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Enemies of Promise

Cyril Connolly

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Enemies of Promise Cyril Connolly

“Whom the gods wish to destroy,” writes Cyril Connolly, “they first call promising.” First published in 1938 and long out of print, *Enemies of Promise*, an “inquiry into the problem of how to write a book that lasts ten years,” tests the boundaries of criticism, journalism, and autobiography with the blistering prose that became Connolly’s trademark. Connolly here confronts the evils of domesticity, politics, drink, and advertising as well as novelists such as Joyce, Proust, Hemingway, and Faulkner in essays that remain fresh and penetrating to this day.

“A fine critic, compulsive traveler, and candid autobiographer. . . . [Connolly] lays down the law for all writers who wanted to count. . . . He had imagination and decisive images flashed with the speed of wit in his mind.”—V. S. Pritchett, *New York Review of Books*

“Anyone who writes, or wants to write, will find something on just about every single page that either endorses a long-held prejudice or outrages, and that makes it a pretty compelling read. . . . You end up muttering back at just about every ornately constructed pensée that Connolly utters, but that’s one of the joys of this book.”—Nick Hornby, *The Believer*

“A remarkable book.”—Anthony Powell

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Steven Connell:

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