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Posted on 03 May 2019 By Yukio Mishima

[EPUB] ? ??? [Haru no Yuki] ♠ MOBI eBook or Kindle ePUB free

Mishima 1925 1970 was a classic Japanese author He was a fierce anti communist who led a band of rebels trying to restore the Emperor He committed ritual suicide when the plot

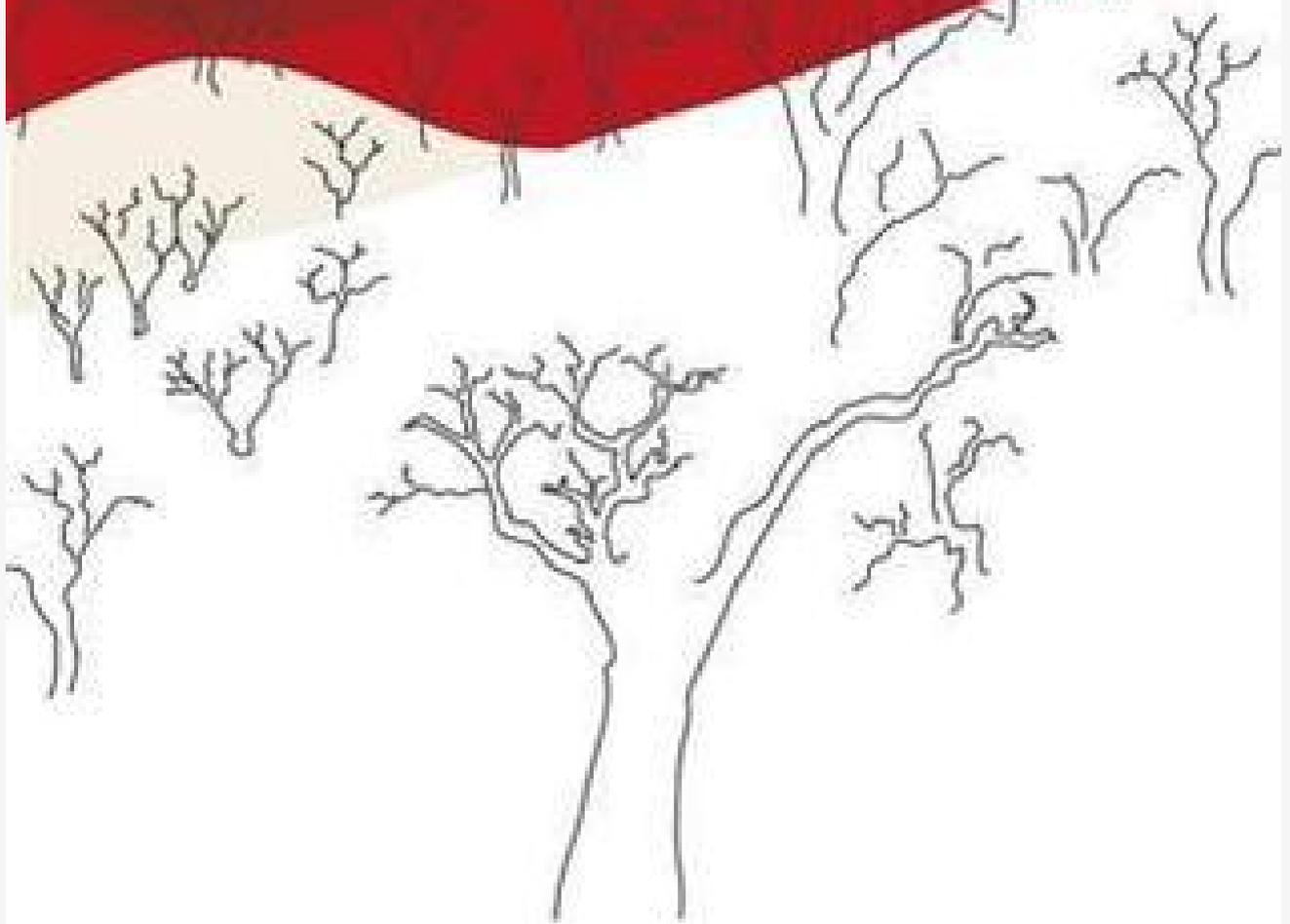
failed His best known work is a tetralogy, *The Sea of Fertility*, of which this book is the first volume Class divisions and changing values in Japan due to western influence are major themes The main character is the son of a very wealthy family How wealthy They have 40 servants and the boy doesn't know all their names even though some of them who have worked there for years The family lives in a multi house compound which includes a western style home in which they entertain and occasionally have western meals The boy's own room is in a Japanese style house but it's decorated with western furniture His mother often dresses and wears her hair in western style And yet, he has a friend at school whose family, he feels is, western in outlook than his, despite their family's lack of western trappings in furniture, food and dress The boy is very good looking, dreamy, melancholy, lazy and ambition less He's bright but he figures he'll get into a university for rich kids because he's not wasting time studying for exams to get into an academically prestigious school He's 18 when the story opens The end of the Russo Japanese War, 7 years ago, is a key backdrop to the story So we know it's around 1912 So the boy's family has money, but it's not one of Japan's traditional 28 noble families, like the one next door So his father creates an alliance between those two families and the boy spends much time at the neighboring residence absorbing the noble ambiance His father supplies the money the other family supplies the prestige. The plot