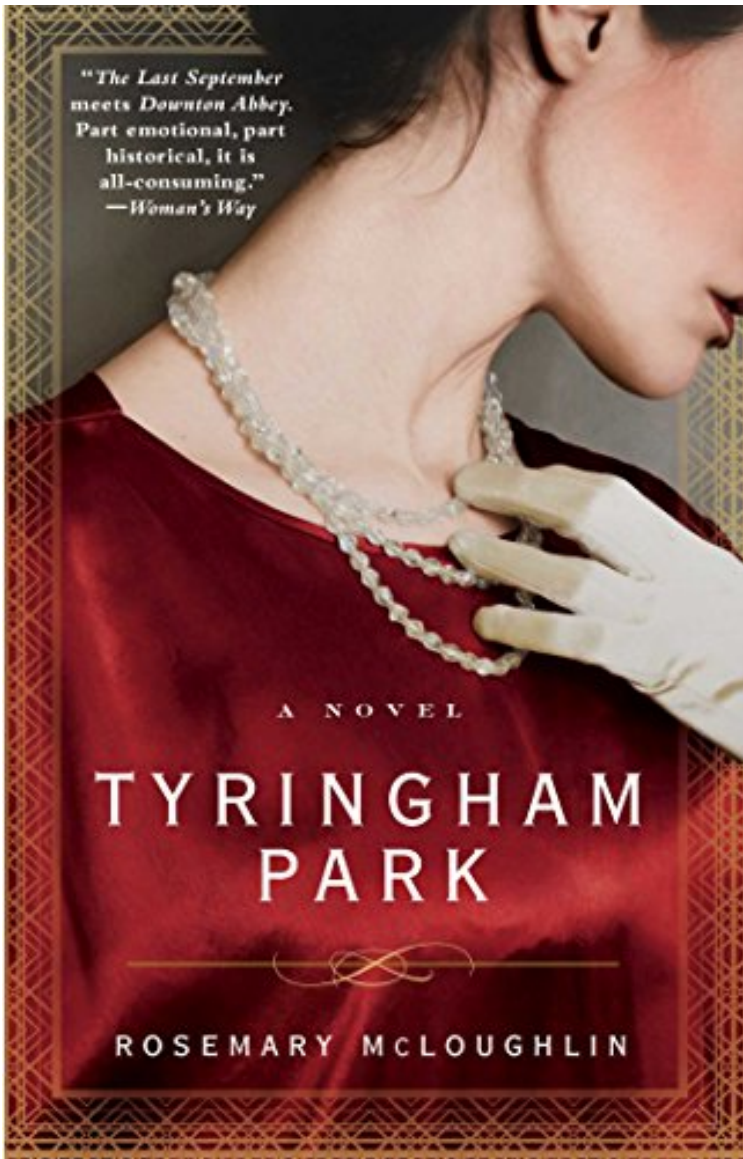


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# Tyringham Park: A Novel (English Edition)



Par Rosemary McLoughlin  
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## Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurThe country estate of Tyringham Park is the epitome of wealth and privilege. Home to the Blackshaws, it finds itself the backdrop to tragedy.It is a beautiful day in 1917, and Tyringham Park is in an uproar after little Victoria Blackshaw, an innocent toddler, disappears without a trace. The feverish search for Victoria soon uncovers jealousies and deceits that both the upstairs and downstairs inhabitants of the grand estate have fought for years to keep hidden.As times passes, Victorias disappearance casts a long shadow over all of their lives. Charlotte, the Blackshaws less favored eight-year-old daughter, finds herself severely impacted by the loss of her sister. As the years pass, she begins to believe that her mother wishes it was she who had disappeared that day rather than the pretty Victoria. Her greatest wish is to escape the

confines of the estate that she once loved; however, Tyringham Park and its mysteries may never release its hold on her. Like all those at Tyringham Park, she is forced into a web of passions and secrets, trysts and betrayals that affect the days of everyone connected to this once great house.

