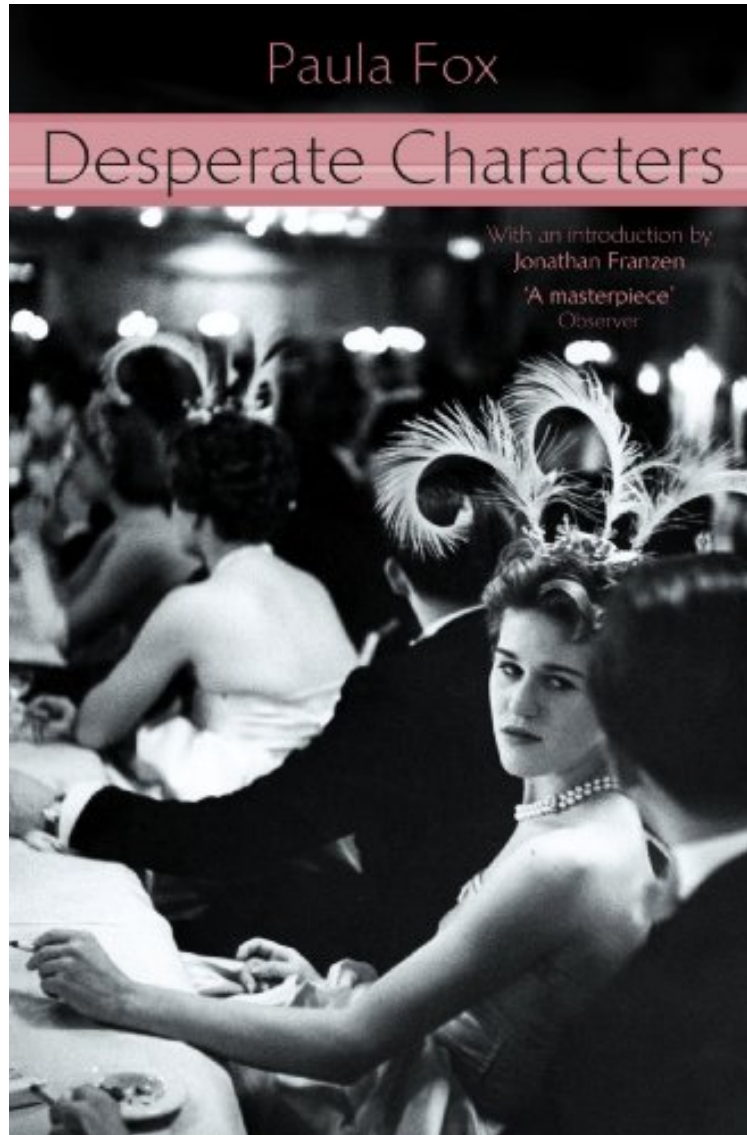


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## Desperate Characters

Von Paula Fox

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**Von Paula Fox : Desperate Characters** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Desperate Characters:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen6 von 6 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. American realism at its best.Von Ein KundeYou may never have heard of Paula Fox (her novels have never sold well; her children's fiction is for, well, children; but her granddaughter is Courtney Love), but, in a perfect world, you would have, many times over. She is a brilliant prose stylist--one of the surest hands in modern fiction. Desperate Characters

is remarkably powerful. Fox's strength is her ability to fashion absolutely tight plotlines that revolve around ordinary events with diamond-hard, compressed language. Everything is soaked in an existential menace. It's no wonder she has influenced a whole generation of young writers (David Foster Wallace, Jonathan Franzen, Jonathan Lethem etc.). Trust me, buy this book!

1 von 1 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Exquisite Writing  
Von Ein Kunde  
The comments by all those famous authors on the cover of this short novel are unerringly true. One note of advice: save the Franzen introduction and read it after you have srored the novel. Truly--you will want to turn immediately to someone who has read the book, and perusing Franzen's insightful, laudatory paragraphs are the next best thing.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Fantasiestaat in Afrika in den 70 er Jahren  
Von Oh.  
Die Geschichte zeigt, wie Macht korrumpiert. Die Geschichte selbst ist erfunden, aber die eigentlichen Wahrheiten liegen in den Erluterungen zu den Geschehnissen und sind sehr bemerkenswert. wir haben viel diskutiert.

**Kurzbeschreibung**  
A Great American Novel from the author of Borrowed Finery. Otto and Sophie Bentwood live childless in a renovated Brooklyn brownstone. The complete works of Goethe line their bookshelf, their stainless steel kitchen is newly installed, and their Mercedes is parked outside. After Sophie is bitten on the hand while trying to feed a half-starved neighbourhood cat, a series of small and ominous disasters begin to plague their lives, revealing the faultlines and fractures in a marriage and a society wrenching itself apart. Includes an introduction by Jonathan Franzen.

deMeet the Bentwoods, Sophie and Otto, "both just over forty," living in Brooklyn sometime in the '60s with neither hope nor children to encourage them to work on their suffocating marriage. Such are the central subjects of Paula Fox's enthralling *Desperate Characters*, first published to much acclaim in 1970. The novel's action unfolds in a single weekend, and includes Otto's torturous breakup with his longtime business partner, Charlie, and a visit the Bentwoods make to their country home, which they find vandalized. Everything pivots around an occurrence so ordinary as to make us marvel at the power it wields under Fox's brilliant pressure: a cat bite. Despite Otto's protests, Sophie puts out a dish for a stray that roams the Bentwoods' neighborhood--an area which is also home to enormous poverty, and in which they, in their renovated townhouse, sit like distant royalty. The cat sinks its teeth into her hand and instantly we are plunged into the heart of what plagues every aspect of this couple's lives: the threat of rabies. Where the cat is concerned, it's literal rabies, but the book is also steeped in the sense that a kind of social rabies lurks just outside the Bentwoods' and indeed the whole world's door. As Sophie suddenly realizes at one point: "Ticking away inside the carapace of ordinary life and its sketchy agreements was anarchy." Throughout Fox's gorgeously crafted, unflinching portrait of a dying marriage and a country at war with itself, the Bentwoods fight the desire to self-destruct like everything around them. At one point, Otto screams at Sophie: "What in God's name do you want? Do you want Charlie to murder me? Do you wish the farmhouse had been burned down?... Do you want to be rabid?" She doesn't, of course, but in a certain way, that outcome makes sense. "God, if I am rabid, I am equal to what is outside," she said out loud, and felt an extraordinary relief as though, at last, she'd discovered what it was that could create a balance between the quiet, rather vacant progression of the days she spent in this house, and those portents that lit up the dark at the edge of her own existence." How fortunate and rare to discover such a perfect articulation of the human condition. --Melanie Rehak.com

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