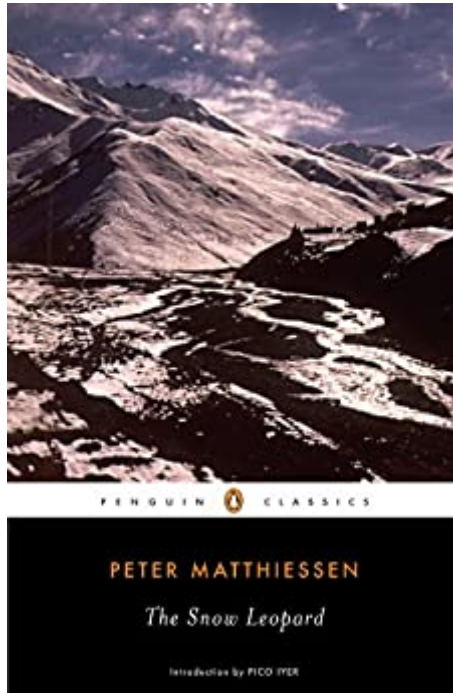


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The Snow Leopard (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

An unforgettable spiritual journey through the Himalayas by renowned writer Peter Matthiessen (1927-2014), the National Book Award-winning author of the new novel *In Paradise*. In 1973, Peter Matthiessen and field biologist George Schaller traveled high into the remote mountains of Nepal to study the Himalayan blue sheep and possibly glimpse the rare and beautiful snow leopard. Matthiessen, a student of Zen Buddhism, was also on a spiritual quest to find the Lama of Shey at the ancient shrine on Crystal Mountain. As the climb proceeds, Matthiessen charts his inner path as well as his outer one, with a deepening Buddhist understanding of reality, suffering, impermanence, and beauty. This Penguin Classics edition features an introduction by acclaimed travel writer and novelist Pico Iyer. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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Customer Reviews

An exceptionally well written book about something that is much more than a journey or any purpose or hope or an activity. It was recommended by my friend whose father had recommended to her before his death, and while I was reading this book with this knowledge, I could see why this must have been a very special and meaningful gift to my friend. It is filled with wonderful internal reflections and conversations about life, yet the author is far from being a lofty philosophical, sagacious intellectual with flowery words and nebulous ideas. He is very human, relatable, as unsure, flawed, tired, irritated, as any one of us, asks questions and gets momentary answers and satisfactions, and then moves on. But his writing skills are exceptional, and so vivid, he brings the icy cold crisp air of the mountains, and the aches of the body, the smells of the living etc etc, all to life. (I also looked up the pictures of animals and spectacular mountains, which is highly recommended if you are not familiar with the region, as I was not). The snow leopard and Tuckten, whether seen or not, are sufficient by the fact of their being...."In the early light, the rock shadows on the snow are sharp; in the tension between light and dark is the power of the universe. This stillness to which all returns, this is reality, and soul and sanity have no more meaning here than a gust of snow; such transience and insignificance are exalting, terrifying, all at once, like the sudden discovery, in meditation, of one's own transparency. Snow mountains, more than sea or sky, serve as a mirror to one's own true being, utterly still, utterly clear, a void, an Emptiness without life or sound that carries in itself all life, all sound. Yet as long as I remain an "I" who is conscious of the void and stands apart from it, there will remain a snow mist on the mirror."

Wow, this book was simple yet stunning. The writing took my breath away & I would read & re-read the same passages over & over again because I was hypnotized by their elegance. Beware though, this is not an easy read. I am a vivacious reader & it took me over a month to finish this book because it demands all of you; it demands that you be present & I truly responded to that. If you like hiking, forests, mountains, Nepal, Tibet, Buddhism, Zen, or anything relating I think you'll find harmony with this story.

One of my all time favorite books. I have both the ebook and the paperback. Part mountaineering, part flora/fauna, part Zen, but always a keen sense of place. Truly inspiring. You'll want to take a Himalayan trek after reading it.

Part travelogue, part anthropology, part adventure; most of all it is powerful tale of one man's spiritual journey through time and space. Peter Matthiessen stands, in my book, as one of the most skillful and powerful writers of the last half of the Twentieth Century. There was a time, some years back, when I read this book every winter. My old copy went the way of a marriage breakup, and I immediately bought another. This one in leather, as I hope to read it many times in the life I have left; among of my all-time favorites! I would carry this book to Mars.

It took me forever to finish this book. It's a little hard to get into. Matthiessen doesn't have a great narrative sense and at times his writing feels very labored. But the book is beautiful (at moments) and sometimes that alone can make a book worth reading. It's really a travel book with an emphasis on self discovery; and it reads a little like a journal--with the flatness and occasional tedium that that entails. But it has an emotional integrity and cohesiveness that keeps you engaged. The author is also grieving after the death of his wife. So feelings of guilt and loss are interwoven with his travels through the Himalayas and his search for the elusive Snow Leopard. Despite the flaws, it's really a classic in its genre.

Beautiful writing. Not fast paced but well worth the effort. An important work since it chronicles an area that won't be around forever to be chronicled. Naturalists and spiritual seekers will enjoy. I found personal notes about his wife and son extremely touching and authentic.

Peter Matthiessen died recently but well before his death, "The Snow Leopard" clearly marked a highpoint in his long literary career. I stumbled across this epic tale of both inner and outer exploration, hungrily searching for an explorer that related more than just his physical travails. He offers vivid descriptions of the mountain world about him, while searching for the elusive snow leopard, and at the same time provides the reader insights into religion, philosophy and his own personal struggles attempting to balance the emotional needs of his family and friends while reaching for the joy and peace that only being alone in the mountains can offer. So, set aside your iPhones and tablets, leave the hubbub of the city noise and traffic behind, forget for a few hours the incessant and annoying buzz of social media and read a few chapters of the monumental work. You will become refreshed and renewed, centered again, perhaps even a new Zen advocate. You owe it to yourself and, more importantly, you owe it to the memory of Peter Matthiessen.

I looked for this book for years, and I finally bought my own copy. I finished it, and I will read it again.

I was disturbed to find out he had left behind his 8-year old son after his wife died the year before (his other children were in boarding school). By the end of the book, it wasn't clear what he really got out of his pilgrimage. It was intense to read it while earthquakes shook poor Nepal. He is a good writer.

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