



The Swedish Cavalier: A Novel

Leo Perutz

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A thief and a nobleman, both down on their luck, cross paths on a bitter winter's day in 1701. One, known locally as "The Fowl-Filcher," is fleeing the gallows; the other, the callow Christian von Tornefeld, has escaped execution to fight for his Swedish king. Neither will reach his destination. Sent with a message to secure aid for von Tornefeld, the thief falls in love with his companion's secret fiancée. He resolves to win her love for himself, and through a clever stratagem, exchanges his fate for the other man's. Risking everything to attain the woman and station of his dreams, he becomes the Swedish cavalier, staying one step ahead of exposure. Later, he sacrifices everything so that his daughter won't learn of his secret past.

In this book he considered is masterpiece, Leo Perutz has created a picaresque world of barons and brigands, swashbuckling dragoons and spurned lovers, gentleman farmers and masked robbers, and lucky parchments, magic spells, and mystical visions. Part adventure, part historical novel of war-ravaged Europe, *The Sweddish Cavalier* is also a moral tale of deceit, betrayal, and redemption.

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