



# The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen

*Elizabeth von Arnim*

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## **The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen** Elizabeth von Arnim

This travel story is shot through with the Elizabeth von Arnim's special self-deprecating wit and character sketches. In 1901, the "real" Elizabeth holidayed on the Baltic island of Rügen with just her maid, a coachman, a carriage piled with luggage, and a woman friend. But from such unpromising beginnings Elizabeth weaves a captivating farrago round her encounters. There's the bishop's wife and her personable son, a dressmaker and, astonishingly, a long-lost cousin who is trying to evade the pursuit of her professor husband. Meanwhile, Elizabeth's friend goes on knitting, and knitting, and knitting, in a travel story of great charm, wit, and perception.

## **The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen Details**

Date : Published November 1st 1990 by Little, Brown Book Group (first published 1904)

ISBN : 9781853812231

Author : Elizabeth von Arnim

Format : Paperback 299 pages

Genre : Travel, Classics, Cultural, Germany, Fiction

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# From Reader Review The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen for online ebook

## Bettie? says

\*\*I am not reading this in German however it is by far the best picture. The modern cover for the English version is this (WTF) ((hattip wandaful))

Available on Project Gutenberg: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/33762> I shall read this on my laptop, a page at a time. Life is grand, thank you Wanda.

Opening: **Every one who has been to school and still remembers what he was taught there, knows that Rügen is the biggest island Germany possesses, and that it lies in the Baltic Sea off the coast of Pomerania.**

She finds a travel guide to Rügen that has this 'remarkable paragraph'

*'Hearest thou the name Rügen, so doth a wondrous spell come over thee. Before thine eyes it rises as a dream of far-away, beauteous fairylands. Images and figures of long ago beckon thee across to the marvellous places where in grey prehistoric times they dwelt, and on which they have left the shadow of their presence. And in thee stirs a mighty desire to wander over the glorious, legend-surrounded island. Cord up, then, thy light bundle, take to heart Shylock's advice to put money in thy purse, and follow me without fear of the threatening sea-sickness which may overtake thee on the short crossing, for it has never yet done any one more harm than imposing on him a rapidly-passing discomfort.'*

3\* - Enchanted April

4\* - Elizabeth and her German Garden

- The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen

TR - Vera (Wanda has found that this story is the basis for du Maurier's Rebecca so I am keen to have a looksee)

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## Chrystal says

In 1901, the Countess von Arnim-Schlagenthin decides to go on a walking tour of Rügen, Germany's largest island off the Pomeranian coast. None of her friends want to go with her, so she decides to go alone, in a carriage instead of walking. She has an idea of writing a travel guide of the best inns on the island and best places to swim, etc. She accomplishes this (her gift of poetically describing nature's gifts is admirably suited to this task), but her tour of Rügen ends up being an adventure in every sense. She finds herself in the middle of a marital spat, having to think up a scheme to get the married couple back together and rid herself of their fighting, at the same time trying to avoid the company of a bishop's wife and her son who appear to be following her around the island. A delicious treat of lyrical beauty and witty observations by a unique voice that still brings delight to readers over 100 years later.

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## Lila says

One of Elizabeth's best novels, although it is important to understand how the island of Rügen is important to German Romanticism and how Elizabeth's husband is related to a famous German Romantic author, Achim von Arnim (1781-1831), to fully appreciate the send up of the English tourists' infatuation with German Romanticism and the sublime experience.

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## Ali says

The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rügen is the third in a series of autobiographical novels by Elizabeth von Arnim which starts with her novel Elizabeth and her German Garden. The second novel The Solitary Summer I have yet to read, (or even possess) but I don't think it really matters which order one reads these novels, they don't follow on really in the conventional sense.

This beautifully written novel took me right away from the here and now, to another time and a place I must admit to not even having heard of. In that first and probably more famous novel, Elizabeth is content to stay in her home, delight in her garden, her children and poke gentle fun at her husband The Man of Wrath. In this novel, Elizabeth is a little older, a little more jaded perhaps, she needs a break from her home, and so we join her on a journey round an Island in the Baltic sea. Elizabeth von Arnim's descriptions of Rügen are wonderful, and I am now keen to follow in the footsteps of Elizabeth one day and take a trip around Rügen myself.

Full review: <https://heavenali.wordpress.com/2016/...>

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## Kerry says

Von Arnim's nastiness knows no bounds. From disgust with the "help" to hatred for her female companions, this book is less about travel and more about von Arnim's sadistic side and absence of empathy.

