



A Difficult Young Man: Text Classics

Martin Boyd

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Winner, Australian Literature Society Gold Medal in 1956. Introduction by Sonya Hartnett.

'Nearly everyone between the ages of eighteen and thirty turns against his family and wants to escape from it. When he is sixty he wants to creep back to the nursery fireside, but it is no longer there.'

Handsome, proud, reprehensible, misunderstood. Dominic Langton is the dark heart of *A Difficult Young Man*. His brother Guy can scarcely understand where he fits into the pattern of things or what he might do next.

Martin Boyd's much loved novel is an elegant, witty and compelling family tale about the contradictions of growing up.

Martin Boyd was born in Switzerland in 1893 into a family that was to achieve fame in the Australian arts. His first novel, *Love Gods*, was published in 1925. Three years later *The Montforts* appeared, under the pseudonym Martin Mills. International success came with *Lucinda Brayford*, followed by the Langton Quartet: *The Cardboard Crown*, *A Difficult Young Man*, *Outbreak of Love*, *When Blackbirds Sing*. In 1957 he went to Rome, where he lived and continued to write until his death in 1972.

Sonya Hartnett is the author of many books for children and adults, including *Of a Boy* and *The Midnight Zoo*. Her most recent novel is *The Children of the King*. She lives in Melbourne.

Few writers, it could be argued, have ever cannibalised life for their art as ruthlessly and consistently as did Martin Boyd; and few are born into situations which lend themselves so readily to art... By the time he wrote *A Difficult Young Man*, focusing the cool spotlight of his attention on his brother Merric as well as more sharply on himself, Boyd had form as a writer whose true gift lay not in the power of his imagination, but in the brilliance of his ancestral inheritance.' Sonya Hartnett

'Urbane, witty and eminently civilised...a subtle and beautifully observed social comedy.' *Times Literary Supplement*

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