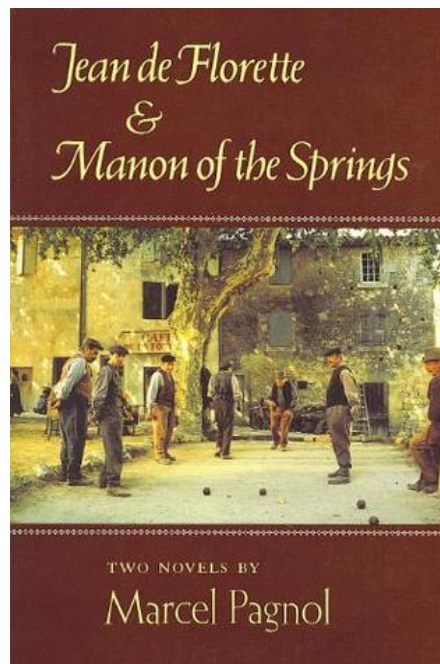




Jean de Florette & Manon of the Springs (Two Novels)

Marcel Pagnol , W.E. van Heyningen (Translator)

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Jean de Florette & Manon of the Springs (Two Novels) Marcel Pagnol , W.E. van Heyningen (Translator)
In *Jean de Florette and Manon of the Springs*, Marcel Pagnol (called by Andre Malraux "one of the great writers of our generation" and by Jean Renoir "the leading film artist of his age") achieve the fullest and most satisfying expression of a story that haunted him for years, a Provencal legend of vengeance exacted by a mysterious shepherdess. Pagnol brings to his treatment of this powerful, moving story his dramatist's sense of place, ambience, and character and his keen understanding of the Provencal countryside and its people. Rich with twists and ramifications, *Jean de Florette and Manon of the Springs* sets an idealistic city man against two secretive and deceitful Provencal country men in a superbly realized story of a struggle for life, of crime and punishment, of betrayal and revenge, and of judgment and forgiveness. In this edition, illustrated with images from the acclaimed film adaptation by Claude Berri, North Point presents Pagnol's enduring story in W.E. van Heyningen's exact and sensitive translation.

Biblical in its cadences, epic in its sweep to destiny, and old fashioned in development of character and plot, this saga charts the destruction of a Provencal family.

Jean de Florette & Manon of the Springs (Two Novels) Details

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From Reader Review Jean de Florette & Manon of the Springs (Two Novels) for online ebook

Rebecca Brothers says

Provence is a magical place where the light is orange on everything it touches, lavender and sun flowers fill the fields, and the people walk gruffly through your heart. I was lucky enough to live in Montpellier, France for a month when I was in college. Right outside the town are purple fields and golden roads and the sun, sun, sun is everywhere. Marcel Pagnol was a native of this region and his books capture the heat and the heartaches that this country is steeped in. Both of these books were made into brilliant films. And this was one of those times a teacher showed us something beautiful and I never got a chance to tell her just how deeply the films affected me. Ms. Diane Jeter, wherever you are, I read these books in French in honor of you. Merci mille fois.

Manny says

If you're tired of these tricky post-modern novels, with their antiheroes and unreliable narrators and structural cleverness, then here's the perfect antidote. A really good, old-fashioned story, where you can unashamedly identify with the main characters, grit your teeth at the bad guys' perfidy, and weep the odd tear. And there is no case in literary history where the book and the film are so perfectly integrated. Pagnol started with a movie, which he wrote partly as a vehicle for his beautiful actress wife; then he turned it a pair of books, which greatly expanded the story; and finally, Claude Berri made two new films, based on the books. I believe that they are still the most successful French movies of all time, and launched both Emmanuelle Béart and Daniel Auteuil as major stars.

So, the book. The story is played out in early 20th century Provence. Simple-minded, basically well-meaning Ugolin comes home from the war with a get-rich scheme; he's going to raise carnations. He's learned the difficult art of growing them successfully, and there's a good market for the flowers, but the problem is that carnations require huge amounts of water. He discusses it with his Machiavellian uncle, César, who has an idea. There's this old farm, Les Romarins, which would be ideal: it has a fine spring.

Les Romarins is, however, just about to be occupied by Jean and his family. Jean's mother, Florette, came from the village, but he grew up in the big city, and has had a desk job. Now, he's decided that he's going to get in contact with his roots, take over the old farm, and raise rabbits. Before Jean arrives, César and Ugolin sneak in, and block up the spring. They figure that, without water, Jean won't be able to do anything; he'll be forced to give up, sell the farm, and move back to the city. Then they'll be free to start growing flowers. It seems pretty cruel to Jean, but for some reason that doesn't appear to bother César.

