All The Stories Of Muriel Spark
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The Collected Stories of Muriel Spark
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Poignant, hilarious, and spooky, Memento Mori addresses old age. In late 1950s London, something uncanny besets a group of elderly friends: an insinuating voice on the telephone reminds each: Remember you must die. Their geriatric feathers are soon thoroughly ruffled, and many an old unsavory secret is dusted off. Spark's mind-bogglingly stunning 1957 debut With easy, sunny eeriness, Spark lights up the darkest things: blackmail, a drowning, nervous breakdowns, a ring of smugglers, a loathsome busybody, a diabolic bookseller, human evil."Long ago in 1945 all the nice people in England were poor, allowing for exceptions," begins The Girls of Slender Means, Dame Muriel Spark's tragic and rapier-witted portrait of a London ladies' hostel just emerging from the shadow of World War II. Like the May of Teck Club itself—"three times window shattered since 1940 but never directly hit"—its lady inhabitants do their best to act as if the world were back to normal: practicing elocution, and jostling over suitors and a single Schiaparelli gown. The novel's harrowing ending reveals that the girls' giddy literary and amorous peregrinations are hiding some tragically painful war wounds. Chosen by Anthony Burgess as one of the Best Modern Novels in the Sunday Times of London, The Girls of Slender Means is a taut and eerily perfect novel by an author The New York Times has called "one of this century's finest creators of comic-metaphysical entertainment."An election is held at the abbey of Crewe and the new lady abbess takes up her high office with implacable serenity.Where does art start or reality end? Happily loitering about London, c. 1949, with the intent of gathering material for her writing, Fleur Talbot finds a job "on the grubby edge of the literary world" at the very peculiar Autobiographical Association. Mad egomaniacs writing their memoirs in advance — or poor fools ensnared by a blackmailer? When the association's pompous director steals Fleur's manuscript, fiction begins to appropriate life.If you or someone you know is in an abusive relationship, this book will show you a way out. The life of an abused woman is one of fear, pain, and isolation. Not only is she victimized by the man she loves, she is often disbelieved and abandoned by friends and family. Broken emotionally and battered physically, she is left feeling as if there is no way out. But there is a way out, and this powerfully courageous book leads the way. Refusing to gloss over the terrible realities of abuse, this book shares the true stories of abused women while exploring the male rational behind abuse and the reasons women minimize or deny the extent of their abuse. The book goes on to discuss practical issues such as court procedures and child custody as well as offering a step-by-step safety and escape plan."Sleek and suggestive . . . [Reality and Dreams] is so smart and seductive that you fail to notice how completely you've accepted a world gone utterly away." —Kirkus Reviews

British film director Tom Richard won acclaim for his moments of pure creative inspiration. But when Richard is hospitalized after toppling from a crane during a shoot, he awakes not knowing what is real and what is not—and with no idea who to trust. Soon his wife, children, and friends are all undergoing crises of their own, from the breakup of a marriage to the loss of a job. As Richard fights to regain his health and stay centered amid the swirling chaos of his personal life, he must also wrest control of his film—his most prized pursuit—from those who seek to take it away. Witty and engrossing, Reality and Dreams is a whiplash ride through the highs and lows of the creative process. This
ebook features an illustrated biography of Muriel Spark including rare photos and never-before-seen documents from the author's archive at the National Library of Scotland. This year sees the launch of the Pocket Classics, a series of short works for pleasurable reading in a pocket-sized format. These books offer an intriguing and original mixture of new and varied reading experiences from a wide range of Scottish writing from different genres and all periods. Think of them as a reintroduction to the impact of the finest writing, whether non-fiction, poetry, short stories or novellas. These four stories, set at home and abroad, show Muriel Spark's characteristically witty and unbalancing powers. In 'The Executor' the niece of a famous author is pursued by an unfinished manuscript. 