

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water is a compelling biography that offers a deep dive into the fascinating life of one of the most renowned British travel writers and adventurers of the 20th century. This book, authored by Artemis Cooper, provides an intimate portrayal of Fermor's extraordinary journeys, his literary achievements, and his complex personality. In this article, we will explore the significance of "Between the Woods and the Water" within Fermor's literary legacy, its themes, and its impact on travel writing and cultural history.

Understanding Patrick Leigh Fermor

Who Was Patrick Leigh Fermor?

Patrick Leigh Fermor (1915–2011) was a British author, scholar, and soldier celebrated for his adventurous spirit and literary talent. His life spanned nearly a century, during which he embarked on remarkable journeys across Europe, notably his legendary trek on foot from the Netherlands to Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) in the late 1930s.

Fermor's writings blend vivid storytelling with historical insight, capturing the essence of the places he visited and the cultures he encountered. His work has inspired generations of travelers, writers, and historians.

The Trilogies of Travel

Patrick Leigh Fermor is best known for his trilogy of travel books:

- **Time of Gifts** — covering his journey through Europe from the Netherlands to Hungary before World War II.
- **Between the Woods and the Water** — continuing his journey through the Balkans and Greece.
- **The Broken Road** — detailing his return journey after the war and reflecting on the changes in Europe.

These works are celebrated for their lyrical prose, historical richness, and vivid portrayal of European landscapes and cultures.

Focus on "Between the Woods and the Water"

Overview of the Book

"Between the Woods and the Water," published in 1986, is the second volume of Fermor's travel trilogy. It chronicles his journey through the Balkans and Greece, capturing a Europe on the brink of upheaval. The narrative begins in 1934, following Fermor as he traverses regions such as Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Greece, providing readers with a detailed and poetic account of his adventures.

The book is not just a travelogue; it's a reflection on history, identity, and the enduring human spirit amidst political turmoil.

Themes Explored

Some of the central themes in "Between the Woods and the Water" include:

- **Journey and Discovery:** Fermor's physical journey mirrors an internal quest for understanding and connection.
- **European Heritage and Diversity:** The book explores the rich tapestry of Balkan cultures, languages, and histories.
- **Change and Nostalgia:** Fermor reflects on the transformations Europe faces and the nostalgia for a fading world.
- **Friendship and Hospitality:** Encounters with locals highlight the warmth and generosity of Balkan communities.

Literary Style and Significance

Fermor's Narrative Voice

Fermor's writing is renowned for its poetic and evocative style. His descriptions are lush, capturing not just the physical landscape but also the atmosphere and mood. His ability to weave historical context seamlessly into his storytelling makes his work both engaging and educational.

His narrative often combines personal anecdotes with historical insights, creating a layered storytelling approach that appeals to both casual readers and scholars.

Impact on Travel Literature

"Between the Woods and the Water" set a standard for travel writing that emphasizes cultural immersion, lyrical prose, and historical depth. It influenced many writers and contributed to a renewed appreciation for traversing lesser-known regions with curiosity and respect.

The book is particularly valued for its detailed descriptions of Balkan life during a period of

significant political unrest, providing a snapshot of a Europe on the cusp of war.

Historical Context and Its Influence

Europe in the 1930s

The period in which Fermor traveled was marked by rising tensions leading up to World War II. His journeys captured the last moments of a Europe characterized by diverse ethnic communities, traditional customs, and political instability.

Fermor's observations serve as a valuable historical record of the Balkans before the upheaval of war and subsequent decades of conflict.

Fermor's Personal Role During WWII

Beyond his travel writings, Fermor played a significant role during World War II as a British intelligence officer. His deep knowledge of Greece and the Balkans proved invaluable during the war effort, especially in resistance activities.

This experience added depth to his later writings, blending adventure with the realities of wartime Europe.

