



The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel

Anne Enright

Download now

[Click here](#) if your download doesn't start automatically

The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel

Anne Enright

The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel Anne Enright

The novel opens in Paris, in the midst of the sexual embrace that makes Eliza Lynch the mistress of Francisco Solano López, the third dictator of Paraguay. She is nineteen years old but wise beyond her years—initiated into sex by a Mr. Bennett, a friend of her family's, while still at school, she has had many lovers and even been married, to an abusive Frenchman named Quatrefages from whom she escaped in north Africa to return to Paris. She is currently a society paramour who maintains a respectable façade even while sleeping with a dressmaker in exchange for credit. López is a young comer in Paraguayan politics, the son of the current dictator, who is in Europe on a diplomatic tour and to recruit engineers and others to help on his plan to build the first railway in South America. He goes to Eliza Lynch for French lessons, but history has other plans for them. A few months later, Eliza realizes she is pregnant.

Eliza accompanies López on his tour of the continent and they are now aboard the Tacuarí, having made the Atlantic crossing and navigating the Rio Parana towards Asunción, Paraguay, López's home. Hugely pregnant, Eliza swings in a hammock feeling simultaneously imperious (she drinks champagne, cooled by being dragged through the river's water on a rope; she presides over card games which mimic the high society she has left behind and gets to know the English engineer and Scottish doctor her husband has hired) and helpless, completely out of her element in a tropical, buggy landscape. But Eliza is a quick study—she befriends Miltón, her husband's Guaraní Indian servant, who teaches her to starch her dresses with porridge to combat the humidity, as the locals do, and quickly begins to think about fixing up Francine, her maid, with one of the men her husband has recruited to assist in his nationalist ambitions. Eliza proves herself a formidable woman, with exactly the right combination of strength, will, resources, and the strategic ability to make allowances for the powerful that will prove her, over the course of López's rule, his most powerful ally. When it becomes clear López—"my dear friend" as Eliza calls him—wants to sleep with Francine himself, Eliza sends the girl off to him, consolidating her own power even as she betrays herself. As they arrive in Asunción, she dresses in a lilac gown that is at the cutting edge of Paris fashion, astonishing the crowd at the pier with her poise, her beauty, her blonde, physical foreignness, even as she is going into labor. Throughout the book, chapters that tell the story of the journey up the Rio Parana, written in Eliza's voice, are interspersed with chapters narrated mostly by Dr. Stewart, the Scottish physician, telling of the legend she later becomes, of the war her husband wages, and of its consequences for her and the men whose company she kept in the elegiac, innocent days aboard the Tacuarí.

Eliza becomes a scandal when they reach Paraguay. From the moment of their arrival in Asunción, which quickly gains the status of popular legend as Eliza's union with López becomes a national fact, she is a larger-than-life figure. López's family rejects her, but the strength of his will—he is a man whose ambitions may not be refused, from the quotidian desire to possess a woman, to the political desire that will shape Paraguayan history—establishes Eliza as something they will have to deal with. Her son is born, though Stewart, who was to have been her personal physician, is so horrified by her as a person that he does not attend the birth. She has the boy christened in order to make him the legitimate heir (despite his bastard origins and the existence of another son by López's previous mistress). The women of Paraguayan society shun her—she builds a beautiful Quinta (villa) where she entertains all the strategically important men, but none of the women will befriend her. She hosts a picnic on board the Tacuarí to celebrate the importation of some Basque peasants who are supposed to build a new town. All the women of Asunción attend, but none of them will speak to her. As retaliation, she has Miltón, in the role of major-domo, throw all the food overboard, and keeps the ship at anchor in the hot sun for most of the day, until the women are fainting from

the heat. In an act which hastens the old López's decline and her lover's ascent to head of state, Eliza builds a gorgeous theater, modeled on the great theaters of Europe, and mounts a play written by a European actor she has imported, but based on Paraguayan national themes. It is her bid for the office, even if only symbolic, of Paraguayan First Lady. Francine, the maid, dies horribly, of a tropical illness that eats away much of her jaw and facial features-and in treating Francine, Stewart reconciles with Eliza.

In 1865, three years after his father's death, López's territorial disputes with Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay lead to the War of the Triple Alliance, with tiny Paraguay at war with all tttttthree nations. Dr. Stewart, the Scottish doctor we met on the Tacuarí (and who is now married to a Paraguayan society girl named Venancia Baez, whom he has grown to intermittently love and find extremely annoying), watches as the war grows and becomes ever more bloody and farcical-it will eventually result in the deaths of what is reportedly half the national population-and López's sanity becomes more and more questionable. He envisions the war as a vast canvas of would-be heroism and actual shame and ruin. And whither López, so goes Eliza. Rumors are that it is her ambition and rapaciousness more than his that spurs on the war; that she is his procuress, providing him with an endless succession of girls whose virginity she verifies herself; even that she is a cannibal who eats the battlefield dead. Public appearances are more and more rare, but Stewart does see her in the road near a graveyard late one night, walking without her usual entourage, completely alone. He follows her for a time, then catches up and walks her home, and at the door kisses her, and magnifies that kiss in his imagination into a sexual embrace. It is not until years later that he realizes she must have been visiting the grave of a child who died in infancy. She gives a dinner-party for him and some of the rising officers of the army, and in a brief moment away from company reveals her sadness to him. All of the officers are a little in love with her, Stewart reflects. She reveals that Benigno, her husband's brother, hates her and plots against her, which is why she has come to the front. She has now borne López several sons.