Unfortunately, they haven't counted on Jean's tenacity. He refuses to admit defeat, and makes a horrible trek every day to fetch water. He knows, moreover, that there used to be a spring on the farm, and keeps searching for it. But he doesn't find it, and, despite all his energy and determination, you can't run a farm without a good water supply. In the end, his options run out. César and Ugolin get control of the farm, and unblock the spring. What they don't realise is that Jean's young daughter, Manon, has seen them do it. She puts the pieces together, and swears that she will get revenge.

I won't give away any more spoilers, but suffice to say that the plot is quite perfect, and the ending is one of the most satisfying I know. Justice is done, but not in the way you expect. And if you have some French, consider reading it in the original; the language is pleasing and not at all difficult.

Almeta says

Jean de Florette, his wife Aimee and daughter Manon are the perfectly happy family, leaving the town life behind and getting back to nature. They have no experience for this endeavor but Jean relies on his books to predict the rainfall, for growing crops and for raising rabbits, etc. The entire family willingly worked themselves to the bone. I was joyful of their every success and mournful of every setback.

Ugolin is an odious farmer/would-be-entrepreneur who covets Jean's land. Yet sometimes I felt a little warmth for him, since he seemed to be discovering a conscience. BUT his self-important god-father, the Papet is just an evil manipulator, plotting ruin.

The townsfolk and Mother Nature played their own very frustrating roles.

An excellent read.

Corey says

I love these books. Great story, marvelous characters tenderly drawn, subtle psychology, and all in the service of a gentle meditation on chance and fate. I can't recommend these highly enough.

Gabrielle says

Pagnol is my favorite writer. He knew when to be funny and when to be touching, created larger-than-life characters and unforgettable stories about human nature. "Jean de Florette" and "Manon des Sources" are stories I have been reading all my life, and it is very difficult for me to summarize them. The first book is about greed, and how it can rot people's hearts. The second book is about revenge, and how sometimes life doles out the cruelest punishments without any human interference.

Some spoilers.

Ugolin Soubeyran is not very smart, but he means well. When he gets back to his humble abode near the small village of Les Bastides after his military service, all he wants is to grow carnations and make a simple living from his flowers. His rich, cunning uncle César (also known as "Le Papet") is more ambitious: why not buy the fine farm of Les Romarins, that has a spring on its land? To make sure they can buy the farm on the cheap, they go plug the spring. But unfortunately for them, Jean Cadoret, a hunchback from "the city", soon after moves in with his wife Aimée and young daughter Manon – he just inherited the farm from his mother's estate. César is not worried: without water, they know that Jean won't be able to get much out of his land, despite his grandiose plans to raise rabbits and grow squashes. Ugolin feels bad about the whole thing, but his uncle manipulates him horribly and they both watch Jean slowly exhaust himself to death trying to farm his land in the drought. They then sweep in, buy the farm from Jean's now destitute widow and set about to unblock the spring. Little do they know that Manon, who was always suspicious of Ugolin's servile friendship, has seen them...

A few years pass and Ugolin becomes a very successful grower of carnations. Meanwhile, Manon grows up into a beautiful young woman and lives a bit as a wildling, guarding a flock of goats in the hills. One day, she overhears two men from the villages gossip as they take a break from their hunt. She hears them confirm what she had known all along, that the Soubeyran blocked her father's spring and caused his ruin; but they also let slip that the entire village knew about it and that no one said a thing, no one helped them - because Jean was a hunchback and because they were city folks. She then decides that she will get revenge, and that while Ugolin and the Papet will pay the harsher price, the rest of the village will go down with them for their odious complicity in her father's death.

It's a powerful, tragic, beautifully written story. It has the kind of universality that one usually encounters in much older books: I find it very reminiscent of Greek tragedies and Russian literature. The characterization is complex and finely detailed, the family-centricity of the tale and moral struggles make for a captivating, engrossing read. The ending is probably the most poignant conclusion to any novel I have ever read and I can never get through it without shedding a few tears.

Pagnol was a poet of nature, in love with the little corner of the world where he was born and this love flows off the page. His prose is clear, bittersweet and elegant. If you do not want to go explore Provence after reading this, read it again! He originally wrote those stories as a movie script and then novelized them, fleshing them out even more, painting an epic, lyrical story about family, the powers of the nature he adored and justice. These are remarkable and tragically underrated books (if I judge by how hard it is to get a copy of the English translation...).

