



Alice Munro
WINNER OF THE MAN BOOKER INTERNATIONAL PRIZE
**THE PROGRESS
OF LOVE**

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The Progress of Love Alice Munro

WINNER OF THE NOBEL PRIZE IN LITERATURE 2013

A divorced woman returns to her childhood home where she confronts the memory of her parents' confounding yet deep bond. The accidental near-drowning of a child exposes the fragility of the trust between children and parents. A young man, remembering a terrifying childhood incident, wrestles with the responsibility he has always felt for his younger brother. In these and other stories Alice Munro proves once again a sensitive and compassionate chronicler of our times. Drawing us into the most intimate corners of ordinary lives, she reveals much about ourselves, our choices, and our experiences of love.

The Progress of Love Details

Date : Published December 12th 2000 by Vintage (first published 1985)

ISBN : 9780375724701

Author : Alice Munro

Format : Paperback 320 pages

Genre : Short Stories, Fiction, Cultural, Canada, Nobel Prize

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From Reader Review The Progress of Love for online ebook

Alan says

1993 notebook:

Dear Alice Munro,

this is a fan letter. I was reading your stories in 'The Progress of Love' commuting - 1 story there, 1 story back. I catch a train - 12 pages, a walk across the city, then a bus - 10 pages. Today was 'Miles City, Montana' there, 'Fits' back. Fine, fine stories, heartstopping; the latter, especially the last 2 pages with its walk on snow over fences and its revelation, made me high. Expand with knowledge, insight. On a bus in Birmingham (UK) your stories on my lap I have grown out of sight and yet smaller and sharper in my seat too.

Thanks..

Persephone Abbott says

A reviewer remarked that it took more time to read these short stories than it did generally to read a novel. I can understand this statement because the stories are quite compact, really a very delightful trait, and do require some attention to the details to fully enter into the narrative. I deeply admire the choices of names and places that immediately made me believe the setting of the stories. The use of timelines is excellently manipulated yet graceful. The stories are of love; of simply watching someone out of love do something inane and not interfering because interference would cause love to be lost, the chase after the ever unreal true love by the hopeless romantic and fool, trying to keep love safe and knowing that it is an impossible task, belonging to love yet love is itself no finite trap, loving the stranger who shares your bed, wondering if you passed on love or if love might have glanced your way, what to do when a friend won't accept your fantasy of your own love life, trying to convince yourself that your love is better than the love others have, sacrificing love to keep love, realizing that someone else may have a better concept of love, the sting and despair of love's wrath and the pride it harbors. My first taste of Alice Munro's short stories and, of course, I cannot be but impressed.

Sama ziada says

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João Carlos says

Alice Munro (n. 1931) no Lago Huron, Ontário, Canadá - Fotografia George Waldman

A escritora canadiana **Alice Munro** (n. 1931) foi galardoada com o **Prémio Nobel da Literatura** em **2013** que reconheceu nela um **”mestre do conto contemporâneo”**, com apenas um único romance publicado em 1971 **”Vidas de Raparigas e Mulheres”**.

Anteriormente, li duas das suas colectâneas de contos **"Falsos Segredos"** (1994) - 5* e **"Ódio, Amizade, Namoro, Amor, Casamento"** (2001) - 4*.

"O Progresso do Amor" é um colectânea que reúne onze contos, originariamente publicada em 1985 – 1986, com destaque para: **"O Progresso do Amor"**, **"A Lua na Pista de Gelo de Orange Street, Jesse e Meribeth, "Um Veio de Loucura"** e **"Refugo Branco"** todos 5*.

Englobo **"A Lua na Pista de Gelo de Orange Street e "Refugo Branco"** na lista dos melhores contos de **Alice Munro**.

O tema abrangente a esta colectânea de contos é o AMOR. Quase todas as personagens procuram esse "amor", nem sempre o encontram, muitas vezes acabam por voltar a perdê-lo; o amor faz parte da vida, da vida comum, do dia-a-dia, o amor como uma "coisa" misteriosa, que exige sacrifício e persistência; das relações humanas que se estabelecem entre marido e mulher, entre pais e filhos, entre amantes, entre casais divorciados, entre irmãos; mas, igualmente, entre o passado e o presente, entre diferentes narradores e diferentes perspectivas da vida, o que está implícito em inúmeras recordações, que acabam por acentuar a complexidade dos relacionamentos familiares, a precariedade da relação, a confiança ou a desconfiança que se estabelece, ou a felicidade ou infelicidade que se revela inesperadamente. Um dos factores determinantes em vários contos é a memória, a forma como se reconstrói eventos passados e compartilhados, com inúmeras variáveis, que mudarão o sentido da vida das personagens.

