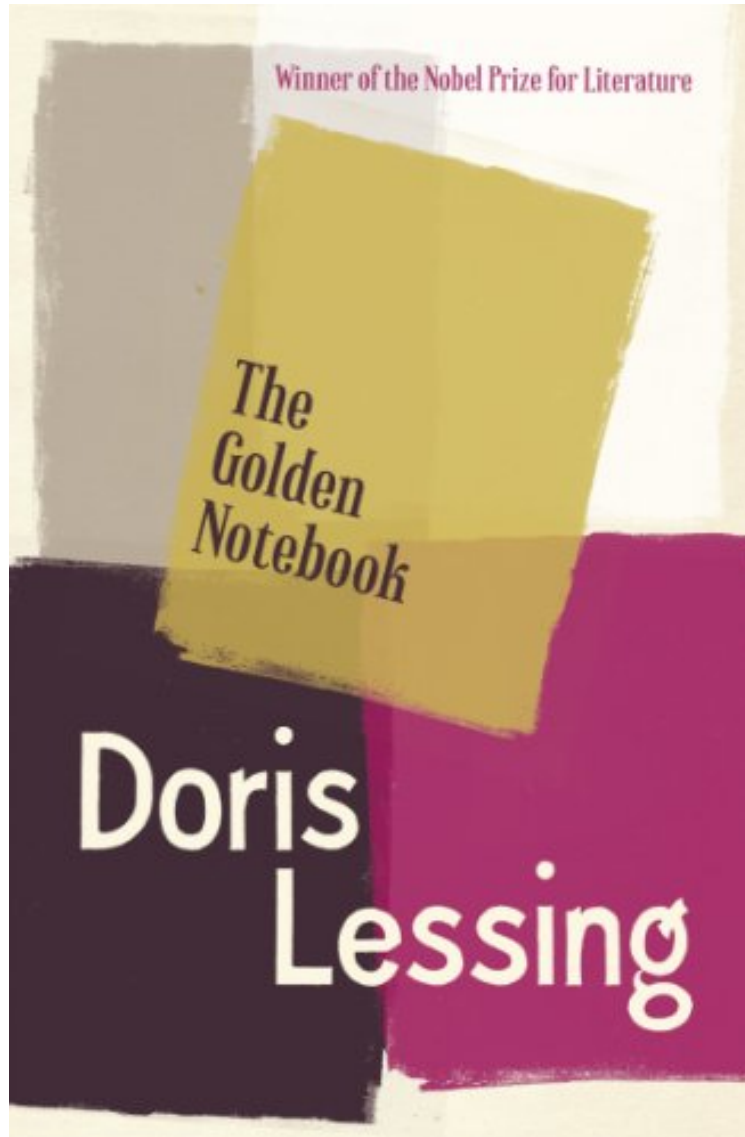


[Get free] The Golden Notebook

## The Golden Notebook

*Von Doris Lessing*

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**Von Doris Lessing : The Golden Notebook** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Golden Notebook:

**Kurzbeschreibung**The landmark novel of the Sixties a powerful account of a woman searching for her personal, political and professional identity while facing rejection and betrayal. In 1950s London, novelist Anna Wulf struggles with writers block. Divorced with a young child, and fearful of going mad, Anna records her experiences in four coloured notebooks: black for her writing life, red for political views, yellow for emotions, blue for everyday events. But it is a fifth notebook the golden notebook that finally pulls these wayward strands of her life together. Widely regarded as Doris Lessing's masterpiece and one of the greatest novels of the twentieth century, *The Golden Notebook* is wry and perceptive, bold and indispensable. Much to its author's chagrin, *The Golden Notebook* instantly became a staple of the feminist movement when it was published in 1962. Doris Lessing's novel deconstructs the life of Anna Wulf, a sometime-Communist and a deeply leftist writer living in postwar London with her small daughter. Anna is battling writer's block, and, it often seems, the damaging chaos of life itself. The elements that made the book remarkable when it first appeared--extremely candid sexual and psychological descriptions of its characters and a fractured, postmodern structure--are no longer shocking. Nevertheless, *The Golden Notebook* has retained a great deal of power, chiefly due to its often brutal honesty and the sheer variation and sweep of its prose. This largely autobiographical work comprises Anna's four notebooks: "a black notebook which is to do with Anna Wulf the writer; a red notebook concerned with politics; a yellow notebook, in which I make stories out of my experience; and a blue notebook which tries to be a diary." In a brilliant act of verisimilitude, Lessing alternates between these notebooks instead of presenting each one whole, also weaving in a novel called *Free Women*, which views Anna's life from the omniscient narrator's point of view. As the novel draws to a close, Anna, in the midst of a breakdown, abandons her dependence on compartmentalization and writes the single golden notebook of the title. In tracking Anna's psychological movements--her recollections of her years in Africa, her relationship with her best friend, Molly, her travails with men, her disillusionment with the Party, the tidal pull of motherhood--Lessing pinpoints the pulse of a generation of women who were waiting to see what their postwar hopes would bring them. What arrived was unprecedented freedom, but with that freedom came unprecedented confusion. Lessing herself said in a 1994 interview: "I say fiction is better than telling the truth. Because the point about life is that it's a mess, isn't it? It hasn't got any shape except for you're born and you die." *The Golden Notebook* suffers from certain weaknesses, among them giving rather simplistic, overblown illustrations to the phrase "a good man is hard to find" in the form of an endless parade of weak, selfish men. But it still has the capacity to fill emotional voids with the great rushes of feeling it details. Perhaps this is because it embodies one of Anna's own revelations: "I've been forced to acknowledge that the flashes of genuine art are all out of deep, suddenly stark, undisguisable private emotion. Even in translation there is no mistaking these lightning flashes of genuine personal feeling." It seems that Lessing, like Anna when she decides to abandon her notebooks for the single, golden one, attempted to put all of herself in one book. --Melanie Rehak

**Pressestimmen**A work of high seriousness....Absorbing and exciting. (Irving Howe, *New Republic*)*The Golden Notebook* is Doris Lessing's most important work and has left its mark upon the ideas and feelings of a whole generation of women. (Elizabeth Hardwick, *New York Times Book* )A rewarding book, and an unusually perceptive one. (Milwaukee Journal)This exciting writer has tried much, aimed high, and has paraded a galaxy of gifts. (Baltimore Sun)No ordinary work of fictionThe technique, in a word, is brilliant. (Saturday )