The Claude Berri movie adaptation are stunning classics. Yves Montand and Emmanuelle Béart break my heart every time and Daniel Auteuil and Gérard Depardieu are magnificent. The cinematography is breathtaking and the music is haunting. I recommend watching them after reading the books: they are perfect, timeless masterpieces

Melissa says

Jean de Florette is our August bookclub pick, and it is beautifully written but incomplete without Manon of the Springs.

bookclub august 2015

Tea Jovanovi? says

Moderan klasik francuske književnosti... Knjiga koja je sjajno ovekovena odli?nom ekranizacijom sa Depardjeom u glavnoj ulozi... Potražite i knjigu i film...

Wanda says

6 JUL 2018 - film today - Jean de Florette (1986) - and, it is a wonderful film. The film is in the original French, of which I have none. Thank good for subtitles. I do own this book - a 2-in-1 novel - which I will begin reading tonight.

9 JUL 2018 - the films were presented back-to-back and were each equally wonderful. The novels are sublime. It is a rare thing when film and book are equally outstanding - this is that rare time.

paperdust says

Timeless classic set in the wild countryside of southern France. A plot laced with twists and turns, exposing the follies and foibles of the characters of this close-knit village community, who guard their land with a vengeance, whose livelihood is at the mercy of Mother Nature, where blood runs thicker than water. With the most befitting score http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V44E_Y...

Molly Ringle says

Really admired and enjoyed this one.

My review from when I read it in 2006:

Technically two novels, but the second is a direct sequel to the first and would be a mystery without it, so they're packaged together and might as well be read as one. (Total is only 440 pages anyway.) When two scoundrels plug up a spring near their farm in rural Provence, hoping to claim it for their own private use later, they start a snowball of events that turn into a life or death matter for pretty much everyone in the village. A beautiful and relaxing portrait of a slow-paced but hard-working lifestyle--let's walk ten miles daily to get water, but through hills of lavender; with a picnic of bread, sausage, and white wine--and also a great moral story of crime, punishment, love, family, and community.

Moonlike says

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Ahmad Sharabiani says

Jean De Florette and Manon of the Springs, Marcel Pagnol

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Roula Zahar says

Jean Cadoret, percepteur, hérite d'une propriété à la campagne qui attire la convoitise de ses riches voisins, les Soubeyran, Cesar et Ugolin. Afin de baisser le prix de la terre ils bouchent la source qui en fait partie. Ils s'attèlent à précipiter le citadin à sa perte en lui apportant une diligente et hypocrite aide dans ses ambitieux projets, cachant la source, même au moment où il se tue à la tâche en tentant de sauver ses plantations d'une rude sécheresse. Dans la suite, Manon, fille de Jean Cadoret a une occasion de venger son père... Belle, intelligente, ayant une merveilleuse complicité avec les animaux et la nature, elle donne aux villageois une sérieuse leçon de justice, d'amour et de bonté.

Alors que le deuxième roman parle de vengeance, assène aux criminels un châtiment mérité faisant appel aux fabuleux talents de scénariste de Pagnol, « Jean de Florette » tient plus du traité sur la bêtise et la méchanceté humaines. Cruauté, hypocrisie et stupidité vont de pair, « le sot n'a pas assez d'étoffe pour être bon » selon les maximes de Francois de la Rouchefoucault. Pagnol souligne la stupidité du méchant et les conséquences de sa sottise, désastreuses pour tout le monde, y compris lui-même alors que la bonté requière subtilité, raffinement, intelligence, culture, savoir et éducation. Elle semble être l'apanage des personnes distinguées et civilisées. La pauvreté, la misère des villageois favorisent ainsi leur silence complice avec les criminels. Les thèmes de la faute de l'innocence et du pardon la méfiance l'hostilité la religion

Les victimes ne sont jamais tout à fait innocentes

La nature accentue les traits des personnages, précipitent leurs comportements et renforce leurs agissements. Elle est d'une part, l'amie de Manon, l'entoure, l'amuse, lui donne les précieux outils de sa vengeance, et accentue d'autre part la barbarie et la grossièreté des criminels quand ils sont face aux durs labeurs et à la survie dans la nature. La nature est en fait la vraie force dominante de cette superbe oeuvre.

