



The Prospector

By J. M. G. (Jean-Marie Gustave) Le Clezio

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The Prospector is the crowning achievement from one of France's preeminent contemporary novelists and a work rich with sensuality and haunting resonance. It is the turn of the century on the island of Mauritius, and young Alexis L'Etang enjoys an idyllic existence with his parents and beloved sister: sampling the pleasures of privilege, exploring the constellations and tropical flora, and dreaming of treasure buried long ago by the legendary Unknown Corsair. But with his father's death, Alexis must leave his childhood paradise and enter the harsh world of privation and shame. Years later, Alexis has become obsessed with the idea of finding the Corsair's treasure and, through it, the lost magic and opulence of his youth. He abandons job and family, setting off on a quest that will take him from remote tropical islands to the hell of World War I, and from a love affair with the elusive Ouma to a momentous confrontation with the search that has consumed his life. By turns harsh and lyrical, pointed and nostalgic, The Prospector is a parable of the human condition (Le Monde) by one of the most significant literary figures in Europe today.

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The Prospector By J. M. G. (Jean-Marie Gustave) Le Clezio Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Le Clezio, who is best known for his Prix Renaudot-winning first novel, *The Interrogation* (1963), has created a gentle portrayal of a man haunted by visions of his ideal childhood. The round of seemingly endless summer seashore days and lessons at the knee of their mother, comes to an end for Alexis L'Etang and his sister Laure with their father's financial ruin and his death. The elder L'Etang's one legacy is an obsession with the treasure of the "Unknown Corsair," supposedly buried on Rodrigues Island. Determined to recapture their earlier prosperity, Alexis leaves for Rodrigues in 1910, where he is bewitched by the quest for the treasure, by the soothing routine of sunny days and by the love of a native girl, Ouma. Four years later his second idyll is interrupted by WW I and Alexis leaves the Indian Ocean for the very different geography of Ypres and the Somme. It is clear that Le Clezio, whose ancestor was a French corsair who settled on Mauritius, loves his setting--maybe too much. His writing is deeply evocative and descriptive even when simply furthering the plot, but many of his lengthy descriptions of Mauritius, Rodrigues and Alexis's ocean voyages between them are overwrought.

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From Library Journal

Haunting and lyrical, this Bildungsroman of the narrator's search for the lost treasure of the Corsair is near-mythic but has realistic details that bolster its plausibility. Set in early 20th-century Mauritius, the story follows the life of a young man who, after the death of his father, tries to restore his family's fortunes by tracking down some buried gold (hence the title); he is assisted by a young island woman, reminiscent of Rima in William H. Hudson's *Green Mansions*, who helps him recognize other things of value. The simple, exotic life of the islanders is portrayed appealingly, but realistic details of their exploitation by European colonists and the miseries of war are not left out. Le Clezio is an acclaimed winner of the French Prix Renaudot, and this novel, a best seller in France, will further enhance his reputation. Essential for academic and large public libraries.

- Ann Irvine, *Montgomery Cty. P.L., Md.*

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From [Booklist](#)

Le Clezio, one of France's finest writers (*The Mexican Dream*), is an incantatory and dazzlingly visual novelist. This hypnotic and mythic novel begins on Mauritius in 1892. Young Alexis, enamored of the glory of the pristine island, is devastated when a hurricane destroys his home and, ultimately, leads to his father's death. He inherits only one legacy: his father's obsession with a buried treasure on a distant island called Rodrigues. Armed with an old cryptic map and a dreamer's determination, Alexis sets out to unearth this treasure and rescue his mother and sister from poverty. Once on Rodrigues, however, Alexis loses track of time and succumbs to the pure, lulling splendor of the place and the magic presence of a lithe, coppery, harpoon-wielding woman named Ouma. But his idyll is obliterated when the world goes to war in 1914. Le Clezio brilliantly conveys the sublime and terrible beauty of life and its twin, death, in devastating evocations of the pulse of the sea, the blaze of the sun, the horrors of violence, and the miraculous lyricism of the mind. A remarkable work. *Donna Seaman*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Patricia Jones:

The publication untitled The Prospector is the reserve that recommended to you to read. You can see the quality of the publication content that will be shown to an individual. The language that author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The article author was did a lot of exploration when write the book, hence the information that they share to you is absolutely accurate. You also could get the e-book of The Prospector from the publisher to make you much more enjoy free time.

Linda Henderson:

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