The first turn-off is von Arnim's displeasure at her cousin's choices--choices which seemed to have arisen from disillusionment with her marriage and the loss of six very young children in succession. Cousin Charlotte is also a feminist and interested, perhaps single-mindedly, with the betterment of women and the improvement of their ability to be independent. But can we blame her? Hardly, given her background story. But von Arnim heaps on the blame.

The book turns horrifying when Charlotte's husband arrives. Charlotte has clearly been trying to escape him--she hates him, and probably for more than his condescending attitude and dismissal of her intelligence. He seems possessive and possibly abusive. And yet von Arnim, with glee, seeks to see them trapped on an island together, despite her cousin's tears and desperate attempts to lose him in his pursuit of her. Von Arnim is firmly on the professor's side, describing him in endearing terms, even when his actions and obsessive nature should have warned any woman--even in the early 20th century.

This book was chilling, von Arnim's evil delight in her cousin's plight and feigned wonderment her cousin's

separation from her husband disturbing.

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## **(P)lla says**

Con l'arrivo della bella stagione, se siete amanti della natura e vi piace immergervi in lunghe pagine descrittive questo libro fa per voi.

*Elizabeth a Rugen* più che un romanzo sembra essere quasi una guida di viaggio, la stessa protagonista si rivolge spesso al lettore nel suo percorso, con recensioni su varie pensioni e lunghe descrizioni del paesaggio.

La protagonista, Elizabeth, decide di intraprendere un solitario viaggio per staccare dalla quotidianità e quale migliore occasione di visitare Rugen, l'isola più grande della Germania? Fornita di mappa con l'itinerario completo e accompagnata dalla propria burbera cameriera personale intraprende un viaggio che almeno all'inizio, si prospetta essere solitario e circondato da tanto verde ma presto la situazione cambierà perchè a rompere gli schemi ci saranno una coppia di madre e figlio che sembrano essere sempre in mezzo, una cugina femminista e e il suo vecchio marito.

Per certi versi questo romanzo mi ha ricordato *Un incantevole aprile* della stessa autrice, la natura era già molto presente ma in particolare qui fa proprio da padrona, sono tante le pagine dedicate completamente al paesaggio e lunghe sono le descrizioni: apprezzo sempre la bravura della Von Arnim in quanto grande ritrattista di paesaggi magnifici ma in questo caso avrei preferito maggiore spazio alla storia che, benché breve e frettolosa, è l'aspetto che più mi è piaciuto.

Sempre acuta e intelligente invece lo è nei rapporti interpersonali e nei dialoghi che intercorrono tra di loro, i soliti siparietti divertenti sono presenti anche qui, in maniera abbastanza cospicua, fanno ridere di gusto e colpiscono per la loro sagacia.

Complice anche una protagonista che conquista il lettore con il suo sense of humor e personaggi secondari che con le loro personalità eccentriche si immergono perfettamente nella storia, il romanzo risulta piacevole ma, anche con un finale piuttosto frettoloso e non del tutto soddisfacente, si colloca al di sotto di altri romanzi letti dell'autrice.

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## **Jennifer Wixson says**

Many authors despair of book signings; however, I enjoy not just meeting the readers of my rural romances, *The Sovereign Series*, but also the opportunity to browse vast shelves of books, old and new. At a recent book signing at Beyond-the-Sea in Lincolnville Beach, Nanette (the owner) had piled a few books other than my own on the small wooden table at which I sat. Naturally, I was curious to see what work was important enough to crowd me out and somewhat antagonistically I picked up a small gray and red paperback with a 1920's cover featuring the figure of a woman twirling next to the sea in a smart black travelling coat. I began reading *The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rugen*, and was so captivated by the opening line of her second paragraph: "Round this island (Rugen) I wished to walk this summer, but no one would walk with me," that I was almost irritated when a fan interrupted me, clutching one of my books to autograph.

How rare it seems these days when one discovers a new author! It is a luxury much like the discovery of a hidden garden or a new chocolatier. In fact, London's Daily Telegraph called this book a "delicious confection."

Mary Annette Beauchamp was an English writer born in Australia in 1866. Her family later emigrated back to England, and in 1891 she married Count Henning August von Arnim-Schlagenthin, a Prussian aristocrat, and thus became herself a Countess or "Gräfin." The couple settled at Nassenheide, Pomerania, where the von Arnim's had their family estate, and Mary began to have babies and take up gardening as a vocation. When her husband was thrown in debtor's prison, von Arnim adopted the pen name "Elizabeth" and wrote the best-selling book, *Elizabeth and her German Garden*. The book was so popular it was reprinted 20 times during the first year of publication.