Elle oppose l'asservissement à l'argent des Soubeyran à la liberté de Manon qui n'a d'autre maître que la nature. Quelle meilleure lecture pour un si beau jour de printemps dans la vallée de Nahr Ibrahim ?

Benjamin says

Two short novels that work best as one longer novel. Pagnol details the tragic greed of two Provencal peasants which costs the life of a man, and how his daughter decides to avenge his death. The rural landscape near Marseille is beautifully described; possibly THE novel about French peasant life.

I saw the films but I had not yet read the books. Now I have. Pagnol's earlier books left me with high expectations. Is it possible, I wondered, to match such simple and elegant beauty? Indeed it is, and more. The film adaptations faithfully captured a story that has the sweep, the depth and the intensity of a classical myth.

Jean de Florette and *Manon des Sources*, originally published as *L'Eau des Collines* – the Water of the Hills – is a kind of anthem: an anthem to the sun and an anthem to life. The novels deal with a whole range of emotions, beginning with avarice and ending in the most heart-wrenching forms of regret. The language is beautiful, limpid and elegant, the story told with economy and precision of expression. It captures a mood, delicate and diaphanous. These are books not so much read through the eye as processed through the heart; they were processed through my heart.

I could not fail to love Jean the hunchback; I could not fail to love golden-haired Manon, in her simplicity and in her beauty. Berri's films are an honest recreation of the novels, with very little deviation. I was able to walk in the same steps as I read and relive the same emotions. In Manon's hills, water is more precious than gold; in Pagnol's novels, words are more precious than gold.

The novels conclude with a letter; no word is offered beyond, no reaction recorded. One can only imagine Manon's response to this voice from beyond the grave, from a man she took to be her enemy, the chief architect of her father's tragedy. My reaction was to dissolve in tears

Nicole~ says

Jean de Florette: The Water of the Hills, première partie

Jean de Florette is the first part of Marcel Pagnol's moving, humorous, mournful, triumphant two-part novel titled *The Water of the Hills*. His story, set in the bucolic hillside of Provence, is a lesson in the power of nature- of the land in its capacity for sustaining life and destroying it; it represents the varying shades of human nature, determined resolve and resilience. Family, and the continuity of generations are also a significant aspect of the novel's theme.

The provincial drama sets the sly, old peasant Cesar Soubeyran(aka Papet), and his dimwitted nephew, Ugolin(aka Galinette) against the cultured, refined hunchback from Crespín, Jean Cadoret, focusing on a plot of land that is fundamental to them all.

On the deaths of his grandfather and his mother, Florette, Jean inherits a farm, Les Romarins, near the small town of Les Bastides. Being disgusted with city life in Crespín, he moves with his wife, Aimee and little daughter, Manon, devising grandiose plans to cultivate and live off the land. The Soubeyrans have their own schemes for the land--rich of soil, under which flows the eponymous natural springs--and deviously plot to sabotage Jean's endeavors.

The ill-treatment of Jean de Florette from the villagers of Les Bastides bears a slight resemblance to that of Victor Hugo's *Notre Dame* character, Quasimodo. He is looked upon as an unwelcomed stranger, an outsider, mistrusted, alienated, and even abused by a 'stray' boule.

Jean's farming devices are successful when nature is kind, but eventually, he is dishearteningly defeated by its destructive wrath. His refusal to 'never give up' stems from the city life he left, where he was humiliated, also for his hunchback. The stubbornness and determination to forge on, despite the disastrous toll on his finances and health, notwithstanding the devious actions of the Soubeyrans, lead to his tragic downfall,

creating the opportunity for the Soubeyrans to takeover the coveted land.

Pagnol's dual tales were well rendered in film, but to read the novel version was a sheer delight. His literary style was easy flowing, his prose vivid. Many a well-turned phrase made me utter praise for the author and the translator.

Part One ends: ***weeps uncontrollably***

Jean's story, as anticipated, ends tragically but very compelling to catapult the reader head on to the next part.

<http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=rDJXPiyvQfg> (Jean de Florette trailer, 1986)

Manon of the Springs: The Water of the Hills, deuxième partie

The story picks up a few years later. Papet, anxious for an heir to continue the Soubeyran bloodline, has only his not-too-sharp-thinking nephew, Ugolin, to consider. He justifies his family's lineage: "partly out of pride and partly not to be separated from their money, they intermarry, cousin to cousin, and even uncles and nieces... At the end of four or five generations you get a maniac like my grand uncle, Elzéar. Two maniacs and three suicides. And now there's the two of us, and I don't count anymore. Now this Soubeyran family is you!"

