



The Farewell Symphony

Edmund White

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Following *A Boy's Own Story* (now a classic of American fiction) and his richly acclaimed *The Beautiful Room Is Empty*, here is the eagerly awaited final volume of Edmund White's groundbreaking autobiographical trilogy.

Named for the work by Haydn in which the instrumentalists leave the stage one after another until only a single violin remains playing, this is the story of a man who has outlived most of his friends. Having reached the six-month anniversary of his lover's death, he embarks on a journey of remembrance that will recount his struggle to become a writer and his discovery of what it means to be a gay man. His witty, conversational narrative transports us from the 1960s to the near present, from starkly erotic scenes in the back rooms of New York clubs to episodes of rarefied hilarity in the salons of Paris to moments of family truth in the American Midwest. Along the way, a breathtaking variety of personal connections--and near misses--slowly builds an awareness of the transformative power of genuine friendship, of love and loss, culminating in an indelible experience with a dying man. And as the flow of memory carries us across time, space and society, one man's magnificently realized story grows to encompass an entire generation.

Sublimely funny yet elegiac, full of unsparingly trenchant social observation yet infused with wisdom and a deeply felt compassion, **The Farewell Symphony** is a triumph of reflection and expressive elegance. It is also a stunning and wholly original panorama of gay life over the past thirty years--the crowning achievement of one of our finest writers.

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