

A Personal Matter Kenzaburo Oe

It was a normal life for brothers Rark and Rarvo, until Rarvo found a mysterious object that transported him and his brother to an unknown world, a world torn apart by war. There, they come face to face with strange beings and creatures, and meet evil in the eye! Can the brothers save themselves, and a new-found friend, from the perils they have to face? Will they be able to find a way to return home or will they be forever trapped in the unknown world?

Foremost among Japanese literary classics and one of the world's earliest novels, the Tale of Genji was written around the year A.D. 1000 by Murasaki Shikibu, a woman from a declining aristocratic family. For sophistication and insight, Western prose fiction was to wait centuries to rival her work. Norma Field explores the shifting configurations of the Tale, showing how the hero Genji is made and unmade by a series of heroines. Professor Field draws on the riches of both Japanese and Western scholarship, as well as on her own sensitive reading of the Tale. Included are discussions of the social, psychological, and political dimensions of the aesthetics of this novel, with emphasis on the crucial relationship of erotic and political concerns to prose fiction. Norma Field is Assistant Professor of Far Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. Originally published in 1987. The Princeton Legacy Library uses the latest print-on-demand technology to again make available previously out-of-print books from the distinguished backlist of Princeton University Press. These editions preserve the original texts of these important books while presenting them in durable paperback and hardcover editions. The goal of the Princeton Legacy Library is to vastly increase access to the rich scholarly heritage found in the thousands of books published by Princeton University Press since its founding in 1905. This is the story of a mother's grief. Her divorced husband has died of cancer and her sons have taken their own lives. To escape her sorrow and guilt, she leaves Japan and travels to Mexico where she settles in a remote village.

Kenzaburo Oe was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature for creating "an imagined world, where life and myth condense to form a disconcerting picture of the human predicament today." In *Death by Water*, his recurring protagonist and literary alter-ego returns to his hometown village in search of a red suitcase fabled to hold documents revealing the details of his father's death during WWII: details that will serve as the foundation for his new, and final, novel. Since his youth, renowned novelist Kogito Choko planned to fictionalize his father's fatal drowning in order to fully process the loss. Stricken with guilt and regret over his failure to rescue his father, Choko has long been driven to discover why his father was boating on the river in a torrential storm. Though he remembers overhearing his father and a group of soldiers discussing an insurgent scheme to stage a suicide attack on Emperor Mikado, Choko cannot separate his memories from imagination and his family is hesitant to reveal the entire story. When the contents of the trunk turn out to offer little clarity, Choko abandons the novel in creative despair. Floundering as an artist, he's haunted by fear that he may never write his tour de force. But when he collaborates with an avant-garde theater troupe dramatizing his early novels, Kogito is revitalized by revisiting his formative work and he finds the will to continue investigating his father's demise. Diving into the turbulent depths of legacy and mortality, *Death by Water* is an exquisite examination of resurfacing national and personal trauma, and the ways that storytelling can mend political, social, and familial rifts.

Wise and illuminating, *Rouse Up O Young Men of the New Age!* is a masterpiece from one of the world's finest writers, Kenzaburo Oe -- winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature. K is a famous writer living in Tokyo with his wife and three children, one of whom is mentally disabled. K's wife confronts him with the information that this child, Eeyore, has been doing disturbing things -- behaving aggressively, asserting that he's dead, even brandishing a knife at his mother -- and K, given to retreating from reality into abstraction, looks for answers in his lifelong love of William Blake's poetry. As K struggles to understand his family and assess his responsibilities within it, he must also reevaluate himself -- his relationship with his own father, the political stances he has taken, the duty of artists and writers in society. A remarkable portrait of the inexpressible bond between this father and his damaged son, *Rouse Up O Young Men of the New Age!* is the work of an unparalleled writer at his sparkling best.

A housewife takes up bodybuilding and sees radical changes to her physique - which her workaholic husband fails to notice. A boy waits at a bus stop, mocking businessmen struggling to keep their umbrellas open in a typhoon - until an old man shows him that they hold the secret to flying. A woman working in a clothing boutique waits endlessly on a customer who won't come out of the fitting room - and who may or may not be human. A newlywed notices that her husband's features are beginning to slide around his face - to match her own. In these eleven stories, the individuals who lift the curtains of their orderly homes and workplaces are confronted with the bizarre, the grotesque, the fantastic, the alien - and, through it, find a way to liberation. Winner of the Kenzaburo Oe Prize, *Picnic in the Storm* is the English-language debut of one of Japan's most fearless young writers.