Legacy and Modern Reception

Critical Acclaim

"Between the Woods and the Water" has received widespread acclaim from critics and readers alike. Its lyrical prose, detailed historical context, and genuine sense of adventure have cemented its status as a classic in travel literature.

Fermor's storytelling continues to inspire travel writers, historians, and adventurers.

Influence on Contemporary Travel Writing

Modern travel writers often cite Fermor as a major influence, especially in emphasizing cultural authenticity and narrative depth. His work encourages travelers to engage deeply with local communities and histories rather than merely passing through.

Recent Editions and Rediscovery

The book has seen new editions and reprints, especially following the publication of Fermor's complete manuscripts and letters. Artemis Cooper's biography has also reignited interest in

Fermor's life and work, bringing his adventures to a new generation.

Conclusion

"patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water" is more than just a travel book; it is a poetic tribute to a Europe that no longer exists in its old form and a testament to the enduring human spirit of curiosity and connection. Fermor's vivid storytelling, combined with his keen historical insights, makes this work a cornerstone of travel literature. Whether you are interested in European history, cultural exploration, or simply beautifully crafted prose, this book offers a profound and inspiring journey.

For those seeking to understand the soul of a bygone Europe or to find inspiration for their own adventures, Fermor's work remains an invaluable resource, capturing the timeless allure of discovery amid the woods and waters of the Balkans and Greece.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main focus of 'Between the Woods and the Water' by Patrick Leigh Fermor?

'Between the Woods and the Water' is the second volume of Patrick Leigh Fermor's travel trilogy, detailing his 1934 journey on foot across Eastern Europe from the North Sea to the Balkans, exploring the landscapes, cultures, and histories of the regions.

How does 'Between the Woods and the Water' differ from Patrick Leigh Fermor's first book, 'A Time of Gifts'?

'Between the Woods and the Water' continues Fermor's journey after 'A Time of Gifts,' covering his travels through Central and Eastern Europe, and offers deeper insights into the local cultures, political climates, and personal reflections, whereas the first book focuses on his early experiences and the Western European route.

Why is Patrick Leigh Fermor considered a significant figure in travel writing, especially in relation to this book?

Fermor's vivid storytelling, rich historical context, and poetic prose make his travel narratives, including 'Between the Woods and the Water,' highly influential. His ability to blend adventure with cultural and historical analysis has cemented his reputation as one of the great travel writers of the 20th century.

What historical events or contexts are prominent in 'Between the Woods and the Water'?

The book captures the pre-World War II atmosphere in Eastern Europe, including the rise of nationalism, political tensions, and cultural shifts, providing a snapshot of a region on the brink of

profound change.

Are there any notable characters or encounters in 'Between the Woods and the Water'?

Yes, Fermor recounts encounters with various locals, travelers, and intellectuals, offering vivid portraits of the diverse peoples and personalities he meets along his journey, enriching the narrative with personal stories and cultural insights.

Has 'Between the Woods and the Water' been adapted or referenced in modern media?

While the book itself hasn't been widely adapted, Fermor's works have inspired travel writers and adventurers. Additionally, his life and writings have been featured in documentaries and literary discussions, highlighting his enduring influence.

What challenges did Patrick Leigh Fermor face during his journey in 'Between the Woods and the Water'?

Fermor faced physical hardships like rough terrains and harsh weather, language barriers, navigational difficulties, and the political tensions of a Europe on the edge of war, all of which he details with resilience and wit.

Why is 'Between the Woods and the Water' considered an essential read for fans of travel literature?

The book exemplifies immersive storytelling, cultural exploration, and lyrical prose, offering readers a profound sense of place and history. Its detailed account of a transformative journey through a pivotal region makes it a timeless classic in travel writing.

Additional Resources

Patrick Leigh Fermor: *Between the Woods and the Water* is a masterful continuation of the legendary travel writer's journey through Greece and beyond. As the second volume of his acclaimed trilogy, it captures the essence of adventure, history, and personal reflection, offering readers an immersive experience into a bygone era of exploration and cultural discovery.

