



Journey Into the Past (New York Review Books Classics)

By Stefan Zweig

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A deep study of the uneasy heart by one of the masters of the psychological novel, *Journey into the Past*, published here for the first time in America, is a novella that was found among Zweig's papers after his death. Investigating the strange ways in which love, in spite of everything—time, war, betrayal—can last, Zweig tells the story of Ludwig, an ambitious young man from a modest background who falls in love with the wife of his rich employer. His love is returned, and the couple vow to live together, but then Ludwig is dispatched on business to Mexico, and while he is there the First World War breaks out. With travel and even communication across the Atlantic shut down, Ludwig makes a new life in the New World. Years later, however, he returns to Germany to find his beloved a widow and their mutual attraction as strong as ever. But is it possible for love to survive precisely as the impossible?

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A focused new translation of the late Zweig's (1881–1942) gorgeous and sad novella spotlights the hopeless passion between a young man and his employer's wife. Ludwig, an ambitious young man from an impoverished background, finds employment with a famous industrialist in Frankfurt-am-Main and is eventually pressed into service as the industrialist's private secretary, living in his house, where he befriends his boss's radiant, sympathetic wife and finds in her an artistic kinship. A passion develops, cut short by the exigencies of the metals business, then by the eruption of WWI, and the two, despite the intervening years and Ludwig's own marriage, eventually embark on an overnight trip together. Moving back and forth through time, Zweig pursues the couple to their destination, where they are confronted by a military demonstration that bludgeons their fragile memories with the cold, crass present. Bell's faultless translation easily conveys the smoldering engine of Zweig's writhing inner consciousness. (Nov.) (c)

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Review

"A brilliant Austrian writer whose work brings to mind that of his compatriot Joseph Roth...a treat of prewar European literature" —Sylvia Brownrigg, *The New York Times*

"The latest novella available to English-speaking readers, *Journey Into the Past*—found among Zweig's papers after his death and now published by New York Review Books Classics in a masterly translation by Anthea Bell and with an introduction by André Aciman..." —Words Without Borders

"*Journey into the Past* is vintage Stefan Zweig—lucid, tender, powerful and compelling." —Chris Schuler, *The Independent*

"The art is in the telling...a powerful love story...Excellent Foreword by writer Paul Bailey" —David Herman, *The Jewish Chronicle*

"One hardly knows where to begin in praising Zweig's work. One gets the impression that he actively preferred to write about women, and about the great moral crises that send shivers down the spines of polite society" —Nicholas Lezard, *The Guardian*

"My advice is that you should go out at once and buy his books" —Anthony Daniels, *The Sunday Telegraph*

"a brilliant writer." —*The New York Times*

"Admired by readers as diverse as Freud, Einstein, Toscanini, Thomas Mann and Herman Goering." —*The New York Times*

"A remarkable tour de force...this is a masterclass in the language of beautiful storytelling." —Paul Blezard, *The Lady*

"Zweig belongs with three very different masters who each perfected the challenging art of the short story and the novella: Maupassant, Turgenev and Chekhov" —Paul Bailey

About the Author

Stefan Zweig (1881–1942), novelist, biographer, poet, and translator, was born in Vienna into a wealthy Austrian Jewish family. During the 1930s, he was one of the best-selling writers in Europe, and was among the most translated German-language writers before the Second World War. With the rise of Nazism, he moved from Salzburg to London (taking British citizenship), to New York, and finally to Brazil, where he committed suicide with his wife. New York Review Books has published Zweig's novels *The Post-Office Girl* and *Beware of Pity* as well as the novella *Chess Story*.

Anthea Bell is the recipient of the 2009 Schlegel-Tieck Prize for her translation of Stefan Zweig's *Burning Secret*. In 2002 she won the Independent Foreign Fiction Prize and the Helen and Kurt Wolff Prize for her translation of W. G. Sebald's *Austerlitz*.

André Aciman is the author of the novels *Eight White Nights* and *Call Me by Your Name*, the nonfiction works *Out of Egypt* and *False Papers*, and is the editor of *The Proust Project*. He teaches comparative literature at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York.

Users Review

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Christine Furst:

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