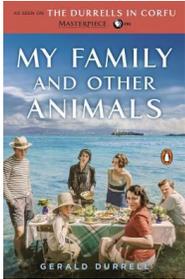


Books by the Stack



***My Family and Other Animals* by Gerald Malcolm Durrell**

A memoir of an English boy growing up on the Greek island of Corfu recounts the author's humorous adventures as he collects all kinds of animals and insects and brings them back to the house, much to his family's dismay.

Why you'll like it: *Funny. Offbeat. Strong sense of place.*

About the Author: Gerald Durrell was born in 1925 in India to British parents. After the death of his father in 1928, the family lived in England and Europe before settling in Corfu. Educated by private tutors, he became interested in natural history and amassed a private collection of dozens of creatures from scorpions to owls. He founded the Jersey Zoological Park and the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust with the purpose of breeding endangered species. His first book, *The Overloaded Ark*, was published in 1953. He died from complications related to a liver transplant on January 30, 1995 at the age of 70. (Bowker Author Biography)

Questions for Discussion

1. Does the author succeed in capturing the essence of Corfu's varied animal and insect life?
2. Mrs. Durrell and Larry argue more than any other family members. Why do you believe they share this type of relationship?
3. When Gerald relays the story of the scorpions in the matchbox, he professes forgetfulness in leaving the box on the mantle to be picked up by an unwitting Larry. Is Gerald as innocent as he claims, or can this be the impish behavior of a child?
4. Mrs. Durrell appears adamant first not to leave England, and then to remain in the strawberry-pink villa. What about Mrs. Durrell's personality suggests why she capitulates to Larry's demands?
5. What is the reason for the Durrells return to England? Do you think that was the real reason?
6. What were the aspects of *My Family and Other Animals* that appealed to you most?
7. Reading this book, would you say that the family that laughs together stays together? If that is so, what does it say about families that cry together? What binds a family closer; is it the laughter or the tears?
8. Among the non-Durrells, which of their friends, neighbors and acquaintances did you find most interesting?
9. Gerald Durrell infuses so much personality in his observations on animal character and behavior. Did any animal make an impression on you?

10. Would you comment on this book as a book of humor, natural or memoir?

11. What influences did Corfu have on Gerald Durrell?

(Questions provided by Bookrags and Between the Lines)



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