

The Fiction of Hortense Calisher



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The Collected Stories of Hortense Calisher Hortense Calisher, John Hollander, 1984 The Fiction of Hortense Calisher Kathleen Snodgrass, 1993 Hortense Calisher is the author of eleven novels six collections of stories or novellas and two memoirs The publication of her first book of short stories *In the Absence of Angels* 1951 marked the debut of an important writer For the past forty years her works have been consistently and widely reviewed Calisher has long been celebrated and censured as a writer's writer a consummate stylist with an impressive range of subjects Despite that range however Calisher's works possess a thematic coherence that has eluded critical notice For more than forty years she has spun out variations on the motif of rites of passage and of extradition Her protagonists may yearn for stasis for a firmly manageable reality but finally emerge into a world where change is the only constant In *The Fiction of Hortense Calisher* the first book length study of Calisher's work Kathleen Snodgrass demonstrates this theme's dominance Following an introduction that provides biographical and critical background she explores similarities in the structure of Calisher's works grouping them together to illuminate both the general motif and its distinctive variations In the first chapter *Bridging the Gulf* The Autobiographical Stories Snodgrass arranges Calisher's early stories into a biographically chronological order a coherent narrative emerges that dramatizes Hester Elkin's rites of passage from childhood through adolescence to early adulthood Hester Elkin is only the first of a succession of Calisher's protagonists to embrace life as an open ended journey In chapter 2 Snodgrass examines four Calisher novels that have in common tumultuous transitions from adolescence to adulthood In Calisher an essential part of that rite of passage is a coming down from the heights of theorizing and fantasy into a willingness to grapple with mundane adult realities Chapter 3 *False Entries* focuses on two companion novels in which the central drama is the painful transition from stasis to movement Subsequent chapters focus on two very different types of movement *Solo Flights* deals with characters sloughing off conventional lives like dead skins and setting off alone while *Re Entries* examines the opposite movement here Calisher's characters re enter what she has termed the great enclosure of the norm Later chapters discuss Calisher's two novels of space travel works in which the primary voyage is psychic rather than physical and works dealing with the voyaging life well into old age In her conclusion Calisher's *Monologuing Eye* Snodgrass demonstrates the inseparability of style and theme in Calisher's works Both stylistically and thematically Calisher repudiates a predictably linear progression through life If her style is as some critics have remarked dense and elliptical so too is her experience of the world She leaves it to others to duplicate a received reality choosing instead to take soundings on a world in flux

BOOK JACKET Title Summary field provided by Blackwell North America Inc All Rights Reserved The Novellas of Hortense Calisher Hortense Calisher, 1997 This Modern Library collection presents seven novellas that brilliantly showcase the range and depth of the talent of Hortense Calisher a writer hailed by the *Saturday Review* as among the most literate practitioners of modern American fiction a stylist wholly committed to the exploitation of language Featured is *Women Men Don't Talk*

About a new story published here for the first time The novellas are characterized by their unfailing intelligence and by the technical sure handedness and acuity of the writing Each has a strong sense of place New York City the Hudson Valley Saratoga Springs and an eclectic cast of characters who inhabit regions where our most acute hopes fears and anxieties coexist The respectable lawyer of Tale for the Mirror attempts to oust an unconventional Hindu healer from his community only to wonder whether the doctor s trickery is any different from his own In The Railway Police a journey by train occasions a social worker s sudden break with past pretenses and her kafkaesque rebirth as a vagabond And in Saratoga Hot a sharply observed tale set amid the fabled world of horse racing a man and woman discover new strength in a love touched by tragedy Included as well are Extreme Magic The Man Who Spat Silver and The Last Trolley Ride Calisher hits at her targets at a point more vital than the usual marksman knows to exist wrote novelist and critic Angus Wilson And The New York Times Book Review commented Seen through her eyes the real world is not prosaic Placed in lyrical poetic spaces it is thick and rich with implication The Novellas of Hortense Calisher an edition exclusive to the Modern Library is a major collection from one of America s finest literary voices The Modern Library has played a significant role in American cultural life for the better part of a century The series was founded in 1917 by the publishers Boni and Liveright and eight years later acquired by Bennett Cerf and Donald Klopfer It provided the foundation for their next publishing venture Random House The Modern Library has been a staple of the American book trade providing readers with affordable hard bound editions of important works of literature and thought For the Modern Library s seventy fifth anniversary Random House redesigned the series restoring as its emblem the running torchbearer created by Lucian Bernhard in 1925 and refurbishing jackets bindings and type as well as inaugurating a new program of selecting titles The Modern Library continues to provide the world s best books at the best prices