Introduction to the Book

Patrick Leigh Fermor's *Between the Woods and the Water* is more than just a travel memoir; it is a literary voyage that blends vivid storytelling with historical insight and philosophical musings. Building upon the foundation laid in *A Time of Gifts*, this volume takes readers along Fermor's

journey through Eastern Europe, primarily Greece, during the 1930s. As Fermor recounts his pilgrimage from the Danube River to the Mediterranean, his prose captures a world on the brink of upheaval, yet still imbued with timeless beauty and human connection.

The book is characterized by Fermor's distinctive narrative voice—lyrical, insightful, and at times humorous. His detailed descriptions of landscapes, towns, and people transport readers into the heart of his adventures. The narrative is not merely a travelogue but a reflection on history, culture, and the enduring human spirit.

Overview of Content and Structure

The book is structured chronologically, following Fermor's journey through Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and Greece. It begins with his departure from Vienna, after having crossed Austria and Hungary, and continues through the Balkan regions—each chapter capturing a different locale and its unique character.

The narrative is rich with historical context, weaving Fermor's personal encounters with broader political and social upheavals. Intertwined with his travel experiences are reflections on the landscapes, architecture, folklore, and traditions of the regions he explores.

Some notable features include:

- Encounters with diverse characters, from shepherds to aristocrats
- Descriptions of historic sites and natural scenery
- Personal anecdotes and moments of introspection
- Insights into the political tensions brewing in Europe pre-World War II

Literary Style and Writing Quality

Patrick Leigh Fermor's writing is often celebrated for its lyrical quality and evocative imagery. His prose flows seamlessly, blending poetic descriptions with sharp wit and keen observation. Readers often praise his ability to evoke a sense of place and mood with remarkable clarity.

Features:

- Use of poetic language that elevates travel writing to art
- Rich vocabulary and vivid imagery
- Personal voice that creates intimacy with the reader
- Anecdotal storytelling that feels spontaneous yet crafted

Pros:

- Immersive and vivid descriptions
- Reflective tone that adds depth
- Engaging narrative flow

Cons:

- Some readers may find the language slightly archaic or verbose
- The poetic style might occasionally detract from straightforward storytelling for those preferring concise accounts

Historical and Cultural Insights

One of the most compelling aspects of *Between the Woods and the Water* is Fermor's integration of historical and cultural insights. His keen interest in local traditions, folklore, and history enriches the narrative, providing context to his personal journey.

Highlights include:

- Detailed accounts of Balkan history and its influence on local customs
- Descriptions of architectural landmarks and ancient ruins
- Anecdotes about local festivals, music, and dance
- Observations on the socio-political atmosphere of the 1930s Europe

This depth of cultural knowledge makes the book not only a travel account but also a valuable historical document, capturing a Europe on the cusp of profound change.

Themes and Personal Reflection

Fermor's journey is imbued with themes of adventure, exploration, and the search for meaning. His reflections often delve into philosophical questions about identity, belonging, and the passage of time.

Some key themes include:

- The transient nature of life and civilizations
- The enduring power of tradition amidst change
- The importance of human connection across cultures
- The juxtaposition of innocence and impending chaos in Europe

His personal reflections add emotional depth, allowing readers to connect with his sense of wonder, nostalgia, and sometimes melancholy.

Strengths of the Book

- Lyrical and poetic prose: Fermor's writing transforms travel into art, creating a rich tapestry of language that entralls readers.
- Historical depth: The book offers nuanced insights into the regions' histories and cultures, making it educational as well as entertaining.
- Vivid descriptions: From mountain vistas to bustling marketplaces, the sensory details bring the journey alive.
- Personal touch: Fermor's candid reflections and interactions give the narrative authenticity and emotional resonance.
- Cultural diversity: The book captures a wide array of local customs, dialects, and traditions, showcasing the richness of Balkan cultures.

