



# The Transit of Venus

By Shirley Hazzard

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**The Transit of Venus** By Shirley Hazzard

**The masterpiece of Shirley Hazzard (1931-2016), *The Transit of Venus* won the National Book Critic's Circle Award and was a finalist for the National Book Award**

*The Transit of Venus* is considered Shirley Hazzard's most brilliant novel. It tells the story of two orphan sisters, Caroline and Grace Bell, as they leave Australia to start a new life in post-war England. What happens to these young women--seduction and abandonment, marriage and widowhood, love and betrayal--becomes as moving and wonderful and yet as predestined as the transits of the planets themselves. Gorgeously written and intricately constructed, Hazzard's novel is a story of place: Sydney, London, New York, Stockholm; of time: from the fifties to the eighties; and above all, of women and men in their passage through the displacements and absurdities of modern life.

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### Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

National Book Critics Circle Award-winner Hazzard here tells of two sisters, Grace and Caroline Bell. Born in Australia and orphaned at an early age, the two make their way to England. There Grace opts for marriage and its securities; Caroline reaches for more and loves not always wisely but well. "A strong, deep, poetic, vibrant novel," lauded PW.

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### Review

'Shirley Hazzard. For me the greatest living writer on goodness and love ... THE TRANSIT OF VENUS, was described to me by a man who knows as "the greatest novel written in the past 100 years". Having read it, I can see his point. Shirley Hazzard, the quiet, playful, lovestruck artist of love, goodness and death in the 20th century. Bryan Appleyard A wonderfully mysterious book ... Both plot and characters are many layered. Unforgettably rich ANNE TYLER A dose of the sublime .. I read it with an almost indescribable pleasure. There were sentences that brought tears of gratification to my eyes NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW An almost perfect novel ... Miss Hazard writes as well as Stendhal NEW YORK TIMES

### About the Author

Born in Australia, Shirley Hazzard traveled the world during her early years, a result of her parents' diplomatic postings. In 1947, at the age of 16, she was engaged by British intelligence to monitor the civil war in China. In 1963, she married the writer Francis Steegmuller, who died in 1994. She has written several novels, two of which were National Book Award Finalists: **The Bay of Noon** (1971) and **The Transit of Venus** (1981, available from Penguin). She is also the author of two collections of short stories, and several works of nonfiction including the memoir **Greene on Capri**. Hazzard's most recent work, **The Great Fire**, won of the 2003 National Book Award for Fiction and the Miles Franklin Award. She died in 2016.

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