



# **A Fairly Good Time: with Green Water, Green Sky (New York Review Books Classics)**

*Mavis Gallant*

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**A Fairly Good Time: with Green Water, Green Sky (New York Review Books Classics) Mavis Gallant  
AN NYRB CLASSICS ORIGINAL**

Mavis Gallant's novels are as memorable as her renowned short stories. Full of wit and psychological poignancy, *A Fairly Good Time*, here with *Green Water, Green Sky*, encapsulates Gallant's unparalleled skill as a storyteller.

Shirley Perrigny (née Norrington, then briefly Higgins), the heroine of *A Fairly Good Time*, is an original. Derided by the Parisians she lives among and chided by her fellow Canadians, this young widow—recently remarried to a French journalist named Philippe—is fond of quoting Jane Austen and Kingsley Amis and of using her myopia as a defense against social aggression. As the fixed points in Shirley's life begin to recede—Philippe having apparently though not definitively left—her freewheeling, makeshift, and self-abnegating ways come to seem an aspect of devotion to her fellow man. Could this unreliable protagonist be the unwitting heroine of her own story?

*Green Water, Green Sky*, Gallant's first novel, is a darker tale of the fractured family life of Bonnie McCarthy, an American divorcée, and her daughter, Flor. Uprooted and unmoored, mother and daughter live like itinerants—in Venice, Cannes, and Paris—glamorous and dependent. With little hope of escape, Flor attempts to flee this untidy life and the false notes of her mother.

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