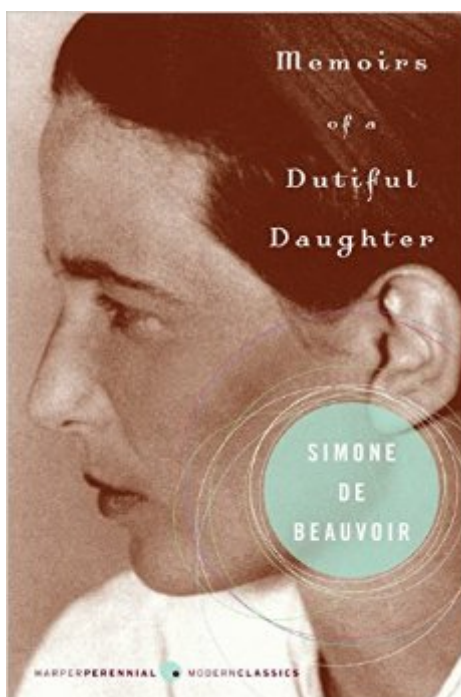


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Memoirs Of A Dutiful Daughter (Perennial Classics)



Synopsis

A superb autobiography by one of the great literary figures of the twentieth century, Simone de Beauvoir's *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* offers an intimate picture of growing up in a bourgeois French family, rebelling as an adolescent against the conventional expectations of her class, and striking out on her own with an intellectual and existential ambition exceedingly rare in a young woman in the 1920s. She vividly evokes her friendships, love interests, mentors, and the early days of the most important relationship of her life, with fellow student Jean-Paul Sartre, against the backdrop of a turbulent political time.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Simone de Beauvoir, Parisian pioneer in existentialist philosophy and author of feminist theory in "The Second Sex", tells all in the first of a four part autobiography, "Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter". Her book is a tumult of turbulent love, teenage angst, philosophical concepts and some clever insights. Raised in a conservative bourgeois family, she is educated and cared for, but her developing intellect forces her to reject the religion and materialism imposed upon her. She writes intricately of her relationships and the experience of a woman defining herself against a restrictive society. To write an autobiography, it's necessary to have a sense of self-importance which motivates thorough disclosure. De Beauvoir demonstrates this when describing her interactions with Jean-Paul Sartre, "we used to talk about all kinds of things, but especially about a subject which

interested me above all others: myself". She writes about her childhood with an adult perspective. Of her two-year old tantrums she explains, "I felt I was not only the prey of grown-up wills, but also of their consciences, which sometimes played the role of a kindly mirror in which I was unwillingly and unrecognisably reflected". Although this comment seems misplaced when attributed to a two-year old mind, it is evidence of her intelligent analysis. Like other renowned intellectuals this century, she disowns her bourgeois background without acknowledging that its status allows and encourages intellectual thought. This was brought to her attention during a conversation with another student who said, "the only thing that matters in the world today, is to feed the starving people".

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