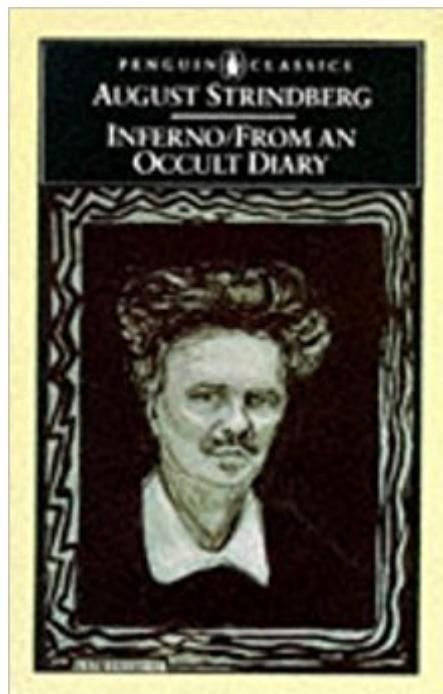


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Inferno / From An Occult Diary



Synopsis

"Inferno" and "From an Occult Diary" are for the most part based on a diary that Strindberg kept between 1896 and 1908 - undoubtedly the most troubled period of his life.

Book Information

Paperback: 432 pages

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Customer Reviews

Text: English, Swedish (translation)

the author was a genius. a kook, but a genius.

Not as deep as one would expect.

Strindberg was one of the foremost playwrights of the 19th century, almost equal in stature to the other great Scandinavian, Ibsen. This work is a departure in that the author takes as his subject his own psyche. The schizophrenia and paranoia he suffers from comes at the reader in waves. We are drawn into the vortex of his twisted reasoning, his fears, his misanthropic vision. About the nearest parallel I can think of is the work of Antonin Artaud, who also is quite adept at describing his own psychoses. What separates them, in my opinion, is that Strindberg is a much greater writer and can at times objectively look at his subject (himself), whereas Artaud tends towards the monomaniacal. I would recommend this work for anyone interested in modern playwrights or in the psychological underpinnings of the artistic temperament.

In Inferno Strindberg writes about the mental problems that he suffered from during the 1890s in a such a convincing way that you almost begin to wonder whether he really was mad. At times you really believe that everyone was out to get him and maybe they were (he made himself very unpopular in his native Sweden with some of his books). I guess this book gives you a good description of just how fine the line between genius and insanity is. If you like *l'Or de Raquin* by Zola this one is for you!

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