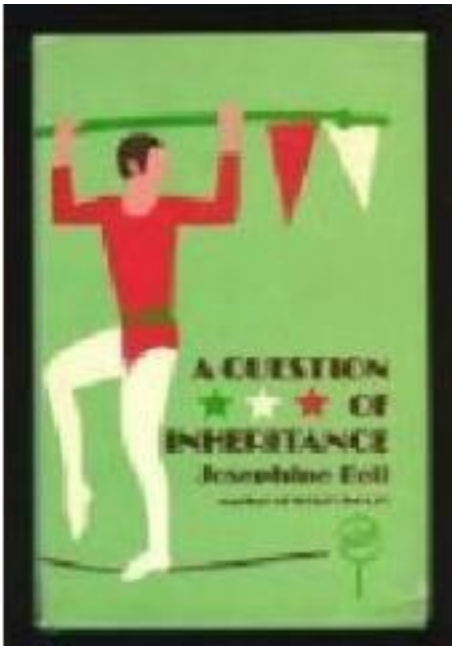


# A Question of Inheritance



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The wind sang old songs as the tale went and like the wind we too sang; sang "Good Night Lady" at her doorway on Christmas Eve but she would not come out. Why I asked myself why? Oh Lady come out we love you--I love you. Still she would not. I couldn't understand then; no one could. I do now. In small towns is there always a Lady Harleigh? I only know there was in ours. She lived in the handsomest house on the Green a plaque by her front door identifying it as the "Josiah Webster House Built 1702." A stranger inquiring who lived there would assuredly have been told there were three occupants only; that Lady herself and her servants the Grifflns. But of course there were four because the shade of Lady's dead husband also dwelt there. No one but the mistress of the house was

aware of Edward Har-  
leigh's ghost; but so real was her apprehension so  
evident her distress that even I in time would glance up at a second-story  
window almost expecting to see a half-realized presence brooding  
behind the curtain. But of course there were no ghosts in the house on the  
Green; only in Lady's heart. During most of my boyhood I strove to know the heart  
of Adelaide Harleigh to unravel the enigma that lingered in the corners of  
her mouth as her smile faded. For if she was everything to everybody if she  
most often seemed joyful and content her joy appeared to me something of  
a disguise. Still she was Lady ever Lady and it is not of ghosts I  
write but of love for though I was only a boy of eight when I first knew  
her and she well past forty I came to love her as she did me. She  
loved another also if in a more comprehensible but less orthodox way; but  
I was unaware had in those early years no cause for jealousy because of  
all the children I was her favorite. It is not easy to learn much about love but  
one thing I discovered that Lady Harleigh taught me: it is not whom we love  
that is important but only that we love.

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