



The Wonderful Adventures Of Nils And The Further Adventures Of Nils Holgersson

Selma Lagerlöf

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BONUS: Ten new pages about Selma Lagerlöf and Sweden added. Three landscape photos included. Selma Lagerlöf is best known in America and worldwide for her masterpiece children's stories: NILS: The Wonderful Adventures of Nils and The Further Adventures of Nils Holgersson. Originally commissioned by the Swedish National Teachers' Society to teach introductory geography to young Swedish schoolchildren, these adventures, first published in 1906–1907, take flight when Nils, a Swedish imp, is magically reduced to elfin size, gets astride a gander who joins a flock of wild geese that fly a route covering the significant geographical and historical sites of all of Sweden. Along the way, they encounter the consequential elements of survival, both socially and environmentally: predator and victim, friend and foe, the land and its users. Told in a series of narratives, these adventures demonstrate this Nobel-prize-winning author's skill at defining the sublime in simple, everyday existence. Much of Selma Lagerlöf's work is rooted in her childhood experiences at the ancestral home, "Mårbacka." In her Memories of Mårbacka, she recounts the flight of one of Mårbacka's ganders who joins a flock of wild geese and returns during the next seasonal migration, proudly bringing new family and friends to share the domestic trough, only to come to a horrific end at the hands of the wicked housekeeper. The emergence of these childhood impressions coupled with adult wisdom suggests the appeal of the adventures of Nils to both children and adults. Family and household staff were a source of entertainment and amusement; the imaginative enchantment of storytelling was a main diversion. Of the many concerns in these adventures still appropriate today is that of the environment expressed by the wild goose: "If you have learned anything at all from us, Thumbietot, you no longer think that the humans should have the whole earth to themselves," . . . "Remember you have a large country and you can easily afford to leave a few bare rocks, a few shallow lakes and swamps, a few desolate cliffs and remote forests to us poor, dumb creatures, where we can be allowed to live in peace." This combined edition, from 1917 translations of the two adventures, is sixth in a series of reprints from Penfield Books of the works of Selma Lagerlöf. Others include: Invisible Links, Girl from the Marsh Croft, Memories of Mårbacka, Scandinavian Kings and Queens (revised version soon to be released), and Gösta Berling's Saga. Forthcoming is Words of Love and Wisdom by Selma Lagerlöf, a book of selected excerpts from her major works.

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