



The Remains of the Day

By Kazuo Ishiguro

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The Remains of the Day is a profoundly compelling portrait of the perfect English butler and of his fading, insular world postwar England. At the end of his three decades of service at Darlington Hall, Stevens embarks on a country drive, during which he looks back over his career to reassure himself that he has served humanity by serving “a great gentleman.” But lurking in his memory are doubts about the true nature of Lord Darlington’s “greatness” and graver doubts about his own faith in the man he served.

A tragic, spiritual portrait of a perfect English butler and his reaction to his fading insular world in post-war England. A wonderful, wonderful book.

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The Remains of the Day By Kazuo Ishiguro Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

The novel's narrator, Stevens, is a perfect English butler who tries to give his narrow existence form and meaning through the self-effacing, almost mystical practice of his profession. In a career that spans the second World War, Stevens is oblivious of the real life that goes on around him -- oblivious, for instance, of the fact that his aristocrat employer is a Nazi sympathizer. Still, there are even larger matters at stake in this heartbreaking, pitch-perfect novel -- namely, Stevens' own ability to allow some bit of life-affirming love into his tightly repressed existence.

From Publishers Weekly

Greeted with high praise in England, where it seems certain to be shortlisted for the Booker Prize, Ishiguro's third novel (after *An Artist of the Floating World*) is a tour de force-- both a compelling psychological study and a portrait of a vanished social order. Stevens, an elderly butler who has spent 30 years in the service of Lord Darlington, ruminates on the past and inadvertently slackens his rigid grip on his emotions to confront the central issues of his life. Glacially reserved, snobbish and humorless, Stevens has devoted his life to his concept of duty and responsibility, hoping to reach the pinnacle of his profession through totally selfless dedication and a ruthless suppression of sentiment. Having made a virtue of stoic dignity, he is proud of his impassive response to his father's death and his "correct" behavior with the spunky former housekeeper, Miss Kenton. Ishiguro builds Stevens's character with precisely controlled details, creating irony as the butler unwittingly reveals his pathetic self-deception. In the poignant denouement, Stevens belatedly realizes that he has wasted his life in blind service to a foolish man and that he has never discovered "the key to human warmth." While it is not likely to provoke the same shocks of recognition as it did in Britain, this insightful, often humorous and moving novel should significantly enhance Ishiguro's reputation here.

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Review

"An intricate and dazzling novel." —*The New York Times*

"Brilliant and quietly devastating." —*Newsweek*

"A virtuoso performance ... put on with dazzling daring and aplomb." —*The New York Review of Books*

"A perfect novel. I couldn't put it down." —Ann Beattie

"The novel rests firmly on the narrative sophistication and flawless control of tone ... of a most impressive novelist." —Julian Barnes

Users Review

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Leon Moses:

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