'Bang-bang You're Dead' mixes childhood games and white-settler affairs to paint a sinister and comic portrait of colonial life and murder by proxy in Africa. Also set in Africa, 'The Seraph and the Zambesi' tells of a Christmas pageant which has the strangest visitor, while 'Portobello Road' is a story haunted by childhood friendships and adult betrayals. Together they illustrate why Spark is regarded as one of the greatest living short story writers. Asked to tightrope walk for the queen's birthday party, Muriel arrives to discover that all the decorative paper lanterns have disappeared and that her detecting skills are needed too. Once a glittering center of arts and culture, the colony world of Reis is being ravaged by an unchecked plague. As anarchy, cynicism and suspicion spread, a handful of the planet's young artists struggle to keep hope alive, clashing in a deadly game of wits with the seductive artificial intelligence that has taken control of their world—and their minds. A Study Guide for Muriel Spark's "The First Year of My Life," excerpted from Gale's acclaimed Short Stories for Students. This concise study guide includes plot summary; character analysis; author biography; study questions; historical context; suggestions for further reading; and much more. For any literature project, trust Short Stories for Students for all of your research needs. Muriel Spark's bracingly salty memoir is a no-holds-barred trip through an extraordinary writer's life. Collects essays, reviews, and journal articles which analyze life, literature, faith, and other topics. The "original, first-rate, serious, and beautiful" short fiction (New York Times Book Review) that introduced J. D. Salinger to American readers in the years after World War II, including "A Perfect Day for Bananafish" and the first appearance of Salinger's fictional Glass family. Nine exceptional stories from one of the great literary voices of the twentieth century. Witty, urbane, and frequently affecting, Nine Stories sits alongside Salinger's very best work—a treasure that will passed down for many generations to come. The stories: A Perfect Day for Bananafish Uncle Wiggily in Connecticut Just Before the War with the Eskimos The Laughing Man Down at the Dinghy For Esmé—with Love and Squalor Pretty Mouth and Green My Eyes De Daumier-Smith's Blue Period TeddyIn this dynamic and utterly novel presentation, David Loy explores the fascinating proposition that the stories we tell—about what is and is not possible, about ourselves, about right and wrong, life and death, about the world and everything in it—become the very building blocks of our experience and of reality itself. Loy uses an intriguing mixture of quotations from familiar and less-familiar sources and brief stand-alone micro-essays, engaging the reader in challenging and illuminating dialogue. As we come to see that the world is made—in a word—of stories, we come to a richer understanding of that most elusive of Buddhist ideas: shunyata, the "generative emptiness" that is the all-pervading quality inherent to all mental and physical forms in our ever-changing world. Reminiscent of Zen koans and works of sophisticated poetry, this book will reward both a casual read and deep reflection. From the cruel irony of 'A member of the Family' to the fateful echoes of 'The Go-Away Bird' and the unexpectedly sinister 'The Girl I Left Behind Me', in settings that range from South Africa to the Portobello Road, Muriel Spark coolly probes the idiosyncrasies that lurk beneath the veneer of human respectability, displaying the acerbic wit and wisdom that are the hallmarks of her unique talent. The Complete Short Stories is a collection to be loved and cherished, from one of the finest short-story writers of the twentieth century. Available at last are all the poems by one of the twentieth century's greatest British writers, Dame Muriel Spark: "a true literary artist, acerbic and exhilarating" (London Evening Standard). In the seventy-three poems collected here Muriel Spark works in open forms as well as villanelles, rondels, epigrams, and even the tour de force of a twenty-one page ballad. She also shows herself a master of unforgettable short poems. Before attaining fame as a novelist (Memento Mori, The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie), Muriel Spark was already an acclaimed poet. The "power
and control" of her poetry, as Publishers Weekly remarked, "is almost startling." With the vitality and wit typical of all her work, Dame Muriel has never stopped writing poems, which frequently appear in The New Yorker. As with all her creations, the poems show Spark to be "astonishingly talented and truly inimitable" (The San Francisco Chronicle). Presents a collection of ghost stories, including "The Hanging Judge," "The Seraph and the Zambesi," and "The Portobello Road." Thirty-seven stories spanning the author's career feature judges, ghosts, mediums, psychologists, fashion designers, and murderers. A great food critic who can make or destroy the reputation of a chef with a stroke of his pen, Pierre Arthens faces his imminent death by trying to recall the one perfect flavor he sampled in his youth, a flavor that he believes forms the ultimate truth of his life. Originally published in 1971, this collection, showcasing thirteen provocative stories, captures lives of everyday hardships, racism, and violence, and includes "The Bones of Louella Brown," in which the remains of a poor black woman are accidentally mixed with those of a white aristocrat, causing outrage in 1920s Boston. Original. Five More Pixs is a fictional novel that touches on suicide, eating disorders, sextortion and more. If you are struggling with these issues yourself, this book may not be right for you. Meet Jane, Caitlin, Sofia and their online friends. Jane is devastated when her best friend Kate is admitted to the hospital after a suicide attempt. But while she struggles with her friend's coma, she also meets Kate's cousin online and falls head over heels for the