



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:

Linda Enders:

Now a day individuals who Living in the era wherever everything reachable by connect to the internet and the resources in it can be true or not require people to be aware of each facts they get. How people have to be smart in receiving any information nowadays? Of course the solution is reading a book. Reading a book can

help people out of this uncertainty Information especially this Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel book as this book offers you rich data and knowledge. Of course the info in this book hundred % guarantees there is no doubt in it as you know.

Alex Thayer:

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

Shirley Parker:

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Luis Morales:

With this era which is the greater man or who has ability to do something more are more special than other. Do you want to become among it? It is just simple strategy to have that. What you need to do is just spending your time not much but quite enough to possess a look at some books. Among the books in the top collection in your reading list is actually Major Pettigrew's Last Stand: A Novel. This book which can be qualified as The Hungry Hills can get you closer in turning out to be precious person. By looking upward and review this guide you can get many advantages.

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