What makes von Arnim's semi-autobiographical writing so irresistible are her amazing powers of description combined with a charming wit. She describes not only the sea and the woods and the fields and the birds and the sky in minutest detail, but also the workings of the human heart, mind and soul with a precision laced with gentle irony. Her lovely ramblings make one want to be with her or have her with one, perhaps as a best friend. Indeed, there is a strain of loneliness that pervades her writing, which searches out and discovers that same unmentionable loneliness within our own souls.

In *The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rugen*, von Arnim sets out one week in summer to explore the island of Rugen in her coach and horses (ferried to the island by a nervous boatsman) accompanied by her faithful maid Gertrud (along for propriety's sake) knitting wordlessly and somewhat relentlessly. Von Arnim's support crew indulges every whim of her heart, stopping hither and thither in villages, by the wayside, in the woods, by the seashore ... every place a thing of beauty catches her eye. In delicious detail von Arnim describes the scents, sounds, tastes of her adventurous journey until you are filled with the urge to get out a map and track down the island of Rugen, feeling sure it must be the most wonderful place on earth even though you have never heard of it. (Apparently, Rugen was a common vacation place for the Prussians and Germans during the early 20th century, and please do not ask me the difference between the two, because I do not know, but von Arnim makes a distinction).

Little complications arise during von Arnim's travels, of course, from her inability to find suitable lodgings to her almost unavoidable encounter with her long-lost cousin Charlotte, a staunch bluestocking feminist, who is on the run from her elderly Professor husband. When Charlotte decides to join von Arnim, the trip hilariously becomes more about Charlotte's escaping than von Arnim enjoying her own vacation (escape) from her husband and children. Indeed, one of the most interesting and endearing aspects of von Arnim's character is that she seems unable to resist the demands and commands of the stronger characters within her orbit, such as her cousin, and her husband, whom she lovingly and ironically labels *The Man of Wrath*. Who of us doesn't hanker to have the courage to clearly label such indomitable characters in our own lives? Von Arnim's tongue-in-cheek tittle-tattle about these creatures whose influence she yields to is so delicious it's almost sinful.

As soon as I was home from my book signing, I went into my bedroom, shut the door, and didn't come out again until I had finished reading *The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rugen*. I have since proceeded to devour as many of von Arnim's books as I can find, including her celebrated *Elizabeth and Her German Garden* and the soulful *A Solitary Summer*. I was also pleasantly surprised to discover that von Arnim is the author of the inspiring book *The Enchanted April*, which has been adapted for Broadway as well as made into a wonderful motion picture.

I can't say enough about von Arnim's writing and tragic personal history (although her first marriage was unhappy, she married again after von Arnim died, only to be even more disappointed in love). I'm sorry we never had the opportunity to meet (she died in 1941 at the age of 74) because I feel sure that we would have been good friends, nay, the best of friends.

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## Laura McDonald says

One cannot underestimate my love for Von Arnim's writing. Her fiction is good, but her autobiographical work is pure joy. In this kind of work she doesn't write about much of anything, but her spirit and intelligence shine in witty observations of daily life. Daily life it indeed was in her first two books, *Elizabeth and Her German Garden* and *The Solitary Summer*. In those she simply described her daily goings-on, mostly in her beloved garden in rural Pomerania. In *The Solitary Summer* she had a small premise at the outset, to have no visitors for a whole summer, and she succeeded charmingly. This time around Von Arnim gets bolder with her premise: to walk around Germany's largest island and popular tourist destination, Rugen.

She fails at her premise almost instantly as it was quite impossible for a woman at that time and her social standing to go walking alone. And since she couldn't convince any lady friends to be as excited about walking around Rugen as she was, she settled for riding her coach around Rugen with her maid, Gertrud. Stolid Gertrud provides an excellent foil for free-spirited Elizabeth, and belly laughs frequently follow many of their interactions. One of the first scenes is permanently nestled in my memory and makes me smile each time I remember it: Worrying about her horses while passing a motor car (not common at the time) and a loud brass band (probably more common than motor cars), Elizabeth and Gertrud jump out of the carriage and run to calm the horses. The horses--it turns out--didn't mind a bit, and they along with the driver kept trotting along oblivious to it all. Elizabeth and Gertrud are left in the dust, watching their comfy carriage fade away in the distance. Apparently it was unseemly for a carriage driver to turn around and look at his passengers, so it was some hours before he discovered the empty carriage and returned to fetch them.

