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By Henry Green

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Back By Henry Green

One-legged Charley Summers is finally home from the war, after several years in a German prison camp, only to find he must now deal with the death of his lover Rose. A shell-shocked romantic—slow, distant, and dreamy—he begins to have trouble telling Rose's half-sister Nancy apart from Rose herself, now buried in the village churchyard. Coping and failing to cope with the quiet realities of daily life, Charley's delusions elevate his timid courtship of a practical and unremarkable young woman into an amnesiac love story both comic and disturbing. A contemporary of Anthony Powell and Evelyn Waugh, Henry Green was one of the greatest English novelists of the twentieth century, and *Back* is his most haunting and personal work.

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Back By Henry Green Bibliography

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- 208 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

First published in England in 1946, this takes its place with his other titles- Loving, Nothing, etc. Full of air and fluff and rose light, and sometimes more serious too, Back is about Charley Summers- a very quiet man who returns from war and a German prison camp with a couple of strikes against him; his lady love Rose is dead and he now has a peg leg. Set for the most part in a suburb and in an office in London, Charley tries to adjust to a Roseless world- a world which insists on being diffused with rose colors, rose words and horrid rose puns. Dead Rose devours him on the one hand and government contracts (he deals in parabolam, bird droppings, needle valves, etc.) on the other, and one day he meets what he supposes to be Rose. Actually she is Nance, Rose's half-sister-through a misdemeanor on Rose's father's part. There are unholy coincidences scattered throughout which give the impression that this Henry Green world is a wild, unsafe, but haphazardly genteel place to live. The skillful coupling of love talk and office terminology, the dexterous handling of characters who seem at first glance to be picked bone clean but who turn into cream, and the view of a world just a little off center make Back a delightful, wispy and original experience. For his established audience.—*Kirkus Reviews*

"Green belongs to the mad tradition in English literature—Sterne, Carroll, Firbank, and Mrs. Woolf." --V. S. Pritchett

"Nobody writes novels quite like Henry Green . . . His characters . . . dance to a tune of his own as precise and stylized as a sonata."—*New York Herald Tribune*

"The best writer of his time." --Rebecca West

"Green's books remain solid and glittering as gems." --Anthony Burgess

About the Author

Henry Green was the pen-name of Henry Yorke, the son of a prosperous Midlands family with aristocratic roots. He was born in 1905 near Tewkesbury and was educated at Eton and Oxford. He entered the family business—producing beer-bottling machines—on the factory floor, and went on to run the firm while writing novels in his spare time. He is the author of *Pack My Bag*, a memoir, and nine novels including *Blindness*, *Nothing*, and *Doting*. Green died in 1973.

Users Review

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Todd Jacobs:

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