

Restitution



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The new novel from 'a major writer by any standards: technique, curiosity, erudition, plus the sheer body, range and quality of her work' (Independent on Sunday). Restitution is the compelling story of a young woman in search of her identity at the end of the century. Betony Falk is in her late 20s. Both her parents died when she was young, and she was brought up by her grandmother. With time on her hands between jobs she decides to find out more about her father's death, which her grandmother has always surrounded in mystery. She finds no death certificate for Henry, her father's name, but only one for Herman Falk - no birth certificates for either. The death certificate hints at suicide. Betony confronts her grandmother with her findings and the latter confesses that the boy she brought up was a German Jewish refugee baby, a substitute for her own stillborn Henry. Her own sense of identity undermined, Betony sets out on a heartrending quest for the truth which takes her to Germany and into the past, only to discover that the more she finds out the less she knows who she is now. Spanning three centuries and seen from the viewpoints of Betony, her grandfather and Gill, her flatmate, RESTITUTION traces a family that fled as Jacobites from England, and again as Jews from Germany, and asks what relevance nationality and the past have for a young woman at the end of the twentieth century.

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