

Penelope Fitzgerald A Life Hermione Lee

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Understanding Penelope Fitzgerald

Biography: A Very Short Introduction

The groundbreaking biography of one of the world's best-loved and bestselling authors Who was the real Georgette Heyer? Georgette Heyer famously said, "I am to be found in my work." Who was this amazing writer who was so secretive about her personal life that she never gave an interview? Where did she get her ideas? Were there real-life models for her ultra-manly heroes, independent-minded heroines, irascible guardians, and clever villains? What motivated her to build a Regency world so intricately researched that readers want to escape there again and again? Heyer's Regency romances, historical novels, and mysteries have surprised and delighted millions of readers for decades, while the woman behind the stories has stayed hidden. Until now! With unprecedented, exclusive access to Heyer's notebooks, papers, and early letters, Jennifer Kloester uncovers both the complex life of a private woman and a masterful writer's craft that will forever resonate in literature and beyond. "A wonderful entertaining biography—a readable and lively account of this beloved writer."—Eloisa James, #1 New York Times bestselling author "Required reading for all lovers of Regency novels."—Mary Jo Putney, New York Times bestselling author of No Longer a Gentleman "A superb portrayal of one of my all-time favorite writers."—Anne Gracie, award-winning author of Bride By Mistake "An engaging, intriguing, absorbing, read!"—Stephanie Laurens, #1 New York Times bestselling author Praise for Georgette Heyer's Regency World: "Meticulously researched yet splendidly entertaining a must-have."—Publishers Weekly Starred Review "Detailed, informative, impressively researched. A Heyer lover writing for Heyer fans."—Times Literary Supplement "Kloester's lively book will delight died-in-the-wool Regency readers." —Booklist

The Blue Flower

Shortlisted for the Booker Prize. In a small East Anglian town, Florence Green decides, against polite but ruthless local opposition, to open a bookshop.

Born with Teeth

Offshore

Penelope Fitzgerald (1916-2000) has been acclaimed as one of the finest British novelists of the late twentieth century. Four of her novels were shortlisted for the Booker Prize and one of them, *Offshore* (1979), won; her final work of historical fiction, *The Blue Flower* (1995), won the US National Book Critics' Circle Award. Fitzgerald's works are distinguished by their acute wit, deft handling of emotional tone and an unsentimental yet deeply felt commitment to portraying the lives of those men, women and children 'who seem to have been born defeated'. Admirers have long recognised the brilliance of Fitzgerald's writing, yet the deceptive simplicity of her style invariably leads readers to ask, 'How is it done?' This book seeks to answer that question, providing the first sustained exposition of Penelope Fitzgerald's compositional method, working both inwards from the surface of her writing and outwards from the archival evidence of Fitzgerald's own drafts and working papers.

Tom Stoppard

What choices must a biographer make when stitching the pieces of a life into one coherent whole? How do we best create an accurate likeness of a private life from the few articles that linger after death? How do we choose what gets left out? This intriguing and witty collection of essays by an internationally acclaimed biographer looks at how biography deals with myths and legends, what goes missing and what can't be proved in the story of a life. *Virginia Woolf's Nose* presents a variety of case-studies, in which literary biographers are faced with gaps and absences, unprovable stories and ambiguities surrounding their subjects. By looking at stories about Percy Bysshe Shelley's shriveled, burnt heart found pressed between the pages of a book, Jane Austen's fainting spell, Samuel Pepys's lobsters, and the varied versions of Virginia Woolf's life and death, preeminent biographer Hermione Lee considers how biographers deal with and often utilize these missing body parts, myths, and contested data to "fill in the gaps" of a life story. In "Shelley's Heart and Pepys's Lobsters," an essay dealing with missing parts and biographical legends, Hermione Lee discusses one of the most complicated and emotionally charged examples of the contested use of biographical sources. "Jane Austen Faints" takes five competing versions of the same dramatic moment in the writer's life to ask how biography deals with the private lives of famous women. "Virginia Woolf's Nose" looks at the way this legendary author's life has been translated through successive transformations, from biography to fiction to film, and suggests there can be no such thing as a definitive version of a life. Finally, "How to End It

All" analyzes the changing treatment of deathbed scenes in biography to show how biographical conventions have shifted, and asks why the narrators and readers of life-stories feel the need to give special meaning and emphasis to endings. Virginia Woolf's *Nose* sheds new light on the way biographers bring their subjects to life as physical beings, and offers captivating new insights into the drama of "life-writing". Virginia Woolf's *Nose* is a witty, eloquent, and funny text by a renowned biographer whose sensitivity to the art of telling a story about a human life is unparalleled--and in creating it, Lee articulates and redefines the parameters of her craft.