Natsume S?seki (1867-1916) was the father of the modern novel in Japan, chronicling the plight of bourgeois characters caught between familiar modes of living and the onslaught of Western values and conventions. Yet even though generations of Japanese high school students have been expected to memorize passages from his novels and he is routinely voted the most important Japanese writer in national polls, he remains less familiar to Western readers than authors such as Kawabata, Tanizaki, and Mishima. In this biography, John Nathan provides a lucid and vivid account of a great writer laboring to create a remarkably original oeuvre in spite of the physical and mental illness that plagued him all his life. He traces S?seki's complex and contradictory character, offering rigorous close readings of S?seki's groundbreaking experiments with narrative strategies, irony, and multiple points of view as well as recounting excruciating hospital stays and recurrent attacks of paranoid delusion. Drawing on previously untranslated letters and diaries, published reminiscences, and passages from S?seki's fiction, Nathan renders intimate scenes of the writer's life and distills a portrait of a tormented yet unflaggingly original author. The first full-length study of S?seki in fifty years, Nathan's biography elevates S?seki to his rightful place as a great synthesizer of literary traditions and a brilliant

chronicler of universal experience who, no less than his Western contemporaries, anticipated the modernism of the twentieth century.

From the winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature and author of the Booker Prize-winning novel *The Remains of the Day* In the face of the misery in his homeland, the artist Masuji Ono was unwilling to devote his art solely to the celebration of physical beauty. Instead, he put his work in the service of the imperialist movement that led Japan into World War II. Now, as the mature Ono struggles through the aftermath of that war, his memories of his youth and of the "floating world"—the nocturnal world of pleasure, entertainment, and drink—offer him both escape and redemption, even as they punish him for betraying his early promise. Indicted by society for its defeat and reviled for his past aesthetics, he relives the passage through his personal history that makes him both a hero and a coward but, above all, a human being.

The Nobel Prize-winning "master of the bizarre plunges the reader into a world of tortured imagination" in this four-novella collection (Library Journal). In this startling quartet of his most provocative stories, the multiple prize-winning author of *A Personal Matter* reaffirms his reputation as "a supremely gifted writer" (The Washington Post). In *The Day He Himself Shall Wipe My Tears Away*, a self-absorbed narrator on his deathbed drifts off to the comforting strains of a cantata as he recalls a blistering childhood of militarism, sacrifice, humiliation, and revenge—a tale that is questioned by everyone who knew him. In *Prize Stock*, winner of the Akutagawa Prize, a black American flier is downed in a Japanese village during World War II, where the local children see him as some rare find—exotic and forbidden. In *Aghwee the Sky Monster*, the floating ghost of a baby inexplicably haunts a young man on the first day of his first job. And in the title story, a devoted father believes he is the only link between his mentally challenged son and reality. "[A] remarkable book." —The Washington Post "Oe is definitely one of the Modern Masters." —Seattlepi.com

A group of delinquent boys are abandoned in a remote village during the Korean war and manage to survive by stealing food and hunting, only to face the possibility of death when the villagers return

Kipling visited Japan in 1889 and 1892. No other leading English literary figure of his day spent so long in that country or wrote so fully about it. Kipling's newspaper dispatches from Japan were described by the great Japanologist Basil Han Chamberlain as 'the most graphic even penned by a globetrotter'. These vivid pen-pictures, together with Kipling's other writings about Japan, are now collected by Sir Hugh Cortazzi and George Webb, carefully edited with an introduction and Notes. First published in 1988, this title is part of the Bloomsbury Academic Collections series.

Four Japanese stories focus on people experiencing the time of World War II. The emphasis is on human feelings of bewilderment and qualities of endurance.

