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# Talk of Angels

*By Kate O'Brien*



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Reissued to coincide with the release of the movie version, a controversial novel, banned in Ireland in 1936 for its frank depiction of lesbianism, follows an Irish woman who becomes involved with a fellow expatriate in Spain. Movie tie-in.



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## Talk of Angels By Kate O'Brien Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #3846170 in Books
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- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 1.13" w x 5.50" l,
- Binding: Paperback
- 368 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

From Library Journal

When this novel was first published in Ireland in 1936, it caused a sensation because of its "frank depiction of lesbianism." Amazing! Those reluctant to note progress in combating homophobia need only read this novel to realize how far we have come. Melodramatic, overwritten, and sexually tame by contemporary standards, the book charts the course of Mary Lavelle, an Irish beauty looking for adventure before settling into marriage. As nanny and English teacher for three pampered Spanish girls, Mary tastes independence and unleashes her skepticism about conventional social mores. Yet, in the end, *Talk of Angels* tells a very old story about a woman punished for her audacity. Beloved Irish author O'Brien offers a compassionate portrait of young, working-class women, but her allusions to needed social changes pose no real challenge to sexism, racism, classism, or heterosexism. Recommended as historical artifact. ?Eleanor J. Bader, New Sch. for Social Research, New York, Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc.

From Kirkus Reviews

The skilled prose of Irish author O'Brien (1897-1974) transmutes the material of a conventional coming-of-age tale ("banned in Ireland in 1936 for its frank depiction of lesbianism") into a rich, absorbing study of character and culture. It's 1922, and Mary Lavelle, the 22-year-old daughter of a widowed doctor in Ireland, is quiet and seemingly conventional, yet she has two qualities that are bound to attract notice: her startling beauty and her yearning to become an independent wanderer. Mary is engaged to nice-but-dull John MacCurtain, a demobilized soldier now working as shipping clerk. John cautiously insists on waiting for marriage until he has a good income, and so Mary, feeling fondness but no great ardor for her fiancé, decides to make use of the time to become a governess in Spain--a then traditional occupation for rootless Irishwomen. She finds work tutoring the daughters of a family headed by the aristocratic Don Pablo Areavaga, whose marriage--complicated, sexless, but not unloving--is explored in depth. Despite initial homesickness, Mary soon takes to her charges, who include the vain, gregarious Pilar and the spirited, amusingly precocious Milagros. With her youth and looks, their new governess provokes comment in the spinsterish community of Irish "misses," but she nevertheless finds friends in Rosie O'Toole, a spunky eccentric, and Agatha Conlon, an austere, mysterious semi-recluse. As Mary develops a taste for bullfights and an infatuation with Spain in general, she comes to find answering John's daily letters a chore. Events reach a crisis when she meets Don Pablo's married son, Juanito--while, at the same time, Agatha is developing her own illicit passion for Mary. Passive and impressionable Mary is sometimes a frustrating heroine, but O'Brien writes with a striking grace and acuity that illuminate not only the landscape of but the complexity of the people living in it. (Film rights to Miramax) -- *Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

## **Users Review**

**From reader reviews:**

**William Phillips:**

Spent a free time to be fun activity to perform! A lot of people spent their down time with their family, or their own friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, going to beach, or picnic within the park. They actually doing same task every week. Do you feel it? Do you need to something different to fill your personal free time/ holiday? Could possibly be reading a book might be option to fill

your cost-free time/ holiday. The first thing you ask may be what kinds of reserve that you should read. If you want to try out look for book, may be the e-book untitled Talk of Angels can be great book to read. May be it could be best activity to you.

**Frank Jorge:**

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**Adrian Johnson:**

You may spend your free time to study this book this guide. This Talk of Angels is simple to deliver you can read it in the area, in the beach, train and also soon. If you did not include much space to bring typically the printed book, you can buy often the e-book. It is make you quicker to read it. You can save typically the book in your smart phone. So there are a lot of benefits that you will get when one buys this book.

**Belinda Fergerson:**

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