This was scene one in Rugen after which Elizabeth, Gertrud and the driver continue village after village around the island. If not a practical travel guide, Von Arnim intended this book to contain at least useful tidbits of where to eat, where to stay, and where the best bathing spots are. She admits that she fails at this intention too, which is just as well since this information is of no use to us over 100 years later. Where Von Arnim excels is in her interactions with the people she meets and, more importantly, with nature. She makes parts of Rugen seem like paradise on earth. People she tries to avoid, but she is not successful. Coincidentally she runs into her cousin Charlotte who is a very earnest feminist with apparently no sense of humor. Charlotte is completely disgusted with Elizabeth's conforming existence of piddling in the garden and having babies. At the point she meets up with Elizabeth, Charlotte is on the run from her famous intellectual husband. I had to wonder if this cousin "Charlotte" was in actuality Von Arnim's real life cousin Katherine Mansfield--a quick look at Mansfield's biography makes this unlikely, but possible. Charlotte, her estranged husband, and a son and mother pair take over the narrative which gets quite interesting. This part of the book reminds me of *Enchanted April* in which Von Arnim weaved several realistic and interacting stories where again not much happens but all ends up intensely satisfying.

As is true when reading any Von Arnim work, you will find yourself wanting to read aloud parts of it to innocent bystanders. I will therefore leave you with a selection of the author's words that I think particularly defines her style and mood:

"Oh blessed state, when mere quiet weather, trees and grass, sea and clouds, can make you forget that life has anything in it but rapture, can make you drink in heaven with every breath! How long will it last, this joy of living, this splendid ecstasy of the soul? I am more afraid of losing this, of losing even a little of this, of having so much as the edge of its radiance dimmed, than of parting with any other earthly possession."

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## Nicki Judson says

I loved the style of writing by Ms von Arnim. She describes the beautiful Rugen scenery with words that seem to flow like a whirling stream, ever so gentle, ever so beautiful. On her 10 day adventure to the island of Rugen, Ms von Arnim, is transported by horse and cart with her abiding maid and her horseman. Along the way she meets a long lost cousin trekking alone to escape her husband; a mother and son travelling from Britain and then thou and behold, the cousin's husband! She describes to the reader the highlights and low-lights of each small settlement in case anybody would like to visit, but the reader is more captivated by the adventures of her travels on her horse and cart, her icy swims, her suppers and drinking tea. Because she describes them with such flourish you will never tire of her eating bread and butter, ..."and we sat among the nightshades, whose flowers were everywhere, and ate in purity and cleanliness...".

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## Tocotin says

The title character/narrator (might also be the author, don't know, don't care) is a wealthy English lady who married a German whatever and now regards herself as a "female Junker", and feels like traveling around the island of Rügen all alone, which means being driven in a carriage by a chauffeur and having her shoes buttoned by a maid. These are inferior beings of course (she sometimes seriously ponders the possible presence of inner life in her maid), not allowed to bother her. There are others, namely her rebellious feminist cousin, the cousin's unbelievably creepy "cute old German professor", and a wife of an English bishop, who have the rights to bother her, and she can't run away. Her distress at this horrible development is what the book is about.

Disliked this book immensely. Wow. Talk about annoying. Sometimes there were glimpses of compassion, but mostly it was all about smug self-satisfaction of Elizabeth who simply could not understand how other people - especially those stupid, unreasonable women - could be dissatisfied with their lot in life. The feminist cousin was a sick, harried and unpleasant individual, the bishop's wife was a horrid snob and hypocrite, the men were more or less fussed over and forgiven for their little faults, being, dontcha know, men - and Elizabeth would rather talk to men. Way more valuable and interesting, men.

There was also nature depicted in painstaking detail, with raptures and frills and lots of sugar.

I had lots of irritating stuff highlighted, but I'm not feeling like quoting anything. Maybe when I'm in prison with nothing else to do.

I liked the ending, and some of the more irritating passages which made me read on, hence 2 stars. But I must say that it's been a long time since I've been in a more unsympathetic company... I'm also reading "Little Women", and haven't decided which bunch of characters is worse as of yet, but Elizabeth in Rügen might take the cake. With rancid butter lol.