Innocence

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY HERMIONE LEE The previously uncollected occasional prose of a great English writer - full of wit, feeling and illumination.

The Knox Brothers

Presents a fictionalized account of the relationship between the eighteenth-century German poet known as Novalis and his true love, Sophie

Virginia Woolf

ONE OF THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW' S 10 BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR A Best Book of the Year: San Francisco Chronicle, Seattle Times Winner of the Plutarch Award for Best Biography The acclaimed biographer of Edith Wharton and Virginia Woolf gives us an intimate portrait of one of the most quietly brilliant novelists of the twentieth century. Penelope Fitzgerald was a great English writer whose career didn't begin until she was nearly sixty. She would go on to win some of the most coveted awards in literature—the Booker Prize and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Now, in an impeccable match of talent between biographer and subject, Hermione Lee, a master biographer and one of Fitzgerald's greatest champions, gives us this remarkable writer's story. Lee's critical expertise is on dazzling display on every page, as it illuminates this extraordinary English life. Fitzgerald, born into an accomplished intellectual family, the granddaughter of two bishops, led a life marked by dramatic twists of fate, moving from a bishop's palace to a sinking houseboat to a last, late blaze of renown. We see Fitzgerald's very English childhood in the village of Hampstead; her Oxford years, when she was known as the "blonde bombshell"; her impoverished adulthood as a struggling wife, mother and schoolteacher, raising a family in difficult circumstances; and the long-delayed start to her literary career. Fitzgerald's early novels draw on her own experiences—working at the BBC in wartime, at a bookshop in Suffolk, at an eccentric stage school in the 1960s—while her later books open out into historical worlds that she, magically, seems to entirely possess: Russia before the Revolution,

postwar Italy, Germany in the time of the Romantic writer Novalis. Fitzgerald's novels are short, spare masterpieces, and Hermione Lee unfurls them here as works of genius. Expertly researched, written out of love and admiration for this wonderful author's work, Penelope Fitzgerald is literary biography at its finest—an unforgettable story of lateness, persistence and survival. From the Hardcover edition.

Cleopatra

Intimate, perceptive, critically acute, funny and moving, this is the first full biography of one of the finest English novelists of the last century. Penelope Fitzgerald (1916-2000) was a great English writer, who would never have described herself in such grand terms. Her novels were short, spare masterpieces, self-concealing, oblique and subtle. She won the Booker Prize for her novel *Offshore* in 1979, and her last work, *The Blue Flower*, was acclaimed as a work of genius. The early novels drew on her own experiences -- a boat on the Thames in the 1960s; the BBC in war time; a failing bookshop in Suffolk; an eccentric stage-school. The later ones opened out to encompass historical worlds which, magically, she seemed to possess entirely: Russia before the Revolution; post-war Italy; Germany in the time of the Romantic writer Novalis. Fitzgerald's life is as various and as cryptic as her fiction. It spans most of the twentieth century, and moves from a Bishop's Palace to a sinking barge, from a demanding intellectual family to hardship and poverty, from a life of teaching and obscurity to a blaze of renown. She was first published at sixty and became famous at eighty. This is a story of lateness, patience and persistence: a private form of heroism. Loved and admired, and increasingly recognised as one of the outstanding novelists of her time, she remains, also, mysterious and intriguing. She liked to mislead people with a good imitation of an absent-minded old lady, but under that scatty front were a steel-sharp brain and an imagination of wonderful reach. This brilliant account -- by a biographer whom Fitzgerald herself admired -- pursues her life, her writing, and her secret self, with fascinated interest.

