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Light

A Day in Monet's Garden

Eva Figes

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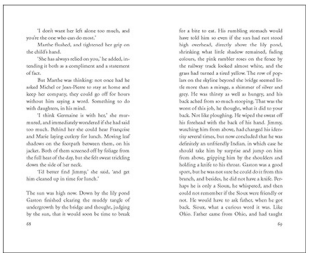
- This shimmering novel is an extraordinary portrait of a day in the life of an artist at work and at home

"I have never read a text which goes even half as far as this one in expressing the particular poignancy which lay at the heart of the impressionist movement. I say this as an art critic. As a novelist I would simply like to pay my tribute to the mastery of language, portraiture and storytelling which Figes has now at her command." – John Berger
"A small masterpiece" – Susan Hill
"A luminous prose poem" – Joyce Carol Oates

This shimmering novel is an extraordinary portrait of a day in the life of an artist at work and at home. In prose as luminous as the colors Monet is using to portray his garden, Eva Figes guides us from dawn ('midnight blueblack growing grey and misty') through midday ('the sun was high now… shrinking what little shadow remained, fading colors, the pink rambler roses on the fence by the railway track looked almost white') to evening ('the tide of shadows rising as the sunset glow faded outside.') Monet's wife, grieving for a lost daughter; a living daughter, fretting that she will not be able to marry the man she loves; their friend the abbé, eating and drinking with them; two children playing, closest to Monet in the freshness and certainty of their vision; all experiencing in different ways the richness of the light that Monet works unceasingly to pin down in his last, great paintings.

Eva Figes (1932-2012), born in Berlin, moved to England with her family in 1939. She published novels and social theory, including the feminist classic *Patriarchal Attitudes.* Her two children are the author Kate Figes and the historian Orlando Figes.



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