revolves around a love story between this boy and the daughter of the neighboring household They have known each other all their lives and she has loved him since they were children But his feelings toward her are on again, off again he mistreats her and pretends he doesn't care for her Finally she gives up on him and becomes engaged to a son of a noble family, actually a member of the Emperor's household At this point she's 21 he's 19, and after the engagement has been approved by the Emperor himself, finally he decides he loves her and begins to pursue her They begin a sexual relationship and she becomes pregnant If word of any of this gets out, it would be the equivalent of a national scandal When the boy's father learns what is going on, after spending his whole life ass kissing the emperor and the nobles, to say he is apoplectic is putting it mildly Never having lifted a hand to his son before, he beats him with a pool cue. The difficult romance gives the author a chance to discuss the theme of the light of reason vs the darkness of passions There's also quite a bit of discussion about Buddhism and reincarnation But we know all this can only end in tragedy His friend counsels him that he is throwing his life away almost as if he wants to commit suicide There is good writing, such as this passage that I liked On a warm spring day, a galloping horse was only too clearly a sweating animal of flesh and blood But a horse racing through a snowstorm became one with the very elements wrapped in the whirling blast of the north wind, the beast embodied the icy breath of winter It's a good story I don't know if it entices me to read the whole tetralogy, but the second volume is the series, *Runaway Horses*, is equally highly rated as *Spring Snow* The other two are *The temple of Dawn* and *The Decay of the Angel* Probably the author's best known work in English is not part of the tetralogy, it