Norman Mailer: A Double Life

On its original publication in 1982 this book was the first full-length study of Philip Roth as a major twentieth-century writer. As well as setting the novelist's work in the context of Jewish-American writing (and Jewish-American families) and twentieth-century American politics, the book explores the characteristic paradoxes in Roth: self-disgust and self-consciousness, restraint and letting go, nausea and appetite, energy and frustration, stylishness and vulgarity, surrealism and the mundane. Roth is a highly literary and referential character and an assessment is made of the conflicting influences on his work of Kafka, Chekov, Gogol, Henry James, Melville and Henry Youngman, a Jewish nightclub and Vaudeville comic. In addition a close examination of his anxious, revolting, garrulous heroes, their mothers, their marriages, their shrinks, and their shiksas is undertaken and a deep seriousness is discovered, co-existing with Roth's comic brashness and bravura.

Earth Keeper

Penelope Fitzgerald, the Booker Prize-winning author of 'Offshore' and 'The Blue Flower', turns her attention to the remarkable life of the Pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones.

Edward Burne-Jones

'A terrific debut. Sparkling, very (very) funny, and deeply moving' ARAVIND ADIGA 'Truly something different, and exhilarating' GARY SHTEYNGART Set in Boston and Bangalore, Accidental Magic is the story of four very different people whose lives are brought together by Harry Potter. For Kannan, Curtis, Rebecca and Malathi, social outsiders and people adrift, the intense and diverse world of Harry Potter fandom offers community, even a sense of meaning. An extraordinary novel about how flawed relationships can be; how we battle loneliness, live on hope and search for that perfect connection-often settling for imperfection-it is also about the tension between duty and the individual pursuit of happiness. Accidental Magic is a work of great imagination and marks the arrival of an exciting and powerful new voice.

Penelope Fitzgerald

A portrait of the influential twentieth-century writer steps away from traditional explorations of her Bloomsbury social circles to reveal how her life was centered on her writing, drawing on letters, diaries, and essays to explain how her written works reflect her formative experiences and creative philosophies. Reprint.

Edith Wharton

Expanded edition of stories based on Hermoine Lee's popular earlier selections published by Everyman.

A House of Air

"With readings of a broad range of her published works, including her final novel, The Blue Flower, Wolfe describes the unfolding of Fitzgerald's writing as a subtle, ongoing process. He maintains that the novels, though plain and rambling at first glance, grow fuller, stranger, and more stirring the more we invest in them. He details Fitzgerald's skill at sequencing events so as to unsettle readers and her ability to enhance motifs by not leaning too hard on them. Wolfe suggests that Fitzgerald's refusal to overplay effects and emotions, while at first puzzling in its disdain for drama, turns out to be one of her chief virtues, for she enables larger associations to emerge as she keeps big dramatic scenes from interfering with

wider patterns."--BOOK JACKET.

Penelope Fitzgerald

Raised by unconventional Irish Catholics who knew "how to drink, how to dance, how to talk, and how to stir up the devil," Kate Mulgrew grew up with poetry and drama in her bones. But in her mother, a would-be artist burdened by the endless arrival of new babies, young Kate saw the consequences of a dream deferred. Determined to pursue her own no matter the cost, at 18 she left her small Midwestern town for New York, where, studying with the legendary Stella Adler, she learned the lesson that would define her as an actress: "Use it," Adler told her. Whatever disappointment, pain, or anger life throws in your path, channel it into the work. It was a lesson she would need. At twenty-two, just as her career was taking off, she became pregnant and gave birth to a daughter. Having already signed the adoption papers, she was allowed only a fleeting glimpse of her child. As her star continued to rise, her life became increasingly demanding and fulfilling, a whirlwind of passionate love affairs, life-saving friendships, and bone-crunching work. Through it all, Mulgrew remained haunted by the loss of her daughter, until, two decades later, she found the courage to face the past and step into the most challenging role of her life, both on and off screen. We know Kate Mulgrew for the strong women she's played--Captain Janeway on Star Trek; the tough-as-nails "Red" on Orange Is the New Black. Now, we meet the most inspiring and memorable character of all: herself. By turns irreverent and soulful, laugh-out-loud funny and heart-piercingly sad, BORN WITH TEETH is the breathtaking memoir of a woman who dares to live life to the fullest, on her own terms.

