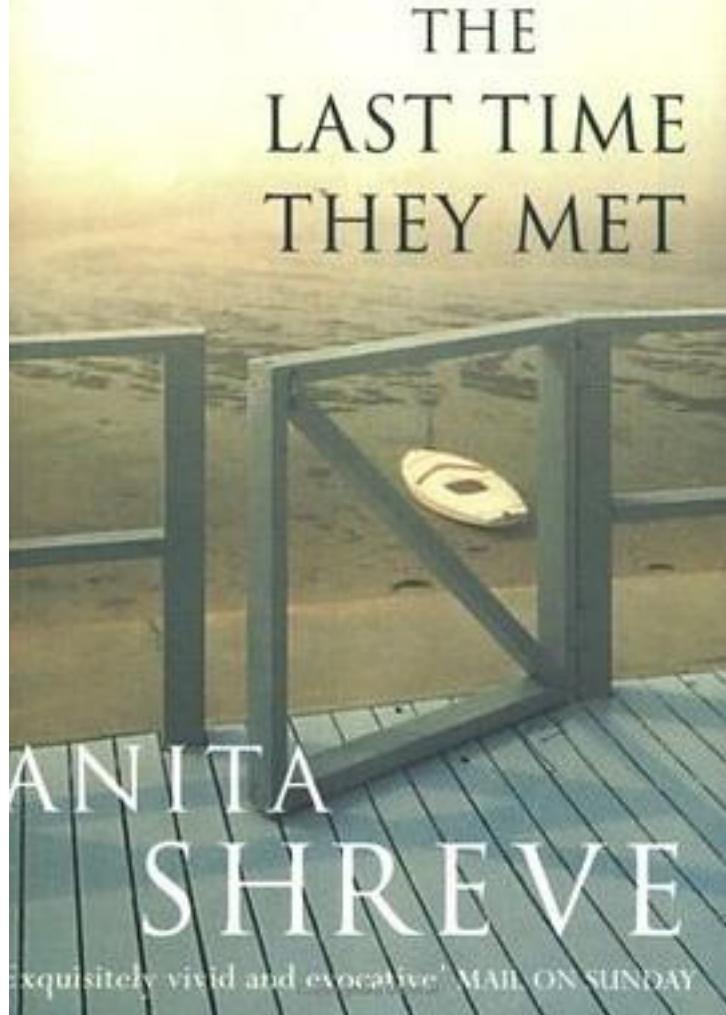


The Last Time They Met

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著者:Anita Shreve

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Amazon.com Review

The Last Time They Met opens with two old lovers, both poets, running into each other at a writer's conference. Well, Linda Fallon and Thomas Janes aren't old, actually--just middle-aged, with a lifetime's worth of history between them. In the first section, Anita Shreve only suggests what that history contains: there was adultery, we gather, and a car accident, plus some illicit encounters under a pitiless Kenyan sun. Presumably the rest of the book will lead back to the beginnings of this grand passion, right? We think we know where this is going--but that's the tricky part, because we don't.

The novel does get off to a slow start, with an unnecessarily drawn-out description of a luxury hotel. But it picks up speed as it moves backward in time, from the lovers' vividly evoked interlude in Africa, to their adolescent years in the Massachusetts village of Hull, and finally to Linda's deepest, darkest secret. Only then does the author unveil her final revelation, which should leave most readers somewhat out of breath, and possibly even obliged to turn back to the first page and read the book over again. Shreve is a canny storyteller, and she knows her characters inside and out. (As well she might: Thomas is the husband of Jean, the photographer in *The Weight of Water*.) And *The Last Time They Met* is yet another example of the kind of book she does best--one that's as skillfully plotted as a thriller, but with writing that lingers long after the last plot twist is unfurled. No matter whether people actually have affairs like these. Reading this book only makes you wish that they did.

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