Fat City is a vivid novel of allegiance and defeat, of the potent promise of the good life and the desperation and drink that waylay those whom it eludes. Stockton, California is the setting: the Lido Gym, the Hotel Coma, Main Street lunchrooms and dingy bars, days like long twilights in houses obscured by untrimmed shrubs and black walnut trees. When two men meet in the ring -- the retired boxer Billy Tully and the newcomer Ernie Munger - their brief bout sets into motion their hidden fates, initiating young Ernie into the company of men and luring Tully back into training. In a dispassionate and composed voice, Gardner narrates their swings of fortune, and the plodding optimism of their manager Ruben Luna, as he watches the most promising boys one by one succumb to some undefined weakness; still, "There was always someone who wanted to fight."

Oe introduces Kogito Choko, a writer in his early sixties, as he rekindles a childhood friendship with his estranged brother-in-law, the renowned filmmaker Goro Hanawa. Goro sends Kogito a trunk of tapes he has recorded of reflections about their friendship, but as Kogito is listening one night, he hears something odd. "I'm going to head over to the Other Side now," Goro says, and then Kogito hears a loud thud. After a moment of silence, Goro's voice continues: "But don't worry, I'm not going to stop communicating with you." Moments later, Kogito's wife rushes in; Goro has jumped to his death. With that, Kogito begins a far-ranging search to understand what drove his brother-in-law to suicide. His quest takes him from the forests of southern Japan to the washed-out streets of Berlin, where Kogito confronts the ghosts from his own past and that of his lifelong, but departed, friend.

Told in the manner of scientific reports, this collection of science fiction stories explores the allegorical overtones about the precariousness of species. *Biogenesis and Other Stories* collects five stories by Tatsuaki Ishiguro. In *Biogenesis*, two professors research the rare winged mouse and how the genetic makeup of the creatures pointed to their eventual extinction. They discover that upon mating, both the male and female of the species died. The professors try to clone the winged mice without success, so they breed the remaining pair in captivity, noting the procedure, which includes a vibration of the creatures' wings, what appeared to be kissing, and the shedding of tears--composed of the same substance as their blood--until their eventual death.

The first new novel Oe has published since winning the Nobel Prize, *Somersault* is a magnificent story of the charisma of leaders, the danger of zealotry, and the mystery of faith. A decade before the story opens, two men referred to as the Patron and Guide of mankind were leaders of an influential religious movement. When a radical faction of their followers threatened to unleash an apocalypse, they recanted all of their teachings and abandoned their followers. Now, after ten years of silence, Patron and Guide begin contacting their old followers and reaching out to the public, assisted by a small group of young people who have come to them in recent months. Just as they are beginning this renewed push, the radical faction kidnaps Guide, holding him captive until his health gives out. Patron and a small core of the faithful, including a painter named Kizu who may become the new Guide, move to the mountains to establish the church's new base, followed by two groups from Patron's old church: the devout Quiet Women, and the Technicians, who have ties to the old radical faction. The Baby Fireflies, young men from a nearby village, attempt to influence the church with local traditions and military discipline. As planning proceeds for the summer conference that will bring together the faithful and launch the new church in the eyes of the world, the conflicting agendas of these factions threaten to make a mockery of the church's unity—or something far more dangerous.

"An epic tale of a stubborn sheep farmer named Bjartur of Summerhouses who decides to spit in the direction of his country's pagan traditions, and its landowners, making his way alone."--

Oe's most important novel, *A Personal Matter*, has been called by The New York Times "close to a perfect novel." In *A Personal Matter*, Oe has chosen a difficult, complex though universal subject: how does one face and react to the birth of an abnormal child? Bird, the protagonist, is a young man of 27 with antisocial tendencies who more than once in his life, when confronted with a critical problem, has "cast himself adrift on a sea of whisky like a besotted Robinson Crusoe." But he has never faced a crisis as personal or grave as the prospect of life imprisonment in the cage of his newborn infant-monster. Should he keep it? Dare he kill it? Before he makes his final decision, Bird's entire past seems to rise up before him, revealing itself to be a nightmare of self-deceit. The relentless honesty with which Oe portrays his hero -- or antihero -- makes Bird one of the most unforgettable characters in recent fiction.