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## classic reverie says

I was wanting to read this book after recently finding out it is the third of a series that does not need to be read together because each book stands on its own but having read Elizabeth's German Garden and Solitary Summer, and enjoying Elizabeth von Arnim's journal like style. Elizabeth has such a refreshing air about her that has me, enjoying all she says even though all the stories I have read of her including The Enchanted April are not story driven but people driven. You are driven forward by the conversations and actions of the



people more than a plot. You are awakened to life, spirituality with regards to nature and purpose of it all. Her books have a loving of nature that one cannot help feel for nature more deeply and wanting to explore it deeps. I had never heard of the island Rugen before but I felt I traveled it in a way with her. When reading this kind of travel guide which in reality turns into a human interaction story, you are interested in how things turn out and once again can Elizabeth obtain that sought out solitary thoughtfulness which she loves to obtain when she commutes with nature but once again relatives or friends show up to bring that reality to restriction because of their want of constant attention. Humor is always present but being a natural one with regards to human beings. I find these stories interesting more so for when they were written pre world war 1, independence of women being very limited and yet always Elizabeth brings it forth in her writing and looking at both sides. I wonder what side she was really on?

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### **Avd.Reader says**

Ein Reiseroman.

The original title of this novel is 'The Adventures of Elizabeth in Rugen'.

Marie Annette Beauchamps (1866-1941), the cousin of the author Catherine Mansfield, was born in Australia. She married into the German von Arnim family and, as a writer, became known as Elizabeth von Arnim ('Elizabeth and the German Garden', 'Father', 'The Enchanted April'). She writes about women trying to find their own ways, exploring new options, and trying out new things, and about the beauty of nature. This humorous account of her travels on the German island Rugen is much more than just a simple turn of the century travel story. German and foreign tourists, "decent behaviour" commonly expected of women travelling alone, the modern joys of bathing, and a cousin's ideas about women's rights, provoke the author's sparkling comments and gentle ridicule. This was fun to read.

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### **Jerroleen says**

This is a delightful novel typical of the turn of the last century in many ways, yet with some dark and powerful undercurrents that foreshadow both the author's own later life and the changes that occurred in the next fifty or so years in the world at large. The irony and satirical, tongue-in-cheek tone are delicious and perfect, never overdone and often hysterically funny.

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### **Bunny says**

Si conclude così l'ideale trilogia con protagonista Elizabeth. In realtà questo terzo episodio è scollegato dai precedenti e non compaiono più la sua bella casa, il suo strepitoso e sterminato giardino, le sue tre figliollette e il marito, bensì soltanto lei in compagnia della sua cameriera e del suo cocchiere su un'isola del Baltico, Rügen appunto. Ovviamente questo viaggio di undici giorni vedrà apparire anche altri personaggi che daranno vita a delle scenette esilaranti. In tutta onestà questo tipo di storielle mi farebbe venire il latte alle ginocchia, ma non quando sono raccontate dalla penna meravigliosa della Von Arnim. Ho sottolineato tante frasi ironiche e mi sono divertita più volte a leggere le sue riflessioni scritte in maniera impeccabile. L'autrice possiede una padronanza del lessico che mi lascia ogni volta estasiata.

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## **Laura says**

This is the story of Elizabeth travel records around Rügen, the largest German's island and a popular tourist destination.

During her walking's with her maid Gertrud, they met Elizabeth's cousin, Charlotte. According to some biographical data of the author, it seems that this character could have been her real cousin, Katherine Mansfield.

Elizabeth and Her German Garden and The Solitary Summer are the next books to read by this author, after have enjoyed so much her lovely book The Enchanted April.

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## **Truehobbit says**

I bought this book over twenty years ago, when I was in Rügen myself - I thought it would be fun to read a book about the place I was just visiting. As usual for me when travelling, though, I read about five pages while there. Back home, it went on the bookshelf until a few weeks ago I was looking for a slim volume to go in my bag for another trip. Rügen had left a great impression on me, though, and I still remember it vividly, so I could easily follow Elizabeth's fresh and vivid impressions and enjoyed re-visiting the place with her, as it were.

It is mostly the report of a ten-day journey around the island, and it's hard to tell how enjoyable it is if you don't know what she's talking about with respect to the places and landscapes, but even without the travelogue aspect it contains a fair amount of amusing interactions with the people she meets on the journey. She has a slightly aloof, (self-)ironic attitude to everything that sometimes seem to make her a little cold, but she is also wisely enough resigned to the facts of life to observe with a kind and patient rather than a judgemental or condemning eye. So, while she doesn't seem to really like anyone, she neither really dislikes anyone either. The former makes her seem a bit pointless, the latter endearing.

