



The Blackwater Lightship

Colm Toibin

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It is Ireland in the early 1990s. Helen, her mother Lily, and her grandmother Dora have come together, after a decade of estrangement, to tend to Helen's beloved brother, Declan, who is dying of AIDS. Under the crumbling roof of Dora's old house, Declan's two friends join the women as each waits for the end. The six of them, from different generations and with different beliefs, are forced to plumb the shoals of their own histories and to come to terms with each other.

The Blackwater Lightship is a beautifully written, deeply resonant story about three generations of an estranged family reuniting to mourn a tragic, untimely death. In spare, luminous prose, Colm Tóibín explores the nature of love and the complex emotions inside a family at war with itself. His fourth novel is about morals and manners, and the clashes of culture and personality. But most of all, it is a novel about the incomparable capacity of stories to heal the deepest wounds.

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