The final action of the war takes place with Eliza's black coach-a carriage she has had painted with twelve coats of black lacquer, and drawn by midnight-colored horses-leading the Paraguayan army into retreat. López's madness is full-blown. He is demanding absolute, blind allegiance from all of his countrymen and executes men daily for disloyalty, including his own family (particularly the brother who alienated Eliza). Stewart, exhausted after five years at war, is led through the battlefield by a Guaraní Indian girl who becomes obscurely comforting to him in the long absence of his wife. He finds comfort in her arms once but realizes she is younger than he thought and, after that, merely relies on her for someone to warm himself against in the night. He has become López's personal doctor which requires him to examine his stool and dress his gonorrhoeic penis in chalk to prevent (or stave off) its drip. Eliza, too, is losing her mind-her firstborn son, who has become a kind of golden symbol for the possible new Paraguay, reveals that she does not sleep at night, subsisting on naps for a few minutes at a time. At night, Stewart can hear her in her tent, fighting with López. "When will you marry me?" she shouts. But López's irrefutable will takes her over once again and soon they are making love.

It is only a matter of time, however, before the Brazilian army overtakes them, and when they do López is immediately shot and killed (though, like Rasputin, there is some suggestion that he was still alive when he fell off his horse into the river and drowned). Stewart, still on the battlefield, manages to avoid being killed himself by brandishing his forceps, and the men watch (unable to join in on penalty of being shot) as Eliza, iron of will to the end, digs a grave for her lover and their dead sons and buries them with her own hands.

Stewart's last glimpse of Eliza Lynch occurs three years later in Edinburgh, where he has brought Venancia and his family. He and Venancia have rediscovered a sweet, middle-aged love and she has taken to life in Scotland. One day he is strolling the main road with his daughter when he sees the Indian Miltón, still in Eliza's service, standing by her coach. Then he sees Eliza herself, walking up to a door, regal as ever and her golden hair flaming in the sun. He realizes she must have made some sort of deal with Camarrá, the Brazilian

general, recalling her exodus in chains (but alive, and accompanied by all of her belongings and retinue). And now she is in Edinburgh, likely visiting her lawyers regarding money Stewart brought with him out of Paraguay, taxes on the export of yerba mate which were granted to him by López years before.

 [Download The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel Anne Enright

From reader reviews:

Cindy Gross:

Have you spare time for the day? What do you do when you have a lot more or little spare time? Yes, you can choose the suitable activity intended for spend your time. Any person spent their very own spare time to take a move, shopping, or went to often the Mall. How about open or perhaps read a book called The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You understand beside you can spend your time using your favorite's book, you can wiser than before. Do you agree with it has the opinion or you have other opinion?

Daryl Thurmond:

A lot of people always spent their free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them loved ones or their friend. Do you realize? Many a lot of people spent they free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you wish to try to find a new activity this is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book that you simply read you can spent all day long to reading a e-book. The book The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel it is extremely good to read. There are a lot of people that recommended this book. These were enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy the actual e-book. You can m0ore simply to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book offers high quality.

Monica Bonner:

People live in this new moment of lifestyle always try to and must have the free time or they will get lot of stress from both everyday life and work. So , when we ask do people have extra time, we will say absolutely indeed. People is human not only a robot. Then we question again, what kind of activity have you got when the spare time coming to a person of course your answer will unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative inside spending your spare time, the particular book you have read is usually The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel.

Jeffrey Cooks:

On this era which is the greater man or woman or who has ability in doing something more are more treasured than other. Do you want to become certainly one of it? It is just simple way to have that. What you should do is just spending your time little but quite enough to have a look at some books. One of several books in the top listing in your reading list is usually The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel. This book that is qualified as The Hungry Slopes can get you closer in turning into precious person. By looking right up and review this e-book you can get many advantages.

**Download and Read Online The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel
Anne Enright #UJ8IZ64CNPG**

Read The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel by Anne Enright for online ebook

The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel by Anne Enright Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel by Anne Enright books to read online.

Online The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel by Anne Enright ebook PDF download

The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel by Anne Enright Doc

The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel by Anne Enright Mobipocket

The Pleasure of Eliza Lynch: A Novel by Anne Enright EPub