s The Sailor Who Fell from Grace with the Sea Photo of the Great Buddha of Kamakura featured in the novel from onmarkproductions.com Photo of the newly restored Marunouchi Building, part of the Shimbashi railroad station featured in the novel Photo of the author from Goodreads

Mishima, like other great writers, has a way of implanting memories in our heads, echoes of other lives How this magic happens is a mystery but when it does, you feel somehow denser inside, solid Spring Snow left me with that feeling, of having increased my gravity and weight, with the lyrical descriptions, history, characters, ceremonies, letters, political intrigue, birds and emerald rings and emerald snakes, and silk kimonos, and At its heart, this is a doomed love story, about two beautiful people Kiyooki Matsugae, and Satoko Ayakura whose outward beauty match their inner turmoil This excerpt from Kiyooki's dream diary is an allegory of the story which is an allegory within allegory, The very night before, he had dreamed of his own coffin, made of unpainted wood It stood in the middle of an empty room with large windows, and outside, the pre dawn darkness was shading to a deep blue it was filled with the sound of birdsong A young woman clung to the coffin, her long black hair trailing from her drooping head, her slender shoulders wracked with sobs He wanted to see her face but could make out no more than her pale, graceful forehead with its delicate peak of black hair The coffin was half covered with a leopard skin bordered in pearls The first muted glow of the dawn flickered on the row of jewels Instead of funeral incense, a scent of Western perfume hung over the room with the fragrance of sun ripened fruit Kiyooki seemed to be watching this from a great height, though he was convinced that his body lay inside the coffin But sure as he was, he still felt the need to see it there by way of confirmation However, like a mosquito in the morning light, his wings lost all power and ceased beating in mid air he was utterly incapable of looking inside the nailed down coffin lid And then, as his frustration grew and intensified, he woke up And Satoko, her words had a cold, proud glitter that could not tolerate the intrusion of a third party In her own mind, she had fashioned their sin into a tiny, brilliant, crystal palace in which she and Kiyooki could live free from the world around them A crystal palace so tiny that it would balance on the palm of one's hand, so tiny that no one else could fit in Transformed for a fleetingly brief instant, she and Kiyooki had been able to enter it and now they were spending their last few moments there, observed with extraordinary clarity in all their minute detail by someone standing just outside There is a movie, but from the preview it seems to have only caught the surface But still Spring Snow is a masterpiece or at least the beginning of one, as it is the first in a cycle of four novels called the Sea of Fertility I hope that the other books are as good as this one, but it's going to be a hard act to follow.

VINTAGE MISHIMA

Spring Snow



Set near Tokyo in 1912 In *Spring Snow* Kiyooki Matsugae is sent as a child to be raised on

the estate of a Count where he learns all the worst habits of a decadent court He is slothful, he preens in the knowledge of his superior looks When 18 years of age he is so self involved the familiar disaffectedness of many Mishima protagonists that even when kissing the woman who loves him he thinks only of how he feels He s an affected asshole who takes a conscious pleasure in cruelty. This was further proof of the hidden, savage essence of the elegance he had cultivated for so long p 257 Kioyaki s friend is the upstanding Shigekuni Honda He adores Kiyooki A hard working young man who loses himself in thoughts of the niceties of European Natural Law and the Laws of Manu, which at the time of the action, the author tells us, were the foundation of Indian law He also has an abiding interest in historiography, particularly how he and his peers will be viewed by future generations This dovetails with the theme of reincarnation which links the four books of The Sea of Fertility cycle The vast Matsugae estate is imposing It is still the period of mourning for the late emperor who was called Meiji in life So the cherry blossom festival as it turns out will be observed, though on a smaller scale than usual An imperial prince attends with his wife and other visitors Their route through the blossoms is girded by a red and white curtain, presumably for purposes of privacy The Western house is filled with geishas A platform for their cherry blossom dances is built in the garden Later, there will be a banquet and a film shown based on a Dickens novel. Amid it all Kiyooki is adrift Satoko is there in all her finery but it s somehow not enough What is he waiting for In thrall to his own beauty, his pride, Kiyooki is at odds with himself, contradictory in his impulses He is lost, no decisiveness aside from a snowy rickshaw ride with Satoko, which was her idea comes from him His is a rapt passivity Meanwhile, he stubbornly let s go of Satoko when she is courted by an imperial prince, and thinks good riddance. Devoid of worry or annoyance, free of all anxiety, Kiyooki at nineteen liked to see himself as a cold and supremely capable young man He felt that he was now past some watershed in the course of his life p 163 But he isn t Unable to read his own emotions, he takes grief for delight his strength of will, as he terms it, when tearing up a letter from Satoko unread, he begins to sense may be cowardice, for she is just about to marry the imperial prince What a muddle he s in Though an aristocrat he has known social isolation much of his life Thus, his misreading of people and situations always in a manner that plays to his own falsely elevated sense of self worth. Long ago he had resolved to recognize his emotions as his only guiding truth and to live his life accordingly, even if meant a deliberate aimlessness That principle had now brought him to his present sinister feelings of joy, which seemed to be the brink of a racing plunging whirlpool There seemed to be nothing left but to throw himself into it p 177 I won t go into Kiyooki and Satoko s love affair or the novel s tragic denouement Suffice it to say that Kiyooki s comeuppance is quite a spectacle and Honda is there to puzzle over it The book has a very long fuse The last 200 pages are far better than the first 200 Despite this uneven start, this is the strongest Mishima novel I have ever read. Spring Snow is volume one of Yukio Mishima s tetralogy The Sea of Fertility When the book opens the year is 1912