Penelope Fitzgerald

A powerful novel of America's Civil War told through the voices of Confederate soldiers, turncoats, and Stonewall Jackson in the weeks leading up to the great slaughter at Antietam In the summer of 1862, as the Civil War rages on, a ragtag Confederate army consisting of young boys and old men, storekeepers, farmers, and teachers, gathers in Virginia under the leadership of Tom "Stonewall" Jackson, ready to follow their sainted commander to glory—or hell. One of these men, Usaph Bumpass left his wife, Ephie, behind to join the Shenandoah Volunteers, only to discover Ephie's lover, Decatur Cate, among his comrades. Still, Usaph remains steadfast in his devotion to a cause he does not fully understand, even as troubling memories of home invade his mind on the march north. But a dark destiny awaits brilliant military strategist Jackson and his Southern boys, as hard truths about war, loyalty, love, life, and death are revealed in the fires and bloodshed at Antietam. A breathtaking work of historical fiction that captures the human face of war as few novels have done before, Confederates has been compared to Tolstoy's epic War and Peace as an artful, honest, and profoundly moving depiction of the lot of the soldier. Shortlisted for Great Britain's prestigious Man Booker Prize, this masterful tale of love, duty, and conflict from author of Schindler's List Thomas Keneally is an enduring and unforgettable classic of Civil War

literature.

The Beginning of Spring

Winner of the James Tait Black Prize for Biography 2014 Winner of the Plutarch Award for Best Biography New York Times Book Review's 10 Best Books of the Year Penelope Fitzgerald (1916–2000) was a great English writer, who would never have described herself in such grand terms. Her novels were short, spare masterpieces, self-concealing, oblique and subtle. She won the Booker Prize for her novel *Offshore* in 1979, and her last work, *The Blue Flower*, was acclaimed as a work of genius. The early novels drew on her own experiences – a boat on the Thames in the 1960s; the BBC in war time; a failing bookshop in Suffolk; an eccentric stage-school. The later ones opened out to encompass historical worlds which, magically, she seemed to possess entirely: Russia before the Revolution; post-war Italy; Germany in the time of the Romantic writer Novalis. Fitzgerald's life is as various and as cryptic as her fiction. It spans most of the twentieth century, and moves from a Bishop's Palace to a sinking barge, from a demanding intellectual family to hardship and poverty, from a life of teaching and obscurity to a blaze of renown. She was first published at sixty and became famous at eighty. This is a story of lateness, patience and persistence: a private form of heroism. Loved and admired, and increasingly recognised as one of the outstanding novelists of her time, she remains, also, mysterious and intriguing. She liked to mislead people with a good imitation of an absent-minded old lady, but under that scatty front were a steel-sharp brain and an imagination of wonderful reach. This brilliant account – by a biographer whom Fitzgerald herself admired – pursues her life, her writing, and her secret self, with fascinated interest.

Georgette Heyer

“A delectable comedy of manners” set in 1950s Florence, by the Man Booker Prize-winning author of *The Bookshop* (The Boston Globe). It's 1955, and Italy is still struggling a decade after the end of World War II. So are the Ridolfis, a Florentine family of long and fading noble lineage. Like their decrepit villa, they've seen better days. Only eighteen-year-old Chiara shows anything like vitality—however impulsive and perilously naïve. Chiara has set her heart and her future on Salvatore Rossi, a brilliant, penniless young doctor and bull-headed son of a Communist, who has erased both politics and romance from his list of priorities. With her plans stymied, Chiara calls on her resourceful and meddlesome British girlfriend, Barney, to help make an impossible match. Now, out of good intentions and the most innocent of instincts, two guileless friends are going to make a series of astonishingly wrong moves in the name of love. From a winner of multiple major literary awards who was called “the best English novelist of her time” by Julian Barnes, *Innocence* is a novel “not just about Italians in love but of living and loving for all humans” (The Times). “As intoxicating as a shot of aged brandy.” —The Washington Post