Weaknesses and Criticisms

- Verbose language: Some readers might find Fermor's elaborate prose overly ornate or slow-paced.
- Historical perspective: The book's focus on the pre-World War II era may feel distant or less relevant to contemporary readers.
- Pacing: The detailed descriptions and reflections occasionally lead to a slower narrative rhythm.
- Limited action: As a travel memoir, it is more contemplative than adventure-driven, which may not appeal to all readers seeking excitement.

Impact and Legacy

Between the Woods and the Water has cemented Patrick Leigh Fermor's reputation as one of the greatest travel writers of the 20th century. Its influence extends beyond travel literature, inspiring writers, historians, and adventurers alike. The book's blend of lyrical storytelling, historical insight, and personal reflection exemplifies a literary approach to exploration that continues to resonate.

Fermor's detailed depiction of a Europe on the brink of war provides a poignant reminder of the fragility of civilizations and the enduring importance of cultural preservation and understanding.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Between the Woods and the Water is a richly rewarding read for anyone interested in travel, history, or literary craftsmanship. Its poetic language and historical depth make it a timeless classic, offering insights not only into the Balkan regions but also into the universal human experience of discovery.

Ideal readers include:

- Lovers of travel literature and historical narratives
- Readers interested in European history and cultures
- Those who appreciate lyrical, well-crafted prose
- Adventurers seeking inspiration for their own journeys

While its ornate style may challenge some, the book's profound insights and evocative storytelling make it a must-read for anyone eager to explore the poetic side of travel writing.

In summary, Patrick Leigh Fermor's *Between the Woods and the Water* is an exquisite literary voyage that captures the essence of a Europe lost to time yet alive in memory and tradition. Its combination of vivid descriptions, historical richness, and personal reflection ensures its place as a landmark in travel literature, inviting readers to walk alongside Fermor through the woods, water, and wonder of 1930s Eastern Europe.

[Patrick Leigh Fermor Between The Woods And The Water](#)

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: *Between the Woods and the Water* Patrick Leigh Fermor, 2010-10-10 The acclaimed travel writer's youthful journey - as an 18-year-old - across 1930s Europe by foot began in *A Time of Gifts*, which covered the author's exacting journey from the Lowlands as far as Hungary. Picking up from the very spot on a bridge across the Danube where his readers last saw him, we travel on with him across the great Hungarian Plain on horseback, and over the Romanian border to Transylvania. The trip was an exploration of a continent which was already showing signs of the holocaust which was to come. Although frequently praised for his lyrical writing, Fermor's account also provides a coherent understanding of the dramatic events then unfolding in Middle Europe. But the delight remains in travelling with him in his picaresque journey past remote castles, mountain villages, monasteries and towering ranges.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Between the Woods and the Water Patrick Leigh Fermor, 2004 This text describes part of the journey of Patrick Leigh Fermor from the Hook of Holland to Constantinople in 1933, describing his encounters with different peoples and cultures.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: A Time of Gifts Patrick Leigh Fermor, 2011-09-14 This beloved account about an intrepid young Englishman on the first leg of his walk from London to Constantinople is simply one of the best works of travel literature ever written. At the age of eighteen, Patrick Leigh Fermor set off from the heart of London on an epic journey—to walk to Constantinople. *A Time of Gifts* is the rich account of his adventures as far as Hungary, after which *Between the Woods and the Water* continues the story to the Iron Gates that divide the Carpathian and Balkan mountains. Acclaimed for its sweep and intelligence, Leigh Fermor's book

explores a remarkable moment in time. Hitler has just come to power but war is still ahead, as he walks through a Europe soon to be forever changed—through the Lowlands to Mitteleuropa, to Teutonic and Slav heartlands, through the baroque remains of the Holy Roman Empire; up the Rhine, and down to the Danube. At once a memoir of coming-of-age, an account of a journey, and a dazzling exposition of the English language, *A Time of Gifts* is also a portrait of a continent already showing ominous signs of the holocaust to come.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: The Patrick Leigh Fermor Boxed Set Patrick Leigh Fermor, 2016-10-11

