

# A Question of Belief (A Commissario Guido Brunetti Mystery)

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"Brunetti is a marvel: smart, cultured, and dedicated to his work." --The Washington Post

Commissario Guido Brunetti longs to escape the crowds of tourists and oppressive heat of Venice in August. But before he can join his family on holiday in the mountains, a folder containing court records lands on his desk. An old friend suspects a sinister motive behind a local court's notorious inefficiency. Meanwhile, Brunetti's colleague, Inspector Lorenzo Vianello, is concerned about his aunt's sudden- and expensive-interest in astrology and enlists the commissario's help. Just when it seems Brunetti will be able to make his getaway, a brutal crime shocks the city and he forces himself to shake off the heat and get down to work.

Donna Leon is the author of nineteen novels featuring Guido Brunetti. She has been awarded the Crime Writers Association Silver Dagger Award and the German Corine Prize. She lives in Venice, Italy.\*Starred Review\* Leon's many fans love this series for the Venetian setting, the complex family dynamics, and the hero's mix of melancholy and compassion, and in this nineteenth installment, they get all of the above. It's summer in the city for Commissario Guido Brunetti, whose family and colleagues are sweating out the heat wave in largely non-air-conditioned Venice. (Leon does weather as well as any contemporary crime novelist: from *Acqua Alta* (1996), in which rain-soaked streets became a vivid metaphor for the city's corruption-drenched politics, to this novel, in which the inescapable heat evokes that same corruption and the way its stench pervades all aspects of society.) Working multiple cases, Brunetti is struggling to find an opportunity to escape with his family to the cool of the mountains, where he dreams of sleeping under an eiderdown quilt. One case involves an aunt's colleague, who appears to be giving great amounts of cash to a religious charlatan, while another pits Brunetti against his usual adversaries: corrupt politicians (this time it's a judge who delays trials for a hefty price). As always, Brunetti finds and agonizes over the human tragedies that lurk beneath the creases of criminal activity. He is in the business of assuaging pain rather than solving crimes, especially when the criminals are corrupt officials, who are as unstoppable as the heat is inescapable. Yes, they can be embarrassed, but "if embarrassment were a bar to advancement, there would be no government and no Church." A unique combination of bedrock cynicism and warm humanity. --Bill Ott

#### Other Books

Qüestió de fe, Mentre el commissario Brunetti prepara les maletes per fugir de la calor de l'agost venecià, el seu col·lega Vianello li demana ajuda per resoldre un problema personal: la seva tieta s'ha obsessionat per l'astrologia i s'està gastant els diners del negoci familiar amb un endeví que no sembla que mostra totes les cartes. Al mateix temps, al despatx de Brunetti arriben indicis d'irregularitats als jutjats de la ciutat. Quan sembla que l'assumpte no va més enllà d'unes discrepàncies internes, l'assassinat d'un dels implicats farà que Brunetti torni sobtadament a Venècia per dirigir la investigació. Què té a veure la mort d'aquest home amb les sospites de corrupció a la magistratura veneciana? Amb un cop d'efecte magistral, a Qüestió de fe Donna Leon construeix un nou cas per a Brunetti, on la burocràcia i la calor sufocant de l'estiu venecià marquen l'atmosfera d'una novel·la plena d'enganys i amb un final explosiu i inesborrable.

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