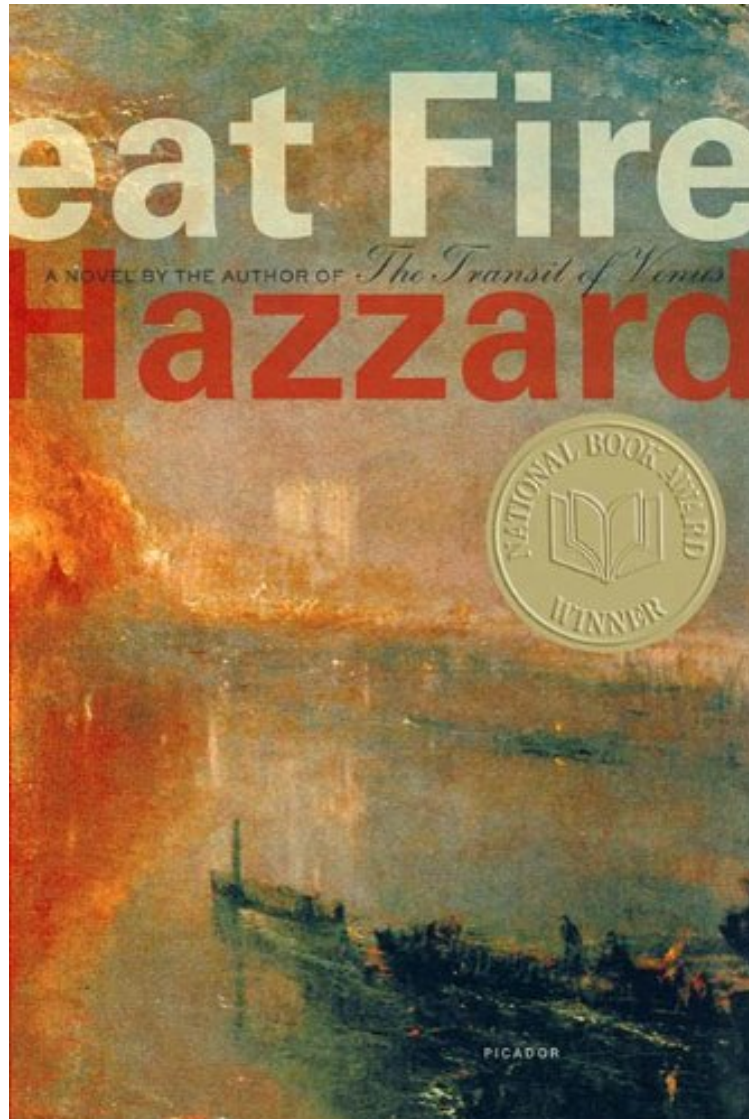


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The Great Fire: A Novel

Von Shirley Hazzard

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Von Shirley Hazzard : The Great Fire: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Fire: A Novel:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen5 von 5 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Kein Feuerwerk, aber ein warmer Schein!Von literaholicDie Welt, die Shirley Hazzard in "The Great Fire" entwirft, hat gewisse hnlichkeiten mit Ondaatjes "The English Patient": Krperlich und/oder seelisch verwundete Menschen verschiedenster Nationalitten stehen im Mittelpunkt, die nach dem "groen Feuer" des II. Weltkriegs ganz individuelle berlebensstrategien entwickeln mssen. Beide Romane beschreiben diese Bemhungen auf uerst poetische Weise, und in