The first full-length book devoted to Japan's 1994 Nobel Laureate, *The Marginal World of Kenzaburo Ôe* introduces the literary universe bursting with the explosive energies of Bakhtinian grotesque realism. In its center stands the "idiot son," a trickster and soulful healer, unknowingly thrown into the world of myth-making and history. The diverse voices of Ôe's characters resonate with one another within and between reinvented texts as the book's analysis flows into the very pores and veins of his masterful writing.

Interlaken, Berne, 21st century. Several things happen after the car hits the rock. Tiff ceases to be pregnant. Stephen captures, like, the most

wonderful bird - fleet, stealthy, and beautiful - a real 'lifer'. And the wallcreeper, the wallcreeper says 'twee'. 'The Wallcreeper' is nothing more than a portrait of marriage, complete with all its requisite highs and lows: drugs, dubstep, small chores, eco-terrorism, birding, breeding and feeding.

This novel offers a contemporary and explosive picture of the nuclear family, which pivots on the bizarre odyssey of a Japanese father and son.

"Some novelists hold a mirror up to the world and some, like Haruki Murakami, use the mirror as a portal to a universe hidden beyond it." —The Wall Street Journal A mind-bending new collection of short stories from the internationally acclaimed Haruki Murakami. The eight stories in this new book are all told in the first person by a classic Murakami narrator. From memories of youth, meditations on music, and an ardent love of baseball, to dreamlike scenarios and invented jazz albums, together these stories challenge the boundaries between our minds and the exterior world. Occasionally, a narrator may or may not be Murakami himself. Is it memoir or fiction? The reader decides. Philosophical and mysterious, the stories in First Person Singular all touch beautifully on love and solitude, childhood and memory. . . all with a signature Murakami twist.

"In Hoshino's dystopia, identities are fluid and any one is as good as another. . .Hoshino's ambitious novel is pleasingly uncomfortable." —Publishers Weekly "Hoshino's latest-in-translation (rendered by De Wolf) begins as black comedy and devolves into an antisolipsistic treatise on the impossibility of individual identity." —Booklist Online "Part existential fable, part 'Night of the Living Dead,' Mr. Hoshino's inventive novel, accessibly translated by Charles De Wolf, paints a nightmare vision of Japan's rootless millennials, who work grinding dead-end jobs that leave them little time for family or individual passions...At first Hitoshi and his fellow MEs are happy to band together against an uncaring world. But the camaraderie doesn't last, since every time one reveals a character flaw the others take it as an indictment of themselves. As the MEs' failures and weaknesses become intolerably magnified onto the 'living but useless rabble' they're gripped by a suicidal impulse that unleashes a crazed murder spree. The frenetic, knife-wielding finale reaches its climax in—a McDonald's, of course. None of them can think of any place else to eat." —Wall Street Journal, included in Best New Fiction column "The imaginative story of a rather unimaginative camera salesman, ME features Hitoshi Nagano; his troubles begin with his impulsive theft of a cell phone from another customer at a McDonalds. They end with a post-apocalyptic future for everyone in Japan." —New York Journal of Books "[Some passages] surpass even Kobo Abe. . .The author has leaped to a higher level." —Kenzaburo Oe, Nobel Prize-winning author of *The Silent Cry*, from the afterword *With an afterword by Kenzaburo Oe*. Translated from Japanese by Charles De Wolf. This novel centers on the "It's me" telephone scam—often targeting the elderly—that has escalated in Japan in recent years. Typically, the caller identifies himself only by saying, "Hey, it's me," and goes on to claim in great distress that he's been in an accident or lost some money with which he was entrusted at work, etc., and needs funds wired to his account right away. ME's narrator is a nondescript young Tokyoite named Hitoshi Nagano who, on a whim, takes home a cell phone that a young man named Daiki Hiyama accidentally put on Hitoshi's tray at McDonald's. Hitoshi uses the phone to call Daiki's mother, pretending he is Daiki, and convinces her to wire him 900,000 yen. Three days later, Hitoshi returns home from work to discover Daiki's mother there in his apartment, and she seems to truly believe Hitoshi is her son. Even more bizarre, Hitoshi discovers his own parents now treat him as a stranger; they, too, have a "me" living with them as Hitoshi. At a loss for what else to do, Hitoshi begins living as Daiki, and no one seems to bat an eye. In a brilliant probing of identity, and employing a highly original style that subverts standard narrative forms, Tomoyuki Hoshino elevates what might have been a commonplace crime story to an occasion for philosophical reflection. In the process, he offers profound insights into the state of contemporary Japanese society. Charles De Wolf, PhD, professor emeritus, Keio University, is a linguist by training, though his first love was literature. Multilingual, he has spent most of his life in East Asia and is a citizen of Japan. His translations include *Mandarins*, a selection of short stories by Ryunosuke Akutagawa (Archipelago Books) and collections of folktales from *Konjaku Monogatari-shu*. He has written extensively about *The Tale of Genji*; and is currently working on his own translation of the work.

