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"A lively microbiography of Geoffrey Chaucer, the "father of English literature", focusing on the surprising and fascinating story of the tumultuous year that led to the creation of the Canterbury Tales"--Provided by publisher.

As the year 1386 began, Geoffrey Chaucer was a middle-aged bureaucrat and sometime poet, living in London and enjoying the perks that came with his close connections to its booming wool trade. When it ended, he was jobless, homeless, out of favour with his friends and living in exile. Such a reversal might have spelled the end of his career; but instead, at the loneliest time of his life, Chaucer made the revolutionary decision to 'maken vertu of necessitee' and keep writing. The result - The Canterbury Tales - was a radically new form of poetry that would make his reputation, bring him to a national audience, and preserve his work for posterity. In The Poet's Tale, Paul Strohm brings Chaucer's world to vivid life, from the streets and taverns of crowded medieval London to rural seclusion in Kent, and reveals this crucial year as a turning point in the fortunes of England's most important poet.

In this award-winning biography, the editor of the most popular edition of The Canterbury Tales re-creates the public, private, and poetic life and times of this extraordinary man. 16-page photo insert.

An acclaimed biography that recreates the cosmopolitan world in which a wine

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merchant's son became one of the most celebrated of all English writers Geoffrey Chaucer is often called the father of English literature, but this acclaimed biography reveals him as a great European writer and thinker. Uncovering important new information about Chaucer's travels, private life, and the circulation of his writings, Marion Turner reconstructs in unprecedented detail the cosmopolitan world of Chaucer's adventurous life, focusing on the places and spaces that fired his imagination. From the wharves of London to the frescoed chapels of Florence, the book recounts Chaucer's experiences as a prisoner of war in France, as a father visiting his daughter's nunnery, as a member of a chaotic Parliament, and as a diplomat in Milan. At the same time, the book offers a comprehensive exploration of Chaucer's writings. The result is a landmark biography and a fresh account of the extraordinary story of how a wine merchant's son became the poet of The Canterbury Tales.

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posterity. In *The Poet's Tale*, Paul Strohm brings Chaucer's world to vivid life, from the streets and taverns of crowded medieval London to rural seclusion in Kent, and reveals this crucial year as a turning point in the fortunes of England's most important poet.

The Middle Ages re-created through the cast of pilgrims in *The Canterbury Tales*. Among the surviving records of fourteenth-century England, Geoffrey Chaucer's poetry is the most vivid. Chaucer wrote about everyday people outside the walls of the English court—men and women who spent days at the pedal of a loom, or maintaining the ledgers of an estate, or on the high seas. In *Chaucer's People*, Liza Picard transforms *The Canterbury Tales* into a masterful guide for a gloriously detailed tour of medieval England, from the mills and farms of a manor house to the lending houses and Inns of Court in London. In *Chaucer's People* we meet again the motley crew of pilgrims on the road to Canterbury. Drawing on a range of historical records such as the Magna Carta, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, and *Cookery in English*, Picard puts Chaucer's characters into historical context and mines them for insights into what people ate, wore, read, and thought in the Middle Ages. What can the Miller, “big...of brawn and eke of bones” tell us about farming in fourteenth-century England? What do we learn of medieval diets and cooking methods from the Cook? With boundless curiosity and wit, Picard re-creates the religious, political, and financial institutions and customs that gave order to these lives.

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"A romp for the ages" (*Vanity Fair*)—now with a graphic cover and deluxe packaging Renowned novelist, historian, and biographer Peter Ackroyd takes on what is arguably the greatest poem in the English language and presents it in a prose vernacular that makes it accessible to readers while preserving the spirit of the original. A mirror for medieval society, *The Canterbury Tales* concerns a motley group of pilgrims who meet in a London inn on their way to Canterbury and agree to take part in a storytelling competition. Ackroyd's contemporary prose emphasizes the humanity of these characters—as well as explicitly rendering their bawdy humor—yet still masterfully evokes the euphonies and harmonies of Chaucer's verse. For more than seventy years, Penguin has been the leading publisher of classic literature in the English-speaking world. With more than 1,700 titles, Penguin Classics represents a global bookshelf of the best works throughout history and across genres and disciplines. Readers trust the series to provide authoritative texts enhanced by introductions and notes by distinguished scholars and contemporary authors, as well as up-to-date translations by award-winning translators.

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