"O Progresso do Amor" é uma excelente colectânea de contos, delimitada pela brevidade da narrativa mas ampliada pela excepcional qualidade da escrita ficcionada de **Alice Munro**.

(view spoiler)

Heidi says

Hirnuinen tunnustus: en ymmärrä Munroa. Olin lukenut häntä aiemmin esimerkiksi novelli-kurssilla, jossa muut kehuivat Munron maasta taivaaseen ja valitsivat hänen novellinsa kurssin parhaaksi (minä en). Luinkin tätä kokoelmaa kuin suurennuslasilla. Halusin todella löytää ne lukuisat kerrokset ja merkitykset, joita tiesin näiden yksinkertaisten novellien olevan täynnä. Vaan nepä pirulaiset eivät näyttäyty minulle! Lainasin jopa saman kirjan englanniksi nähdäkseni, josko löytäisin nuo upeat kerrokset alkuperäiskielellä, mutta kun ei niin ei. Puolessa välissä luovutin. Ilmeisesti olen väärällä aaltopituudella Munron kanssa, tai jotain. Mitään mainittavia muistikuvia yhdestäkään lukemastani novellista ei jäänyt.

Ruta Buciunaite says

I first stumbled upon Alice Munro's quotes in Alex Colville's exhibition and was immediately urged to read her work - it had the same air of small-town Canada as Colville's paintings.

This book reminds me of so many things.

It reminds me of Raymond Carver, except he's more american and very bitter, and Munro's writing is feminine and more refined, and there's a strong sense of hope, of everything being OK somehow.

It also recalls a wonderful movie "I am Love" - the quiet determination, the secret order of the way life moves about, and people trying to make sense of it. Forgiveness.

It reminds me of my aunt and Gabija - and they are quite similar to each other as well, the two women who know how to live, the women I look up to. That's probably because people in Munro's stories know how to live too; there's no unnecessary questions, only the way things are, and the way you gradually understand them to be.

It also reminds me of Laisve and Suopis' wedding, the way they danced together and the way they've done everything right.

There's big force in moving slowly; I would like to harness it some day.

It reminds me of winter, and the feeling of safety.

It reminds me how good it feels to have family and belong to a family, and how cosy little family moments spent together are. Insignificant things you end up cherishing the most; silly thoughts, so humane; stories my mother tells me that I have no recollection of happening.

"Whenever David and I wanted to say something private, we had to put our heads under the covers."

Human creatures are very gentle and sensitive creatures.

But hand-in-hand with this small-town quietness, there's the implicit terror, and it's burdened so deep. It's like when you don't know that you don't know.

It's that feeling when life-changing disasters almost happen.

Or they happen, and nobody really knows how to react.

It's not the terrible things that are terrible, it's the tiny details that make them terrible; tiny, annoying, supernatural details that refuse to be contextualised. They can drive a person out of their mind.

Or, on the contrary- how disasters sometimes seem so frighteningly peaceful. Isn't that horrible?

Or the status quo.

"They weren't so bound, or if they were it was a bond he had to break. We've been together so long, couldn't we just tough it out, said Stella at the time, trying to make it a joke. She didn't understand, probably didn't understand yet, how that was one of the things that made it impossible. This white-haired woman walking beside him through the nursing home dragged so much weight with her - a weight not just of his sexual secrets but of his middle-of-the-night speculations about God, his psychosomatic chest pains, his digestive sensitivity, his escape plans, which once included her and involved Africa or Indonesia. All his ordinary and

extraordinary life - even some things it was unlikely she knew about - seemed stored up in her. He could never feel any lightness, any secret and victorious expansion, with a woman who knew so much. She was bloated with all she knew. Nevertheless he put his arms around Stella. They embraced, both willingly."

It reminds me of being old, it reminds me of being a mother.

Of looking at a faded painting, painted in pastel colours, it's so beautiful, and it starts burning my eyes.

This book reminds me of Vilnius. Of that yearning to live in a big city where every new day is a New Day.

Alice Munro is my favourite writer of 2015;
she touched my soul at parts I didn't even know I had.

"Violet hardly knew how to go about cleaning these two up. The worst was that they had become rebellious, looked at each other and snickered when she talked to them, avoided her, were mulish and silent. They acted as if they had some idiotic secret.

And so they did, they had a secret, but it did not come out until quite a while later, not until after the events of the next summer, and then indirectly, with Bonnie Hope telling some girls who told another who told another, and others getting to hear about it, then a neighbour woman, who finally told Violet.