"A magic curtain, woven of legends, hung before the world. Cervantes sent Don Quixote journeying and tore through the curtain. The world opened before the knight-errant in all the comical nakedness of its prose." In this thought-provoking, endlessly enlightening, and entertaining essay on the art of the novel, renowned author Milan Kundera suggests that "the curtain" represents a ready-made perception of the world that each of us has—a pre-interpreted world. The job of the novelist, he argues, is to rip through the curtain and reveal what it hides. Here an incomparable literary artist cleverly sketches out his personal view of the history and value of the novel in Western civilization. In doing so, he celebrates a prose form that possesses the unique ability to transcend national and language boundaries in order to reveal some previously unknown aspect of human existence.

A personal memoir by the author of *Warriors of God* describes his own daughter Hillary's courageous battle with a devastating chronic illness, its impact on the entire family, and the daunting medical and social implications of such controversial issues as stem cell research, animal organ transplants, and reproductive and therapeutic cloning. Reprint. 15,000 first printing.

Explores the cultural changes that have taken place in Japan throughout the last decade as demonstrated by various economic groups and institutions, predicting what Japan's changing world role will mean for the future.

Tells the story of Hikari Oe, the brain-damaged son who inspired his novelist father, and who is the only disabled classical music prodigy

In *Seventeen* the story of a lonely seventeen year old who turns to a right-wing group for self-esteem and *J* the story of a spoiled, young, drifter son of a Japanese executive Oe shows us a world where the values that had regulated life had been blown to smithereens along with Hiroshima and Nagasaki: what confronts his heroes now is a gaping emptiness. *Seventeen's* lost young man is in the throes of becoming a right wing activist and assassin. He feels his identity for the first time in the enervating rush of murderous violence. The story has enormous topicality and vibrancy for today. In *J*, our protagonist's erotic excitement comes as a "chikan" one who rubs himself against women on crowded trains rather than participating in the drab everyday world, which he feels would only be self-deception. He can only feel complete while attaining "the absolute ecstasy of total action." Of course this action of sexual assault can bring arrest, disgrace, and imprisonment. As always, Oe treats his subjects not with pity or disdain, but with sympathy. Kenzaburo Oe is without a doubt the first truly modern Japanese writer. He has managed a feat which even his talented and prolific elder contemporary, the late Yukio Mishima, was unable to accomplish: he has wrenched Japanese literature free of its deeply rooted, inbred tradition and moved it into the mainstream of world literature. Oe's influences and literary heroes are less Japanese than American and European. Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, and Jean-Paul Sartre rank high among them, and Oe's favorite novel, he confesses, is *Huckleberry Finn*. Oe grew up on the western island of Shikoku, a place steeped in Japanese rural traditions and wartime propaganda. His early works are regarded as classics of the disillusionment his nation felt on seeing what Japan's leadership had done to the country. His heroes have been expelled from the certainty of childhood into a world that bears no relation to their past.

Hiroshima Notes is a powerful statement on the Hiroshima bombing and its terrible legacy by the 1994 Nobel laureate for literature. Oe's account of the lives of the many victims of Hiroshima and the valiant efforts of those who cared for them, both

immediately after the atomic blast and in the years that follow, reveals the horrific extent of the devastation. It is a heartrending portrait of a ravaged city - the "human face" in the midst of nuclear destruction.