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: *The Unpossessed* Tess Slesinger, 2002-08-31 Tess Slesinger's 1934 novel, *The Unpossessed* details the ins and outs and ups and downs of left-wing New York intellectual life and features a cast of litterateurs, layabouts, lotharios, academic activists, and fur-clad patrons of protest and the arts. This cutting comedy about hard times, bad jobs, lousy marriages, little magazines, high principles, and the morning after bears comparison with the best work of Dawn Powell and Mary McCarthy.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Notes on the Cinematograph Robert Bresson, 2016-11-15 The French film director Robert Bresson was one of the great artists of the twentieth century and among the most radical, original, and radiant stylists of any time. He worked with nonprofessional actors—models, as he called them—and deployed a starkly limited but hypnotic array of sounds and images to produce such classic works as *A Man Escaped*, *Pickpocket*, *Diary of a Country Priest*, and *Lancelot of the Lake*. From the beginning to the end of his career, Bresson dedicated himself to making movies in which nothing is superfluous and everything is always at stake. *Notes on the Cinematograph* distills the essence of Bresson's theory and practice as a filmmaker and artist. He discusses the fundamental differences between theater and film; parses the deep grammar of silence, music, and noise; and affirms the mysterious power of the image to unlock the human soul. This book, indispensable for admirers of this great director and for students of the cinema, will also prove an inspiration, much like Rilke's *Letters to a Young Poet*, for anyone who responds to the claims of the imagination at its most searching and rigorous.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Hill Jean Giono, 2016-04-05 An NYRB Classics Original Deep in Provence, a century ago, four stone houses perch on a hillside. Wildness presses in from all sides. Beyond a patchwork of fields, a mass of green threatens to overwhelm the village. The animal world—a miming cat, a malevolent boar—displays a mind of its own. The four houses have a dozen residents—and then there is Gagou, a mute drifter. Janet, the eldest of the men, is bedridden; he feels snakes writhing in his fingers and speaks in tongues. Even so, all is well until the village fountain suddenly stops running. From this point on, humans and the natural world are locked in a life-and-death struggle. All the elements—fire, water, earth, and air—come into play. From an early age, Jean Giono roamed the hills of his native Provence. He absorbed oral traditions and, at the same time, devoured the Greek and Roman classics. *Hill*, his first novel and the first winner of the Prix Brentano, comes fully back to life in Paul Eprile's poetic translation.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: *A Visit to Don Otavio* Sybille Bedford, 2016-06-21 In the mid-1940s, Sybille Bedford set off from Grand Central Station for Mexico, accompanied by her friend E., a hamper of food and drink (Virginia ham, cherries, watercress, a flute of bread, Portuguese rosé), books, a writing board, and paper. Her resulting travelogue captures the violent beauty of the country she visited. Bedford doesn't so much describe Mexico as take the reader there—in second-class motor buses over thousands of miles, through arid noons and frigid nights, successions of comida corrida, botched excursions to the coast, conversations recorded verbatim, hilarious observations, and fascinating digressions into murky histories. At the heart of the book is the Don Otavio of the title, the travelers' gracious host, his garrulous family and friends, and his Edenic hacienda at Lake Chapala. Published in 1953, *A Visit to Don Otavio* was an immediate success, "a travel book written by a novelist," as Bedford described it, establishing her reputation as a nonpareil writer.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Back Henry Green, 2016-10-18