In late fall of that year - the year Violet went away to normal school - Dawn Rose had begun to menstruate. She was so affronted by this development that she went down to the creek and sat in the cold water, resolved to get the bleeding stopped. She took off her shoes and stockings and underpants and sat there, in the shallow, icy water. She washed the blood out of her underpants and wrung them out and put them on wet. She didn't catch cold, she didn't get sick, and she didn't menstruate again all year. The neighbor woman said that such a procedure could have affected her brain.

"Driving all that bad blood back into her system, it could have.""

Aditi says

This collection was a different from the Lives of Girls and Women in that the stories were not connected by characters at all. They are merely set in the same geographical region and thus share the way people interact with their surroundings. However, each story is beautiful in its own right, with some more memorable than others. Munro is really skilled at piercing what is seemingly mundane and breaking the skin of our dullest moments to expose the profound and fickle tendencies of our nature. And as usual, that leaves me amazed, contemplative and just still.

Valentina says

Questa raccolta di racconti brevi va letta con attenzione per i dettagli, perché sono proprio questi i veri protagonisti.

Il primo impatto, devo ammetterlo, non è stato dei migliori: i racconti sembravano lasciare l'azione in sospenso, senza conclusione. Poi mi sono resa che i racconti di Alice Munro non sono "drammatici" nel senso etimologico del termine; i protagonisti sono grovigli di emozioni, sentimenti che si avvicinano nelle vite dei personaggi.

Alice Munro rappresenta quello che si cela dietro una lacrima, un sorriso appena abbozzato, una risata sfrontata. Perché tutte queste cose non sono altro che increspature sulla superficie dell'animo: è nelle profondità che si nasconde il vero sentimento.

Ecco, i protagonisti di Munro sono emozioni e paure, reazioni istintive.

I personaggi non sono altro che viatici di tali grovigli di emozioni.

Questa è solo la mia personale interpretazione, ovviamente.

Il percorso dell'amore è un libro che ho imparato ad apprezzare poco alla volta, racconto dopo racconto, un personaggio dopo l'altro.

Alice Munro è una grande autrice che lascia i suoi protagonisti liberi di agire sulla pagina, senza interferenze o giudizi.

Ana Lúcia says

Voltei aos magníficos contos de Alice Munro.

Li estes onze e souberam-me a pouco.

“Mesmo que vivamos atormentados por problemas, que sejamos doentes e pobres e feios, temos uma alma para carregar vida fora como um tesouro numa salva.” (O Progresso do Amor)

Marley says

I'm sorry but I thought it was OK. Clearly based upon other reviews and awards I am in the minority. But these stories are just sketches of situations that don't really "say" anything. I never know quite what the message is or what I'm supposed to take away from it. This is "abstract" literature...it is beautifully written but I just need more.

Simona says

Nei vari racconti che compongono la raccolta e di cui la Munro è maestra, la scrittrice ci parla delle diverse forme d'amore.

L'amore, raccontato dalla Munro, assume di volta in volta diverse sfumature e sfaccettature. L'amore descritto qui è l'amore filiale, come nel primo racconto che dà il titolo alla raccolta, dove una donna, una figlia riscopre vecchi ricordi nella casa dei genitori, ricostruendo così la sua vita e il suo passato.

E' l'amore coniugale o anche l'amore/ affetto tra due amiche come nel racconto "Jesse e Meribeth".

In tutti questi racconti, apparentemente semplici, si annida la tragedia, l'incomprensione, il dramma, aspetti dove spesso i dettagli, come una tazzina di caffè o qualcos'altro in particolare, fanno la differenza.

I personaggi dei racconti della Munro, sia uomini che donne, anche se queste sono le maggiori protagoniste dei suoi racconti, vivono questa alternanza, queste storie come se fossero continuamente sospesi tra bene e male e il lettore è in sospensione, prosegue su questo filo in loro compagnia.

Jamie says

Of the three collections I've read by Munro, I'd say this is arguably the weakest (the other two being *Runaway* and *Open Secrets*), but by any other standard, these are still utterly breathtaking stories. I suppose my two critiques would be that (a) this feels like cohesive as a collection in that each story seems only tangentially to tie back to a grander thematic thread; and (b) that there are two or three somewhat

unmemorable stories. "Eskimo" and "Circle of Prayer" come to mind. Or rather, don't, and I had to look at the table of contents to recall their titles.

