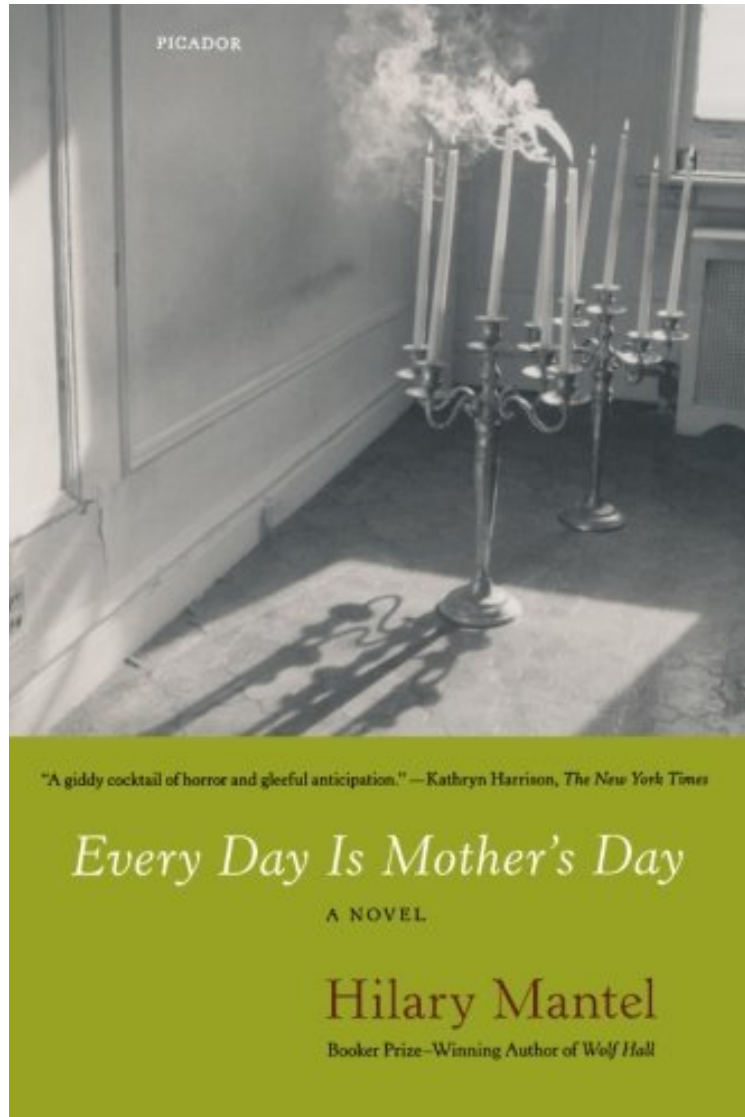


Every Day Is Mother's Day

Hilary Mantel

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Hilary Mantel : Every Day Is Mother's Day before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Every Day Is Mother's Day:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy GrrrrrrA very creepy story with interesting characters. I plan to read the sequel soon.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An outstanding writer!By Anne-Marie IbanezMs. Mantel's writing draws you in and keeps you fascinated throughout the novel. Her observations resonate with our own experiences and we can really identify and empathize with the characters. Impossible to put this book

down, once started. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Dark and well written, this book shows the author's willingness to share the irony of the maternal spirit...By A CustomerThe book is honest and cynical. The cold look at grandmothers and the burden of care has some funny moments.

By the Booker Prize-Winning Author of *WOLF HALL* Evelyn Axon is a medium by trade; her daughter, Muriel, is a half-wit by nature. Barricaded in their crumbling house, surrounded by the festering rubbish of years, they defy the curiosity of their neighbors and their social worker, Isabel Field. Isabel is young and inexperienced and has troubles of her own: an elderly father who wanders the streets, and a lover, Colin, who wants her to run away with him. But Colin has three horrible children and a shrill wife who is pregnant again--how is he going to run anywhere? As Isabel wrestles with her own problems, a horrible secret grows in the darkness of the Axon household. When at last it comes to light, the result is by turns hilarious and terrifying.

