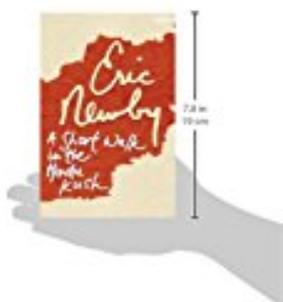


[PDF] A Short Walk In The Hindu Kush

Eric Newby - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: A Short Walk in the Hindu Kus
Author: Eric Newby
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Description:

For more than a decade following the end of World War II, Eric Newby toiled away in the British fashion industry, peddling some of the ugliest clothes on the planet. (Regarding one wafer-thin model in her runway best, he was reminded of "those flagpoles they put up in the Mall when the Queen comes home.") Fortunately, Newby reached the end his haute-couture tether in 1956. At that point, with the sort of sublime impulsiveness that's forbidden to fictional characters but endemic to real ones, he decided to visit a remote corner of Afghanistan, where no Englishman had planted his brogans for at least 50 years. What's more, he recorded his adventure in a classic narrative, *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush*. The title, of course, is a fine example of Newby's habitual self-effacement,

since his journey--which included a near-ascent of the 19,800-foot Mir Samir--was anything but short. And his book seems to furnish a missing link between the great Britannic wanderers of the Victorian era and such contemporary jungle nuts as .

At times it also brings to mind , who contributed the preface. Newby is a less acidulous writer, to be sure, and he has little interest in launching the sort of heat-seeking satiric missiles that were Waugh's specialty. Still, *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush* is a hilarious read. The author excels at the dispiriting snapshot, capturing, say, the Afghan backwater of Fariman in two crisp sentences: "A whole gale of wind was blowing, tearing up the surface of the main street. Except for two policemen holding hands and a dog whose hind legs were paralysed it was deserted." His capsule history of Nuristan also gets in some sly digs at Britain's special relationship with the violence-prone Abdur Rahman: Officially his subsidy had just been increased from 12,000 to 16,000 lakhs of rupees. To the British he had fully justified their selection of him as Amir of Afghanistan and, apart from the few foibles remarked by Lord Curzon, like flaying people alive who displeased him, blowing them from the mouths of cannon, or standing them up to the neck in pools of water on the summits of high mountains and letting them freeze solid, he had done nothing to which exception could be taken. Newby also surpasses Waugh--and indeed, most other travel writers--in another important respect: he's miraculously free of solipsism. Even the keenest literary voyagers tend to be, in the purest sense of the term, self-centered. But *A Short Walk in the Hindu Kush* includes wonderfully oblique portraits of the author's travel companion, Hugh Carless, and his wife, Wanda (who plays a starring role in such subsequent chronicles as). There are also dozens of brilliant cameo parts, and an indelible record of a stunning landscape. The roof of the world is, in Newby's rendering, both an absolute heaven and a low-oxygen hell. Yet the author never pretends to pit himself against a malicious Nature--his mountains are, in Frost's memorable phrase, too lofty and original to rage. Which is yet another reason to call this little masterpiece a peak performance. --James Marcus --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Review Readers will admire his (Newby) perseverance, intriguing personality, and outstanding descriptions.' --Library Journal, March 2002

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