On the other hand, stories like "The Progress of Love," "Fits," "Jesse and Meribeth" and "A Queer Streak" are among the best short pieces of fiction I've read/heard all year, the first one being my personal favorite. Munro has a peculiar way of taking the positively mundane and awarding it a sense of breathtaking profundity, emotional weight, tragedy - meanwhile, those things which are tragic, particularly death here, often happen offstage but seem nevertheless terribly inevitable. Perhaps that's what I'm really trying to get at: the inevitability of life's events, whether they be tedious or irrecoverably wrenching, itself takes on a kind of epic quality. Nothing surprises - and everything surprises. You see I'm at a loss for how to describe this; that, I suppose, is why Munro is the master in this case.

If I were smart, I'd run out and buy every other collection Munro's written and spend the rest of the summer devouring them. I may just do that.

Dolors says

Munro portrays how marital and filial love evolves through generations as the role of men and women shifts following the waves of emancipation and economic independence.

A divorced woman returns to her childhood home and fragmented memories of the tense relationship between her mother and her grandparents frame the setting for her mother's predisposition to love the man she married forever. But at what cost? Faith seems to work when doubts arise for past generations, but it proves to be useless in the claws of modernity.

The dilemma of committing to another and stick to that person through thick and thin, or to remain independent and build one's life according to changing circumstances?

Munro doesn't question, she doesn't moralize, she merely presents, but the reader can't stop from answering to the silent conflicts that are brought up to the surface through Munro's clear-cut prose.

May you find the answer you need.

Blake says

I sometimes like to think of Alice Munro as a painter. In drawing her just so, I can consider that she must furnish the place she has made for her daily hours of work with these finely delineated and peculiarly detailed portraits of people who have never existed whole, but whom we have all met in part: people whose clothes and expressions we have worn, whose lives we have lived in, and into whose poses our own movement pours content.

Still, portraits are not her characteristic medium. Other than these, and in this proceeding form her sense is particularly keen, she represents scenes of place and person blended in life's activity and broadly. Lives are given shape in the heavy shadow of stilled dilemma and clarified in her finer brush strokes, but her images carry a sense of continuing on after their resolution. The stories told by her best works go on when we have ceased looking and on into fresh territories and a body of new choices. By these, her subjects are no more resolved in their lives than are we in our own.

Jenn(ifer) says

Come with me, my love... <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CbMeAO...>

I'm an observer by nature. I guess you can say I like to watch. Birds. Bugs. Animals. Humans. The weather. I can sit in front of my bay window for hours watching a spider spin a web, a thunderstorm rolling in, a swarm of bees sipping nectar from my rhododendrons...

Alice Munro must be an observer by nature too, because her stories reveal her fascination with everyday life and everyday people. This particular collection focuses on relationships: between couples, siblings, parents and children -- always in some way or other following the progress of love.

In my opinion, Alice Munro is the queen of short story writers. I think this can be attributed to her economy of language. Whereas many novelists need to use an excessive amount of words to get their point across, Munro can tell a compelling and engaging tale with concision.

My hat is off to the master for delivering another phenomenal collection of stories.

4.75/5

M. says

I guess Alice Munro is a good writer. I'll probably read something else by her but in a more distant future. I struggled with this book. Everything seemed to be right, yet every time I was picking it up, I was wincing. I was wading through it, I was procrastinating, I was looking for excuses to drop it. I wanted it to end. I found it depressive although I have read far sadder books but their tone of sadness was understandable whereas this one was not. It was not that kind of suffering that leads to the tragic end after which you bounce back (or not). It was more like unconstructive wallowing. I am glad I don't have to open this book again.

K.D. Absolutely says

My first book by Alice Munro (born 1931) and oh my, she kicks ass!

What is it with female Canadian writers? I normally think twice before picking up any book by a female writer. This is not a sexist remark but most of them I tried hard to like them but they fell short of my expectations. Virginia Woolf will always be my favorite along with Dame Iris Murdoch. Then, I also enjoyed *Surfacing* by Margaret Atwood and *Unless* by Carol Shields. They are the first two female Canadian writers who both joined my list of favorite female authors alongside Woolf and Murdoch. Now it is 3 vs 2 in favor of the Canadians.

I also remember that I have not read any book by a Canadian *male* writers. Do female writers, unlike in all parts of the world, dominate in the literary scene there? Now I remember a friend recommending Timothy Findley's works. Maybe soon.

I checked Wiki and it says this for Munro: *is a Canadian short-story writer, winner of the 2009 Man Booker International Prize for her lifetime body of work, three-time winner of Canada's Governor General's Award for fiction, and a perennial contender for the Nobel Prize.* So, Munro is really a serious writer and I used to ignore her works in our bookstores here in the Manila.