(A bit confusing for Germans maybe: naturally, when I first saw the book I thought the 'von Arnim' in her name meant she was connected to the famous Achim and Bettina von Arnim, but nothing like it, on the contrary, she's an Englishwoman who was married to a German nobleman of that name (who seems no relation at all to 'the' von Arnims) and the book was originally written in English.)

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## **Sharon says**

Sadly cannot find the exact edition of this book by Gutenberg Project that I downloaded to my kindle for free.

Both my husband and I read this book having seen it referred to in a walking program Wanderlust with Julia Bradbury and having relatives that vacation on Rügen annually. It distresses me that the book descriptions are often incorrect for the various editions.

Elizabeth in 1904 was a lady before her times...she wanted to walk Rügen and experience it totally but could not get a woman friend to accompany her so off she goes with her driver, August and her MAID the wonderful character Gertrud, two horses to draw the carriage and off they go. Along the way she runs into various characters and situations and her cousin Charlotte. A somewhat frustrated early feminist attempting

to spread the word of liberation to all females within her reach and avoid her aging doddering professor husband. The two British visitors to the Island, mother and son and Charlotte's Professor husband and Charlotte herself.... all seem to weave in and out of the story while everyone moves around the island meeting up here and there.

The humor and wit of Elizabeth's descriptions of the frustrations large and small of NOT getting her solitude and her beautifully expressed joy of the nature in every respect make the book a true pleasure to read. I can well understand why her writing was and remains popular.

We took note, with some pleasure, in the second series of Downton Abbey ..I think episode two wherein her famous book, Elizabeth and Her German Garden was made reference to.

One has to try and put themselves back into another time in this world when such manners and customs were necessary and treasured. In many ways, I wish we could see more of these sensibilities today.

A joy for a change of pace.....

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### **Vera Maharani says**

Reading Von Arnim's semibiographical novel is like reading a letter from old friend. It feels close at heart, although it was written more than a century ago. Lovely description of Ruegen, humorous random observation of trivial things, and her interaction with other characters made me laugh a lot. As a fellow introvert I know how it felt when all I want to do is enjoying my time alone and then accidentally I bumped into chit-chatty friends/relatives/strangers, and I had to wear a smile and behaved accordingly when the only thing I wanted is to scream at the top of my lung, "SHUT THE HELL UP!" It's nice that Elizabeth labeled this trip as 'adventure', though. If it happened to me, most likely I would label it as 'that trip in which the world conspired to disturb me'. Her phlegmatic -INFP Jungian Type predisposition and cheerful view of everything lightened it up

For more of my blabbering and admiration for this work, kindly please check Paradiso Perduto(written mostly in Bahasa)

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### **Emilymcmc says**

This is the lady equivalent of Starship Troopers: You can read a satiric commentary, or read a lovely and addicting travel narrative of Baltic resort life 100 years ago. Words are carefully, beautifully chosen (even the descriptions of scenery are interesting), and it's worth a look just to admire the casual precision of language and tone. Meanwhile, everyone in the book is so miserable. The women are furiously, silently frustrated with the social conventions that force them to do what they least want to; the men are oblivious and talk endlessly. It's a wildly fun read.

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### **Leslie says**

This was a rather short work by my dear old dead friend Elizabeth von Arnim. No, of course we weren't really friends, seeing as how she died eons ago before I was even a twinkle in my Pappy's eye. But if we had been contemporaries, I am sure we would have been the best of friends. Like Jane Austen, she is very intelligent and witty. Like Gaskell, she is very nice. Yeah, nice. She thinks snarky things, but is well bred enough to not speak it. She's nice. Anyway, this is tiny bit of travel literature. She was always traveling by

herself, my Elizabeth is. Of course this time, much to my delight, she brought along her lovely and sturdy maid, Gertrud. Gertrud rocks. She knits when she can, is long-suffering and always able to whip up coffee and biscuits in any situation that may arise. So anyway, Elizabeth is traveling around Rugen and runs into some humorous characters that interfere with her plans in the funniest ways. There is a bossy, know-it-all Bishop's wife and her charming son and a cousin of Elizabeth's who is super intellectual and into causes and such but is, much to the reader's entertainment, on the run from her old-man husband who the bishop's wife at first thinks is a homeless vagabond come begging. HEE heee. Elizabeth decides to reunite the two but is hampered in her noble efforts by monsoons (in Germany, yes), lack of suitable lodgings or transportation that will accommodate her uninvited traveling companions, and the interfering of the bishop's wife who decides to establish herself as a groupie to the cousin's husband, despite his horrid appearance, once she learns he is really a famous professor or something.

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