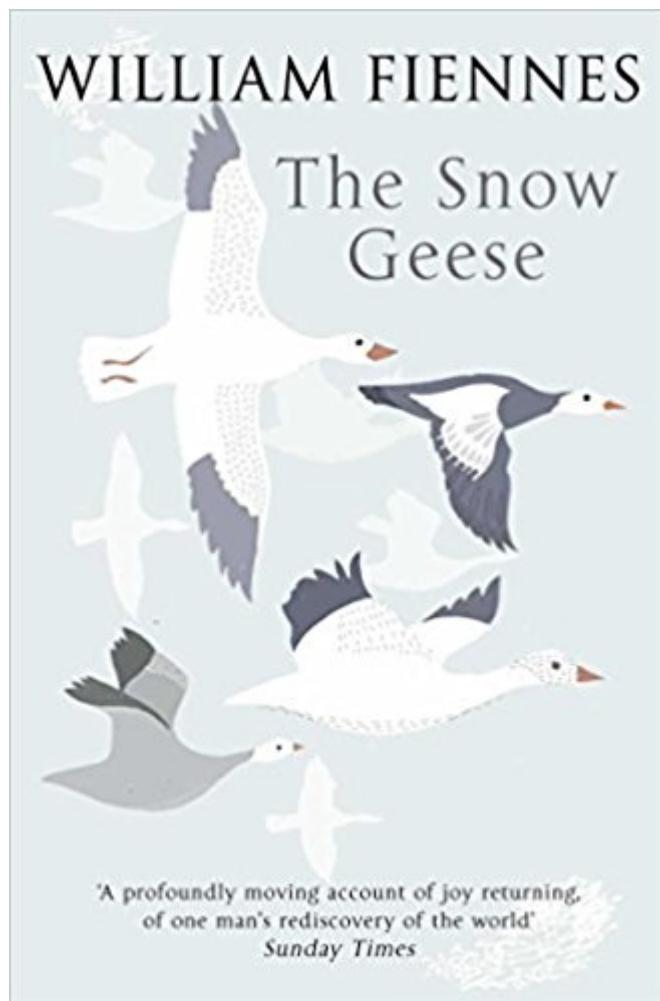


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The Snow Geese



Synopsis

WINNER OF THE HAWTHORNDEN PRIZE SHORTLISTED FOR THE SAMUEL JOHNSON PRIZE SUNDAY TIMES YOUNG WRITER OF THE YEAR One winter, after an enforced period of quiet, William Fiennes finds himself restless and yearning for adventure. Inspired by his reading about the migratory patterns of birds, he flies to Texas to find the million-strong flocks of snow geese and to follow them on their spring flight thousands of miles north to breeding grounds on the Arctic tundra. This mesmerizing book, already a classic, captures their journey with wisdom, humility and endless curiosity. It is a meditation on freedom of movement, on seeing the world anew, and on the joy of returning -- indefinitely changed. 'Why are we drawn to birds, to landscape, to nature? It is for the sense of wonder -- and in capturing that sense of wonder, Fiennes reminds us how desperately we all need it' Sunday Telegraph 'The Snow Geese moved me as have few other recent books. No one who reads it is likely to continue to look at the world in the same way' Times Literary Supplement 'A beautifully solitary and beautifully reflective book' Evening Standard 'The descriptions of the geese and their environment are jaw-droppingly beautiful. But Fiennes' most remarkable talent is for describing the quotidian with such freshness that it is like seeing the world for the first time' Mail on Sunday 'An inspired work of natural history and travel. A classic' Irish Independent

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

'With this beautiful, haunting debut Fiennes joins that small, very special band of writer-explorers - Emerson and Thoreau, Annie Dillard and Bruce Chatwin - who give us another pair of eyes: he has

renewed the variety and wonder of the world' Marina Warner 'Fiennes is a very fine writer and this book is pure delight' Peter Carey, winner of the Booker Prize 2001

William Fiennes is the author of *The Snow Geese* and most recently, *The Music Room*. He was *Sunday Times* Young Writer of the Year and the recipient of a Somerset Maugham Award. He lives in London.

This book was a joy to read and was filled with intricate knowledge and curiosity about the geese and their migration as well as an exquisitely detailed account of the passion of one man to journey with these birds and along the way to discover interesting and kindly folk.

Received in great condition in timely manner and followup to be sure I got what I wanted when I needed it was excellent. Story is fascinating as well. All around a good deal!

This book will entertain those who enjoy travel memoirs, natural history-lite, and don't mind long forays into description and philosophy. This nonfiction book was inspired by Paul Gallico's, "The Snow Goose" (1940). The author begins with a recollection of this story and then briefly describes his protracted illness at the age of 25 with an illness. After returning to his family home to recover Fiennes decides to take a journey to trace the snow goose's spring migration. Starting in Austin, Texas, and tracing the flight of birds in rental cars, greyhound busses, and Canadian trains he arrives at Baffin Island where the birds have their summer mating and foraging grounds. Describing the migratory pattern of snow geese could be a straightforward and dry narrative, but intertwined with the geese's journey is Fiennes's personal homeward journey propelled by the people he meets along the way and seemingly the philosophical musings sprinkled throughout the book. An example of the tangential flights of fancy which the author takes is that of homesickness. First drawing on those who first identified and defined homesickness as a malady, and then expanding with literary illustrations such as "The Odyssey," Fiennes describes his feeling of homesickness. Unfortunately the connection between homesickness and seasonal bird migration is not made, nor can it be really. The description of people and places in this book are detailed. Sometimes too much so. Since the people described are frequently peripheral to the story, fellow passengers on the bus or train, the story sometimes loses focus. The natural scenes in contrast are more apt and so the detail is not begrimed: "There were hills and swales in all directions, drawing away on the curve of the sphere, and clouds massing in the south, above the sea" (p. 240). The combination of natural

description, and the description of all people encountered joined with the personal rumination of the author makes for an odd amalgamation of literary genres.

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