



Descent into Hell: A Novel

Charles Williams

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In this provocative, classic metaphysical thriller, a group of suburban amateur actors plagued by personal demons and terrors explore the pathways to heaven and hell

Certain inhabitants of Battle Hill, a small community on the outskirts of London, are preparing to mount a new play by the neighborhood's most illustrious resident, the writer Peter Stanhope. Each actor struggles with self-absorption, doubt, fear, and sin. But "the Hill" is not like other places. Here the past and present intermingle, ghosts walk among the living, and reality is often clouded by dreams and the dark fantastic. For young Pauline Anstruther, who is caring for an aging grandmother and frightened by the specter of a doppelgänger who gets closer with each visitation, the prospect of heaven exists in the renowned playwright's willingness to bear the burden of her terror. For eminent historian Lawrence Wentworth, the rejection of his desire pulls him deeper inside himself, leaving him vulnerable to the lure of the succubus and opening wide the entrance to hell.

A brilliant theological thriller, *Descent into Hell* is an extraordinary fictional meditation on sin and personal salvation by one of the twentieth century's most original and provocative literary artists. Charles Williams, a member of the Inklings alongside fellow Oxfordians C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Owen Barfield, has written a powerful work at once profoundly disturbing and gloriously uplifting, an ingenious amalgam of metaphysics, religious thought, and darkest fantasy.

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