Back is the story of Charley Summers, who is back from the war and a POW camp having lost the woman he loved, Rose, to illness before he left and his leg to fighting. In other words, Charley has very little to come back to, only memories, and on top of that he has been deeply traumatized by his experience of war. Rose's father introduces him to another young woman, Nancy, and Charley becomes convinced that she is in fact Rose and pursues her. Back is at once a Shakespearean comedy of mistaken identities, a voyage into the world of madness, and a celebration of the improbable healing powers of love.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Samskara U.R. Ananthamurthy, 2017-01-10 Samskara is one of the acknowledged masterpieces of modern world literature, a book to set beside Chinua Achebe's Things Fall Apart and Tayeb Salih's Season of Migration to the North. Taking its name from a Sanskrit word that means "rite of passage" but also "moment of recognition," it begins when Naranappa, an inhabitant of a small south Indian town and a renegade Brahmin who has scandalously flouted the rules of caste and purity for years, eating meat, drinking alcohol, marrying beneath him, mocking God, unexpectedly falls ill and dies. The question of whether he should be buried as a Brahmin divides the other Brahmins in the village. For an answer they turn to Praneshacharyah, the most devout and respected member of their community, an ascetic who also tends religiously to his invalid wife. Praneshacharyah finds himself unable to provide the answer, though an answer is urgently needed since as he wonders and the villagers wait and the body festers, more and more people are falling sick and dying. But when Praneshacharyah goes to the temple to seek a sign from God, he discovers something else entirely—unless that something else is also God. Samskara is a tale of existential suspense, a life-and-death encounter between the sacred and the profane, the pure and the impure, the ascetic and the erotic.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: English Renaissance Poetry John Williams, 2016-02-23 AN ANTHOLOGY FROM THE AUTHOR OF STONER Poetry in English as we know it was largely invented in England between the early 1500s and 1630, and yet for many years the poetry of the era was considered little more than a run-up to Shakespeare. The twentieth century brought a reevaluation, and the English Renaissance has since come to be recognized as the period of extraordinary poetic experimentation that it was. Never since have the possibilities of poetic form and, especially, poetic voice—from the sublime to the scandalous and slangy—been so various and inviting. This is poetry that speaks directly across the centuries to the renaissance of poetic exploration in our own time. John Williams's celebrated anthology includes not only some of the most famous poems by some of the most famous poets of the English language (Sir Thomas Wyatt, John Donne, and of course Shakespeare) but also—and this is what makes Williams's book such a rare and rich resource—the strikingly original work of little-known masters like George Gascoigne and Fulke Greville.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: The Farm in the Green Mountains Alice Herdan-Zuckmayer, 2017-05-02 The charming, return-to-the-land memoir of a refugee family who flees Nazi Germany and finds their true home in the backwoods of rural Vermont Alice and Carl Zuckmayer lived at the center of Weimar-era Berlin. She was a former actor turned medical student, he was a playwright, and their circle of friends included Stefan Zweig, Alma Mahler, and Bertolt Brecht. But then the Nazis took over, and Carl's most recent success—a play satirizing German militarism—impressed them in all the wrong ways. The couple and their two daughters were forced to flee, first to Austria, then to Switzerland, and finally to the United States. Los Angeles didn't suit them, neither did New York, but a chance stroll in the Vermont woods led them to Backwoods Farm and the eighteenth-century farmhouse where they would spend the next five years. In Europe, the Zuckmayers were accustomed to servants; in Vermont, they found themselves building chicken coops, refereeing fights between fractious ducks, and caring for temperamental water pipes "like babies." But in spite of the endless work and the brutal, depressing winters, Alice found that in America she had at last discovered her "native land." This generous, surprising, and witty memoir, a best seller in postwar Germany, has all the charm of an unlikely romantic comedy.