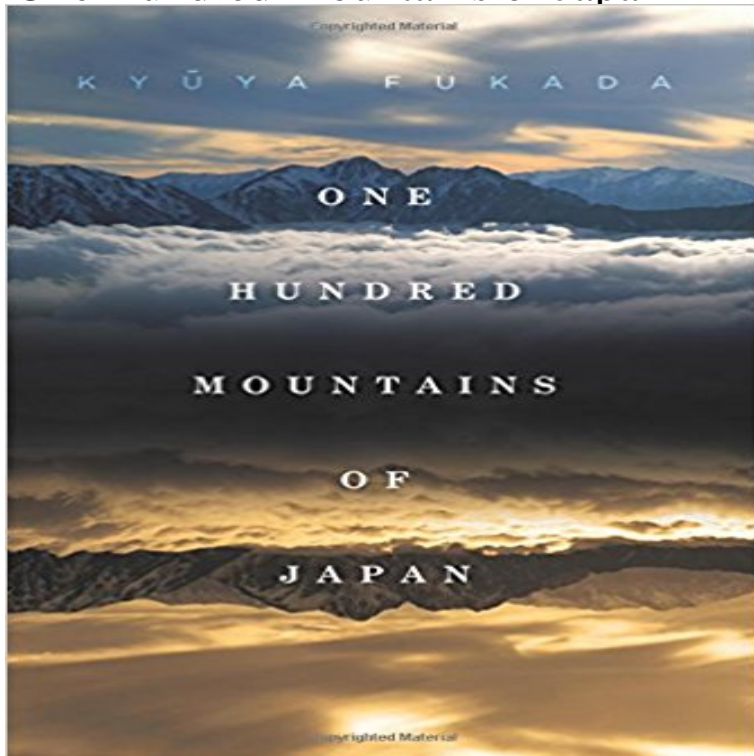


One Hundred Mountains of Japan



The more deeply you go into a long-held tradition, the more secrets and surprises it yields up. Mighty Ontake is like that. The mountains inexhaustible treasury of riches is like some endless storybook with its pages uncut. As one follows the rambling plot along, one is always looking forward to reading more. Every page yields things never found in other books. Ontake is that kind of mountain. One Hundred Mountains is that kind of book. Nowhere in the world do people hold mountains in so much regard as in Japan, observed the author, Kyuya Fukada, in the afterword to his most famous work. Mountains have played a part in Japanese history since the countrys beginnings, and they manifest themselves in every form of art. For mountains have always formed the bedrock of the Japanese soul. In One Hundred Mountains, Fukada pays tribute to his favorite summits. Published in 1964, the book became an instant classic. Consisting of one hundred short essays, each celebrating one notable mountain and its place in Japans traditions, the book is an elegantly written eulogy to the landscape, literature, and history that define a people. More recently, Japans national broadcasting company has turned it into a memorable TV series. Fukada himself was bemused by his books success: In the end, the one hundred mountains represent my personal choice and I make no claims for them beyond that. Yet, half a century after he set down those words, his mountains have become a cultural institution. Marked on every hiking map and enshrined in scores of spin-off books, his One Hundred Mountains are today firmly embedded in the mountain traditions they grew out of. Now available in English for the first time, One Hundred Mountains of Japan will serve as a vade mecum to the Japanese mountains for a new cohort of hikers and mountaineers. It will also open up novel territories for students of Japans literature, folklore, religions, and

mountaineering history?in short, for mountain-lovers everywhere.

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