



## The Last of the Savages

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THE LAST OF THE SAVAGES is an ambitious novel of historical sweep, which addresses issues as diverse as racial guilt, class difference, sexual repression, the 1960's, and the inescapability of the past. A characteristically American novel, reminiscent of F. Scott Fitzgerald and William Faulkner, it is overly ambitious, tackling more plot and ideas than it can successfully handle, but is nevertheless engrossing and replete with beautifully wrought images and details.

The novel flashes between past and present as Patrick Keane narrates the history of his unlikely friendship with prep school roommate Will Savage, which begins in 1965 and connects their lives in intimate ways for over thirty years. Although Patrick and Will share a desire to flee their origins, the pasts they hope to escape and the visions they are pursuing are quite different.

Patrick, the overachieving son of a New England appliance salesman, strives to be accepted into the upper echelons of society. Will, on the other hand, was born into the aristocracy to which Patrick aspires, but he has nothing but contempt for it, reserving all of his passion for the rhythm and blues music of his native Tennessee. Patrick represses homosexual feelings to follow a conventional path to a flourishing career and socially prominent wife, while Will's unrepressed and nonconformist pursuits lead to an intermittently successful career as a music producer, as well as drug problems and a rocky marriage. Despite the vastly different routes taken, however, both men arrive, in their forties, at similar destinations, reasonably content with their fate, and their demons at bay.

## Sources for Further Study

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