mysterious young man. Caitlin desperately embraces anorexia after her father's deadly car accident. Online, she meets Sara, an admin of an app centered around eating disorders, and the first person to finally understand what she's going through. Sofia has decided to learn French to impress her big sister who's moved to France. She joins an app to find pen pals and meets the ideal gay best friend any girl would dream to have. With social media accounts at the heart of the lives of the three Californian teenagers, they seek human connections at a time when the rest of the world doesn't seem to understand them. They'll find support, friendship and love in messages received on their phones. They'll share their most hidden secrets with their new best friend. They'll send their intimate pictures to their first love. They'll find out you really never know someone you've never met IRL. From Muriel Spark, the grande dame of literary satire, comes this swift, deliciously witty tale of writerly ambition that recalls her beloved The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie. College Sunrise is a somewhat louche and vaguely disreputable finishing school located, for now, in Lausanne, Switzerland. Rowland Mahler and his wife, Nina, run the school as a way to support themselves while he works, somewhat falteringly, on his novel. Into Rowland's creative writing class comes seventeen-year-old Chris Wiley, a red-haired literary prodigy whose historical novel-in-progress, on Mary Queen of Scots, has already excited the interest of publishers. The inevitable result: keen envy, and a game of cat and mouse fraught with jealousy and attraction, both literary and sexual. Based on a real London murder case, this witty, subversive novel follows Lord Lucan, a dissolute member of the British aristocracy, into the abyss as he is accused of killing his children's nanny while trying to murder his wife. By the author of The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie. Reprint. 35,000 first printing. Four brand new tales are now added to New Directions' original 1997 cloth edition of Open to the Public. This new and complete paperback edition now contains every one of her forty-one marvelous stories, catnip for all Spark fans. All the Stories of Muriel Spark spans Dame Muriel Spark's entire career to date and displays all her signature stealth, originality, beauty, elegance, wit, and shock value. No writer commands so exhilarating a style playful and rigorous, cheerful and venomous, hilariously acute and coolly supernatural. Ranging from South Africa to the West End, her dazzling stories feature hanging judges, fortune-tellers, shy girls, psychiatrists, dress designers, pensive ghosts, imaginary chauffeurs, and persistent guests. Regarding one story ("The Portobello Road"), Stephen Schiff said in The New Yorker: "Muriel Spark has written some of the best sentences in English. For instance: 'He looked as if he would murder me, and he did.' It's a nasty piece of work, that sentence." In this irresistible #1 New York Times best-selling novel, Anne Tyler explores the slippery alchemy of attracting opposites, and the struggle to rebuild one's life after unspeakable tragedy. Travel writer Macon Leary hates travel, adventure, surprises, and anything outside of his routine. Immobilized by grief, Macon is becoming increasingly prickly and alone, anchored by his solitude and an unwillingness to compromise his creature comforts. Then he meets Muriel, an
eccentric dog trainer too optimistic to let Macon disappear into himself. Despite Macon's best efforts to remain insulated, Muriel up-ends his solitary, systemized life, catapulting him into the center of a messy, beautiful love story he never imagined. A fresh and timeless tale of unexpected bliss, The Accidental Tourist showcases Tyler's talents for making characters—and their relationships—feel both real and magical. "Incandescent, heartbreaking, exhilarating...One cannot reasonably expect fiction to be much better than this." —The Washington Post

Look for Clock Dance, the charming new novel from Anne Tyler, available now.Dame Muriel Spark delivers a delightfully alarming novel, full of high society and low cunning. One October evening five posh London couples gather for a dinner party, enjoying "the pheasant (flambe in cognac as it is)" and waiting for the imminent arrival of the late-coming guest Hilda Damien, who has been unavoidably detained due to the fact that she is being murdered at this very moment "Symposium" was applauded by "Time" magazine for the "sinister elegance" of Muriel Spark's "medium of light but lethal comedy." Mixed in are a Monet, a mad uncle, some unconventional nuns, and a burglary ring run by a rent-a-butler. Symposium stars a perfectly evil young woman (a classic sweet-faced hair-raising Sparkian horror) who has married rich Hilda's son by hook or by crook, hooking him at the fruit counter of Harrod's. There is also spiritual conversation—and the Bordeaux is superb. "The prevailing mood is urbane: the wine is poured, the talk continues, and all the time the ice on which the protagonists' world rests is being thinned from beneath, by boiling emotions and ugly motives.No living writer handles the tension between formality of expression and subversiveness of thought more elegantly." ("The Independent on Sunday").

