

The Village Of Longing - George O'brien

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'Page after page, he splits the atom of detail so that autobiography and cultural history flare up in one long pleasurable chain-reaction.'-Seamus Heaney, Observer. The Village of Longing, George O'Brien's narrative of his childhood in the somnolent river-valley settlement of Lismore, Co. Waterford, during the 1950s, has established itself as a contemporary classic since its initial publication in hardback in 1987. It describes the life and surroundings of an only child raised in an unorthodox household within a close-knit society ruled by the twin empires of Castle and Church haunted by the lure of foreignness and the pain of exile. George O'Brien's shimmering prose incarnates an Ireland in microcosm -- a physical place and a place of the mind. 'In this remarkable memoir George O'Brien has concentrated on recapturing that fugitive entity, the real thing. He is himself the real thing: an artist. Besides humour, there is poetry here. Nothing is phoney, nothing made up. His picture of Irish life in the fifties is a delight, an imaginative feast, and a singular achievement in its own right.'- Derek Mahon. 'The grace and power of his prose are exhilarating ...In a few sentences the author can illuminate a whole panorama of Irish social history ... For me, reading this book was akin to reading about part of myself.'- Dervla Murphy, The Irish Times

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