



Light and Dark: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia)

By Natsume



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Published in 1917, *Light and Dark* is unlike any of Natsume Soseki's previous works and unique in Japanese fiction of the period. What distinguishes the novel as "modern" is its remarkable representation of interiority. The protagonists, Tsuda Yoshio, thirty, and his wife O-Nobu, twenty-three, exhibit a gratifying complexity that qualifies them as some of the earliest examples of three-dimensional characters in Japanese fiction.

O-Nobu is quick-witted and cunning, a snob and narcissist no less than her husband, passionate, arrogant, spoiled, insecure, naive—yet, above all, gallant. Under Soseki's scrutiny, she emerges as a flesh-and-blood heroine with a palpable reality, dueling with her husband, his troublemaking friend, Kobayashi, and her sister-in-law, O-Hidé. Tsuda undertakes his own battles with Kobayashi, O-Hidé, and the manipulative Madam Yoshikawa, his boss's wife. These exchanges explode into moments of intense jealousy, rancor, and recrimination that will surprise English-speaking readers who expect indirectness, delicacy, and reticence in Japanese relations. Echoing the work of Jane Austen and Henry James, Soseki's novel achieves maximal drama with minimal action and symbolizes a tectonic shift in literary form.



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Editorial Review

Review

This is Natsume Soseki's longest and most complex work, his most ambitious in terms of social description and psychological analysis, and his most intricately plotted. It is a book for the ages, a modernist masterpiece, masterfully translated.

(Alan Tansman, University of California, Berkeley)

With its dramatic expansion of the use of stream-of-consciousness narration, which Natsume Soseki had experimented with in previous novels, *Light and Dark* is a landmark in world literature. This new rendering by one of the very best translators of Japanese fiction reintroduces this modern masterpiece to a twenty-first-century audience.

(Michael K. Bourdaghs, University of Chicago)

Light and Dark is the greatest novel by modern Japan's greatest novelist. What Natsume Soseki achieved in this, his last, work is a pure miracle: no other word can do justice to the irony and precision of his character delineations and the gripping reality of his portrayal of a Japan in transition. Thanks to John Nathan's fine new translation, literature lovers everywhere can finally share in savoring this treasure, a detailed and unforgiving limning of love and marriage, faith and betrayal.

(Minae Mizumura, author of *A True Novel* and *The Fall of the Japanese Language in the Age of English*)

Natsume Soseki's *Light and Dark* is one of the most gripping novels in modern Japanese literature. It represents a historical turning point in the development of Japanese fiction. John Nathan, a distinguished translator, has produced a masterful rendition that captures the subtle nuances of the original.

(Haruo Shirane, Columbia University, author of *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons*)

An enduring masterpiece.

(*Times Literary Supplement*)

Unusual, in several respects, *Light and Dark* is nevertheless an accomplished work of art and a fascinating example of Japanese fiction of its time.

(M.A. Orthofer *Complete Review*)

Light and Dark is a masterful novel, and Nathan's is a superior translation. For readers of Japanese literature it will be enlightening as it is one of the most important modern Japanese novels that inspired a rich literary tradition.

(Asian Review of Books)

A pitch-perfect new translation by John Nathan.

(Public Culture)

About the Author

Natsume Soseki (1867–1916) was the foremost Japanese novelist of the Meiji period, known for his books *Kokoro*, *Botchan*, and *I Am a Cat*. He is also the author of *Theory of Literature and Other Critical Writings*.

John Nathan is Takashima Professor of Cultural Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

Users Review

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Beverly Dewitt:

This Light and Dark: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia) book is not really ordinary book, you have it then the world is in your hands. The benefit you get by reading this book is usually information inside this publication incredible fresh, you will get details which is getting deeper you actually read a lot of information you will get. This Light and Dark: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia) without we realize teach the one who looking at it become critical in contemplating and analyzing. Don't become worry Light and Dark: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia) can bring if you are and not make your carrier space or bookshelves' become full because you can have it in the lovely laptop even telephone. This Light and Dark: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia) having great arrangement in word as well as layout, so you will not sense uninterested in reading.

Peter Zimmerman:

Is it a person who having spare time subsequently spend it whole day simply by watching television programs or just lying on the bed? Do you need something new? This Light and Dark: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia) can be the solution, oh how comes? It's a book you know. You are consequently out of date, spending your spare time by reading in this new era is common not a geek activity. So what these publications have than the others?

William Moreau:

On this era which is the greater man or who has ability to do something more are more important than other. Do you want to become considered one of it? It is just simple solution to have that. What you must do is just spending your time not very much but quite enough to have a look at some books. One of many books in the top record in your reading list will be Light and Dark: A Novel (Weatherhead Books on Asia). This book that is qualified as The Hungry Mountains can get you closer in turning out to be precious person. By looking upwards and review this reserve you can get many advantages.

Annie Rose:

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