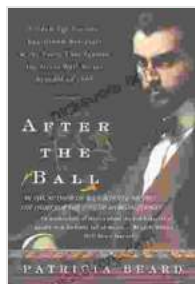


# After the Ball: A Haunting Tale by Patricia Beard



## After the Ball by Patricia Beard

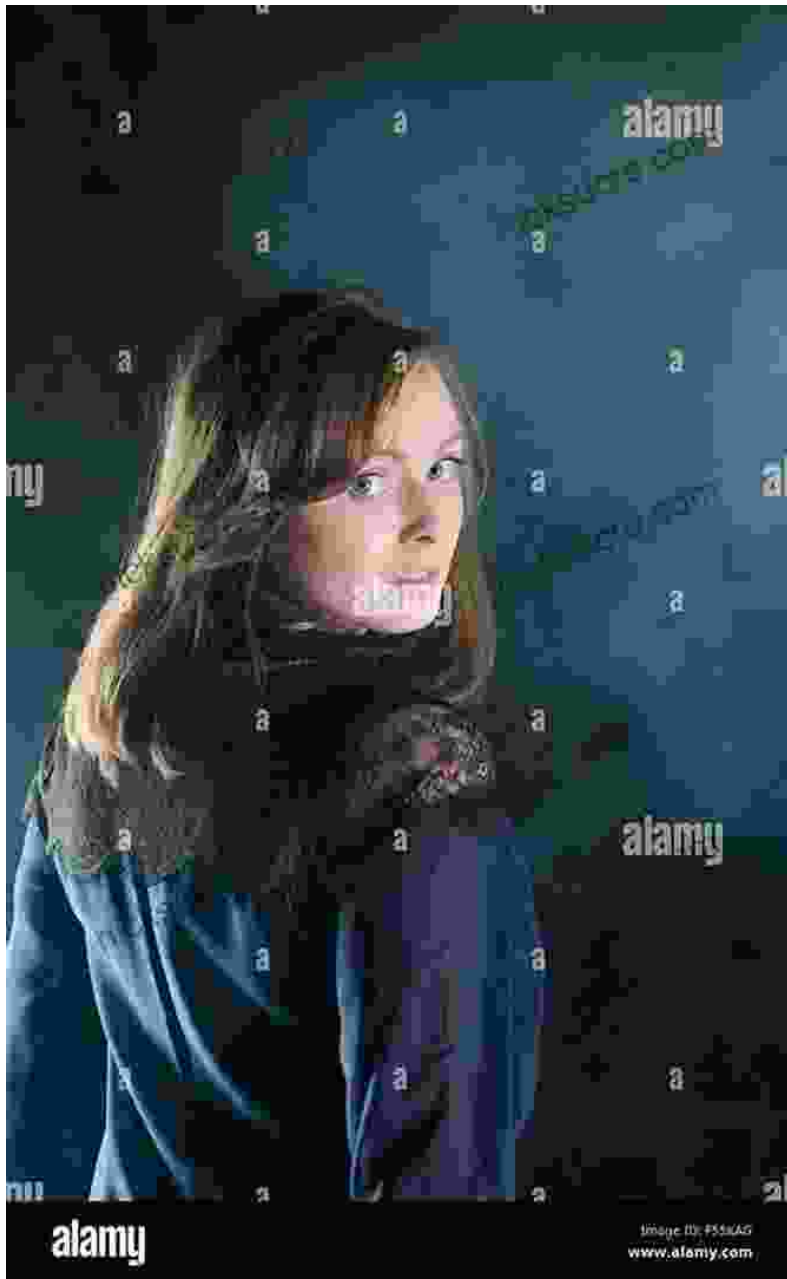
★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 7701 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 416 pages

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**After the Ball** is a captivating short story by Patricia Beard that explores the themes of loss, longing, and the supernatural. First published in 1985, the story has become a beloved classic of the horror genre, and has been praised for its atmospheric writing and unforgettable characters.

The story is set in the opulent world of Victorian high society. Lady Margaret, a young woman of wealth and privilege, is preparing for the

grand ball that will mark her entrance into society. She is filled with excitement and anticipation, but her happiness is tinged with a sense of foreboding.

As the ball progresses, Margaret becomes increasingly drawn to a mysterious stranger. The man is handsome and charming, but there is something unsettling about him. He seems to know things about her that he shouldn't, and his gaze is both alluring and terrifying.

As the night wears on, Margaret finds herself drawn into a dangerous game of seduction. She is torn between her desire for the stranger and her fear of the unknown. When the clock strikes midnight, the stranger's true nature is revealed, and Margaret must confront the consequences of her choices.

## **Character Analysis**

The characters in **After the Ball** are complex and well-developed. Lady Margaret is a sympathetic protagonist, and her journey of self-discovery is at the heart of the story. She is a young woman who is both innocent and vulnerable, but she also has a strength and determination that allows her to face her fears.

The stranger is a enigmatic figure who represents both danger and temptation. He is a predator who preys on Margaret's vulnerability, but he is also a symbol of her own repressed desires. Margaret is drawn to him because he offers her an escape from the stifling world of Victorian society.

## **Setting Analysis**

The setting of **After the Ball** is as important as the characters. The story is set in the opulent world of Victorian high society, but there is a sense of

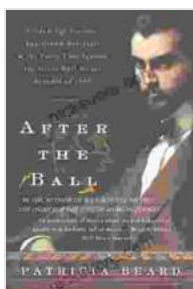
decay and darkness beneath the surface. The ball itself is a microcosm of this world, a place where appearances can be deceiving and danger lurks in the shadows.

The use of symbolism in **After the Ball** is subtle but effective. The ball itself is a symbol of Margaret's transition from childhood to adulthood, and the stranger represents the dangers that await her in the adult world. The clock striking midnight is a symbol of the passage of time and the inevitability of change.

**After the Ball** is a haunting and unforgettable tale that explores the dark side of human desire. Patricia Beard creates a world that is both beautiful and terrifying, and her characters are complex and relatable. The story is a timeless classic that will stay with you long after you finish reading it.

### Suggested citation:

Beard, Patricia. "After the Ball." *The New Yorker*, 1985.



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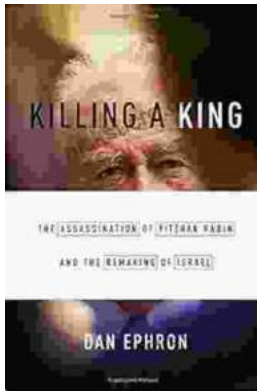
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