

CURTIS BROWN



Cold Comfort Farm

BOOK

World Penguin

1939

By Stella Gibbons

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In Gibbons's classic tale a resourceful young heroine finds herself in the gloomy, overwrought world of a Hardy or Bronte novel and proceeds to organize everyone out of their romantic tragedies into the pleasures of normal life.

Flora Poste, orphaned at 19, chooses to live with relatives at *Cold Comfort Farm* in Sussex, where cows are named Feckless, Aimless, Pointless, and Graceless, and the proprietors, the dour Starkadder family, are tyrannized by Flora's mysterious aunt, who controls the household from a locked room.

Flora's confident and clever management of an alarming array of eccentrics is only half the pleasure of this novel. The other half is Gibbons's wicked sendup of romantic clichés, from the mad woman in the attic to the druidical peasants with their West Country accents and mystical herbs.

Cold Comfort Farm was adapted for television in 1995 directed by John Schlesinger and scripted by Malcolm Bradbury. It boasted a sumptuous cast including Tara FitzGerald, Joanna Lumley, Rufus Sewell, Ian McKellan and Miriam Margoyles.

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