

“The apparently fixed constellations of family relationships, the recurrent beauties of nature, the flaming or flickering patterns of love and lust” all the elements of Kawabata’s fictional world are combined in an engrossing novel that rises to the incantatory fascination of a Nô drama. “Saturday Review Few novels have rendered the predicament of old age more beautifully than The Sound of the Mountain. For in his portrait of an elderly Tokyo businessman, Yasunari Kawabata charts the gradual, reluctant narrowing of a human life, along with the sudden upsurges of passion that illuminate its closing. By day Ogata Shingo is troubled by small failures of memory. At night he hears a distant rumble from the nearby mountain, a sound he associates with death. In between are the relationships that were once the foundation of Shingo’s life: with his disappointing wife, his philandering son, and his daughter-in-law Kikuko, who instills in him both pity and uneasy stirrings of sexual desire. Out of this translucent web of attachments and the tiny shifts of loyalty and affection that threaten to sever it irreparably” Kawabata creates a novel that is at once serenely observed and enormously affecting. Translated from the Japanese by Edward G. Seidensticker

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