Manon, now a teenaged beauty, educated, smart and a bit of a wildling shepherdess, is at the center of attention. The self-indulgent Ugolin choosing her for a wife and obsesses about her to an ever-climbing psychopathic degree: "I saw you when you were bathing in the rain pool... I looked at you for a long time, you were so beautiful I was afraid of committing a crime." (not a very gallant way to declare one's love, dimwit!)

Manon could hardly recognize him after four years, "but this person had played a large part in her past ...since her childhood he had inspired in her an irrational aversion, and since he had taken the farm from her, this aversion had turned to hate."

The stirrings of love enters Manon's heart for the first time, but they are for Bernard, the new schoolteacher in Les Bastides. Besides the tension of love-rivalry, Manon realizes the treacherous hand that Ugolin and his uncle played in her father's ultimate demise:

"The long suffering of her father, his three years of heroic effort, had become almost ridiculous ...the little hunter had said that people had laughed at him. It was not the blind forces of nature, or the cruelty of fate, that he had fought for such a long time, but the tricks and hypocrisy of stupid peasants, sustained by the silence of a coalition of miserable wretches, whose spirit was as low as their feet. He was no longer a vanquished hero, but the pitiable victim of a monstrous farce, a weakling who had employed all his efforts for the amusement of an entire village."

The way she settles her revenge is one of the book's bitter ironies that inspired a hearty: "You go, girl!" from this reader.

Pagnol portrayed the French pastoral life and small town idiosyncrasies with precise accuracy, down to the petty little squabbles, superstitions, jealousies, prejudices, and even the little secrets no-one claims to 'know' about:

"The 'band of unbelievers' (thus referred since they never went to mass) would often gather around the terrace of Philoxène's café for gossip, and so they talked about 'other people's business,' but by means of discreet allusions--for example, when the baker said one evening: "some families are really on good terms with each other," it was because Petoffi had just gone by and he was suspected of being the father of his sister-in-law's child."

On the lighter side, these characteristics of the townfolk are more amoral than fatalistic; mostly, they are humorously co-mingled with the community's bond of camaraderie, and general sense of good nature, once they get to know you. For, if called upon to dig a little deeper, they would put aside the pettiness for the sense of 'right and good conscience' to surface.

http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=_sdSX4V9XAO (Manon of the Springs trailer, 1986)

Revenge, justice, well-conceived ironic twists, and the examination of earthly darkness and light: melodramatically build the final part of this captivating, well-written novel of the forces of nature, both divine and humanistic; a fertile mixture of tears and laughs, which I could only highly recommend.

Sylvester says

10* How on earth can I comment on these books?! There is too much to say. I was irritated by the fact that they were put into one volume, but as I began Manon of the Springs, I saw why they had done it. The two are inseparable. Manon of the Springs doesn't work without Jean de Florette, but there is a definite need for a division between the two. So if you're just considering reading these - have a little faith.

I've been wracking my brain trying to puzzle out what it is about Marcel Pagnol's writing that is so outstanding, and I can't say I've got the answer yet. I do think that there is something unique about French authors - Jean Giono has this quality as well (although I don't like all of his novels). Would it be going too far to say there's a certain sense of sun in them? I don't know how to explain it - but really, there is a specific quality light. (I'm off my onion, of course, but you're reading this, so you're a little off too.) I can feel the sun's heat on my skin in this book. I almost have to read it with my hand shading my eyes. Yes, it's ridiculous, but I won't recant.

The other thing I've come up with is that somehow, in an amazing feat of insight and skill that most authors wouldn't dare or even think to try, Pagnol has made all his characters Children. Of course I don't mean children as in young humans, but as in seeing them from the inside out. Their motives, their foibles, their bubbling cauldrons of good and evil desires and emotions. All these things are as transparent as glass in them. Greed, hope, lust, love, self-sacrifice, vision, envy - you name it, each character is open to us in a strangely beautiful and loving way, and without softening the edges. I cannot say enough about how amazing I find this.

And then there is the setting. Well. This is as much a novel about the earth and seasons and nature - and gardening - as anything. So naturally it comes near to my heart. Manon and the Hunchback are Nature's Children, and I feel as if Pagnol gave me a gift, introducing me to them as he has.

Highly, highly recommended.
