

The Distant Hours

'... ENTHRALLING ROMANTIC THRILLER.' PUBLISHERS WEEKLY

Edie Burchill and her mother have never been close, but when a long-lost letter arrives one Sunday afternoon with the return address of Milderhurst Castle, Kent, printed on its envelope, Edie begins to suspect that her mother's emotional distance masks an old secret.

Evacuated from London as a thirteen-year-old girl, Edie's mother is chosen by the mysterious Juniper Blythe, and taken to live at Milderhurst Castle with the Blythe family: Juniper, her twin sisters and their father, Raymond, author of the 1918 children's classic *The True History of the Mud Man*. In the grand and glorious Milderhurst Castle, a new world opens up for Edie's mother. She discovers the joys of books and fantasy and writing, but also, ultimately, the dangers.

Fifty years later, as Edie chases the answers to her mother's riddle, she, too, is drawn to Milderhurst Castle and the eccentric Sisters Blythe. Old ladies now, the three still live together, the twins nursing Juniper, whose abandonment by her fiancé? In 1941 plunged her into madness.

Inside the decaying castle, Edie begins to unravel her mother's past. But there are other secrets hidden in the stones of Milderhurst Castle, and Edie is about to learn more than she expected. The truth of what happened in the distant hours has been waiting a long time for someone to find it.