On Keeping Women Hortense Calisher, 2013-09-17 DIVA complex masterpiece that reveals the mind of a contemporary woman beyond the confines of family love and duty to one s self divDIV div Lexie a married woman with four children undergoes a midlife crisis and questions her role as wife mother and lover From within a Victorian house in the Hudson River Valley Lexie dissects her life experiences in hopes of gaining a deeper understanding of her unhappiness Through rich symbolism lively dialogue and acute commentary Hortense Calisher conjures a cohesive map of Lexie s personal awakening

Queenie Hortense Calisher, 2013-11-05 DIVA cheeky portrait of an old fashioned young woman s assimilation into the modern world divDIV divDIV Set in 1960s New York this piquant coming of age story concerns a teenage girl Queenie raised to become a kept woman in an exceedingly comfortable and well adjusted yet insular and retrograde household After enrolling in college Queenie confronts new understandings both personal and political and gradually becomes cognizant of the dated values imparted upon her divDIV div Bringing her trademark stylishness and a remarkable exuberance to Queenie Hortense Calisher simultaneously pays homage to and updates the Victorian storytelling approach in capturing the intellectual and sexual breakthroughs of a contemporary young woman

The New Yorkers Hortense

Calisher, 2013-09-17 *DIVA* sprawling multicharacter masterpiece of guilt and the hope for redemption divDIV divDIV Opening in 1943 and spanning over a decade *The New Yorkers* is Hortense Calisher's most ambitious novel Judge Simon Mannix a well educated upper middle class New Yorker is faced with a terrible decision when his unfaithful wife is accidentally shot and killed by their twelve year old daughter Mannix insists upon keeping the truth a secret claiming that the death was a suicide as he attempts to save his child from a life of psychological trauma Shame accumulates in his consciousness and Mannix finds himself obsessed with the nuances of guilt div Calisher weaves a complex tapestry of closely observed human behaviors and emotions accentuated by a collection of fragmented portraits of the lives that intersect with those of the judge and his daughter Standard Dreaming Hortense Calisher, 2013-09-17 *DIVA* unique novel of parents and children and the spaces between them divDIV divDIV Dr Niels Berners a Swiss plastic surgeon living in New York is struggling to recover from his dysfunctional son's abandonment of him He joins a group of four other parents all with absent children either in jail or in jeopardy to discuss their feelings and seek a sense of community comfort and closure div Hortense Calisher artfully strings together tales of healing brilliantly tracing the shadow of the generational gap With compassion and precision she paints the bruised egos of concerned parents confronting very empty nests Age Hortense Calisher, 2013-11-05 *DIVDIVA* novel that examines aging and marriage with sincerity and insight divDIV Rupert and Gemma an elderly couple still very much in love know that death will inevitably come for one of them before taking the other so they keep private journals to ensure that the survivor's mate will never truly be gone living on instead through his or her words *Age* is the narrative of Rupert and Gemma's lives their similarities their differences and the ways in which the two are irreversibly entwined Each writes of life's mundane events social outings errands a quiet night at home that assume wistful meaning when viewed through the lens of memory divDIV div div *Mysteries of Motion* Hortense Calisher, 2013-11-05 *DIV* Hortense Calisher's excursion into science fiction A rich portrait of the passengers aboard the first civilian space shuttle divDIV divDIV *The Citizen Courier* is headed toward Island US the first public habitat in space Aboard the ship resides a collection of diverse travelers Narrator Tom Gilpin is a rich publisher and he's joined by fellow journalist Veronica as well as an industrialist a Jewish German expatriate philosopher a diplomat and his wife and the teenage son of a NASA admiral divDIV div Revealing a complex nonlinear narrative for each of its characters the iridescent literary sci fi of *Mysteries of Motion* captures lives and relationships as labyrinthine as the space vessel that carries them channeling intergalactic philosophical and psychological voyages **False Entry** Hortense Calisher, 1988 Pierre Goodman who grew up in a wealthy Jewish family in London offers courtroom testimony in the American South about a Ku Klux Klan murder he didn't witness

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Table of Contents The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher

1. Understanding the eBook The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - The Rise of Digital Reading The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher User Reviews and Ratings
 - The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher Free and Paid eBooks
 - The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher Public Domain eBooks
 - The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher eBook Subscription Services

- The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher Compatibility with Devices
 - The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Interactive Elements The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
- 8. Staying Engaged with The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Setting Reading Goals The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of The Fiction Of Hortense Calisher
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
- 14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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