

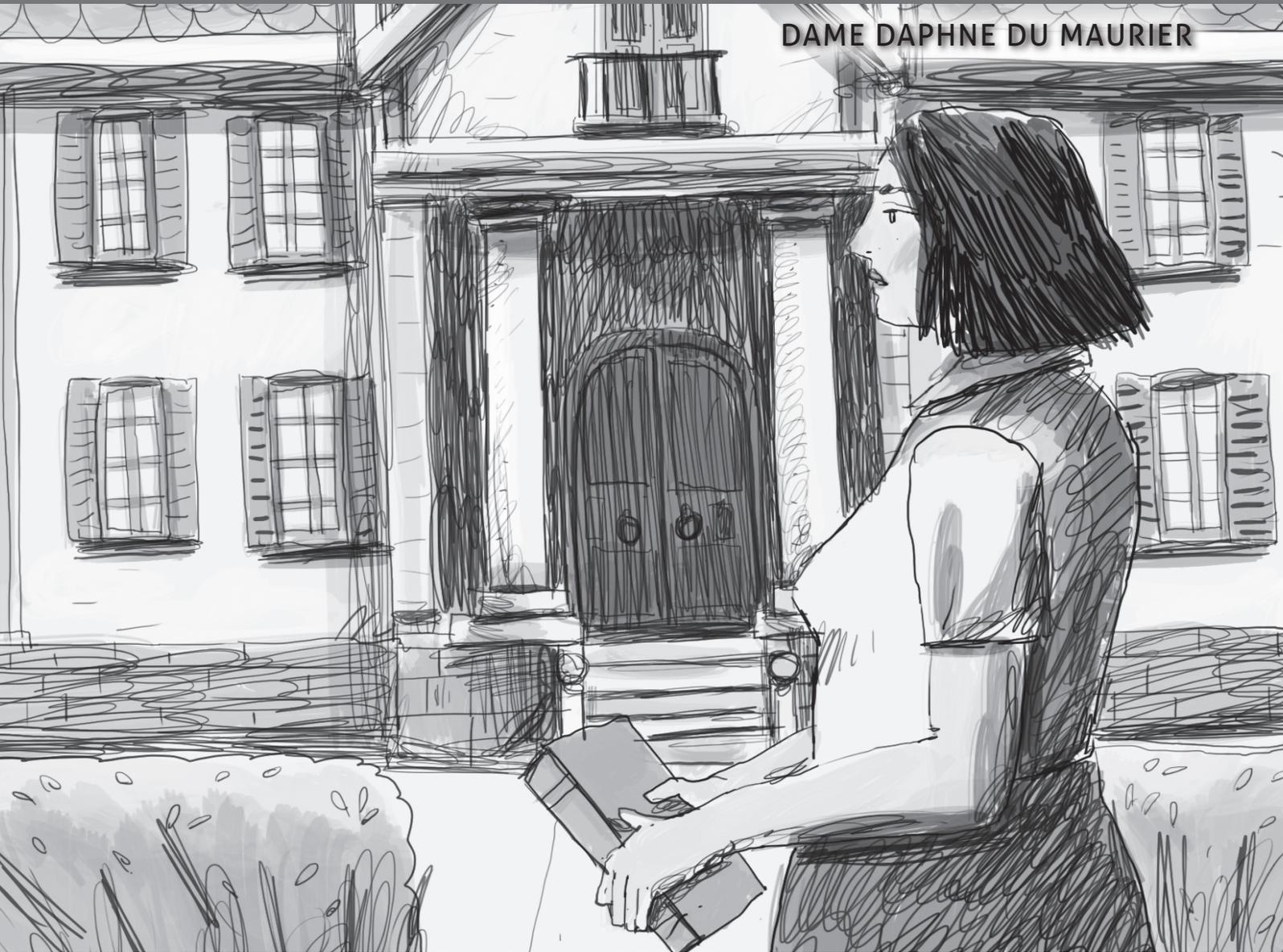
SIMPLIFIED READERS

B2

LEVEL 6

Rebecca

DAME DAPHNE DU MAURIER



WORKSHEETS

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ABOUT THE NOVEL

Rebecca is a classic suspense novel written by English author Daphne du Maurier and published in 1938. It is about a young woman who marries a wealthy man whose life and household are haunted by the memory of his first wife. Though once regarded as an old-fashioned romance novel by critics, *Rebecca* has maintained its popularity to this day. It has become a bestseller and has been enjoyed by generations of readers. It became especially popular after Alfred Hitchcock's 1940 film,

Rebecca, which won the Academy Award for Best Picture. Many features of the novel's plot were based on the author's own life. In the description of Manderley, the author was inspired by a big estate that she had visited in her childhood, as well as a 17th-century mansion with a beach. Daphne du Maurier did not name her heroine, who is also the narrator of the story; she is known as Mrs de Winter. The novel begins with the heroine's dream and then is told in the form of a flashback.

SUMMARY

The heroine, whose name remains unknown throughout the novel, and her husband are travelling across Europe and staying in small hotels wherever they go. They are both trying to forget the bad memories of their home in England, Manderley. The novel begins with the heroine's dream of returning home and then continues with the memories of how she and her husband first met and got married.

