

You Can't Go Home Again

Thomas Wolfe

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With an Introduction by Gail Godwin

A twentieth-century classic, Thomas Wolfe's magnificent novel is both the story of a young writer longing to make his mark upon the world and a sweeping portrait of America and Europe from the Great Depression through the years leading up to World War II. Upon the publication of *You Can't Go Home Again* in 1940, two years after Wolfe's death, *The New York Times Book Review* declared that it "will stand apart from everything else that he wrote because this is the book of a man who had come to terms with himself, who was on his way to mastery of his art, who had something profoundly important to say."

Driven by dreams of literary success, George Webber has left his provincial hometown to make his name as a writer in New York City. When his first novel is published, it brings him the fame he has sought, but it also brings the censure of his neighbors back home, who are outraged by his depiction of them. Unsettled by their reaction and unsure of himself and his future, Webber begins a search for a greater understanding of his artistic identity that takes him deep into New York's hectic social whirl; to London with an uninhibited group of expatriates; and to Berlin, lying cold and sinister under Hitler's shadow. He discovers a world plagued by political uncertainty and on the brink of transformation, yet he finds within himself the capacity to meet it with optimism and a renewed love for his birthplace. He is a changed man yet a hopeful one, awake to the knowledge that one can never fully "go back home to your family, back home to your childhood . . . away from all the strife and conflict of the world . . . back home to the old forms and systems of things which once seemed everlasting but which are changing all the time."



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