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising Miron Białoszewski, 2015-10-27 On August 1, 1944, Miron Białoszewski, later to gain renown as one of Poland's most innovative poets, went out to run an errand for his mother and ran into history. With Soviet forces on the outskirts of Warsaw, the Polish capital revolted against five years of Nazi occupation, an uprising that began in a spirit of heroic optimism. Sixty-three days later it came to a tragic end. The Nazis suppressed the insurgents ruthlessly, reducing Warsaw to rubble while slaughtering some 200,000 people, mostly through mass executions. The Red Army simply looked on. Białoszewski's blow-by-blow account of the uprising brings it alive in all its desperate urgency. Here we are in the shoes of a young man slipping back and forth under German fire, dodging sniper bullets, collapsing with exhaustion, rescuing the wounded, burying the dead. An indispensable and unforgettable act of witness, *A Memoir of the Warsaw Uprising* is also a major work of literature. Białoszewski writes in short, stabbing, splintered, breathless sentences attuned to "the glaring identity of 'now.'" His pages are full of a white-knuckled poetry that resists the very destruction it records. Madeline G. Levine has extensively revised her 1977 translation, and passages that were unpublishable in Communist Poland have been restored.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Like Death Guy De Maupassant, 2017-02-21 A devastating novel about the treachery of love by Maupassant, now in a new translation by National Book Award and Pulitzer Prize winning poet and translator Richard Howard Olivier Bertin is at the height of his career as a painter. After making his name as a young man with his *Cleopatra*, he has gone on to establish himself as "the chosen painter of Parisiennes, the most adroit and ingenious artist to reveal their grace, their figures, and their souls." And though his hair may be white, he remains a handsome, vigorous, and engaging bachelor, a prized guest at every table and salon. Olivier's lover is Anne, the Countess de Guilleroy, the wife of a busy politician. Their relationship is long-standing, close, almost conjugal. The countess's daughter is Annette, and she is the spitting image of her mother in her lovely youth. Having finished her schooling, Annette is returning to Paris. Her parents have put together an excellent match. Everything is as it should be—until the painter and countess are each seized by an agonizing suspicion, like death. . . . In its devastating depiction of the treacherous nature of love, *Like Death* is more than the equal of *Swann's Way*. Richard Howard's new translation brings out all the penetration and poetry of this masterpiece of nineteenth-century fiction.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Thus Were Their Faces Silvina Ocampo, 2015-01-27 An NYRB Classics Original *Thus Were Their Faces* offers a comprehensive selection of the short fiction of Silvina Ocampo, undoubtedly one of the twentieth century's great masters of the story and the novella. Here are tales of doubles and impostors, angels and demons, a marble statue of a winged horse that speaks, a beautiful seer who writes the autobiography of her own death, a lapdog who records the dreams of an old woman, a suicidal romance, and much else that is incredible, mad, sublime, and delicious. Italo Calvino has written that no other writer "better captures the magic inside everyday rituals, the forbidden or hidden face that our mirrors don't show us." Jorge Luis Borges flatly declared, "Silvina Ocampo is one of our best writers. Her stories have no equal in our literature." Dark, gothic, fantastic, and grotesque, these haunting stories are among the world's most individual and finest.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Blindness Henry Green, 2017-04-04 Henry Green's first novel, and the book that began his career as a master of British modernism *Blindness*—Henry Green's first novel, begun while he was still at Eton and finished before he left university—is the story of John Haye, a young student with literary airs. It starts with an excerpt from his diary, brimming with excitement and affectation and curiosity about life and literature. Then a freak accident robs John of his sight, plunging him into despair. Forced to live with his high-handed, horsey stepmother in the country, John begins a weird dalliance with a girl named Joan, leading to a new determination. *Blindness* is the curse of youth and inexperience and love and ambition, but blindness, John will discover, can also be the source of vision.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: Family Lexicon Natalia Ginzburg,