In her flashback, the heroine (also the narrator) is a timid and naïve young woman whose parents have died. She is the travel companion of a wealthy American woman. During one of their travels, they meet a wealthy English gentleman at their hotel. The heroine's employer knows from the newspapers that the man owns a huge, beautiful estate in England and that he has just lost his wife. She drowned in her sailboat in the bay near their home a year before while sailing alone. The employer introduces herself and the heroine to this man and starts a conversation with him, which embarrasses the heroine and annoys the man. However, the gentleman likes the heroine very much and has lunch with her the next day. Then, they begin to meet regularly and go for rides in the country.

After spending time together for two weeks, the heroine and the gentleman fall in love, and he proposes marriage. When they get married, they go to the gentleman's beautiful estate in England, near the beach. There, the heroine faces problems with the housekeeper, who thinks she is trying to replace the former mistress of the house and hates her. The heroine feels frightened and despised by this woman. She feels that she cannot fit in with the household and that she can never be like the former mistress, who everyone adored for her charm, elegance and talents. She acts as if she were a stranger in the house rather than the mistress. Luckily, there are people who are friendly to her: her husband's sister and her husband's agent, who is a nice young man.

The former mistress, Rebecca, customarily hosted a costume ball each year, and it is soon time for it to take place. The heroine's spirits begin to improve during the preparations for this event. The housekeeper convinces her to wear a beautiful costume that is the same as the dress the former mistress wore at the ball the previous year. However, her husband becomes furious when he sees her in that costume. This increases the heroine's fear that he doesn't really love her and that he is still devoted to his first wife. The housekeeper hates the heroine so much that she even encourages her to jump out of the window and kill herself. One day, when a ship hits the rocks on the bay near Manderley, divers find the wreckage of Rebecca's sailboat with her dead body locked up in the cabin. After this, the heroine's husband tells her the truth: contrary to her reputation, Rebecca was a nasty woman who lived a secret life and always lied to him. On the night of her death, they had a big row about her attitude. He was so angry and fed up with her indecent behaviour that he shot her, and then took her dead body to the boat and sank it. Upon hearing this, the heroine finally realizes that her husband actually hated Rebecca and was trying to cope with the guilt of murdering her, which no one knew about.

At this point, the heroine begins to feel stronger; she finally becomes confident about her husband's love for her. Meanwhile, it is found that Rebecca's boat was made to sink due to the holes drilled on its bottom. The heroine and her husband both fear that he will be found guilty of murdering Rebecca. Luckily, the death is officially declared as suicide and not murder. But Rebecca's cousin claims that Rebecca did not kill herself and that she was killed by her husband. During the investigation into the case, it is discovered that on the day of her death, Rebecca went to London to see a doctor who diagnosed her with cancer. Rebecca was going to die of cancer in a few months. This fact confirms the idea that the cause of Rebecca's death was suicide and not murder. Relieved from his feeling of guilt, while driving all night back from London where he and the heroine visited the doctor, the husband stops to make a call to Manderley. He learns that the housekeeper has disappeared. As they come closer to the mansion, they see smoke and flames in the sky. They realize that Manderley is burning.

Discuss before you begin reading:

- 1 Why do some people, especially the elderly, live in the past? Is it better to forget or remember bad memories of the past? What do you think?
- 2 Have you ever felt very jealous of someone? Did you try to be like that person? Or did you feel that you can never be like him/her? Why?

A Word Search

Find the 14 hidden words in the puzzle. The definitions of these words are given in Exercise B.

I	V	F	P	K	P	Y	B	O	A	T	H	O	U	S	E
Y	Y	U	E	L	G	L	L	W	I	B	B	U	O	Y	U
Q	Y	F	Z	L	F	J	C	O	R	O	N	E	R	H	U
H	R	K	M	Z	K	S	U	I	C	I	D	E	F	A	S
E	C	T	S	G	M	B	B	A	G	E	N	T	L	Y	J
Y	V	L	G	S	S	V	W	K	V	E	R	D	I	C	T
D	I	I	E	M	U	H	O	N	E	Y	M	O	O	N	Y
O	O	B	G	U	F	E	I	N	Q	U	E	S	T	S	C
Z	E	D	F	C	O	L	O	N	E	L	J	Z	S	W	X
C	O	M	P	A	N	I	O	N	S	R	E	G	B	W	Q
A	N	J	M	W	L	P	O	N	O	T	E	I	Q	K	D
U	I	H	M	B	U	T	L	E	R	T	Q	N	U	E	P
C	Q	H	H	U	Z	M	F	L	A	S	H	B	A	C	K
N	G	C	F	J	J	E	V	I	D	E	N	C	E	F	T
E	B	H	E	K	X	M	S	X	C	O	T	T	A	G	E

