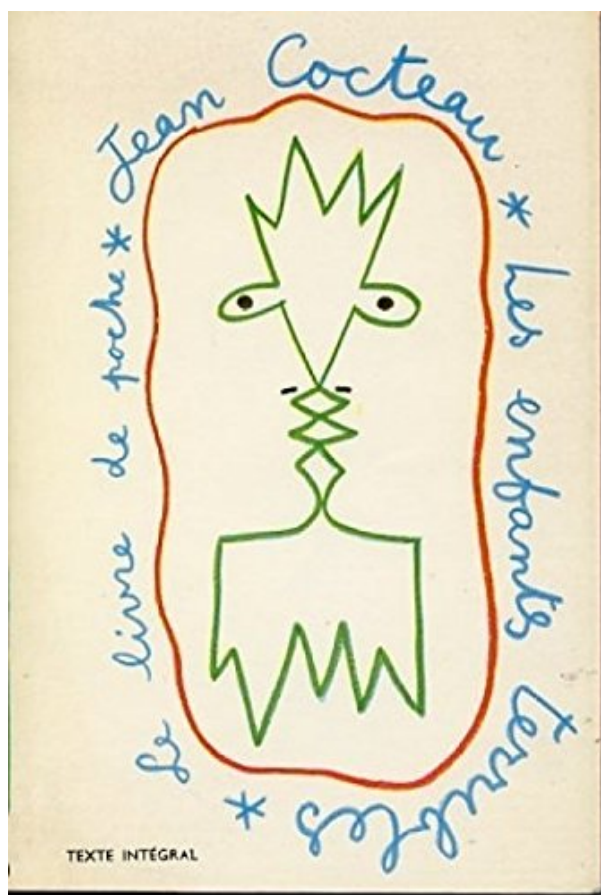
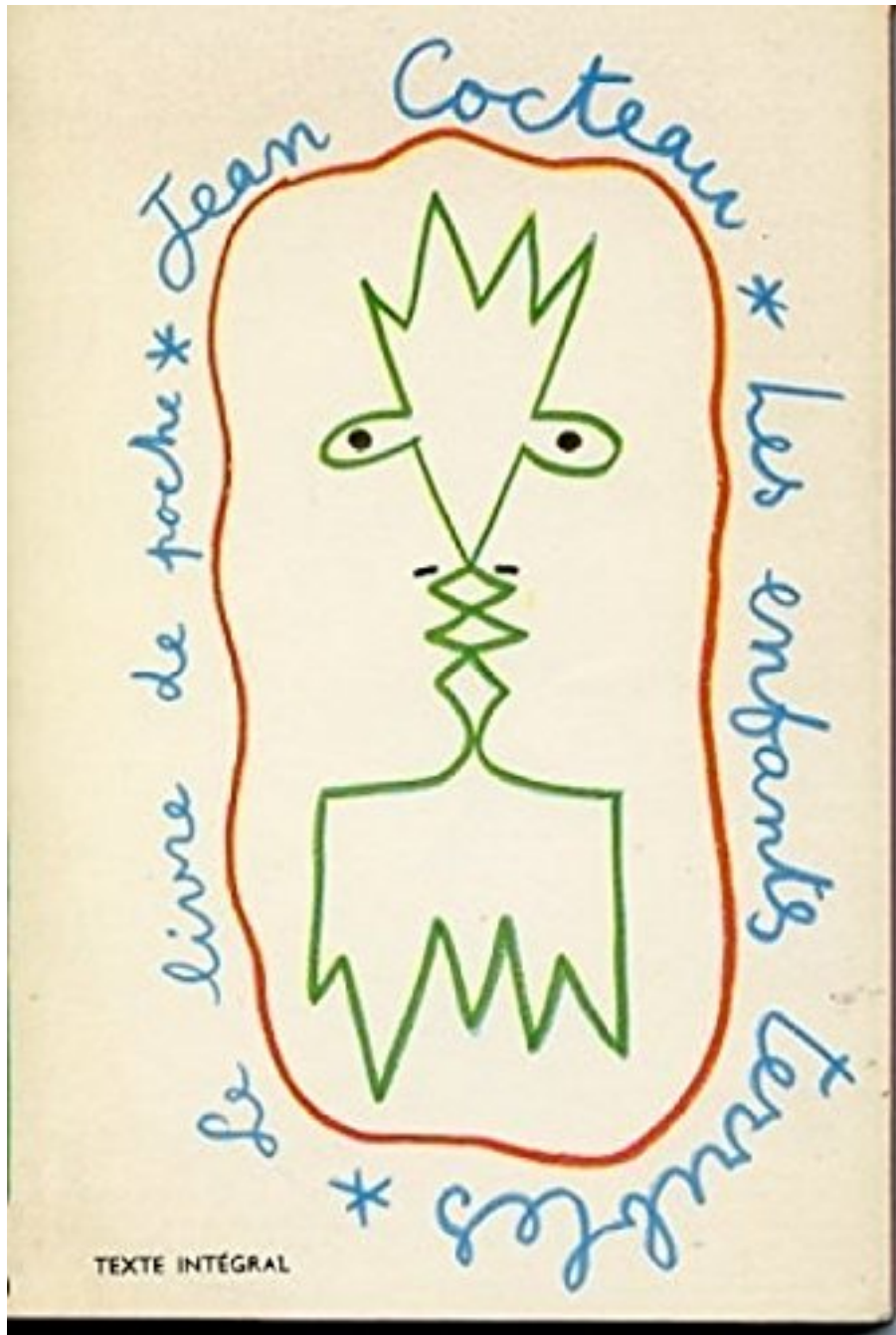


