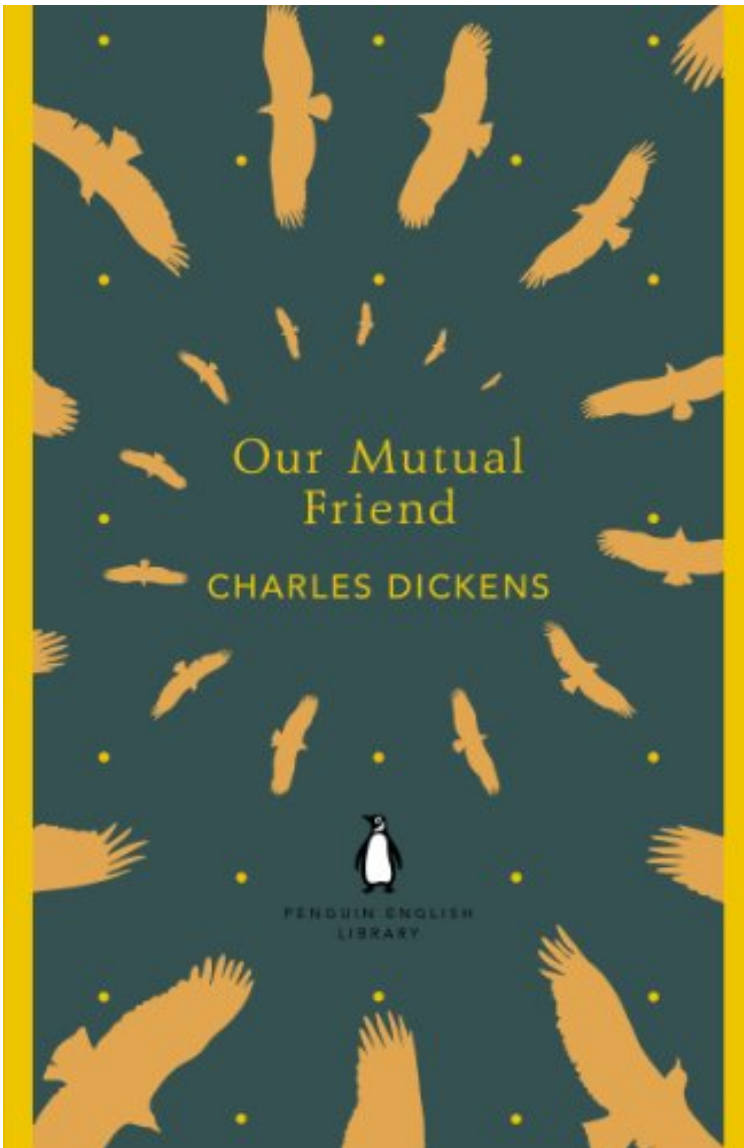


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Our Mutual Friend



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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur"Yours is a 'spectable calling. To save your 'spectability, it's worth your while to pawn every article of clothes you've got, sell every stick in your house, and beg and borrow every penny you can get trusted with. When you've done that and handed over, I'll leave you. Not afore"Our Mutual Friend centres on an inheritance - Old Harmon's profitable dust heaps - and its legatees, young John Harmon, presumed drowned when a body is pulled out of the River Thames, and kindly dustman Mr Boffin, to whom the fortune defaults. With brilliant satire, Dickens portrays a dark, macabre London, inhabited by such disparate characters as Gaffer Hexam, scavenging the river for corpses; enchanting, mercenary Bella Wilfer; the social climbing Veneerings; and the unscrupulous street-trader Silas Wegg. The novel is richly symbolic

in its vision of death and renewal in a city dominated by the fetid Thames, and the corrupting power of money. The Penguin English Library - 100 editions of the best fiction in English, from the eighteenth century and the very first novels to the beginning of the First World War..com Our Mutual Friend was the last novel Charles Dickens completed and is, arguably, his darkest and most complex. The basic plot is vintage Dickens: an inheritance up for grabs, a murder, a rocky romance or two, plenty of skullduggery, and a host of unforgettable secondary characters. But in this final outing the author's heroes are more flawed, his villains more sympathetic, and the story as a whole more harrowing and less sentimental. The mood is set in the opening scene in which a riverman, Gaffer Hexam, and his daughter Lizzie troll the Thames searching for drowned men whose pockets Gaffer will rifle before turning the body over to the authorities. On this particular night Gaffer finds a corpse that is later identified as that of John Harmon, who was returning from abroad to claim a large fortune when he was apparently murdered and thrown into the river. Harmon's death is the catalyst for everything else that happens in the novel. It seems the fortune was left to the young man on the condition that he marry a girl he'd never met, Bella Wilfer. His death, however, brings a new heir onto the scene, Nicodemus Boffin, the kind-hearted but low-born assistant to Harmon's father. Boffin and his wife adopt young Bella, who is determined to marry money, and also hire a mysterious young secretary, John Rokesmith, who takes an uncommon interest in their ward. Not content with just one plot, Dickens throws in a secondary love story featuring the riverman's daughter, Lizzie Hexam; a dissolute young upper-class lawyer, Eugene Wrayburn; and his rival, the headmaster Bradley Headstone. Dark as the novel is, Dickens is careful to leaven it with secondary characters who are as funny as they are menacing--blackmailing Silas Wegg and his accomplice Mr. Venus, the avaricious Lammles, and self-centered Charlie Hexam. Our Mutual Friend is one of Dickens's most satisfying novels, and a fitting denouement to his prolific career. -- Alix Wilber From School Library Journal Grade 7 Up- With a cast of characters that covers the whole spectrum of London life, Dickens weaves a tapestry of tales that are by turn funny, moving and tragic.

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