Human Voices

Man Booker Prize Finalist: This “marvelous novel” about an abandoned husband, set in Moscow a century ago, is “bristling with wry comedy” (Newsday). March 1913. Moscow is stirring herself to meet the beginning of spring. English painter Frank Reid returns from work one night to find that his wife has gone away; no one knows where or why, or whether she’ll ever come back. All Frank knows for sure is that he is now alone and must find someone to care for his three young children. Into Frank’s life comes Lisa Ivanovna, a quiet, calming beauty from the country, untroubled to the point of seeming simple. But is she? And why has Frank’s bookkeeper, Selwyn Crane, gone to such lengths to bring these two together? From a winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award, this novel, with a new introduction by Andrew Miller, author of *Pure*, is filled with “writing so precise and lilting it can make you shiver” (Los Angeles Times). “Fitzgerald was the author of several slim, perfect novels. *The Blue Flower* and *The Beginning of Spring* both had me abuzz for days the first time I read them. She was curiously perfect.” —Teju Cole, author of *Open City*

Virginia Woolf

A fascinating collection of letters from the great English novelist – and prolific correspondent – Penelope Fitzgerald

So I Have Thought of You: The Letters of Penelope Fitzgerald

Young Fred Fairly, a junior fellow at St. Angelicus College in 1912 Cambridge, falls in love with the dangerously mysterious Daisy, whom he awakens next to one morning after a freak accident

Penelope Fitzgerald

Winner of the Booker Prize *On the Battersea Reach of the Thames*, a mixed bag of the slightly disreputable, the temporarily lost, and the patently eccentric live on houseboats, rising and falling with the great river’s tides. Belonging to neither land nor sea, they cling to one another in a motley yet kindly society. There is Maurice, by occupation a male prostitute, by happenstance a receiver of stolen goods. And Richard, a buttoned-up ex-navy man whose boat dominates the Reach. Then there is Nenna, a faithful but abandoned wife, the diffident mother of two young girls running wild on the waterfront streets. It is Nenna’s domestic predicament that, as it deepens, draws the relations among this scrubby community together into ever more complex and comic patterns. The result is one of Fitzgerald’s greatest triumphs, a novel the Booker judges deemed “flawless.” “A marvelous achievement: strong, supple, humane, ripe, generous, and graceful.” —Sunday Times

Body Parts

Philip Roth

From Hermione Lee, the internationally acclaimed, award-winning biographer of Virginia Woolf and Willa Cather, comes a superb reexamination of one of the most famous American women of letters. Delving into heretofore untapped sources, Lee does away with the image of the snobbish bluestocking and gives us a new Edith Wharton—tough, startlingly modern, as brilliant and complex as her fiction. Born into a wealthy family, Wharton left America as an adult and eventually chose to create a life in France. Her renowned novels and stories have become classics of American literature, but as Lee shows, Wharton's own life, filled with success and scandal, was as intriguing as those of her heroines. Bridging two centuries and two very different sensibilities, Wharton here comes to life in the skillful hands of one of the great literary biographers of our time. From the Trade Paperback edition.

A Long Way From Verona

“Earth Keeper is a prayer for continuity in these days of uncertainty. I cannot tell you why I loved this book, I can only tell you I wept my way through it. Each page brought me closer to myself, a self I had lost in the pandemic. We need Scott Momaday's calm, clear prose and stories. Words are medicine. There is wisdom in sharing what one knows, especially at a time when we know so little. ‘Let me say my heart,’ he says. And he does.” — Terry Tempest Williams, author of *Erosion: Essays of Undoing* A beautifully written and poignant tribute to the Earth, from Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist and poet N. Scott Momaday. One of the most distinguished voices in American letters, N. Scott Momaday has devoted much of his life to celebrating and preserving Native American culture, especially its oral tradition. A member of the Kiowa tribe who was born and grew up on Indian reservations throughout the Southwest, Momaday has an intimate connection to the land he knows well and loves deeply. In *Earth Keeper: Reflections on the American Land*, he reflects on his native ground and its influence on his people. “When I think about my life and the lives of my ancestors, I am inevitably led to the conviction that I, and they, belong to the American land. This is a declaration of belonging. And it is an offering to the earth.” he writes. Momaday recalls stories of his childhood, stories that have been passed down through generations, stories that reveal a profound and sacred connection to the American landscape and a reverence for the natural world. In this moving and lyrical work, he offers an homage and a warning. Momaday reminds us that the Earth is a sacred place of wonder and beauty; a source of strength and healing that must be protected before it's too late. As he so eloquently yet simply expresses, we must all be keepers of the Earth.