So far, I've read 3 short-stories collections: *Blind Willow, Sleeping Woman* by Haruki Murakami; *Nocturnes* by Kazuo Ishiguro and *What We Talk About, When We Talk About Love* by Raymond Chandler. This book *The Progress of Love* by Alice Munro is on its **own** league.

It is definitely not stories as "slices" of one's life. Most of her stories have plots that can stand as separate full-length *interesting* novels. They are not rushed up because Munro delicately takes time to tell her stories using her words carefully and sensitively. Her stories are like well-captured photographs in an art studio. Sharp pixels. Suited lighting as the artist took them at exact time of the day. I am not talking about mountains, sunset and bay. Munro's stories are about human beings: their relationships, dreams, fears and questions. The stories in this book, *The Progress of Love* deal with common and uncommon people dealing issues in their *present* lives by looking back to their *past*. I think that this explains why *progress* is in the title. Although I am giving this a star less from amazing because out of the 11 stories only one mentioned the word *love*. I am not sure if this was intentional of Munro. I thought that this book can be a good pre-Valentine read *chuckle*. To compare, what I know of Murakami is that he writes and writes short stories and lump them into a book without any thought on the title of the collection and select one of the titles to also be the title of the whole collection. *The first story of this book has that title but it is far from my favorite which is the one towards the end, A Queer Streak.* Also, reading Munro is not as easy as the works of the other 3 gentlemen. Because each of the 11 short stories are very interesting, I slowed down and took time 11 times to adjust to the story, i.e., know the characters and setting as they are introduced at the start. I mean, when I finally closed the book, I thought I spent almost the same time I would have spent reading 5 or so short novels.

But it was worth my time really. They are not about those Murakami dream sequences that can just be meaningless (if you really think about most of them). Munro's stories are more of our lives being put on the operating table: dissected, examined and evaluated. Munro does not provide the answers but she does ask the right questions for us to re-evaluate our lives, where we are heading to.

Helmali says

Picked this book because of the tag saying " Winner of the Nobel prize in Literature 2013" thought I would be blown away. Sadly reading the first five stories I am disappointed. Found it a bit mundane. The stories in my opinion have the same sort of characters. For example a trucker who sort of abandons his family and goes to the Arctic to work in oil rigs. I encountered this character in two short stories so far. And the wife who brings up two boys all by her own.

Reading this book now has become an effort, since I want to finish this. Six stories to go so far.

Final verdict - I didn't find it enjoying reading this at a stretch. When you read one story at a time with intervals between it becomes more entertaining.

Teresa Proença says

Onze contos narrados com a profundidade de um romance, ao nível do conhecimento das personagens, onde é dada primazia ao seu interior, desvalorizando o exterior.

Historias reveladoras do intimo e anseios mais profundos da alma humana.

Na sua maior parte são as mulheres as protagonistas principais e as "vítimas" do **Progresso do Amor**; do encantamento no seu início, do desespero no seu fim e do seu poder transformador.

"Liberta-me. Liberta-me. Devolve-me o juízo. Por favor, depressa. Por favor."

Orsodimondo says

I CONIUGI ARNOLFINI

Preso per mano e portato in mezzo a vite ordinarie di gente qualsiasi, ma scoprendo angoli nascosti e intimi, e così illuminando molto di me, delle mie scelte e esperienze di vita, d'amore. Rapito dall'eleganza e dall'attenzione che Munro sparge.

Si tratta di racconti, e io e i racconti andiamo molto d'accordo: con questi della Munro, la prossimità diventa addirittura saldatura.

Non racconta gente speciale Alice Munro, non mette al centro delle sue narrazioni personaggi con sensibilità straordinarie: ma la mano di Munro prende i suoi attori e li porta a tale profondità interiore, da trovare quasi più sentimenti di quanti ne possano contenere ed esprimere, se non ci fosse proprio lei, la scrittrice, la grande Alice Munro.

Le pause di riflessione non sopraggiungono certo per opacità di scrittura, ma perché la trama del racconto è potente, intricata, intrecciata finemente, richiede la nostra completa attenzione.

Si esce da queste pagine migliori di come si è entrati.

Il ritratto dei coniugi Arnolfini di Van Eyck. E' una scena all'apparenza semplice, un uomo e una donna che si tengono per mano al centro di una stanza da letto di un ricco appartamento borghese. Eppure è una delle opere più enigmatiche della storia dell'arte. La normalità è piena di mistero.

Lo dice Polanski. E Roman di mistero è supremo esperto.