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# LES ENFANTS TERRIBLES BY JEAN COCTEAU PDF

Softcover, French, 177 pages, book in original french language, pocket book

- Sales Rank: #11384132 in Books
- Published on: 1925
- Number of items: 1
- Binding: Paperback
- 177 pages

Most helpful customer reviews

13 of 14 people found the following review helpful.

Cocteau's Masterpiece of Imagination and Longing

By A Customer

Cocteau's novel is gem of a book which deals with the power of make-believe to transport the characters into worlds of their own making. Specifically, Les Enfants Terribles tells the story of a brother and sister who, after the death of their mother, create a sanctuary in one enchanted room and via their active imaginations. These fantasies become the axis on which their lives revolve until it spirals out of control and ends in a climax befitting a Greek tragedy. Reading this book is like reliving a fever dream in which the reality and fantasy blur.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Bizarre, ridiculous...yet, absolutely wonderful

By S. Shamma

When I read the synopsis of the book, I was highly intrigued and bought it on the spot. But when I started reading the first chapter of the book, I thought I had gotten stuck with the most ridiculous book on the planet.

The first chapter involves Paul getting hit with a snowball (with a stone hidden inside it) to the chest by his crush/obsession, the feminine-looking Dargelos. Apparently, Paul becomes so ill that he is bed-ridden and advised by the doctor not to go back to school - or leave the house - leaving his sister to not only care for him, but for their sick mother as well. End of the chapter, "The Game" is revealed, which can only be played in their shared bedroom, and it involves the siblings trying to annoy each other until one of them leaves the contest with the last word, ideally having caused a display of angry frustration from the other.

Having read all that, I sat there thinking what a ridiculous, silly book this is. How soft is this boy that he can't go back to school? And with Paul obsessing over Dargelos (sobbing uncontrollably upon knowing he won't be able to see him again because he can't go back to school), and Gerard obsessing over Paul, I was left with the impression that they were homosexual. Only to have Gerard develop an infatuation with Elizabeth soon after, which left me confused.

I realized, halfway through the second chapter, that I needed to stop over-analyzing and instead delve into the story until I am lost in it. That worked wonders for me, because as soon as I came up for breath, I realized I had devoured the whole thing in less than two hours. And it left me speechless.

After Paul and Elizabeth's mother dies, they are left to fend for themselves, with the help of a nurse and Gerard (plus Gerard's father). Elizabeth takes up a job as a model, and meets Agathe, who moves in with them and becomes part of their family. As their family grows, and the siblings grow up, it becomes harder to stay in the private world (and the Game) that they shared for so long. But attempting to keep each other in The Game comes with a huge price, one that will leave you breathless with shock and sadness in the end.

Jealousy, intimacy, superiority, love, obsession with a subtle, yet consistent, hint of incest - this story has everything. It will confuse you, yet astound you. So just sit there and enjoy the ride.

7 of 9 people found the following review helpful.

Almost as magical as the film.

By darragh o'donoghue

'Les Enfants Terribles' is one of those great novels of childhood at which the French excel, full of vibrancy, caprice, terror, passion, danger, wonder, fun: its narrative is an allegory of that life-, body-, soul-changing move from childhood to adulthood.

But it is so much more. It is the great Surrealist novel, about the child-like way of looking at the dim, everyday world as marvellous, as new: a snow-blanketed street, a messy room, a trip to the seaside. It is a novel of rite, of theatre, of play; of the classical and the modern; a living Surrealist manifesto, where reality, dream and imagination conflate in a supreme act of transformation, as dependent on, yet transcending, the real world as the novel's heroes. It is poetry and imagination as King Midas; a moustache on a marble bust; the lightest and most profound book ever written.

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