The Game of Hope

A biography of the acclaimed Anglo-Irish novelist follows the formation of her character and the growth of her art from her childhood in a great ancestral manor to her discovery of America and international fame.

The Bookshop

This book, first published in 1977, is not about Bloomsbury, lesbianism, madness or suicide, but is a much-needed introduction to Virginia Woolf's nine novels, written in the hope of turning attention back from the life to the fictional work. Its clarity and insights will make this book invaluable to a student embarking on a study of Virginia Woolf as a novelist, and to all those whose interest has been aroused by the continuing publication of biographical material. It will, moreover, increase the enjoyment, not only of enthusiasts, but also of those who have hitherto, found her a 'difficult' writer.

A Suitable Boy

The Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer brings to life the most intriguing woman in the history of the world: Cleopatra, the last queen of Egypt. Her palace shimmered with onyx, garnets, and gold, but was richer still in political and sexual intrigue. Above all else, Cleopatra was a shrewd strategist and an ingenious negotiator. Though her life spanned fewer than forty years, it reshaped the contours of the ancient world. She was married twice, each time to a brother. She waged a brutal civil war against the first when both were teenagers. She poisoned the second. Ultimately she dispensed with an ambitious sister as well; incest and assassination were family specialties. Cleopatra appears to have had sex with only two men. They happen, however, to have been Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, among the most prominent Romans of the day. Both were married to other women. Cleopatra had a child with Caesar and--after his murder--three more with his protégé. Already she was the wealthiest ruler in the Mediterranean; the relationship with Antony confirmed her status as the most influential woman of the age. The two would together attempt to forge a new empire, in an alliance that spelled their ends. Cleopatra has lodged herself in our imaginations ever since. Famous long before she was notorious, Cleopatra has gone down in history for all the wrong reasons. Shakespeare and Shaw put words in her mouth. Michelangelo, Tiepolo, and Elizabeth Taylor put a face to her name. Along the way, Cleopatra's supple personality and the drama of her circumstances have been lost. In a masterly return to the classical sources, Stacy Schiff here boldly separates fact from fiction to rescue the magnetic queen whose death ushered in a new world order. Rich in detail, epic in scope, Schiff's is a luminous, deeply original reconstruction of a dazzling life.

