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A Coin in Nine Hands: A Novel (Phoenix Fiction)

Marguerite Yourcenar

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During the space of a day in Rome in 1933, a ten-lira coin passes through the hands of nine people—including an aging artist, a prostitute, and a would-be assassin of Mussolini. The coin becomes the symbol of contact between human beings, each lost in private passions and nearly impenetrable solitude.

"*A Coin in Nine Hands* has . . . passages that move close to poetry and a story that belongs in both literature and history."—Doris Grumbach, *Los Angeles Times Book Review*

"What lingers at the end of *A Coin in Nine Hands* is the shadowiness and puppetlike vagueness of the Dictator, and the compelling specificity of the so-called 'common people' revolving all around him."—Anne Tyler, *The New Republic*

"Within a few pages we have met half the major characters in this haunting, brilliantly constructed novel. . . . The studied perfection, the structural intricacy and brevity remind one of Camus. Yet by comparison, Yourcenar's prose is lavish, emotional and imagistic."—Cynthia King, *Houston Post*

"Transcends its specific time and place to become a portrait of vividly delineated characters caught in the vise of a tragically familiar political situation."—*Publisher's Weekly*

Best known as the author of *Memoirs of Hadrian* and *The Abyss*, Marguerite Yourcenar (1903-87) achieved countless literary honors and was the first woman ever elected to the Académie Française.

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