TYRINGHAM PARK 1917

The mother wasn't seen to lose her composure and the father didn't return from London when Victoria Blackshaw, the pretty one, went missing at the age of twenty-two months. The first person to notice that the baby carriage was empty was the mother, Edwina Blackshaw, and the second was Manus, the horse trainer. Edwina, disbelieving, snatched up the tartan quilt and the feather mattress, shook them, and let them drop from her hand to the ground. She felt around the dark interior of the carriage for Victoria's redheaded doll or anything that might provide a clue to the child's absence, but the only things her hands touched were a crumbling biscuit and a teething ring. Manus noted with relief that all the stalls and the gate leading into the paddock were closed, but was sickened to see that one of the double doors of the stables entrance was unsecured and standing slightly open. He wrenched the door fully open and raced to check the avenue in front of the stables and the banks of the flooded river behind it, then the weir and the bridge with its view downstream, before running around the perimeters of the outbuildings, expecting to see a little figure in white every time he turned a corner. Edwina tested the latches of the seven occupied stalls first, rattling the lower half-doors to see if they were fastened and not merely closed over. The instinct of a horse, no matter how docile, to lash out if grabbed by the back leg without warning was what she feared; a little body smashed up against a wall was what she dreaded to find. In a state of heightened expectation Manus ran back into the courtyard in the hope that Edwina had found Victoria in his absence, a hope so strong he thought for one second he saw the child's outline, but the image quickly dissolved. With uncharacteristic roughness he pulled Mandrake out from his stall and, despite the gelding's sidestepping in reaction to the panic in the atmosphere, had him bridled and saddled in a minute. Ill-fortune followed the river in case she went in, he said, mounting. Get help first in the hope that she didn't. Edwina was standing in the middle of the yard, swaying slightly. We need to widen the search immediately. By now he presumed the child had fallen into the river and been carried away, but he didn't want to take away her hope by disobeying her order. Silently cursing the minutes he would lose by riding up to the house, he did as she commanded. Edwina found herself turning in circles as one moment of indecision followed another. She knew so little about her daughter. Was she two yet? Having falsified the date of birth on official records, she could never remember which was Victoria's real birth date and which was her registered one. Surely the child must be two by now? Were two-year-olds capable of clambering out of carriages unaided, or would someone have to lift them? Could Victoria climb? Walk a distance? Make her way back to the house? If Edwina knew the answers to these questions and if she had any idea how long the child had been missing, she might have had some inkling of what to do next. Later she explained to the policemen that she had positioned the baby carriage on the shady side of the courtyard, confident that Victoria would sleep for an hour (information supplied by the nanny, though she didn't mention that to them) while she helped Manus change the dressings on the shin of a nervous filly. The wound exposed the bone and a flap of skin and flesh was dangling, she elaborated to add realism to her account. Manus couldn't have managed on his own without causing distress to the animal. Of course he could have waited until the stable lads returned, but seeing she was there, it would have been foolish not to make use of her expertise. So Victoria was unattended for about twenty minutes (it was actually forty, but Edwina affected vagueness so she wouldn't have to admit to that), and the child could have disappeared any time during that period. When they asked her if she had felt the mattress before lifting it out, to see if it was still warm, she had to admit that in her distracted state she hadn't thought of it, and when they asked if the double doors had been open or closed at the time she went to attend to the filly, she said that they certainly were closed—she would have shut them behind her out of habit after she'd wheeled Victoria into the courtyard. And what was Victoria's date of birth? The inspector turned the page of his notebook and, pen poised, waited for the answer. Edwina's mind went blank. Excuse me a moment, she said, rising from her chair and leaving the room, feeling no obligation to give any reason for her departure to the two policemen. The housekeeper, Miss East, never forgot how Manus appeared on horseback like a messenger from the Apocalypse to bring the bad news up the hill to the house. His shouting brought her flying out through the front door. Victoria has gone missing. Round up everyone! he called across to her, making no attempt to prevent the swerving, stamping Mandrake from damaging the lawn with deep gouges and hoofprints. Despite her fear of horseflesh, Miss East ran onto the grass right in front of the animal to find out more details. Mandrake high-stepped backwards at her approach, and Manus didn't check him. I'm searching the river; I fear she's drowned were his only responses to her outpouring of questions. He turned with a snap of

the reins, and Mandrake, reacting, accelerated with such speed that Manus barely had time to shout over his shoulder, The stables! before he was gone, leaving Miss Easts person splattered with clods of earth. Fired by an awful dread, she rushed around the house to the walled garden adjoining the kitchens. With relief she saw quite a number of the servants in the enclosure, all making the most of the sun: some sleeping, some talking or playing cards, and one poking at a line of ants with a stick. Listen! Everyone listen! she thought she shouted, and then clapped her hands when no one moved. She called out in a stronger voice. Victoria is missing! Come quickly! This time they heard and stumbled upright, dazed and sluggish from the sun, exclaiming and cursing. Stables, she pointed, then flapped her hands as if herding geese. Immediately. Go quickly. Run! They were already moving off. She followed them through the garden gate and called to the youngest boy, Ned! Your legs are younger than mine, and had to pause to catch her breath before adding, Run as fast as you can. Tell Sid and then the steward. Tell them to go to the stables. Theres a good lad. The boy looked pleased to be singled out. He promptly changed direction and headed for the coachmans little cottage behind the rowan trees, some distance from the house. Miss East felt her agitation quiet a little. The servants would be able to cover a lot of ground in a short time, and the steward and Sid would take charge and know what to do. I wouldnt want to be in Nurse Dixons shoes, she thought to herself, not for all the tea in China. With all her faults, and God knows she has plenty of them, shes never managed to lose a child before now. As she ran after the others, two maids, mindful of the limitations of middle age, turned back to check that she was all right, but she waved them on, saying she was fine, she would only hold them back, and to keep going. When they rounded the corner of the house, her legs weakened and she sank to the ground on her knees. Dear God, she prayed, let the precious little one already be found. Please, Lord, have pity and dont let her come to any harm.

Revue de presse McLoughlin marshals the gothic suspense of Daphne Du Maurier . . . Tyringham Park delivers grand passion, secret intra-class trysts, kidnap and violent deaths within a gripping romance (Irish Independent) The Last September meets Downton Abbey. Part emotional, part historical, it is all consuming - we urge you not to read it in one go (Woman's Way) Dark and densely plotted, this is The Thorn Birds with a dash of Du Maurier's Rebecca - brilliant (Irish Daily Mail)