and the setting Meiji Japan, which has given way to Taisho democracy , an environment is that of a fading Japanese aristocracy resigned to accept into its midst the creep of a westernization of its culture Adolescent law student Shigekuni Honda is an impassive friend to Kiyooki Matsugae, a baron's son of distant samurai descent Honda's future seems preordained Kiyooki is a dreamer who is gripped by the sense that life's slippery fineness is running through his fingers and away from him second by second He longs to chase the impossible, to bend the world into the shape of his ideals.Kiyooki's desires eventually encounter the beautiful Satoko Ayakura Although they have been friends since early childhood, they have grown into a mutual indifference of each other When Satoko gets engaged to a prince, Kiyooki is suddenly consumed by an inspired passion for her, and the two fall into an illicit affair that proves the undoing of them both She gets pregnant and then gets an abortion Honda accepts the job of go-between for the lovers, but can only watch as Satoko renounces the world and exiles herself to a remote, wintry nunnery Kiyooki drives himself to pneumonia in a hopeless effort to retrieve her Dying, clutching Honda's hand, Kiyooki murmurs that they will meet again someday, beneath the falls Although it sounds a bit melodramatic, in truth the book is amazingly well written, with subtleties, implications, and consequences of environment both human and cultural that cause the reader to marvel at Yukio Mishima's abilities A master at work.The closest equivalent I could suggest for comparison is the love story of Romeo and Juliet also a story of star-crossed lovers The story is filled with symbolism, imagery and melancholy This Knopf hardcover edition was printed in 1972 and is the first American Edition issued as part of a set of all four books The cycle consisting of Vol 1 Spring Snow Vol 2 Runaway Horses Vol 3 The Temple Of Dawn Vol 4 Five Signs Of A God's Decay The series, which Mishima began writing in 1964 and which was his final work, is usually thought of as his masterpiece Mishima's ritualistic suicide in 1970 will always overshadow his work. [EPUB] ? ??? [Haru no Yuki] ? Tokyo, The Closed World Of The Ancient Aristocracy Is Being Breached For The First Time By Outsiders Rich Provincial Families, A New And Powerful Political And Social Elite Kiyooki Has Been Raised Among The Elegant Ayakura Family Members Of The Waning Aristocracy But He Is Not One Of Them Coming Of Age, He Is Caught Up In The Tensions Between The Old And The New, And His Feelings For The Exquisite, Spirited Satoko, Observed From The Sidelines By His Devoted Friend Honda When Satoko Is Engaged To A Royal Prince, Kiyooki Realises The Magnitude Of His Passion ... It is hard to put words to the beauty and melancholy that Mishima pours into this first of his great tetralogy The symbolism, the imagery, the characters everything here is drawn with a fine pencil and eye for detail The characters reappear in the following books but not as you might expect This is one of the great monuments of Japanese literature in the 20th C my other favourite is Soseki's I am a Cat and it is truly a pleasure to read and savour. . A book can be either of two things a key to open locked doors which lead to unique experiences we have not encountered or are impossible for us to attain while the other is a mirror to show us who we are or remind us of

