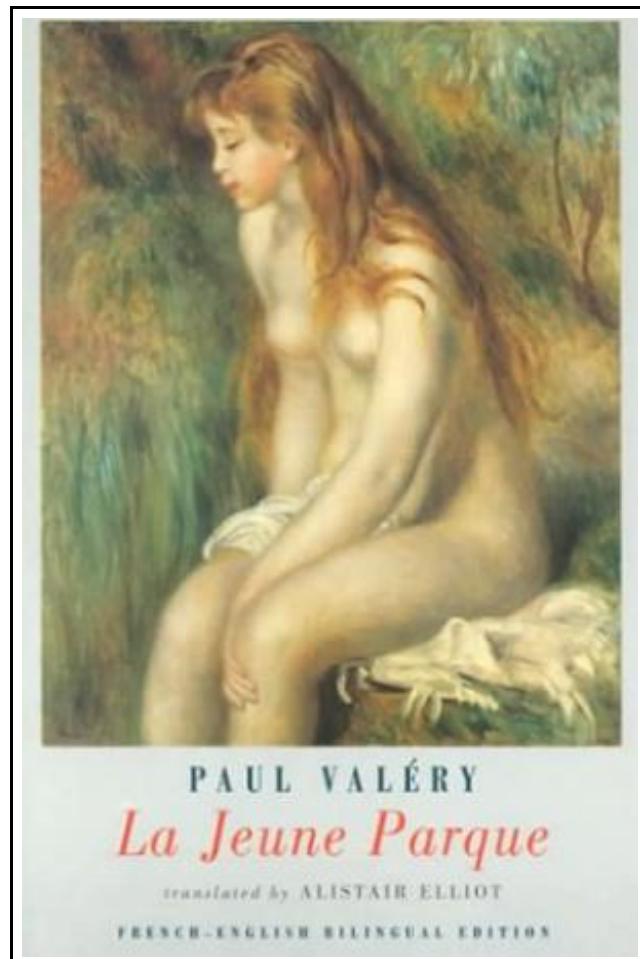


La Jeune Parque (Paperback)



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BLOODAXE BOOKS LTD, United Kingdom, 1997. Paperback. Book Condition: New. French-English bilingual ed. 217 x 139 mm. Language: French, English. Brand New Book. Paul Valery (1871-1945) was a poet and essayist, and along with Verlaine and Mallarme is regarded as one of the most important Symbolist writers, and an influence on poets from Eliot to Ashbery. He had a quiet life by many standards, but in one respect it was exemplary, even legendary; he made an early reputation in little magazines, decided to stop writing verse when still only 20, kept his silence for 20 years, then began again; and his first book of verse, published when he was 45, was his masterpiece *La Jeune Parque*. A poem should not mean, but be, said Archibald MacLeish. *La Jeune Parque* (the goddess of Fate as a young woman) certainly exists: she's beautiful and makes great gestures. And as for what she means, there's a substantial amount of argument about that, so *La Jeune Parque* is a poem by either definition. It's a classic, by general agreement, written to the full 17th-century recipe for alexandrine couplets, and it's modern, with every word pulling its weight in more than one direction. Alistair Elliot's translation with notes is aimed at making this rewarding but difficult long poem accessible enough for bafflement to turn into admiration. He attempts to clarify its small puzzles and also trace the overall narrative line of Paul Valery's poem: it does have a story (what should a young woman do?) and does struggle towards a resolution. He also provides an introduction which deals with the interesting circumstances of the poem's four-year composition (1913-17), which resulted in Valery's instantly becoming a famous poet at the age of 45, after having written no...

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