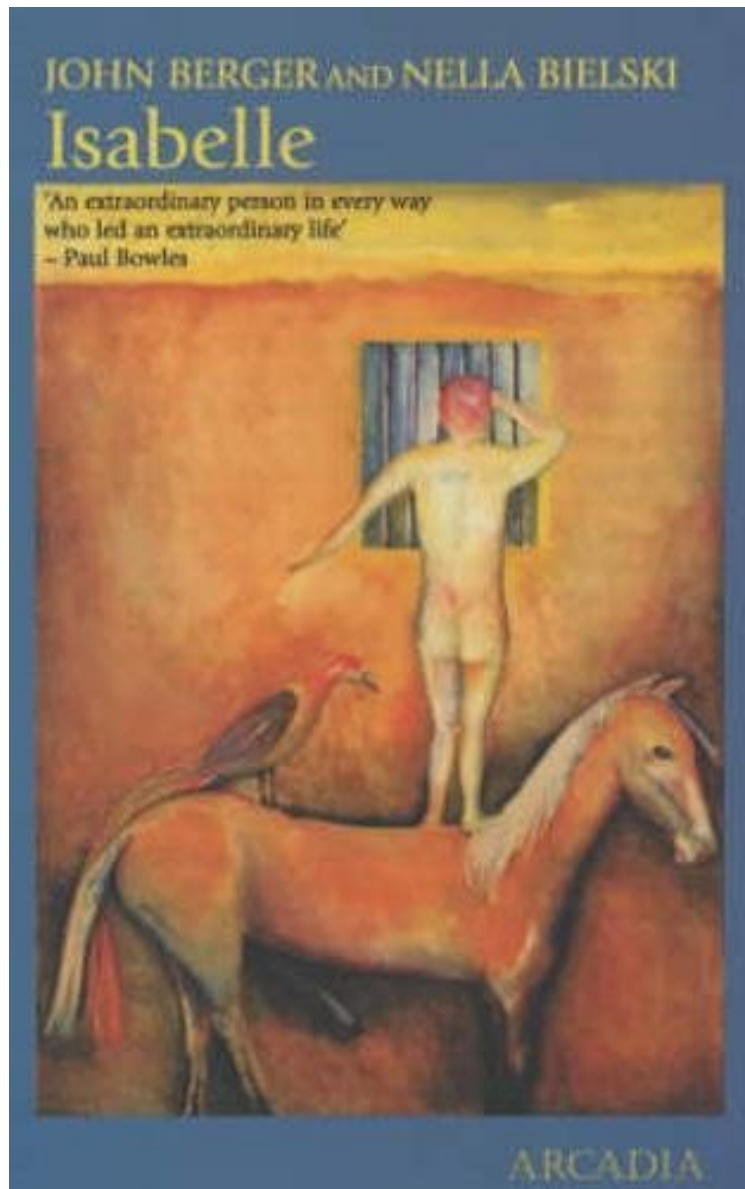


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## Isabelle

*John Berger, Nella Bielski*  
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**John Berger, Nella Bielski : Isabelle** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Isabelle:

In 1897, Isabelle, aged twenty, left Geneva for Kenadsa, at the Moroccan frontier. Gripped by spiritual restlessness

and a desire to transcend the artificial constraints of society, she journeyed into the Sahara, into the heart of Islam. There she revelled in the languorous warmth of the nights and the sensuous beauty of the people. Dressed as an Arab youth, she smoked kif, took innumerable lovers, and made dangerous trips alone across the desert. She married Sliman, a French army sergeant, and became a mystic healer. Her freak death in a flash flood ended a brief life of disturbing contradictions, for Isabelle was a European turned Arab, a Christian who became a Sufi, a woman who passed for a man.