ourselves and the past we have not forgotten One stirs excitement, the other nostalgia This time it took the shape of the latter The book served as a mirror to me, reminding me of a befuddled young man blind to the workings of his heart, prone to exaggerating the simple nuances in the actions of a woman devoted to him, a woman he doubted because of childish fears But I am not here to talk of myself, I am here because the pain it stirred in me forces me to write. Kiyooki, a beautiful yet lethargic young man, is at odds with his equally beautiful childhood friend Satoko An inexperienced boy when it comes to the desire inside him, he constantly misinterprets and confuses the actions of the young woman who is thoroughly taken with him His melancholy attitude doesn't help his cause and he loathes balefully in the estranged pool of his own work That is until he learns of Satoko's engagement with a prince, thus the object of his hatred and bewilderment is snatched from him, suddenly out of reach It is such a curious thing that when something we have ignored for so long is suddenly unavailable to us, we find it infinitely desirable The fickle human heart with its itinerant impulses shifts its gear and so the idea of unattainability forces us to acknowledge the taken for granted, the sudden spotlight makes the dull suddenly novel And it is in this manner that young Kiyooki realizes the gravity of his passion for Satoko Doomed from the very start, an affair begins between the childhood friends In this shared consciousness of tragedy, their love flourishes At the very core of this tragic romance Spring Snow serves as Yukio Mishima's statement against elegance Being a military man of action, he felt that the Japanese strayed from the righteous way of the Samurai and have alarmingly become slaves of pleasure, smitten with exterior beauty, apathetic to the real world, too taken by the West, too modern He envisioned a traditional Japan with its graceful simplicity, austere values, and unceasing nationalism and love for the Emperor The character Kiyooki is a warning to the people of Japan, a cautionary tale to show the rotteness that elegance is bound to instill in the indolent souls of its time This very idea is what prompted Mishima to stage a coup d'état in 1970 to restore power to the Emperor But he failed and thus committed ritual seppuku However before his death, he was able to complete his tetralogy, the Sea of Fertility, which features Spring Snow as the first of four books With this in mind, I believe it to be quite irresponsible to fully interpret an incomplete picture To understand his real intentions, I have to complete the journey by reading the other three works Yet as a standalone it is rather fascinating to see something that was meant to alarm, instead take one's breath away with sheer elegance And so by embodying the object of his scorn, Mishima ironically succeeds in mirroring the very relationship of Kiyooki and Satoko The path we're taking is not a road, Kiyooki, it's a pier, and it ends someplace where the sea begins All at once subtle, tender, and painful, this novel manages to evoke a somber tinge of passion in the otherwise luscious backdrop of Taisho Japan Indeed, like spring snow, a furtive loveliness envelops the landscape of its pages but intertwined with this beauty is a faint cry of desolation, a quiet deadliness that can only enhance its icy elegance. Has there ever been a stranger novelist than Yukio Mishima On

