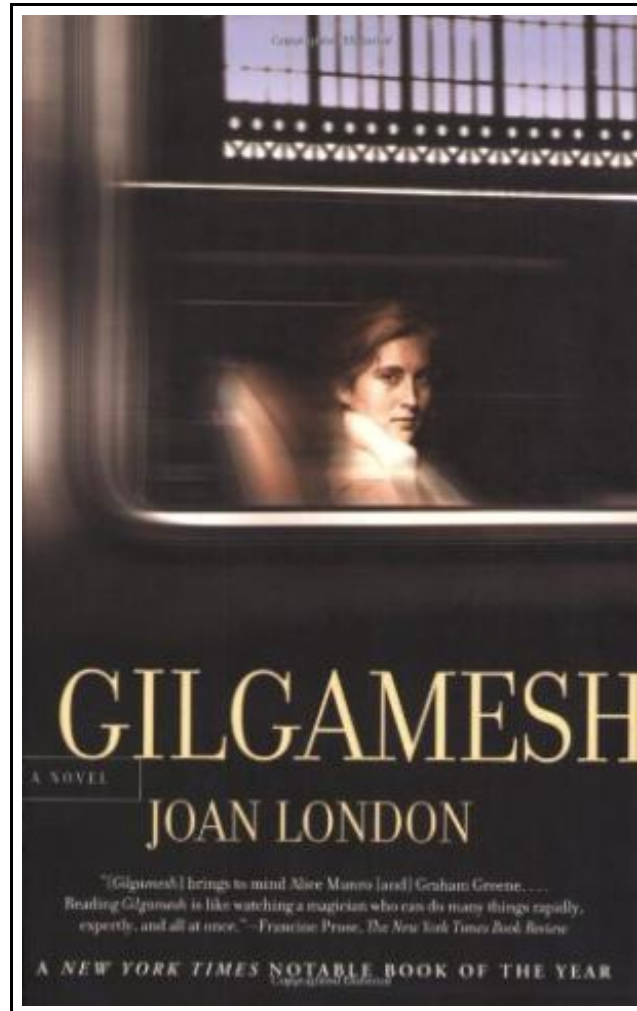


# Gilgamesh



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Grove Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 272 pages. Dimensions: 8.3in. x 5.6in. x 0.7in. This is a magnificent book, a story of encounters and escapes, of friendship and love, of loss and acceptance. It is full of sparsely depicted but fully fleshed characters and the wide sweep of history. It is 1937. On a tiny farm in the town of Nunderup, in far southwestern Australia, seventeen-year-old Edith lives with her sister Frances and their mother, a beautiful woman who lives mostly in her own mind after the sudden death of Frances and Edith's father. One afternoon two men, Edith's cousin Leopold and his Armenian friend Aram, arrive-taking the long way home from an archaeological dig in Iraq. Among the tales they tell is the story of Gilgamesh, the legendary king of Uruk in ancient Mesopotamia. Gilgamesh's great journey of mourning after the death of his friend Enkidu, and his search for the secret of eternal life, is to resonate throughout Edith's life, opening up the possibility of a life beyond the hardscrabble farm life of her village. When they leave, Leopold to return to London and Aram to Armenia, the house feels suddenly empty and Edith misses them fervently. Two years later, in 1939, Edith sets out on a journey of her own, bringing with her the young son she and Aram conceived, whom he does not know about. Motherhood has clarified Edith-she has become single-minded, unwilling to swerve from her path, no matter what social mores or practical limitations are put in her way. When she is sent to a birthing house to bear Jim, and believes they plan to adopt him out against her will, she sneaks out at dawn and takes him home. She raises him alone, under her sister's disapproving eye and despite the patronizing of...

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