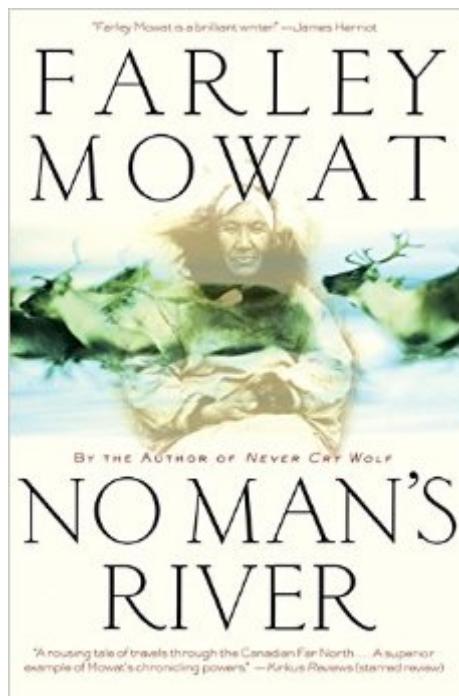


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No Man's River



Synopsis

With *No Man's River*, Farley Mowat has penned his best Arctic tale in years. This book chronicles his life among Metis trappers and native people as they struggle to eke out a living in a brutal environment. In the spring of 1947, putting the death and devastation of WWII behind him, Mowat joined a scientific expedition. In the remote reaches of Manitoba, he witnessed an Eskimo population ravaged by starvation and disease brought about by the white man. In his efforts to provide the natives with some of the assistance that the government failed to provide, Mowat set out on an arduous journey that collided with one of nature's most arresting phenomena—the migration of the Arctic's caribou herds. Mowat was based at Windy Post with a Metis trapper and two Ihalmiut children. A young girl, known as Rita, is painted with special vividness; checking the trap lines with the men, riding atop a sled, smoking a tiny pipe. Farley returns to the North two decades later and discovers the tragic fate that befell her. Combining his exquisite portraits with awe-inspiring passages on the power of nature, *No Man's River* is another riveting memoir from one of North America's most beloved writers.

Book Information

Paperback: 320 pages

Publisher: Da Capo Press; Reprint edition (January 6, 2006)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0786716924

ISBN-13: 978-0786716920

Product Dimensions: 1 x 5.5 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 10.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (12 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Readers can count this book as one more captivating true tale of Canada's far north, told by its best-read authority. The young Farley Mowat, returning disillusioned from the War in 1947 and thinking to become a biologist, joined with a taxonomist on a collecting "scientific" expedition into the Barren Lands of Northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan. The headstrong 26 year old was improbably paired up with a disciplined naturalist of the old school, who killed and skinned every

animal he could shoot, poison or trap. After a while, Farley, having seen enough killing in the war, became disillusioned with this approach to appreciating the wonders of nature, and deserted his post in favor of exploring the largely uninhabited territory in the company of an Indian half-breed, Charles Schweder. His real desire was to contact the "People of the Deer," the Imhalmiut. These people came to be idealized in Farley's mind as a people "uncontaminated with the murderous aberrations of civilized man." Mowat gives a clear picture of the hardships encountered by the few inhabitants of this harsh landscape. By the time of the expedition, the Imhalmiut had dwindled to only a few scattered bands, having been nearly wiped out in a succession of epidemics. Farley tells of the well-intended but sporadic and largely ineffectual aid given to them by the Canadian government and its minions, and how Schweder had been traumatized by his experience in a partially successful rescue attempt he had made the year previous. His rescue of a six year old replacement for his child bride, dead of starvation, presents the reader (and Mowat) with a thought-provoking moral dilemma. So much for the myth of the noble savage...

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