



The Trial of Elizabeth Cree

Peter Ackroyd

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A literary star returns with an addictive tale of murder in Victorian London. Peter Ackroyd is "our most exciting and original writer... one of the few English writers of his generation who will be read in a hundred years' time." -- *The Sunday Times* (London) *The Trial Of Elizabeth Cree* is without a doubt Peter Ackroyd's breakout book. It has all the erudition and literary brilliance we expect of Ackroyd, yet it is as vivid, scary, and spellbinding as the best of Edgar Allan Poe. The year is 1880, the setting London's poor and dangerous Limehouse district, home to immigrants and criminals. A series of brutal murders has occurred, and, as Ackroyd leads us down London's dark streets, the sense of time and place becomes overwhelmingly immediate and real. We experience the sights and sounds of the English music halls, smell the smells of London slums, hear the hooves of horses on the cobblestone streets, and attend the trial of Elizabeth Cree, a woman accused of poisoning her husband but who may be the one person who knows the truth about the murders. The wonderfully rhythmic shifting of focus from trial to back alleys, where we come upon George Gissing, author of *New Grub Street*, and even Karl Marx, gives the story a tremendous depth and resonance beyond its page-turning thriller plot. In *The Trial Of Elizabeth Cree*, Peter Ackroyd has once again confirmed his place as one of the great writers of our time.

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