



The Return

Walter de la Mare

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“The Complete Work, Enriched with a Critical Introduction”

ABOUT THE BOOK

A FORGOTTEN MASTERPIECE OF THE SUPERNATURAL • Walter de la Mare’s haunting novel of identity, obsession, and the mysteries of the human soul.

Arthur Lawford is an ordinary man, living a quiet suburban life. But one autumn afternoon, he falls asleep by an old grave—and wakes transformed. His face and very being seem altered, as though another presence has entered him. Friends and family recoil. His wife grows distant. Neighbours whisper. Struggling to hold on to his sense of self, Lawford is forced into a journey through fear, doubt, and spiritual dislocation. What has returned with him from the graveyard—a ghost, a curse, or some shadow of his own soul?

First published in 1910, *The Return* established Walter de la Mare not only as a poet of eerie beauty but also as a novelist of unsettling psychological depth. The book fuses gothic horror with metaphysical reflection, exploring themes of mortality, selfhood, and the uncanny. Its subtle, dreamlike prose has influenced later writers of supernatural fiction, from M. R. James to Shirley Jackson. Few lines capture its atmosphere better than Lawford’s quiet dread: “It was as if he had come back from a place where he had no right to be.”

This Feel Classics edition restores de la Mare’s neglected classic for modern readers. With a thoughtful introduction, explanatory notes, glossary, and a detailed chronology of his life, it is ideal for students, first-time readers, and literature enthusiasts alike.

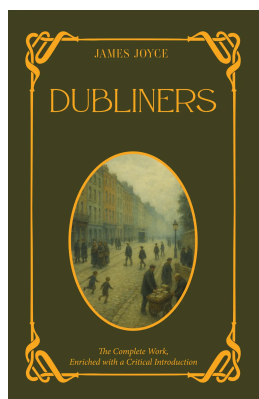
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Walter de la Mare (1873–1956) was an English poet, novelist, and short story writer, best known for his haunting explorations of the imagination, the supernatural, and the inner life of the mind. Born in Charlton, Kent, on April 25, 1873, he initially worked in the civil service while writing poetry under the pseudonym "Walter Ramal." His first major success came with the poetry collection *The Listeners and Other Poems* (1912), which established his reputation as a master of mood and mystery.

De la Mare's fiction, including novels like *The Return* (1910) and numerous short stories, often blends the eerie with the introspective, exploring psychological states and hidden realities. He was also a beloved writer of children's literature, known for his sensitivity to childhood wonder and fear.

Awarded the Order of Merit in 1953 and knighted for his literary achievements, de la Mare remains a distinctive voice in English literature, admired for his lyrical prose, evocative imagery, and ability to conjure the uncanny in everyday life. He died in London on June 22, 1956.

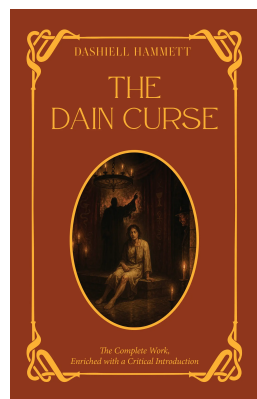
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