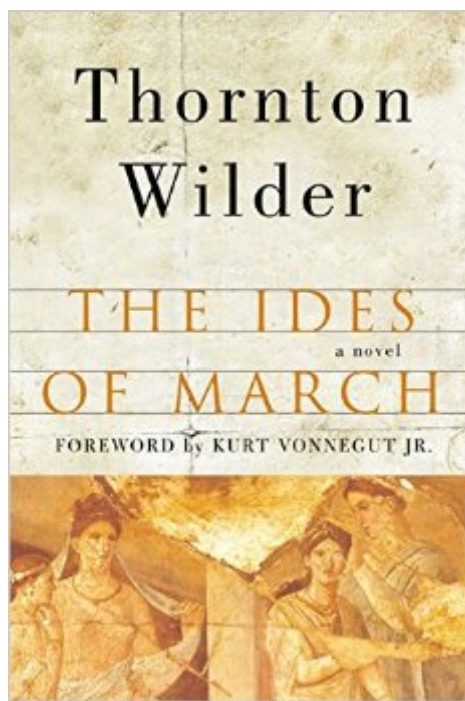


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The Ides Of March: A Novel



Synopsis

Drawing on such unique sources as Thornton Wilder's unpublished letters, journals, and selections from the extensive annotations Wilder made years later in the margins of the book, Tappan Wilder's Afterword adds a special dimension to the reissue of this internationally acclaimed novel. *The Ides of March*, first published in 1948, is a brilliant epistolary novel set in Julius Caesar's Rome. Thornton Wilder called it "a fantasia on certain events and persons of the last days of the Roman republic." Through vividly imagined letters and documents, Wilder brings to life a dramatic period of world history and one of history's most magnetic, elusive personalities. In this inventive narrative, the Caesar of history becomes Caesar the human being. Wilder also resurrects the controversial figures surrounding Caesar -- Cleopatra, Catullus, Cicero, and others. All Rome comes crowding through these pages -- the Rome of villas and slums, beautiful women and brawling youths, spies and assassins.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I really liked Thornton Wilder's "The Ides of March" because of its drama and its philosophical content. The first thing to note is the great structure of the book which makes it very dramatic. The book is structured into four separate parts and each part leads up to a scene that is anticipated throughout the part. For part I, it is the dinner at Clodia and Clodius Pulcher's; for part II, it is the reception at Cleopatra's; for part III, it is the profanation of the mysteries of the goddess by Clodia Pulcher and her brother; and for part IV, it is Caesar's assassination. From the very start of each part, Wilder whets your appetite for how the climactic event is going to go and I was so anxious to find

out what happened, which kept me turning the pages. The second thing I want to mention is the great amount of thought provoking philosophical content in this concise, 246 page novel. There is a lot of reflection in Caesar's journal about the rational grounds for religion (a belief in God or the Gods), there is a passage on living one's life with the knowledge that one will die one day, and stuff about love and relationships. Also, there is a lot of character analysis, analyzing Caesar's character, contrasting it to Cicero's and Junius Brutus's and others. The fact that Caesar and these others are these famous historical figures from ancient Rome tinged it all with that feeling that one is gaining an education about the roots of Western Civilization, in touch with the classics. My favorite parts are probably the letters of Caesar to his friend Lucius Mamilius Turrinus because of the great philosophical content and also the letters at the end of each section where some other character will describe in a long letter what happened at the climactic event.

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