



In Youth Is Pleasure & I Left My Grandfather's House

Denton Welch

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First published in 1945, *In Youth Is Pleasure* is a beautiful and unassuming coming-of-age novel by the English writer and painter Denton Welch (1915-1948). Painfully sensitive and sad Orville Pym is 15 years old, and this novel recounts the summer holiday after his first miserable year at public school--but as in all of Welch's work, what is most important are the details of his characters' surroundings. Welch is a Proustian writer of uncanny powers of observation who, as William S. Burroughs wrote, "makes the reader aware of the magic that is right under his eyes." Film director John Waters includes this novel as one of his "Five Books You Should Read to Live a Happy Life If Something Is Basically the Matter with You," and writes: "Maybe there is no better novel in the world than Denton Welch's *In Youth Is Pleasure*. Just holding it in my hands, so precious, so beyond gay, so deliciously subversive, is enough to make illiteracy a worse social crime than hunger." Also included in this edition is the first U.S. publication of "I Left My Grandfather's House." This first-person account of an idyllic walking tour in the British countryside undertaken when Welch was 18 makes a fascinating companion piece to the fictionalized, though no less autobiographical, *In Youth Is Pleasure*.

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