Confederates

Elizabeth Bowen, an Estimation

A group of notable writers—including UK poet laureate Simon Armitage, Julian Barnes, Margaret MacMillan, and Jenny Uglow—celebrate our fascination with the houses of famous literary figures, artists, composers, and politicians of the past. What can a house tell us about the person who lives there? Do we shape the buildings we live in, or are we formed by the places we call home? And why are we especially fascinated by the houses of the famous and often long-dead? In *Lives of Houses*, a group of notable biographers, historians, critics, and poets explores these questions and more through fascinating essays on the houses of great writers, artists, composers, and politicians of the past. Editors Kate Kennedy and Hermione Lee are joined by wide-ranging contributors, including Simon Armitage, Julian Barnes, David Cannadine, Roy Foster, Alexandra Harris, Daisy Hay, Margaret MacMillan, Alexander Masters, and Jenny Uglow. We encounter W. H. Auden, living in joyful squalor in New York's St. Mark's Place, and W. B. Yeats in his flood-prone tower in the windswept West of Ireland. We meet Benjamin Disraeli, struggling to keep up appearances, and track the lost houses of Virginia Woolf and Elizabeth Bowen. We visit Benjamin Britten in Aldeburgh, England, and Jean Sibelius at Ainola, Finland. But *Lives of Houses* also considers those who are unhoused, unwilling or unable to establish a home—from the bewildered poet John Clare wandering the byways of England to the exiled Zimbabwean writer Dambudzo Marechera living on the streets of London. With more than forty illustrations, *Lives of Houses* illuminates what houses mean to us and how we use them to connect to and think about the past. The result is a fresh and engaging look at house and home. Featuring Alexandra Harris on moving house ● Susan Walker on Morocco's ancient Roman House of Venus ● Hermione Lee on biographical quests for writers' houses ● Margaret Macmillan on her mother's Toronto house ● a poem by Maura Dooley, "Visiting Orchard House, Concord, Massachusetts"—the house in which Louisa May Alcott wrote and set her novel *Little Women* ● Felicity James on William and Dorothy Wordsworth's Dove Cottage ● Robert Douglas-Fairhurst at home with Tennyson ● David Cannadine on Winston Churchill's dream house, Chartwell ● Jenny Uglow on Edward Lear at San Remo's Villa Emily ● Lucy Walker on Benjamin Britten at Aldeburgh, England ● Seamus Perry on W. H. Auden at 77 St. Mark's Place, New York City ● Rebecca Bullard on Samuel Johnson's houses ● a poem by Simon Armitage, "The Manor" ● Daisy Hay at home with the Disraelis ● Laura Marcus on H. G. Wells at Uppark ● Alexander Masters on the fear of houses ● Elleke Boehmer on sites associated with Zimbabwean writer Dambudzo Marechera ● Kate Kennedy on the mental asylums where World War I poet Ivor Gurney spent the last years of his life ● a poem by Bernard O'Donoghue, "Safe Houses" ● Roy Foster on W. B. Yeats and Thoor Ballylee ● Sandra Mayer on W. H. Auden's Austrian home ● Gillian Darley on John Soane and the autobiography of houses ● Julian Barnes on Sibelius and Ainola

Lives of Houses

A British radio station struggles through the London blitz, in a “wonderful” novel of World War II England (A.S. Byatt), by a veteran of the BBC. The nation is listening. It’s 1940, and BBC radio is on the air. Dedicated to the cause, it’s going to do what it does best: keep the British upper lip stiff without resorting to lies. But nightly blackouts and the thunder of exploding enemy bombs are only part of the chaos faced by the staff. There’s a battle for control between two program directors—one recklessly randy, the other efficient. Their comely assistant is suffering the pangs of unrequited love; an unwed mother is resisting the impending birth of her baby; and an exiled French general takes to the airwaves demanding Britain’s surrender. Then there’s the concert hall itself—a makeshift shelter for the displaced that quickly becomes a hotbed for quick trysts, bloody brawls, private wars between the sexes, political grandstanding, pointless deaths, and overriding fear, as the news unfolds just outside the building’s vulnerable walls. Inspired by the Booker Prize-winning author’s own wartime experiences at the BBC, *Human Voices* is a novel at once “funny, touching, and authentic” (Sunday Times, London). “Made me laugh out loud as I have hardly done since *Cold Comfort Farm*. It is extraordinary and immensely praiseworthy that a book with such an ultimately serious idea can be so brilliantly funny.” —Country Life “A tribute to the unsung and quintessentially English heroism of imperfect people.” —New Criterion

The Novels of Virginia Woolf

Penelope Fitzgerald's biography of her remarkable family describes the quite extraordinary lives of her father and his three brothers. Their lives straddled the divide between late Victorian and Edwardian society.

Virginia Woolf's Nose

Biographies are one of the most popular and best-selling of the literary genres. Why do people like them? What does a biography do and how does it work? This Very Short Introduction examines different types of biographies, why certain people and historical events arouse so much interest, and how they are compared with history and fiction.

Willa Cather

I ought to tell you at the beginning that I am not quite normal having had a violent experience at the age of nine' Jessica Vye's 'violent experience' colours her schooldays and her reaction to the world around her- a confining world of Order Marks, wartime restrictions, veyella dresses, nicely-restrained essays and dusty tea shops. For Jessica she has been told that she is 'beyond all possible doubt', a born writer. With her inability to conform, her absolute compulsion to tell the truth and her dedication to accurately noting her experiences, she knows this anyway. But what she doesn't know is that the experiences that sustain and enrich her burgeoning talent will one day lead to a new- and entirely unexpected- reality.

