

Loitering with Intent (New Directions Paperbook)

By Muriel Spark

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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.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly
Art, reality and the strange ways the two imitate one another are at the core of Muriel Spark's delightful Loitering with Intent, first published in 1981. Would-be novelist Fleur Talbot works for the snooty, irascible Sir Quentin Oliver at the Autobiographical Association, whose members are all at work on their memoirs. When her employer gets his hands on Fleur's novel-in-progress, mayhem ensues when its scenes begin coming true. Generating hilarious turns of phrase and larger-than-life characters (especially Sir Quentin's batty mother), Sparks's inimitable style make this literary joyride thoroughly appealing. (June 28)
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Review
A delicious conundrum. -- *The New Statesman*

Generating hilarious turns of phrase and larger-than-life characters...Spark's inimitable style make this literary joyride thoroughly appealing. -- *Publishers Weekly*, 18 June 2001

I found it a delight from start to finish—funny, unexpected and compulsively readable...this strange, immensely enjoyable novel. -- *Auberon Waugh, Daily Mail*

One of Spark's very best novels—funny and clever and surprising. -- *The New Republic*

The most intensely Sparkian of her books. -- *The Listener*

Though first published only 20 years ago, Spark's offbeat fiction certainly deserves a place in [ND's] line of contemporary classics. -- *Kirkus Reviews,*, 15 February 2001

Unsurpassable. -- *The Times Literary Supplement [London]*

What a coolly crafted, wickedly funny novel this is! -- *Daily Express*

[A] delirium of delight....robust and full-bodied, a wise and mature work, and a brilliantly mischievous one. -- *The New York Times Book Review Book Review*

[O]ne of Muriel Spark's most accomplished moral fables or puzzles...it provides considerable insight and wit, and no easy answers. -- *A.S. Byatt*

About the Author
The writer of “some of the best sentences in English” (The New Yorker), Muriel Spark (1918–2006) was the author of dozens of novels including The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie, Memento Mori, and The Driver’s Seat. She became Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1993.

Users Review

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Tracie Berry:

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