the one hand, he was a body building Nationalist, who advocated bushido, the samurai code he also, as many know, committed seppuku, which is a ritual form of suicide involving disembowelling and beheading You don t, it is fair to say, get that kind of thing with Julian Barnes and Karl Ove Knausgaard. On the other hand, Mishima was undeniably a cultured man, who spoke English and dressed in the English fashion he was a bisexual who acted in films and wrote plays as well as novels and short stories It is almost as though he embodied the conflict that of the traditional and reserved vs the modern and progressive that until very recently so dominated most of the great Japanese literature, and about which his own work, especially *Spring Snow*, is also concerned. In what is perhaps a nod to Murasaki Shikibu s monumental *Tale of Genji*, *Spring Snow* is primarily focussed on a preternaturally beautiful young man As with the shining prince, everyone who meets the central character, Kiyooki Matsugae, is struck by his attractiveness and the awareness of his good looks and the effect it has on other people makes him somewhat spoiled and conceited Further, although he is the son of a nouveau riche couple, who dress in Western clothes, he was actually raised by a once prosperous aristocratic family, in order to ensure that he is well versed in traditional Japanese ways and has an elegant bearing This upbringing means that Kiyooki is, in a sense, caught between two different eras he isn t fully a traditionalist he doesn t revere the Emperor, for example , nor is he entirely modern he is elegant, as his parents desired, but his elegance, and decadence, means that he is unfit for the modern world for instance, out of indolence he neglects his schooling. I imagine that it is clear already that my opinion of Kiyooki is not especially positive He is not bad per se, but he is tremendously arrogant and self obsessed Of course, you could excuse some of his flaws on the basis of his age Kiyooki is a teenager and so arrogance and self obsession are pretty much part of the deal, but, even so, the behaviour of most teenagers does not lead to the ruin of numerous people I should point out, however, that I do not think that the reader is meant to like him I believe that, as a product of two conflicting eras, or ways of life, the effete and ineffectual Kiyooki is, for Mishima, a necessary failure as a human being For me, it is telling that his servant Inuma, the one character whose attitude would have, I think, most closely resembled Mishima s own in terms of his feelings about loyalty, duty, etc , is disappointed in him, and even, at times, disgusted by him Inuma looked down at his face, at the sensitive darting eyes with their long lashes the eyes of an otter and he knew that it was hopeless to expect him to swear the enthusiastic oaths of loyalty to the Emperor that a night like this would have invoked in any normal young Japanese boy Kiyooki s eyes were now wide open as he lay on his back staring at the ceiling, and they were filled with tears And when this glistening gaze turned on him, Inuma s distaste deepened As I read the novel for the second time, I was baffled by the popular opinion that it is a moving love story, or even the greatest of all love stories Yes, it details a troubled relationship between two young people the aforementioned Kiyooki and the equally beautiful Satoko, the daughter of the noble family who raised the boy but it is a strange kind of love that continually rejects someone

and then suddenly wants that person at the point at which it has become impossible to have them. Perhaps Satoko does love Kiyooki, but there is abundant evidence that the same is not true for the young man. For example, the first thing he says to his friend Honda, when an ill-looking Satoko is unresponsive towards him, is "I don't think Satoko will sleep with me any more." Does that sound like love to you? No, it sounds like someone who is a bit of a dick. Don't get me wrong, I've not always been a nice guy where girls are concerned, so you could say I'm in no position to judge. But on the basis of the principle of "it takes one to know one," I'm calling Kiyooki out. Moreover, although there are seemingly insurmountable obstacles to their relationship, I don't necessarily buy the star-crossed lovers interpretation of the story because the couple, Kiyooki in particular, cause their own problems and create those obstacles themselves. Having said that, I guess you could argue that fate or destiny is also an obstacle to the couple's love, and this is certainly not something that Kiyooki and Satoko can control. As you may know, *Spring Snow* is part of a tetralogy called *The Sea of Fertility*. Each book in the series deals with reincarnation and predestination. In *Spring Snow*, the first volume, there are numerous hints and suggestions that what is happening, specifically to Kiyooki, is, in a sense, meant to be. For example, he keeps a dream journal, and one of his dreams involves Satoko clinging to his coffin; there are repeated references to his demise, and a general sense of foreboding hangs over the novel. There's no doubt that he's heading straight for tragedy. I've got to use every ounce of my strength to stop him fulfilling his destiny. In this way, Satoko and Kiyooki's relationship is tragic, because they never had a chance. However, if you want to appeal to predestination then you can't really talk about Kiyooki at all, because without free will he becomes a non-entity. As a reviewer, in order for discussion to be possible, I want to take him on face value. One may ask then, if Kiyooki is so unpleasant, and *Spring Snow* is not the tragic or tear-jerking tale of adolescent love it is billed as, why should you read the book? Well, first of all, it is always engrossing whether one sympathises with Satoko and Kiyooki or not, one is, crucially, still interested in their fate. Further, although the narrative isn't exactly full of high-octane action, Mishima, unlike many of the other historically important Japanese novelists, does serve up a steady amount of excitement and surprise and tension. In contrast, something like Tanizaki's acclaimed novel *The Makioka Sisters* may be wonderful, but it is at times interminably slow and uneventful. I can't imagine that, when reading that book, there are people that have stayed up late into the night, desperate to reach the end of a chapter, so as to find out what happens next, but I can certainly see that being the case with *Spring Snow*. I wrote at the beginning of this review that Mishima to some extent embodied the conflict that he wrote about, that of the traditional and the modern ways of life. What is most interesting about *Spring Snow* is that this conflict, this tension, is not only apparent thematically, it is in the style too. So, while the prose is undeniably graceful, as you would expect from a great Japanese novel, it lacks simplicity. Indeed, Mishima's style, with its extended metaphors, extreme emoting, and psychological depth, is, I would say, closer to Western writers, like Flaubert, Proust, and