beiden Romanen bietet die Liebe (ein anderes großes Feuer) einen Ausweg. Doch damit enden die Parallelen zwischen den beiden Romanen auch schon. "The Great Fire" wirkt erheblich statischer. Als Leser fühlt man sich bisweilen fast wie der Betrachter eines äußerst stilicheren impressionistischen Bildes, das bewusst auch auf Vagheiten setzt, um die Fantasie des Betrachters anzusprechen. Zur Handlung: Aldred Leith, ein 32-jähriger Kriegsheld, schreibt 1947 an einem Buch, das die gesellschaftlichen Umbrüche der Nachkriegszeit in China und Japan zum Thema hat. Seine Arbeit führt ihn nach Kure, in die Nähe Hiroshimas, wo er Helen und Ben Driscoll, die bezaubernden Kinder griechischer Eltern kennenlernt. Aldred und die 17-jährige Helen verlieben sich ineinander. Die Entwicklung dieser zarten Liebe, die viele Widerstände berwinden muss, ist der rote Faden in Shirley Hazzards Roman. "The Great Fire" wurde mit dem National Book Award ausgezeichnet und stand auf nahezu allen Auswahllisten der wichtigsten Literaturpreise. Für Liebhaber poetisch-literarischer Romane im traditionellen Stil, für Fans vom William Trevor oder Anita Brookner, ist "The Great Fire" eine sichere Empfehlung: ein eleganter Text voller menschlicher Wärme. Leser, denen ein schnelleres Fortschreiten der Handlung wichtig ist, werden mit Shirley Hazzards Roman vermutlich weniger glücklich.

Kurzbeschreibung A great writer's sweeping story of men and women struggling to reclaim their lives in the aftermath of world conflict The Great Fire is Shirley Hazzard's first novel since *The Transit of Venus*, which won the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1981. The conflagration of her title is the Second World War. In war-torn Asia and stricken Europe, men and women, still young but veterans of harsh experience, must reinvent their lives and expectations, and learn, from their past, to dream again. Some will fulfill their destinies, others will falter. At the center of the story, Aldred Leith, a brave and brilliant soldier, finds that survival and worldly achievement are not enough. Helen Driscoll, a young girl living in occupied Japan and tending her dying brother, falls in love, and in the process discovers herself. In the looming shadow of world enmities resumed, and of Asia's coming centrality in world affairs, a man and a woman seek to recover self-reliance, balance, and tenderness, struggling to reclaim their humanity. The Great Fire is the winner of the 2003 National Book Award for Fiction. From Booklist Despite this Australian writer's absence from the world's fiction stage--since the 1981 publication of *The Transit of Venus*, which earned her great acclaim, including the National Book Critics' Circle Award--her readers have continued to hold hands in devotion and anticipation. Their thrill over her new novel will be completed; the long days and nights of waiting will be forgotten. Time and place have always been exactly evoked in Hazzard's fiction, and such is the case here. The time is 1947-48, and the place is, primarily, East Asia. Obviously, then, this is a locale much altered--by the events of World War II, of course, and, as we see, physical destruction and psychological wariness and weariness lay over the land. Our hero, and indeed he fills the requirements to be called one, is Aldred Leith, who is English and part of the occupation forces in Japan; his particular military task is damage survey. He has an interesting past, including, most recently, a two-year walk across civil-war-torn China to write a book. In the present, which readers will feel they inhabit right along with Leith, by way of Hazzard's beautifully atmospheric prose, he meets the teenage daughter and younger son of a local Australian commander. And, as Helen is growing headlong into womanhood, this novel of war's aftermath becomes a story of love--or more to the point, of the restoration of the capacity for love once global and personal trauma have been shed. Brad Hooper Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved Pressestimmen "The Great Fire is a brilliant, brave, and sublimely written novel that allows the literate reader 'the consolation of having touched infinity.' This wonderful book, which must be read at least twice simply to savor Hazzard's sentences and set pieces, is among the most transcendent works I've ever had the pleasure of reading."--Anita Shreve "Shirley Hazzard is, purely and simply, one of the greatest writers working in English today. Which makes me more than grateful to have this long-hoped-for new novel."--Michael Cunningham "I wish there were a set of words like 'brilliant' and 'dazzling' that we saved for only the rarest occasions, so that when I tell you *The Great Fire* is brilliant and dazzling you would know it is the absolute truth. This is a book that is worth a twenty-year wait."--Ann Patchett "Shirley Hazzard has written a hypnotic novel that unfolds like a dream: Japan, Southeast Asia, the end of one war and the beginning of another, the colonial order gone, and, at the center of it all, a love story."--Joan Didion