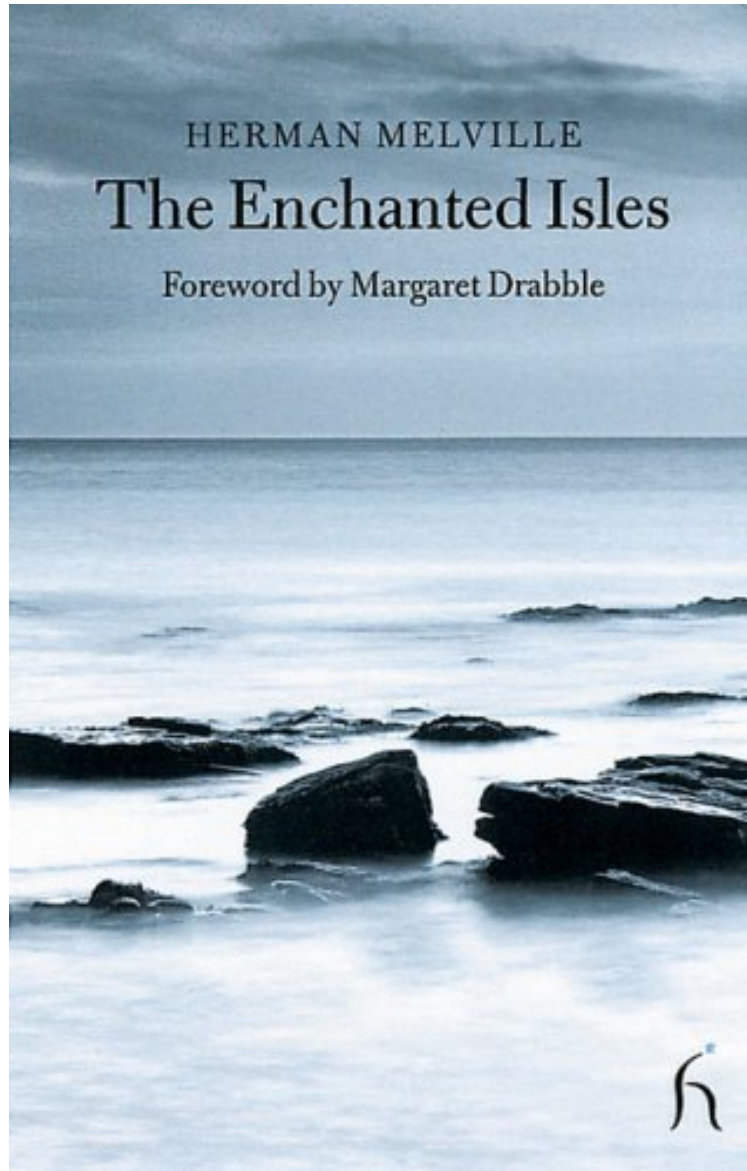


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## The Enchanted Isles (Hesperus Classics)

*Herman Melville*

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**Herman Melville : The Enchanted Isles (Hesperus Classics)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Enchanted Isles (Hesperus Classics):

9 of 11 people found the following review helpful. Melville's InfernoBy Penelope V. Burt15 years ago I read all of Melville's novels and most of his other prose, but I must have missed this one. So along comes this handsome edition of the sketches and narratives about the Encantadas (Darwin's Galapagos)- and not an early work, but written after

Moby Dick - which in less than a hundred pages shows once again what an astounding writer Melville is. The four pages devoted to the island's tortoises are as good as any he wrote about whales. A sample: "That these tortoises are the victims of a penal, or malignant, or perhaps a downright diabolical enchanter, seems in nothing more likely than in that strange infatuation of hopeless toil which so often possesses them. I have known them in their journeyings ram themselves heroically against rocks, and long abide there, nudging, wriggling, wedging, in order to displace them, and so hold on their inflexible path. Their crowning curse is their drudging impulse to straightforwardness in a belittered world." Of the actual narratives, the most anthologized is the story about the Chola Widow, which is heartbreaking, but even more so when read in the context of the whole suite of pieces. If you think you won't like Melville, try this book; and if you do like Melville, don't miss it.

One of Melville's earliest writings, *The Enchanted Isles* is a hauntingly beautiful descriptive work inspired by a tour of the Galapagos Islands. Originally penned as a travelogue, Melville's writings form a series of evocative sketches of each of the Galapagos Islands. Recounting their myths and legends, he conjures up the spirit of each in astonishing detail. Read together, they create a timeless classic, perfectly capturing the islands' eternal charm and mystery.

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