Accidental Magic

Drawing on extensive interviews and unpublished letters, as well as his own encounters with Mailer, this authoritative biography of the eminent novelist, journalist and controversial public figure chronicles his entire career and his self-conscious effort to create a distinctive identity for himself.

The Gate of Angels

For Napoleon's stepdaughter, nothing is simple - especially love. Paris, 1798. Hortense de Beauharnais is engrossed in her studies at a boarding school for aristocratic girls, most of whom have suffered tragic losses during the tumultuous days of the French Revolution. She loves to play and compose music, read and paint, and daydream about Christophe, her brother's dashing fellow officer. But Hortense is not an ordinary girl. Her beautiful, charming mother, Josephine, has married Napoleon Bonaparte, soon to become the most powerful man in France, but viewed by Hortense at the outset as a coarse, unworthy successor to her elegant father, who was guillotined during the Terror. Where will Hortense's future lie? it may not be in her power to decide. Inspired by Hortense's real-life autobiography with charming glimpses of life long ago, this is the story of a girl destined by fate to play a role she didn't choose.

The Secret Self

The key book for all time on Tom Stoppard: the biography of our greatest living playwright, by one of the leading literary biographers in the English-speaking world, a star in her own right, Hermione Lee. With unprecedented access to private papers, diaries, letters, and countless interviews with figures ranging from Felicity Kendal to John Boorman and Trevor Nunn to Steven Spielberg, Hermione Lee builds a metiucously researched portrait of one of our greatest playwrights. Drawing on several years of long, exploratory conversations with Stoppard himself, it tracks his Czech origins and childhood in India to every school and home he's ever lived in, every piece of writing he's ever done, and every play and film he's ever worked on; but in the end this is the story of a complex, elusive and private man, which tells you an enormous amount about him but leaves you, also, with the fascinating mystery of his ultimate unknowability.

Edith Wharton: Four Novels of the 1920s: The Glimpses of the Moon / A Son at the Front / Twilight Sleep / The Children

Acclaimed biographer Hermione Lee presents four “remarkable and surprising” books that collectively capture World War I and the Jazz Age through the eyes of one of our greatest novelists. Edith Wharton achieved the height of her critical and

popular success in the 1920s, following *The Age of Innocence*, winner of the 1921 Pulitzer Prize, with four works that, though less well-known today, reveal the same mastery of dramatic irony and penetrating social satire that place her, with Henry James and Willa Cather, among the foremost writers of her era. The Library of America now brings these brilliant works together for the first time in the fifth volume of its ongoing edition of Wharton's works. Here are *The Glimpses of the Moon* (1922), a romance set amid the crosscurrents of upper-class social maneuvering that is considered by some scholars to have been a literary inspiration for *The Great Gatsby*; *A Son at the Front* (1923), set in Paris in the First World War, a searing character study of an American painter grappling with his son's decision to answer the call of duty in the French army; *Twilight Sleep* (1927), a satire of the Jazz Age and the New York society ladies who turn to drugs, occultism, and other distractions to escape the pain and emptiness of their lives; and *The Children* (1928), an unlikely love story that editor Hermione Lee has called "a daring and profoundly sad book" and "the most remarkable and surprising of the novels that came after *The Age of Innocence*." Also included is a chronology of Wharton's life, newly expanded from Hermione Lee's masterful biography of Wharton, as well as helpful explanatory notes.

Understanding Penelope Fitzgerald

A biography of Willa Cather (1873-1947), who spent years working as a journalist, teacher and editor of a New York magazine whose deepest feelings were directed towards women. Her friendships from Sarah Orne Jewett and Dorothy Canfield to Stephen Tennant and Yehudi Menuhin were important to her yet as she became more famous she withdrew increasingly from the modern world she disliked. Willa Cather's fiction charts new, female versions of epic pioneering heroism and the extraordinary cultural encounters of the New World history. This major reinterpretation of Cather's work explores that American context and those traditions but finds a strange and disconcerting Cather a writer of split identities, sexual conflict, dramatic energies and stoic fatalism. The author has written books on Elizabeth Bowen, Virginia Woolf and Philip Roth and *The Short Stories of Willa Cather* .

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