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Napoleon's Last Island

By Tom Keneally

RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA, 2016. Paperback. Condition: New. 6. Whilst living in exile on St Helena, Napoleon exerted an extraordinary influence on young Betsy Balcombe. How did she get from Napoleon's side to the Australian bush? When Tom Keneally discovered by chance at the National Gallery of Victoria that Betsy Balcombe, a young girl living on St Helena while the Emperor Napoleon was exiled there, had become the Emperor's 'intimate friend and annoyer', and had then emigrated with her family to Australia, he was impelled to begin another extraordinary novel, exploring the intersection between the ordinary people of the world and those we deem exceptional. Betsy Balcombe moved as a child with her family to St Helena, 'that high mid-Atlantic rock of exile'. Ten years later her family befriended, served and were ruined by their relationship with Napoleon. To redeem their fortunes William Balcombe, Betsy's father, betrayed the Emperor and accepted a job as the colonial treasurer of New South Wales, taking his family with him. After enduring a profound tragedy on the voyage out, and never quite recovering from the results of his association with Napoleon, William's life deteriorated; however, his family struggled and survived in Australia. Tom Keneally recreates...



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