



the sweetest dream

DORIS LESSING

A NOVEL

This story of a family, spanning most of the twentieth century, has its fulcrum in the Sixties, that contradictory and embattled decade about which argument becomes louder each day. The youth of that time, bursting old bonds and demanding freedoms, were seen by some of their elders in a manner not at all as they saw themselves, as romantic idealists, but as deeply damaged people. Old Julia, the clan's matriarch, knows why. "You can't have two dreadful wars and then say 'That's it, and now everything will go back to normal.' They're screwed up, our children, they are the children of war."

Remarkable women, Julia and Frances, grandmother and mother, fight for "the kids" against obstacles, the worst being Comrade Johnny. Here is a memorable picture of a character only recently departed from our scene. "The revolution comes before personal matters" is his dictum, as he deposits discarded wives and hurt children in the accommodating house whose emotional center is always the extendable kitchen table, that essential prop of the Sixties, around which the family sits through the evenings, eating, joking, boasting about their shoplifting, debating the violent ideologies of the time that take some of them out to the Third World, another to a South African village dying of AIDS.

This novel reflects our recent history like a many-faceted mirror, and is full of people not easily forgotten, each—for worse or for better, directly or indirectly—made by war.

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ΔΩΡΕΑ  
ΕΛΛΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝΙΚΟΥ  
ΠΑΙΟΝΙΔΗ

of Pan Peonides

Good wishes

Dia Lenny

Marc 2002

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