



The Lost Words: A Feast of Forgotten Words, Their Origins and Their Meanings

Pete May, Philip Howard

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Philip Howard's legendary 'Lost Words' column has been appearing weekly in The Times for many years, wittily illuminating a raft of the most obscure, esoteric words the English language has to offer. At the same time, his 'Word Watching' puzzles have provided readers with the chance to pit their lexicographical skill against his tongue-in-cheek multiple-choice conundrums. This unique collection, bringing together the very best of all these, is a feast for word lovers. Here we can lament the disappearance of words like 'accismus' (an insincere and feigned refusal of something that is earnestly desired), and wonder why we ever thought we could do without 'zoilus' (a censorious, malignant or envious critic). And, once we have completed our journey through the dictionary entries time has forgotten, there's more fun to be had, as we ponder whether having a 'tirrit' means one is in possession of a trumpet, throwing a fit or the proud owner of a type of bird, and if the charge of being 'spissid' is a comment on one's girth, sobriety or resemblance to a javelin, either literal or metaphorical. Endlessly fascinating, Lost Words continues Philip Howard's amusing and informative tour of words that enrich the English language and would otherwise have been lost forever.

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