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The Master And Margarita. Mikhail Bulgakov



Synopsis

Russia's literary world is shaken to its foundations when a mysterious gentleman - a professor of black magic - arrives in Moscow, accompanied by a bizarre retinue of servants. It soon becomes clear that he is the Devil himself, come to wreak havoc among the cultural elite of a disbelieving capital. But the Devil's mission quickly becomes entangled with the fate of the Master - a man who has turned his back on his former life and taken refuge in a lunatic asylum - and his past lover, Margarita.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I purchased this book because it was the only one of the 6 known translations into English which I did not have! "Master and Margarita" has been a favorite of mine for decades, one of the very few novels I have ever read more than once. For those who do not know, this is one of the many spin-offs of the Faust legend; it is a cult classic and has inspired works of music and art. Written 1928-1940, not yet completely finished at Bulgakov's death with the result that there are a few minor inconsistencies in some of the chapters of the second part. A final text was prepared in 1963 by the author's widow (being the not-completely-edited manuscript as it was when the author died), and it finally saw the light of day when published in a Russian magazine Nov. 1966 & Jan. 1967. However, that was in a censored version, with 10-15% of the text cut; uncensored versions, however, circulated in the Soviet underground. Russian versions of the complete text were published in France and Germany later in 1967. The first version published in the U.S.S.R. was prepared by Anna Saakyants in 1973, with some additions and changes, including passages Bulgakov had crossed out, but had not re-edited at the time of his death. Then, a new version by Lidiya

Vanovskaya arrived in 1989 which was closer to the original 1963 typescript of the widow (eliminating certain passages added in the 1973 edition -- compliant with Bulgakov's wishes, but resulting in further inconsistencies). The sensation the original resulted in two English translations being quickly made and issued in 1967: Mira Ginsburg (considered a good translation, but from the censored text, so not complete), and Michael Glenny (of the uncensored version, but the translator appears to have taken some liberties with the text).

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