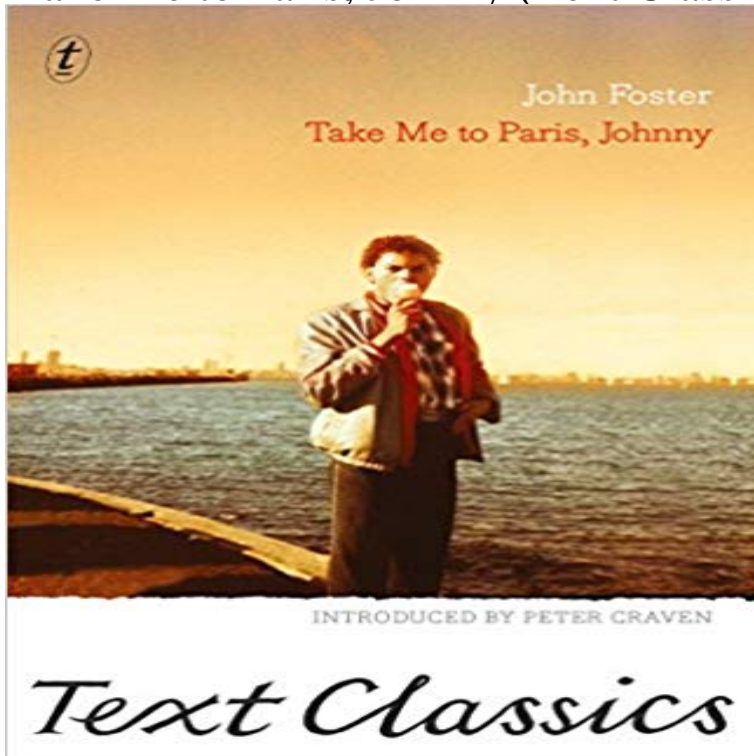


Take Me to Paris, Johnny (Text Classics)



Take Me to Paris, Johnny is John Foster's moving yet unsentimental account of the life of his partner, Juan Cespedes. It traces Juan's youth in Cuba and his move to New York, where he struggles to make it as a dancer. There, in 1981 in a chance encounter, much like any other he meets John, an Australian historian. What begins as just a fling becomes a dazzling six-year affair. The two travel between New York, Berlin and Melbourne, struggling with bureaucracy in their quest to gain Juan residency in Australia, then with the disease taking the lives of gay men around the globe. To the end, Juan an exotic bird, the only one of his kind in Melbourne is captivating, witty, headstrong. First published in 1993, not long before John Foster's death, Take Me to Paris, Johnny is brilliant and unflinching, at once controlled and impassioned: a love story told with humour and unerring skill. This edition includes an introduction by Peter Craven and an expanded biographical portrait of the author by John Rickard. John Foster was born in Melbourne in 1944. He studied at the University of Melbourne, then in Germany and the United Kingdom. In 1971 he returned to the University of Melbourne, where for many years he lectured in the Department of History. He edited the collections *Community of Fate: Memoirs of German Jews in Melbourne* (1986) and *Victorian Picturesque: The Colonial Gardens of William Sangster* (1989). Take Me to Paris, Johnny was Foster's tribute to his lover, Juan Cespedes, a Cuban dancer who died of AIDS in 1987. The memoir was published in 1993 and shortlisted for the Age Book of the Year award; within a year, John Foster himself was dead. [A] literary masterpiece Unparalleled in Australian letters Makes most fiction, here or elsewhere, look paltry by comparison. Peter Craven, from the Introduction A superbly crafted memoir [A] subtle balance of formality and intimacy, of rationality

and passion. John Rickard, from the Afterword Brilliantly accomplished use of language Few other books documenting this illness rumble and resonate with such sustained power. Robert Dessaix [Take Me to Paris, Johnny] reminds us of the complexity of relationship of the simultaneous strength and fragility of love. Denis Altman A remarkable, beautifully written memoir that captures and preserves the jittery zeitgeist among active gay men moving around the globe in the early 80s. Gail Bell, Monthly Finely written Foster deftly recounted his cross-colour, cross-class relationship, and brought his lover back to life on the page. Steve Dow, Age

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