From Publishers Weekly This remarkable first novel takes us into a slatternly house, filled with demons and ghosts, where the clairvoyant Evelyn Axon and Muriel, her pregnant half-wit daughter, cower out of sight of society. Moving seamlessly to a cottage in another part of London, it introduces Colin Sydney, father of three stupefyingly unappealing children, tries to escape the disappointments of marriage via a hole-in-corner affair with Isabel Field, a young social worker assigned to supervise Muriel. It turns out that Colin grew up in a house around the corner from the Axons, that his mother tried to speak to her dead husband through Mrs. Axon, and that his sister was sexually abused by the late Mr. Axon, who, once Muriel was born, refused to risk further congress with his wife. All these soiled reminders of times past linger nasty little spirits who upset the furniture, steal from the larder, even leave hortatory notes. Who fathered Muriel's baby? Her mother cannot guess, but a changeling it must be, and, like all changelings, it must be cast away. When Mrs. Axon is similarly cast away, Colin Sydney, in defiance of the portents, moves his family into her haunted house, leaving the thoroughly involved reader to imagine what lies in wait. Copyright 1987 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal A rundown, and possibly haunted, Victorian house takes center stage in these back-to-back black comedies, written by British novelist Mantel (*The Giant*, *O'Brien*) with a distinct Rendellian flavor. In the first story, set in the mid-Seventies, Evelyn Axon, a terrorized, guilt-ridden widow, lives with her dull-witted daughter, Muriel. Into their lives comes the nettlesome social service bureaucracy, primarily in the person of Isabel Field, the last in a long series of social workers assigned to their case. Isabel has problems of her own, though, the main one being a stagnating affair with Colin Sydney, a married man she has met in an evening class on creative writing. Muriel has been encouraged to participate in weekly workshops for the mentally handicapped at the local community center, but she eludes both her mother and her case workers and manages to get herself pregnant. All these lives intersect at the novel's bizarre conclusion, as Evelyn dies, Muriel is institutionalized, and Colin Sydney's family take up residence in the Axons' house. The second novel opens ten years later as Muriel is caught up in the Eighties trend to deinstitutionalize the mentally challenged. Out on the streets once more, she knowingly adopts multiple personas with the misguided intention of exacting revenge on those she believes have wronged her, principally Isabel Field and Colin Sydney. Slowly, all these entangled lives begin to come undone. Like her fellow Brits Rose Tremain and Penelope Fitzgerald, Mantel continually produces novels that chart fresh terrain and derive from a wellspring of creative imagination. These two early novels herald the promise of the rich and varied literary career that followed. Recommended for most public libraries. --Barbara Love, Kingston Frontenac P.L., Ont. Copyright 2000 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Kirkus s The first American edition of a 1985 novel, the debut and first of a paired set (see also below) of the versatile and inventive British author (*The Giant*, *O'Brien*, 1998, etc.). The story begins and ends with a death, and bristles with a graveyard wit that's most effectively balanced by Mantel's scrupulous empathy with its several characters' lonely and frustrated lives. Among them are widowed Evelyn Axon, a truculent professional "medium" who lives alone with her mildly retarded adult daughter Muriel and the supernatural "entities" she imagines capering menacingly through their house; the aforementioned Muriel, whose aggrieved, sardonic reflections on her mother's complacent and unsympathetic world are quite brilliantly rendered; the social worker who aims to improve their lot; and the married man with whom she unwisely involves herself. The latter characters wistful Isabel Field (who lives at home with her own widowed parent) and sexually beleaguered Colin Sydney, a history teacher and an embattled reluctant husband whose mother is a client of Evelyn's propel the narrative in continually surprising directions, as Isabel's visits to the Axons, her trysts with Colin, and Evelyn's mean plans to rid herself of the problems Muriel keeps creating uncover one level after another of relationships and affiliations among these people and such others as Colin's sister-in-law Florence (also a widow). It's all rather feverishly overplotted (albeit in the poker-faced manner of Beryl Bainbridge and Muriel Spark, to name two obvious influences). But Mantel keeps the pot boiling merrily, fills her story with pungent conversational exchanges and observations (e.g., "Women never forget their handbags. They're womb symbols"), and brings her story to a mordantly funny, improbably moving violent climax. An exhilarating combination of kitchen-sink realism and grim expressionist farce: convincing further proof that Mantel is one of England's best contemporary novelists. -- Copyright ©2000, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.