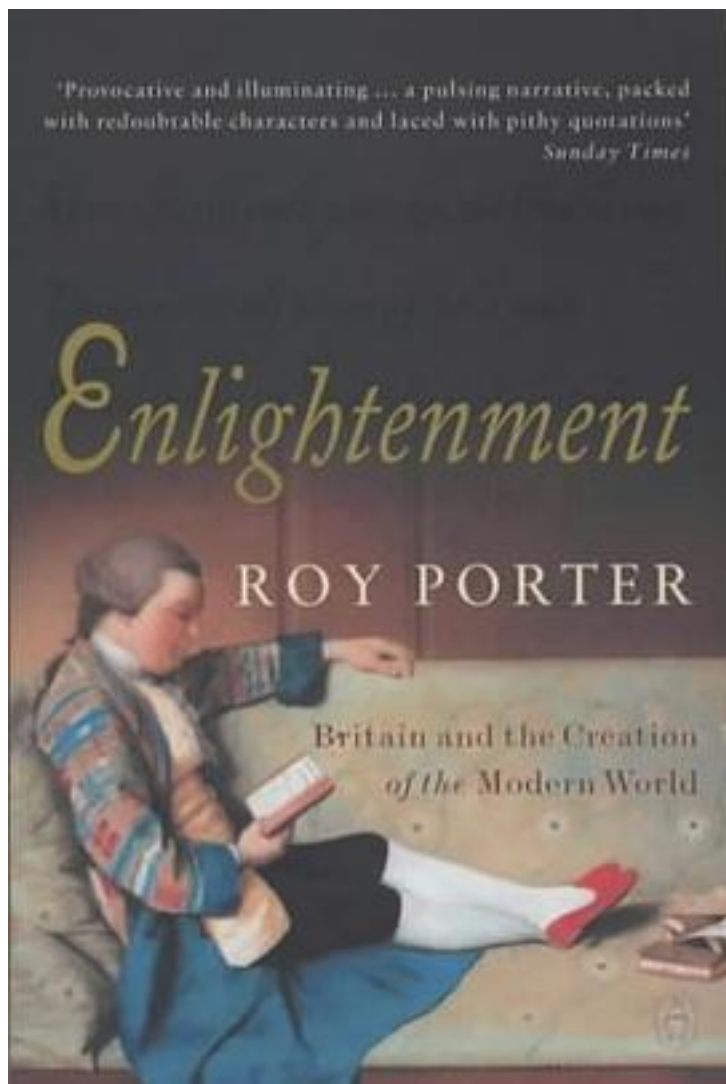


Enlightenment



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出版者:

出版时间:2008-5

装帧:

isbn:9781590200742

In October 2005, only a few months after her Turkish husband is detained and her five-year-old son distributed to a foster family by United States border patrol, Jeannie Wakefield disappears. She leaves behind in Istanbul a fifty-three-page letter to M, an investigative journalist whom Jeannie begs to write about her plight. The letter tells the story of Jeannie's first arrival in Turkey thirty-four years earlier, when she was a bright-eyed sixteen-year-old innocent, shimmering with open-hearted idealism. Desperate to soak up new experiences, well-meaning Jeannie found herself befriended by a group of high school students who would change her life--pretty, cautious Lüset; clean-cut, aristocratic Haluk; sullen Chloe, their jealous American tag-along; volatile, outspoken, and ruthlessly anti-imperialist Suna; and, at the center of it all, inscrutable and effortlessly charismatic Sinan, the dark horse who would steal Jeannie's heart the way he stole M's not long before. The letter goes on to reveal a convoluted tale of political intrigue, of retired intelligence operatives, a grisly murder, and a dismembered body in a trunk. When Dutch Harding, Jeannie's radical friends' beloved American teacher, disappears, the trail of blood leads to her door, and after interrogations, torture, car bombs, and suicide attempts, her clique is splintered and scattered across the globe. Jeannie's diary tells a grim and heartbreaking history of first loves shattered and best friends betrayed, and M finds herself, against her will, tangled in Jeannie's narrative. Jeannie has only asked her for one favor--to write one article exposing the horrible truth. But in the "deep state" of post-911 Turkey, nobody is who they say they are, and everyone is a suspect--exactly how much will M sacrifice to save the woman who stole her only true love?

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