

Mrs. Dalloway



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Virginia Woolf

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As Clarissa Dalloway walks through London on a fine June morning, a sky-writing plane captures her attention. Crowds stare upwards to decipher the message while the plane turns and loops, leaving off one letter, picking up another. Like the airplane's swooping path, Virginia Woolf's Mrs. Dalloway follows Clarissa and those whose lives brush hers--from Peter Walsh, whom she spurned years ago, to her daughter Elizabeth, the girl's angry teacher, Doris Kilman, and war-shocked Septimus Warren Smith, who is sinking into madness. As Mrs. Dalloway prepares for the party she is giving that evening, a series of events intrudes on her composure. Her husband is invited, without her, to lunch with Lady Bruton (who, Clarissa notes anxiously, gives the most amusing luncheons). Meanwhile, Peter Walsh appears, recently from India, to criticize and confide in her. His sudden arrival evokes memories of a distant past, the choices she made then, and her wistful friendship with Sally Seton. Woolf then explores the relationships between women and men, and between women, as Clarissa muses, "It was something central which permeated; something warm which broke up surfaces and rippled the cold contact of man and woman, or of women together.... Her relation in the old days with Sally Seton. Had not that, after all, been love?" While Clarissa is transported to past afternoons with Sally, and as she sits mending her green dress, Warren Smith catapults desperately into his delusions. Although his troubles form a tangent to Clarissa's web, they undeniably touch it, and the strands connecting all these characters draw tighter as evening deepens. As she immerses us in each inner life, Virginia Woolf offers exquisite, painful images of the past bleeding into the present, of desire overwhelmed by society's demands. -- Joannie Kervran Stangeland Pressestimmen

"With its annotated contemporary reviews, newspaper articles, and historical and medical documents, Broadview's Mrs Dalloway is an ideal student text." - Maggie Humm, University of East London, editor of The Edinburgh Companion to Virginia Woolf and the Arts "Jo-Ann Wallace's superb edition of Mrs. Dalloway offers students, scholars, and common readers a richly contextualized framework for Woolf's fourth novel. Brief, clear, and unobtrusive annotations cover geographical, historical, economic, social, and literary allusions. A thorough yet readable introduction covers Woolf's biography and reputation, her novel's modernist and experimental features, and its status as a war novel. Excellent appendices capture a wide range of contemporary reactions, locate the novel within Woolf's fictional and nonfictional canon, and give readers entry into the lived experience of the time through political, medical, educational, and social documents. The select bibliography and brief chronology are also helpful." - Beth Rigel Daugherty, Otterbein University Werbetext

One day in the life of a woman preparing to give a party - and a groundbreaking work of twentienth-century literary fiction

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