



A Beginner's Guide to Immortality: From Alchemy to Avatars

Maria Birmingham

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In this whimsical, quirky work, Maria Birmingham delivers a humorous history of the various ways people have tried to live forever. From the work of elixir-making alchemists to the concoction of gold, pearl, and coral that scientist Roger Bacon swore by, this book explores the fascinating and surprising history of humanity's attempts to achieve immortality. The book covers beliefs and practices from a variety of cultures and time periods, including tales of a Chinese emperor traveling to an island in search of a mythical fruit that could raise the dead, and of the twenty-first-century president of Kazakhstan who called on his scientists to create an elixir of life—resulting in a yogurt-based drink. Humorous and engaging, *A Beginner's Guide to Immortality* is broken up into pithy, bite-sized chunks accompanied by whimsical illustrations that perfectly complement its entertaining content. The book also includes an index, map, and easy-to-read text boxes, with sections clearly labeled. A must-read for anyone interested in science, magic, and everything in between.

STEPHANIE BUCKLIN (Winter 2016)

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