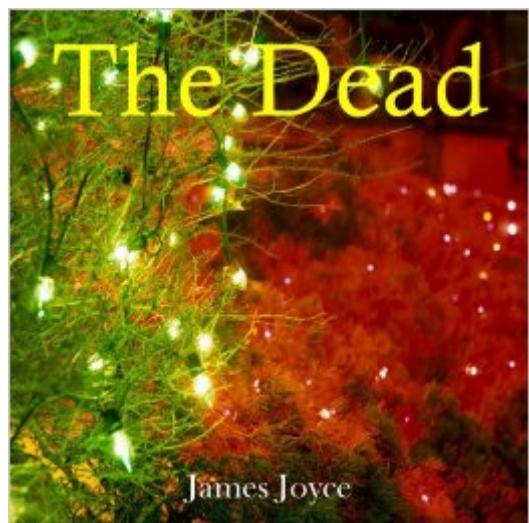


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# Dead, The



## Synopsis

This is a short story about a Christmas party hosted by Kate and Julia Morkan. Their nephew Gabriel Conroy attends with his wife, and though the party is full of fun and Christmas cheer, it is also full of memories of loss.

## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Epic Audio Books; Talking Book edition (2009)

Language: English

ASIN: B003VFYS3Q

Shipping Weight: 2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (53 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #7,665,762 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #40 in [Books > Books on CD](#)

[Authors, A-Z](#) > ( J ) > Joyce, James #137960 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Classics](#)

## Customer Reviews

I've found this to be the most useful of all the "case study" texts I've tried from both St. Martin's/Bedford and Norton. The primary text is sufficiently contained and the representative critical methodologies presented clearly enough to introduce students to both literature and literary theory without overwhelming them. Moreover, "The Dead" is capable of repaying the close and observant reader with a Joycean "epiphany" perhaps not surpassed by any other literary text (the last several paragraphs, especially, require attention to the developing, altering meanings of each and every word). I have one caveat: the essay representing feminist criticism I frankly find baffling. The writer, apparently trying to have her cake and eat it too, manages to indict Joyce as a sexist while applauding the story as a critique of sexism and patriarchal hegemony! It does not "seem" to occur to her that Joyce may be removed from his central character, Gabriel, or that her evidence for Gabriel's male arrogance may actually be Joyce's idea from the start. A close reading of the character certainly suggests an ironic portrayal--everything that appears to be in Gabriel's favor is exposed through Joyce's subtle language as self-delusion. The feminist critic, however, impugns Joyce by suggesting that his "intentions" are less honorable than the meaning of the text itself! Perhaps the writer is overstating a point in order to provide a better example of the type of critical approach she was asked to represent for the purposes of this anthology. I know that I will suggest as much should I again have occasion to use this particular essay.

Set in early 20th century Dublin this short story was the last in a collection called *The Dubliners* by native son, James Joyce. Despite the mournful title there is no murder nor mysterious death involved in this seemingly simple piece, set in an old-fashioned Society home during the Christmas season. Instead this proves an introspective tale from the viewpoint of middle-aged Gabriel, favorite nephew of his respected aunts who host an annual dinner party. The role of music and performers is debated among their many lively guests. Gabriel's required speech during dinner praises the Irish tradition of warm hospitality. But something causes his wife, Gretta, to hark back to her girlhood and her first love--whose poignant memory threatens his plans for connubial bliss in their hotel room. Delicate as the snowflakes which blot out the city landscape, barely plotted with delicious hints of unexpressed emotion, *The Dead* transports readers to a different gas-lit age, where beauty and grace are subtly exhibited and passionately sought after. Joyce reminds us that music possesses the power to evoke the past and serve as a catalyst both for pain and pleasure. This may be read in one sitting, but don't miss the author's other reminiscences.

"The Dead" is an absolute classic, and I am not giving three stars to James Joyce's writing style. I am reviewing this particular edition. As I was just casually reading (not even trying to be picky), I noticed at least five spelling/punctuation errors. I realize this sounds petty, but it's distracting :(There are other discrepancies from the text as seen in various editions of *Dubliners*. Just keep this in mind when ordering (in fact, I'd recommend just springing for *Dubliners*, because it is an excellent collection).

The book is well-written. Not only is "The Dead" included, but five critics give their perspectives on the story, such as historicism, reader-response criticism, etc. You will learn about the rule of reading, if that is something new to you as well as many of literary terms and concepts.

It's only my first reading. I have heard that Joyce can be difficult. I don't know what to make of the narrative. His development of the scene and characters is fantastic. He leads a reader to ask questions and keep going to find the answers around the corner. He gradually unfolds the descriptions that answer the questions. Still, I was left wondering. Maybe it will hit me later.

The book to read before you die. (It'll take your mind off of it.) So poignant. Plus, it's short and not stream of consciousness (unlike *Ulysses*), and written in ordinary prose (unlike *Finnegans Wake*), so you can impress your friends and your 7th grade English teacher, who said you'll never amount

to anything (or that could have been Ms. Crabapple to Bart), that you're reading Joyce.

The prose is excellent, but that is not the entire reason of why I like this piece. Although on my first read of The Dead I did not like it, it always returned to my mind at certain points in my life because of the subject matter. On subsequent readings I realized its beauty. The melancholy expressed over lost love and life in such a short period is profound. The Dead contains great writing.

This is a most beautiful story, so well written and enchanting that you are completely taken away to another time and place where you meet people you hope actually lived because they will live on in you. Beautiful a must read.

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