

Dark Rosaleen

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A NOVEL OF THE
IRISH CIVIL WAR

KELLY JOYCE NEFF

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Dark Rosaleen is the story three people from vastly different strata of Irish life, as they struggle to come to terms with the times through which they live. It is an allegory, a triune of Ireland's relationship with her artists and patriots, in the passing from the mind of colonialism to independence. Michael Rafferty is the artist and pacifist, who elucidates the terrible poignancy of the Dublin slums, the Great War, and the Irish Revolution. Patrick Leary is the university professor and revolutionary, complex and contradictory, who would risk everything for his country's freedom. Molly Clennaghan is the Anglo-Irish debutante who, loving and hating them both, wants her safe little Castle society world to go on forever. They come together in the Dublin of 1909, when Mick Rafferty leaves his native Sligo for Trinity College. His prefect is Paddy Leary, who has been called back from a holiday in Kerry by the Irish Republican Brotherhood. There is an instant connection between them, for they are alike in their orientation to the artistic. He is suspicious of the professor's volatile personality, until a visit to the Abbey Theatre. He also meets Paddy's girlfriend Molly. By the outbreak of the Great War in 1914, the camaraderie that existed between the three is shattered by Paddy's politics and Mick and Molly's affair. With conscription and revolution looming in Ireland, what was broken can never be mended. Paddy fights with the Rebels in the Easter Rising of 1916, while Mick is in the heart of things too, as a relief worker with the Red Cross. Paddy is arrested, Mick considers decamping to America, and Molly finds herself an outcast among her own people.