning 'I could end up glowing in the dark!' Nick Heddle's book explores pressing social issues by switching the action between 1957 and 2001. The history of England's historic gay liberation runs through the novel, culminating in the 21st century and the advent of civil partnerships. But above all, this is ultimately a story of love, a love which flowers in spite of the decaying state of the world.



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