



The Thurber Letters: The Wit, Wisdom and Surprising Life of James Thurber

Harrison Kinney, Rosemary A. Thurber

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Though he died more than forty years ago, James Thurber remains one of America's greatest and most enduring humorists, and his books -- for both adults and children -- remain as popular as ever. In this comprehensive collection of his letters -- the majority of which have never before been published -- we find unsuspected insights into his life and career.

His prodigious body of work -- fables, drawings, comic essays, reportage, short stories, including his famous "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" -- all define Thurber's special and prolific genius. Like most good humorists, he was prone to exaggeration, embellishment, and good-natured self-deprecation. In his letters we find startling revelations about who he really was, and why the prism through which he viewed the world could often be both painfully and delightfully distorting.

For the first time, Thurber's daughter Rosemary has allowed the publication of many of the extremely personal letters he wrote early in his life to the women he was -- usually hopelessly -- in love with, as well as the affectionate and hilarious letters that he wrote to her. In addition, Harrison Kinney, noted Thurber biographer, has located a number of Thurber letters never before published. *The Thurber Letters* traces Thurber's progress from lovesick college boy to code clerk with the State Department in Paris and reporter for the *Columbus Dispatch*, through his marriages and love affairs, his special relationship with his daughter, his illustrious and tumultuous years with *The New Yorker*, his longstanding relationship with E. B. White, his close friendship with Peter De Vries, and his tragic last days. Included in the book are Thurber drawings never before published. His candid comments in these personal letters, whether lighthearted or melancholy, comprise an entertaining, captivating, informal biography -- pure, wonderful Thurber.

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