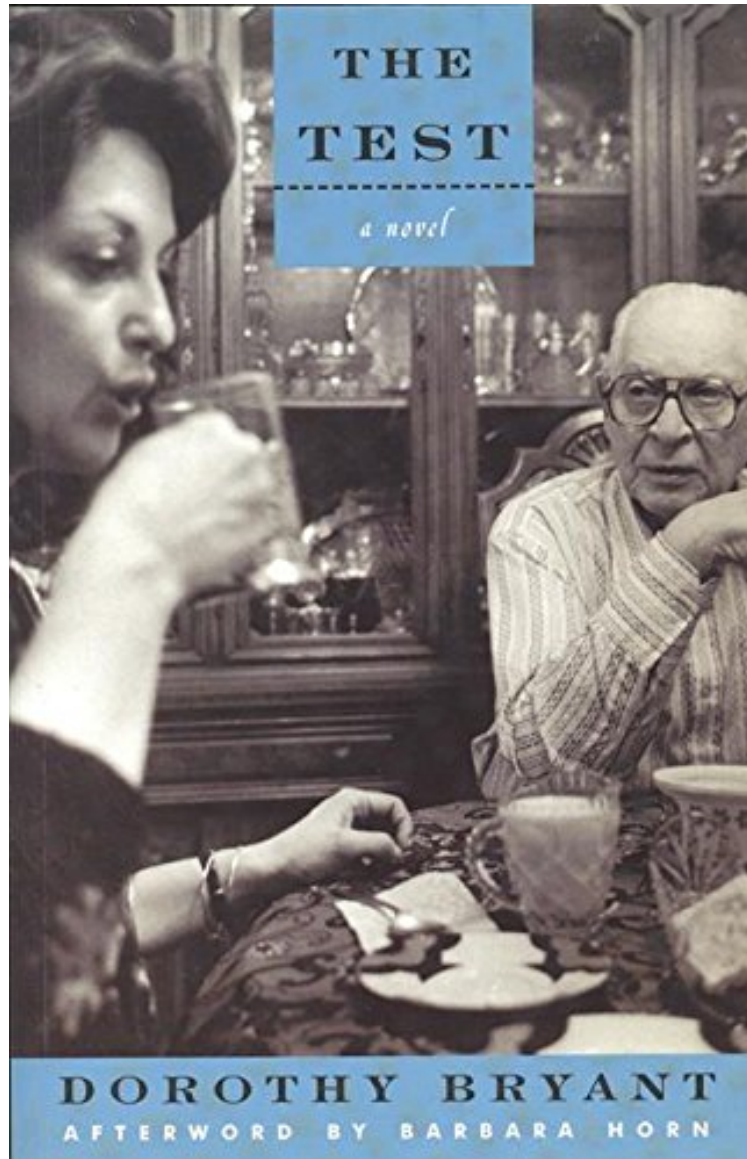


The Test

Dorothy Bryant

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#3195519 in Books The Feminist Press at CUNY 2001-10-01Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.50 x .50 x 5.501, .55 #File Name: 1558612742176 pages | File size: 73.Mb

Dorothy Bryant : The Test before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Test:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. uniquely differentBy Janet GagliardiI enjoyed the book-the unique subject matter--aging ,senile father--distracted,overburdened daughter and their communication and unique intent toward one another.However, the author should have defined chapters. Every pagewas a continuation of the other. I

found it very annoying. Perhaps because it all took place in one day-- , pauses and time to reflect through chapters would have made it easier to read(I dept loosing my place-paragraph after paragraph. It was tedious. All in all, the book was well written andthecharacters very real and well protrayed. Bravo5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Wonderful NovelBy RichardThe Test is a great novel, perhaps my favorite of Dorothy Bryant's, though it's hard to say because she has so many fine books. I only know that this book is so skillfully written that you believe every word. Superbly drawn characters. Nothing flashy or gratuitous. I would highly recommend it to anyone interested in the the difficulties of life and how we survive them.

From American Book Award-winner Dorothy Bryant, comes this timeless story about caring for an aging parent. With complexity, bravery, and dry humor, *The Test* details the frustrating push and pull between Pat and her eighty-year-old father, who is attempting—for the third and last time—to pass the test to renew his driver's license. Bryant's unflinching gaze sees deep into the hearts of both parent and child, revealing the dramatic, awkward, and universal struggle each faces with aging, memory, and love. Trying to reconstruct memories of her childhood and of who her parents once were, Pat puzzles out the confabulations of family memory: how stories become accepted fact, how facts get twisted in stories, and how some perspectives are lost completely. In a deeply sensitive examination of one woman's coping with the changes of aging, Bryant offers a rare and moving testimony.

From Kirkus sIn Bryant's *A Day in San Francisco* (1983), a middle-aged woman confronted the trans-generational implications of her son's gay ``outing" and her own past defections from family. Here, again, a 50-ish daughter of a quasi-senile father scours the past, as well as the present's receding convictions, during an exasperating day with an elderly parent who evades, blames, bullies, and now and then reveals his loneliness and fear. It is daughter Pat's turn to spend the day with Dad in his house in a San Francisco suburb. This is the day of his driving test, which he will surely flunk again. Both irritated and amused, Pat listens to his ``confabulations" (filling in memory gaps with fiction) as he insists he's already passed the test, watered the (dying) plants, bought a new car battery, etc. Alternately enraged and resigned as the day creeps on, Pat notices Dad's stinginess as usual (but then there's the poverty of his childhood in Italy to consider) and coolly listens to his moans of yearning for his recently dead wife (but did she ever have a chance to break loose from marital servitude, live a life?). There's a trip to the barber--where, communicating in clich,s, Dad is one of the boys again--plus little errands and time-passers while the old man's mind-grating repetitions, complaints, and plaints go on and on. Throughout, Pat sets herself to examine--through the prism of a sputtering-out life--a family's times and passions and hasty choices, and finds no solutions to family conundrums or old hurts (her family's distress at her divorce, her son's homosexuality). The wryly comic close ends the day with Dad on a note of irony. Bryant's examinations of thorny, contemporary relationships have a docudrama punch, building as they do on sharp, harsh recognitions: a masterful portrait of an empty old age. -- Copyright ©1991, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved. "Wryly comic, . . . Bryant's examinations of thorny, contemporary relationships have docudrama punch, building as they do on sharp, harsh recognitions: a masterful portrait." ?Kirkus"For nearly twenty years, Berkeley novelist Dorothy Bryant has consistently and amazingly anticipated the events and issues of her time. . . .*The Test* offers the kind of fiercely wise observations we have come to expect of Bryant." ?San Francisco Chronicle"The cutting incisiveness of the characterizations, the delicate balance between tragedy and humor, the entire tautness and clarity and the depths of feeling come through. . . . A vividly alive glimpse into the human condition." ?Ella Leffland, author of *Breath and Shadows*