2017-04-25 A masterpiece of European literature that blends family memoir and fiction An Italian family, sizable, with its routines and rituals, crazes, pet phrases, and stories, doubtful, comical, indispensable, comes to life in the pages of Natalia Ginzburg's *Family Lexicon*. Giuseppe Levi, the father, is a scientist, consumed by his work and a mania for hiking—when he isn't provoked into angry remonstrance by someone misspeaking or misbehaving or wearing the wrong thing. Giuseppe is Jewish, married to Lidia, a Catholic, though neither is religious; they live in the industrial city of Turin where, as the years pass, their children find ways of their own to medicine, marriage, literature, politics. It is all very ordinary, except that the background to the story is Mussolini's Italy in its steady downward descent to race law and world war. The Levis are, among other things, unshakeable anti-fascists. That will complicate their lives. *Family Lexicon* is about a family and language—and about storytelling not only as a form of survival but also as an instrument of deception and domination. The book takes the shape of a novel, yet everything is true. "Every time that I have found myself inventing something in accordance with my old habits as a novelist, I have felt impelled at once to destroy [it]," Ginzburg tells us at the start. "The places, events, and people are all real."

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: *History is Our Mother: Three Libretti* Alice Goodman, 2017-07-18 The first appearance of Alice Goodman's two internationally-renowned and controversial libretti, alongside one of her masterful translations. An NYRB Classics Original *Nixon in China* and *The Death of Klinghoffer* played a crucial role in bringing opera back to life as a contemporary art form, and they have been popular—and, in the case of *Klinghoffer*, highly controversial—ever since they were first staged by the director Peter Sellars in the eighties and nineties. Both operas were conceived from the start as collaborations between composer and writer, and their power is due as much to the dazzlingly constructed and deeply felt libretti of the poet Alice Goodman as they are to John Adams's music. *Nixon in China* is a story, at once heroic, comic, and unnerving, of men and women making history and of their different conceptions of what history is and what it means to make it. *Klinghoffer*, by contrast, has at its center the tragedy of an innocent man condemned at the cost of his life to play a part in history. *History Is Our Mother*, which takes its title from a line sung by the title character in *Nixon in China*, brings Goodman's two libretti together for the first time in book form. Included alongside Goodman's no less inspired translation of Emanuel Schikaneder's famous libretto to *The Magic Flute*, these vivid dramas of character and searching meditations on fate are here revealed as among the most original, ambitious, and accomplished poetic achievements of our time.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: *Living* Henry Green, 2017-04-04 A timeless work of social satire, set in the 1920s and considered one of the most insightful Modernist depictions of England's working class *Living* is a book about life in a factory town and the operations of a factory, from the workers on the floor to the boss in his office. The town is Birmingham and the factory is an iron foundry, like the one that Henry Green worked in for some time in the 1920s after dropping out of Oxford, and the stories—courtships, layoffs, getting dinner on the table, going to the pub, death—are all the ordinary stuff of life. The style, however, is pure Henry Green, at once starkly constrained and wildly streaked with the expedients and eccentricities of everyday speech—cliché and innuendo, clashing metaphors, slips of tongue—which is to say it is like nothing else. Epic and antic, *Living* is a book of exact observation and deep tenderness, the work, in Rosamond Lehmann's words, of an "amorous and austere voluptuary" whose work continues to transform the novel.

patrick leigh fermor between the woods and the water: *Arabia Felix* Thorkild Hansen, 2017-06-13 Discover the riveting true story of the 18th-century expedition that left only one survivor in this lost classic of adventure and travel writing—with 33 drawings and maps. *Arabia Felix* is the spellbinding true story of a scientific expedition gone disastrously awry. On a winter morning in 1761 6 men leave Copenhagen by sea—a botanist, a philologist, an astronomer, a doctor, an artist, and their manservant—an ill-assorted band of men who dislike and distrust one another from the start. These are the members of the Danish expedition to Arabia Felix, as Yemen was then known, the first organized foray into a corner of the world unknown to Europeans. The expedition made its

way to Turkey and Egypt, by which time its members were already actively seeking to undercut and even kill one another, before disappearing into the harsh desert that was their destination. Nearly 7 years later a single survivor returned to Denmark to find himself forgotten and all the specimens that had been sent back ruined by neglect. Based on diaries, notebooks, and sketches that lay unread in Danish archives until the twentieth century, Arabia Felix is a tale of intellectual rivalry and a comedy of very bad manners, as well as an utterly absorbing adventure.

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