Dostoevsky, than Kawabata or Tanizaki I would also argue that Mishima's characters are easier to understand and relate to for a Western audience again, one may not like their behaviour, or admire their motivations, but they are familiar to us Kiyooki is a brat, for example, but we all have known brats Satoko is perhaps a mystery, like the enigmatic women you find in Kawabata, but even her actions can be viewed in terms of a young girl having the hots for a great looking guy. Yet for all that, the biggest selling point is just how beautiful Spring Snow is it really is breathtaking at times As with Flaubert's Madame Bovary, the prose is actually so beautiful that it is, in a sense, diverting, so that, like when in the company of a beautiful woman one becomes incapable of judging her behaviour, readers tend not to pick up on how unsavoury the behaviour of the characters actually is Also like Flaubert, Mishima's prose is sensual, and highly detailed In my review of Madame Bovary I called the Frenchman a hyperrealist, by which I mean he makes the real or ordinary seem extraordinary, and I would apply the same term to Mishima There are numerous passages in the text that one could highlight as evidence, but one that particularly struck me was Kiyooki holding the train of the princess dress Beautiful, elegant, imposing, she was like a flower at the moment of its perfection Princess Kasuga's hair had the blackness and sheen of fine lacquer Seen from behind her elaborate coiffure seemed to dissolve into the rich white skin textures of the nape of her neck, leaving single strands against her bare shoulders whose faint sheen was set off by her d collet she held herself erect and walked ahead with a firm step, betraying no tremor to her trainbearers, but in Kiyooki's eyes that great fan of white fur seemed to glow and fade to the sound of music, like the snow covered peak first hidden, then exposed by a fluid pattern of clouds I love that It isn't a one off either, Mishima throws this kind of stuff out by the page Mad, bad, and dangerous to know he may have been, but he was a wonderful, sensitive writer THE SEA OF FERTILITY Volume 2 Runaway Horses

New Post

The Torn Skirt

In Spite of Killer Bees

Mates, Dates, and Cosmic Kisses

How Do I Love Thee
Sloppy Firsts
Knocked Out by My Nunga-Nungas
Empress of the World
Mates, Dates, and Inflatable Bras
True Believer
Mahalia
Lady: My Life as a Bitch
Mortal Engines
The Book of Fred
Fair Weather
Lirael

Recent Post

The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants
Echo
Artemis Fowl
When Lightning Strikes
Code Name Cassandra
Getting the Girl
Whale Talk
The Ersatz Elevator
Princess in the Spotlight
A Piece of Heaven
Razzle
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The Vile Village
Spanish Holiday: Or, How I Transformed the Worst Vacation Ever into the Best Summer of My Life
The Hostile Hospital
Mates, Dates, and Designer Divas
The Two Princesses Of Bamarre
What My Mother Doesn't Know
Every Time a Rainbow Dies
The Secret School
Among the Impostors
Breathing Underwater
The Rag and Bone Shop

Wurst Case Scenario

Girlhearts

Freewill

The Torn Skirt

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