A sweeping story told in letters, spanning two continents and two world wars, Jessica Brockmole’s atmospheric debut novel captures the indelible ways that people fall in love, and celebrates the power of the written word to stir the heart.

March 1912: Twenty-four-year-old Elspeth Dunn, a published poet, has never seen the world beyond her home on Scotland’s remote Isle of Skye. So she is astonished when her first fan letter arrives, from a college student, David Graham, in far-away America. As the two strike up a correspondence—sharing their favorite books, wildest hopes, and deepest secrets—their exchanges blossom into friendship, and eventually into love. But as World War I engulfs Europe and David volunteers as an ambulance driver on the Western front, Elspeth can only wait for him on Skye, hoping he’ll survive.

June 1940: At the start of World War II, Elspeth’s daughter, Margaret, has fallen for a pilot in the Royal Air Force. Her mother warns her against seeking love in wartime, an admonition Margaret doesn’t understand. Then, after a bomb rocks Elspeth’s house, and letters that were hidden in a wall come raining down, Elspeth disappears. Only a single letter remains as a clue to Elspeth’s whereabouts. As Margaret sets out to discover where her mother has gone, she must also face the truth of what happened to her family long ago.

Sparkling with charm and full of captivating period detail, Letters from Skye is a testament to the power of love to
overcome great adversity, and marks Jessica Brockmole as a stunning new literary voice.

Look for special features inside. Join the Random House Reader’s Circle for author chats and more.

Praise for Letters from Skye

“Letters from Skye is a captivating love story that celebrates the power of hope to triumph over time and circumstance.”—Vanessa Diffenbaugh, New York Times bestselling author of The Language of Flowers

 “[A] remarkable story of two women, their loves, their secrets, and two world wars . . . [in which] the beauty of Scotland, the tragedy of war, the longings of the heart, and the struggles of a family torn apart by disloyalty are brilliantly drawn, leaving just enough blanks to be filled by the reader’s imagination.”—Publishers Weekly (starred review)

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“[A] dazzling little jewel.”—Richmond Times-Dispatch

From the Trade Paperback edition.

Amazon.com Review

A Letter from the Author, Jessica Brockmole

Dear Reader,
As an American who spent years living abroad, I know too well the challenge in maintaining relationships from a distance. Before telephones and webcams made separations easier, people had no choice but to entrust bits of their heart to the postman with every letter they sent. A lost letter could cause sleepless nights, a returned letter, even more. But a reply penned immediately, in a hot rush of emotion, could make the soul soar. Letters from Skye is a story about lovers and families separated by war, with nothing but pen and paper to hold everything together.

I first wrote this book six years ago, while I was living in Edinburgh, Scotland. After my youngest was born, we escaped the city and went to the Isle of Skye for one gorgeous week. We stayed in a cottage on the beach and chased legends across the island in the rain. Evenings, I sprawled before the little peat coal fire with maps of Skye, tracing the coast and trying my tongue at the Gaelic. On the drive back to Edinburgh, a story came together in my head. The story of a woman bound to the poetry of Skye, held within those rocky coasts, being given a glimpse of the greater world with the unexpected arrival of an envelope. The story of a man, desperate to prove himself fearless, finding his only fear on the other end of those letters. The story of a daughter, trying to catch the past as it comes tumbling out of the wall. I scribbled notes right there in the car and started furiously writing when we got back home.

The result of that outpouring wasn’t just a novel; it was an extended letter to myself, written in those secret, lonely hours after the rest of the world went to bed. A letter reminding me to not lose touch with those I love, no matter where in the world we may be. Reminding me that it’s okay to have fears; I’m stronger for overcoming them. Reminding me to walk to the borders of who I am, and then to take a step beyond.

I invite you to do the same.

Product Description

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