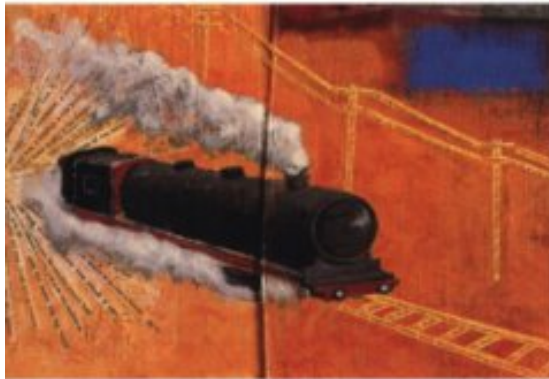


(Mobile book) If on a winter's night a traveler

## If on a winter's night a traveler

*Von Italo Calvino*

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**Von Italo Calvino : If on a winter's night a traveler** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised If on a winter's night a traveler:

Kurzbeschreibung Italo Calvino imagines a novel capable of endless mutations in this intricately crafted story about writing and readers. If on a Winter's Night a Traveler turns out to be not one novel but ten, each with a different plot, style, ambience, and author, and each interrupted at a moment of suspense. Together they form a labyrinth of literatures, known and unknown, alive and extinct, through which two readers, a male and a female, pursue both the story lines that intrigue them and one another. . . . If on a Winter's Night a Traveler is a marvel of ingenuity, an experimental text that looks longingly back to the great age of narration--"when time no longer seemed stopped and did not yet seem to have exploded." Italo Calvino's novel is in one sense a comedy in which the two protagonists, the Reader and the Other Reader, ultimately end up married, having almost finished If on a Winter's Night a Traveler. In another, it is a tragedy, a reflection on the difficulties of writing and the solitary nature of reading. The Reader buys a fashionable new book, which opens with an exhortation: "Relax. Concentrate. Dispel every other thought. Let the world around you fade." Alas, after 30 or so pages, he discovers that his copy is corrupted, and consists of nothing but the first section, over and over. Returning to the bookshop, he discovers the volume, which he thought was by Calvino, is actually by the Polish writer Bazakbal. Given the choice between the two, he goes for the Pole, as does the Other Reader, Ludmilla. But this copy turns out to be by yet another writer, as does the next, and the next. The real Calvino intersperses 10 different pastiches--stories of menace, spies, mystery, premonition--with explorations of how and why we read, make meanings, and get our bearings or fail to. Meanwhile the Reader and Ludmilla try to reach, and read, each other. If on a Winter's Night is dazzling, vertiginous, and deeply romantic. "What makes lovemaking and reading resemble each other most is that within both of them times and spaces open, different from measurable time and space." Pressestimmen [Italo Calvino is] one of the worlds best fabulists. John Gardner, NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW Calvino is a wizard. Mary McCarthy, NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS [Calvino] manages to charm and entertain the reader in the teeth of a scheme designed to frustrate all reasonable readerly expectations. John Updike, THE NEW YORKER Calvino is that very rare phenomenon, a true original . . . If on a winters night a traveler is breathtakingly complex and self-conscious (there are moments when it quite literally makes one gasp with astonishment) . . . [yet it] is one of the most accessible and enchanting novels written in the last fifty years. from the Introduction by Peter Washington