Robert wants nothing more than to become a serious art historian. But his hopes for a staid academic life are put on hold when he's driven from London to Venice to escape one lover and seek out another: the enigmatic Bulgarian refugee Lina Pancev. In Venice, Robert encounters a grand carnival of lust, lies, blackmail, cocktail parties, and regicide. As he chases Lina, his heart's desire, the city itself provides a priceless education in love, art, and beauty. Witty yet elegant, Territorial Rights is a celebration of human imperfection and complexity, with as many shifting identities, wardrobe changes, and sumptuous settings as a comic opera.A wealthy academic's life shatters when his estranged wife becomes the suspected leader of a terrorist organization. Having led a successful, comfortable life, Harvey Gotham retires to the French countryside to pursue bookish obsessions—namely, a long monograph on the Book of Job, the biblical narrative of faith in the face of extraordinary suffering. But Gotham's intellectual interests soon bleed into his daily life when a series of misfortunes, from a destructive affair, to his wife's involvement with an extremist group, threaten to destroy everything he holds dear. Hailed by the New York Times as "an extremely sophisticated account of the perils that surround our unsuspecting lives in the world today,"The Only Problem balances Spark's unique blend of razor-sharp satire and moral introspection in one fast-paced, absorbing novel. This ebook features an illustrated biography of Muriel Spark including rare photos and never-before-seen documents from the author's archive at the National Library of Scotland.

In Mildred Pierce, noir master James M. Cain creates a novel of acute social observation and devasting emotional violence, with a heroine whose ambitions and sufferings are never less than recognizable. Mildred Pierce had gorgeous legs, a way with a skillet, and a bone-deep core of toughness. She used those attributes to survive a divorce and poverty and to claw her way out of the lower middle class. But Mildred also had two weaknesses: a yen for shiftless men, and an unreasoning devotion to a monstrous daughter. When Barbara Vaughan's fiancé joins an archaeological excursion to the Dead Sea Scrolls, she takes the opportunity to explore the Holy Land. It is 1961, and the nation of Israel is still in its infancy. For Barbara, a half-Jewish Catholic convert, this is a journey of faith, and she ignores warnings not to cross the Mandelbaum Gate from Israel into Jordan. An adventure of espionage and abduction, from pilgrimage to flight, The Mandelbaum Gate is one of Spark's most compelling novels, and won the James Tait Memorial Prize."A perfect book"—and basis for the Maggie Smith film—about a teacher who makes a lasting impression on her female students in the years before World War II (Chicago Tribune). "Give me a girl at an impressionable age, and she is mine for life!" So asserts Jean Brodie, a magnetic, dubious, and sometimes comic teacher at the conservative Marcia Blaine School for Girls in Edinburgh. Brodie selects six favorite pupils to mold—and she doesn't stop
with just their intellectual lives. She has a plan for them all, including how they will live, whom they will love, and what sacrifices they will make to uphold her ideals. When the girls reach adulthood and begin to find their own destinies, Jean Brodie’s indelible imprint is a gift to some, and a curse to others. The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie is Spark’s masterpiece, a novel that offers one of twentieth-century English literature’s most iconic and complex characters—a woman at once admirable and sinister, benevolent and conniving. This ebook features an illustrated biography of Muriel Spark including rare photos and never-before-seen documents from the author’s archive at the National Library of Scotland.

Madame Katerina, Detective 'Nine Nails' McGray's most trusted clairvoyant, hosts a séance for three of Edinburgh's wealthiest families. The following morning everyone is found dead, with Madame Katerina being the only survivor. When questioned she alleges a tormented spirit killed the families for revenge. McGray, even though he believes her, must find a rational explanation that holds up in court, else Katerina will be sentenced to death. Inspector Ian Frey is summoned to help, which turns out to be difficult as he is still dealing with the loss of his uncle, and has developed a form of post-traumatic stress (not yet identified in the 19th century). This seems an impossible puzzle. Either something truly supernatural has occurred - or a fiendishly clever plot is covering a killer’s tracks.

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