



## In Hazard (New York Review Books Classics)

*Richard Hughes*

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The *Archimedes* is a modern merchant steamship in tip-top condition, and in the summer of 1929 it has been picking up goods along the eastern seaboard of the United States before making a run to China. A little overloaded, perhaps—the oddly assorted cargo includes piles of old newspapers and heaps of tobacco—the ship departs for the Panama Canal from Norfolk, Virginia, on a beautiful autumn day. Before long, the weather turns unexpectedly rough—rougher in fact than even the most experienced members of the crew have ever encountered. The *Archimedes*, it turns out, has been swept up in the vortex of an immense hurricane, and for the next four days it will be battered and mauled by wind and waves as it is driven wildly off course. Caught in an unremitting struggle for survival, both the crew and the ship will be tested as never before.

Based on detailed research into an actual event, Richard Hughes's tale of high suspense on the high seas is an extraordinary story of men under pressure and the unexpected ways they prove their mettle—or crack. Yet the originality, art, and greatness of *In Hazard* stem from something else: Hughes's eerie fascination with the hurricane itself, the inhuman force around which this wrenching tale of humanity at its limits revolves. Hughes channels the furies of sea and sky into a piece of writing that is both apocalyptic and analytic. *In Hazard* is an unforgettable, defining work of modern adventure.

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