Minae Mizumura's *An I-Novel* is a semi-autobiographical work that takes place over the course of a single day in the 1980s. This formally daring novel radically broke with Japanese literary tradition and offers a luminous meditation on how a person becomes a writer.

Deep in London's dangerous slums, Victorians transact their most secret and shameful business. For a price, a man can procure whatever he wants. But for one such man, the price he pays is his life. In sunless Water Lane, respected solicitor Leighton Duff lies dead, kicked and beaten to death. Beside him is the barely living body of his son, Rhys. The police cannot fathom these brutal assaults until shrewd investigator William Monk, aided by nurse-turned-sleuth Hester Latterly, uncovers a connection between them and a series of rapes and beatings of local prostitutes. But then the case takes an even more shocking turn.

A Personal Matter Grove/Atlantic, Inc.

Lurid depictions of sex and impotence, themes of emperor worship and violence, the use of realism and myth - these characterize the fiction of Mishima Yukio and Oe Kenzaburo. Napier discovers similarities as well as dissimilarities in the work of two writers of radically different political orientations. Napier places Yukio's and Kenzaburo's fiction in the context of postwar Japanese political and social realities and, in a new preface for the paperback edition, reflects on each writer's position in the tradition of Japanese literature.

From the Nobel Prize-winning author: "One of the great short novels of the 20th century" (Jonathan Franzen, *The Wall Street Journal*). Internationally acclaimed as one of the world's most influential writers, Kenzaburo brings to the fore the post-WWII rage and anxiety of a decorous society in this "deathly black comedy . . . dripping with nuclear terror" (*The Japan Times*). *Bird* is an antisocial twenty-seven-year-old intellectual hanging on to a failing marriage with whiskey. He dreams of going to Africa where the sky sprawls with possibilities. Then, as though walloped by a massive invisible fist, Bird's Utopian fantasies are shattered when his wife gives birth to what he calls their "monster baby." Now, Bird is left with one question: How can he and his wife spend the rest of their lives with this damaged thing clinging to their backs? As shameful, disgraceful, and unthinkable a desire as it is, Bird has an answer. Not sealed. Not just yet. Not before Bird flees on a bender of indiscriminate (and frustratingly impotent) sex, hard liquor, self-delusion, and most terrifying of all—self-discovery. "[I'd] forgotten just how crazy it is . . . It feels so much like life to me . . . it tells me that I'm onto something correct. People don't want to deal with reality." —Jonathan Franzen, *The Wall Street Journal* "Very close to a perfect contemporary novel." —*The New York Times* "An astonishing novel." —Mother Jones

"Two brothers, Takashi and Mitsu, return from Tokyo to the village of their childhood. Selling their family home leads them to an inescapable confrontation with their family history. Their attempt to escape the influence of the city ends in failure as they realize that its tentacles extend to everything in the countryside, including their own relationship."--Amazon.com.

HarperCollins is proud to present its incredible range of best-loved, essential classics.

Landing in a mental institution after being accused of a crime he does not remember, self-proclaimed hero Pepper is assaulted by a monster that has been attacking patients but that the hospital staff does not believe exists.

First pub. 1964. Author's most dramatic work, won him the prestigious Shincho Literary Prize. In the novel the narrator tells how he responds to the birth and problems posed by his handicapped child. Recipient of the 1994 Nobel prize.

In 2016 Scottish writer Iain Maloney and his Japanese wife Minori moved to a village in rural Japan. This is the story of his attempt to fit in, be accepted and fulfil his duties as a member of the community, despite being the only foreigner in the village. Even after more than a decade living in Japan and learning the language, life in the countryside was a culture shock. Due to increasing numbers of young people moving to the cities in search of work, there are fewer rural residents under the retirement age - and they have two things in abundance: time and curiosity. Iain's attempts at amateur farming, basic gardening and DIY are conducted under the watchful eye of his neighbours and wife. But curtain twitching is the least of his problems. The threat of potential missile strikes and earthquakes is nothing compared to the venomous snakes, terrifying centipedes and bees the size of small birds that stalk Iain's garden. Told with self-deprecating humour, this memoir gives a fascinating insight into a side of Japan rarely seen and affirms the positive benefits of immigration for the individual and the community. It's not always easy being the only gaijin in the village.

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