



The Exiles Return: A Novel

Elisabeth de Waal

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WITH A FOREWORD BY EDMUND DE WAAL, AUTHOR OF *THE HARE WITH AMBER EYES*

SET IN THE ASHES OF POST-SECOND WORLD WAR VIENNA, A POWERFUL, SUBTLE NOVEL OF EXILES RETURNING HOME FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER FLEEING HITLER'S DEADLY REIGN

Vienna is demolished by war, the city an alien landscape of ruined castles, a fractured ruling class, and people picking up the pieces. Elisabeth de Waal's mesmerizing *The Exiles Return* is a stunningly vivid postwar story of Austria's fallen aristocrats, unrepentant Nazis, and a culture degraded by violence.

The novel follows a number of exiles, each returning under very different circumstances, who must come to terms with a city in painful recovery. There is Kuno Adler, a Jewish research scientist, who is tired of his unfulfilling existence in America; Theophil Kanakis, a wealthy Greek businessman, seeking to plunder some of the spoils of war; Marie-Theres, a brooding teenager, sent by her parents in hopes that the change of scene will shake her out of her funk; and Prince "Bimbo" Grein, a handsome young man with a title divested of all its social currency.

With immaculate precision and sensitivity, de Waal, an exile herself, captures a city rebuilding and relearning its identity, and the people who have to do the same. Mesmerizing and tragic, de Waal has written a masterpiece of European literature, an artifact revealing a moment in our history, clear as a snapshot, but timeless as well.

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