



Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel

By Helen Simonson

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BONUS: This edition contains a *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* discussion guide.

You are about to travel to Edgecombe St. Mary, a small village in the English countryside filled with rolling hills, thatched cottages, and a cast of characters both hilariously original and as familiar as the members of your own family. Among them is Major Ernest Pettigrew (retired), the unlikely hero of Helen Simonson's wondrous debut. Wry, courtly, opinionated, and completely endearing, Major Pettigrew is one of the most indelible characters in contemporary fiction, and from the very first page of this remarkable novel he will steal your heart.

The Major leads a quiet life valuing the proper things that Englishmen have lived by for generations: honor, duty, decorum, and a properly brewed cup of tea. But then his brother's death sparks an unexpected friendship with Mrs. Jasmina Ali, the Pakistani shopkeeper from the village. Drawn together by their shared love of literature and the loss of their respective spouses, the Major and Mrs. Ali soon find their friendship blossoming into something more. But village society insists on embracing him as the quintessential local and her as the permanent foreigner. Can their relationship survive the risks one takes when pursuing happiness in the face of culture and tradition?

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Amazon Best Books of the Month, March 2010: In her witty and wise debut novel, newcomer Helen Simonson introduces the unforgettable character of the widower Major Ernest Pettigrew. The Major epitomizes the Englishman with the "stiff upper lip," who clings to traditional values and has tried (in vain) to pass these along to his yuppie son, Roger. The story centers around Pettigrew's fight to keep his greedy relatives (including his son) from selling a valuable family heirloom--a pair of hunting rifles that symbolizes much of what he stands for, or at least what he thinks he does. The embattled hero discovers an unexpected ally and source of consolation in his neighbor, the Pakistani shopkeeper Jasmina Ali. On the surface, Pettigrew and Ali's backgrounds and life experiences couldn't be more different, but they discover that they have the most important things in common. This wry, yet optimistic comedy of manners with a romantic twist will appeal to grown-up readers of both sexes. Kudos to Helen Simonson, who distinguishes herself with *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand* as a writer with the narrative range, stylistic chops, and poise of a veteran.
--Lauren Nemroff

From Publishers Weekly

In her charming debut novel, Simonson tells the tale of Maj. Ernest Pettigrew, an honor-bound Englishman and widower, and the very embodiment of duty and pride. As the novel opens, the major is mourning the loss of his younger brother, Bertie, and attempting to get his hands on Bertie's antique Churchill shotgun—part of a set that the boys' father split between them, but which Bertie's widow doesn't want to hand over. While the major is eager to reunite the pair for tradition's sake, his son, Roger, has plans to sell the heirloom set to a collector for a tidy sum. As he frets over the guns, the major's friendship with Jasmina Ali—the Pakistani widow of the local food shop owner—takes a turn unexpected by the major (but not by readers). The author's dense, descriptive prose wraps around the reader like a comforting cloak, eventually taking on true page-turner urgency as Simonson nudges the major and Jasmina further along and dangles possibilities about the fate of the major's beloved firearms. This is a vastly enjoyable trapeze through the English countryside and the long-held traditions of the British aristocracy. (Mar.)

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From [Bookmarks Magazine](#)

Hailed by the Christian Science Monitor critic as "one of the most endearing love stories I've read in a long time," Major Pettigrew's Last Stand drew comparisons to books by Jane Austen, E. F. Benson, and Alexander McCall Smith. Simonson dexterously combines Old World settings and sensibilities with modern situations to skewer English village life, but it is Simonson's love story and her optimistic faith in the power of kindness, rather than social satire, that form the heart of this charming and poignant novel. While USA Today found some secondary characters "a tad contrived" and the New York Times Book Review thought that Simonson's England seemed exaggerated in its quaintness, these were deemed minor missteps in an otherwise lovely read with a powerful message.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Donald Kelley:

Do you have favorite book? For those who have, what is your favorite's book? Guide is very important thing

for us to be aware of everything in the world. Each book has different aim or perhaps goal; it means that publication has different type. Some people experience enjoy to spend their time to read a book. They are really reading whatever they have because their hobby is reading a book. How about the person who don't like examining a book? Sometime, individual feel need book once they found difficult problem or even exercise. Well, probably you should have this Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel.

William Threatt:

The guide with title Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel possesses a lot of information that you can understand it. You can get a lot of advantage after read this book. That book exist new understanding the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world at this point. That is important to yo7u to learn how the improvement of the world. This particular book will bring you in new era of the the positive effect. You can read the e-book on your own smart phone, so you can read the idea anywhere you want.

Margaret Wynkoop:

Often the book Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel has a lot of knowledge on it. So when you read this book you can get a lot of help. The book was published by the very famous author. Tom makes some research prior to write this book. That book very easy to read you may get the point easily after reading this book.

Susan Munoz:

A number of people said that they feel weary when they reading a reserve. They are directly felt the idea when they get a half areas of the book. You can choose typically the book Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel to make your personal reading is interesting. Your own personal skill of reading expertise is developing when you like reading. Try to choose simple book to make you enjoy you just read it and mingle the feeling about book and studying especially. It is to be 1st opinion for you to like to wide open a book and learn it. Beside that the book Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel can to be a newly purchased friend when you're truly feel alone and confuse with what must you're doing of these time.

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