B Definitions of the hidden words:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 an official who examines the reasons for a person's death, especially if it was violent or unexpected:
_____</p> <p>2 an army or air force officer of high rank:
_____</p> <p>3 an official process to discover the cause of someone's death: _____</p> <p>4 an official judgment or decision made after a trial in court: _____</p> <p>5 the act of killing oneself intentionally:
_____</p> <p>6 a floating object that acts as a guide or warning for boats or places for tying up boats:
_____</p> <p>7 a person who acts for or represents another person:
_____</p> | <p>8 a small building at the seaside or at the side of a river or lake, in which boats are kept:
_____</p> <p>9 facts which help to prove that someone committed a crime: _____</p> <p>10 a young woman hired to care for and provide friendship for an old woman, especially during travels: _____</p> <p>11 a small house, usually in the country:
_____</p> <p>12 a holiday taken by a newly-wed couple:
_____</p> <p>13 a scene in a film or part of a novel that returns to events in the past: _____</p> <p>14 the head servant in a big house or mansion:
_____</p> |
|--|--|

A Stop reading at the break on page 46. Fill in the blanks in this summary of the first 45 pages.

The novel begins with the narrator's dream of **1** _____, which is the seaside mansion where she and her husband used to live. In the present day, they are staying in a **2** _____ on a foreign island. The narrator knows that they will never go back to their home again. They are both trying to forget the painful times they had there. Then, she thinks about the past and makes a flashback to the day when she and her husband, **3** _____, first met at a hotel in **4** _____. She was **5** _____ years old then. She feels that she is not quiet or shy anymore. In her flashback, she is working as a **6** _____ to Mrs Van Hopper, a wealthy middle-aged American woman. They are staying at a hotel in that city. There, Mrs Van Hopper introduces herself to a rich, mysterious English gentleman who is staying at the same hotel and having lunch at the next table. She starts to chat to him, which the man finds annoying and makes the **7** _____ feel embarrassed. Later that day, the narrator receives a **8** _____ from the English man, apologizing for his rude behaviour earlier. In the next two weeks, while Mrs Van Hopper stays in bed with **9** _____, the narrator spends the mornings with this man. They go for rides around the countryside and have long conversations. Just before the narrator and Mrs Van Hopper are getting ready to leave for **10** _____, the English man proposes **11** _____ and the narrator accepts it because she has fallen in love with him. After having a honeymoon in **12** _____, the couple arrive at the gentleman's huge house in England, where the narrator meets the housekeeper named **13** _____ and all the other staff, including Frith, who is the **14** _____ of the house and the young **15** _____ called Robert, as well as Jasper, the gentleman's favourite **16** _____. The housekeeper has prepared a big room in the **17** _____ wing of the house as the narrator's bedroom. The next day, the narrator meets her husband's agent, whose name is **18** _____. She also meets Beatrice, who is her husband's **19** _____, and Mr Giles Lacy, her husband. The narrator is annoyed by the fact that the presence of her husband's dead wife, **20** _____, is felt everywhere in the house although she drowned in a boating accident in the previous year.

B When you have read up to page 53, try to guess the reasons for the following. Write down your guesses and when you finish reading Chapter 4, see if your guesses were right or wrong.

1 The narrator's husband doesn't go with her over the rocks down to the beach. Why? _____

2 He gets upset about her going inside the cottage on the beach. Why? _____

3 He says they should have stayed in Italy. Why? _____

4 Ben, the strange man on the beach, anxiously says, 'I didn't say anything, did I?' Why? _____

A Complete the table. Who said what, to whom and when?

QUOTATION	WHO?	TO WHOM?	WHEN?
1 'There was nothing to be done. In six months' time, she would have been dead.'			
2 'Don't be a fool. You've seen me in the cottage on the beach, Mrs de Winter's cottage. Do you remember?'			
3 'You have just made a serious accusation against de Winter. Do you have any proof?'			
4 'Do you mind leaving the house? Or do you want us to throw you out?'			
5 'You say you made him happy. What do you know about life? You come here and think you can take my lady's place.'			
6 'I did not change anything. I gave no orders; I left everything to you. I wanted to be friends with you.'			
7 'How could you know? But it was such a shock, you see. None of us expected it, and Maxim... he thinks you did it on purpose, as a joke.'			
8 'Don't forget the old lady is nearly blind. And she has memory problems. I called the nurse to tell her we were coming.'			
9 'This was her bed. Beautiful, isn't it? Here is her nightdress, the one she was wearing before she died. Feel it, hold it. How soft and light it is.'			
10 'Well, goodbye. By the way, it would be very nice of you if you did not tell Max about my little visit.'			
11 'Tell Mrs Danvers to come here, and we'll find out what happened. Which ornament was it?'			
12 'You know why he is marrying you, don't you? He's not in love with you. He is so lonely in that empty house that he's nearly gone mad. He just can't live there alone.'			
13 'You English men, you don't want to show off, so you don't like talking about your homes.'			
14 'You think you've won, don't you? But I am not finished with you yet. No, sir.'			
15 'I've been glad to help. But now, you must put the whole thing behind you. Why don't you go away for a bit? Take a short holiday. Go abroad perhaps. Goodbye, both of you.'			

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PALLADIUM TOWER

Barbaros Mah. Kardelen Sk. No: 2 Kat: 22 34746 Ataşehir / İstanbul

Tel: 0850 288 35 00 • Faks: 0850 288 35 09

www.ydspublishing.com • info@ydspublishing.com