



The Great Man: A Novel

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From the acclaimed author of *The Epicure's Lament*, a novel of literary rivalry in which two competing biographers collide in their quest for the truth about a great artist.

Oscar Feldman, the "Great Man," was a New York city painter of the heroic generation of the forties and fifties. But instead of the abstract canvases of the Pollocks and Rothkos, he stubbornly hewed to painting one subject—the female nude. When he died in 2001, he left behind a wife, Abigail, an autistic son, and a sister, Maxine, herself a notable abstract painter—all duly noted in the *New York Times* obituary.

What no one knows is that Oscar Feldman led an entirely separate life in Brooklyn with his longtime mistress, Teddy St. Cloud, and their twin daughters. As the incorrigibly bohemian Teddy puts it, "He couldn't live without a woman around. It was like water to a plant for him." Now two rival biographers, book contracts in hand, are circling around Feldman's life story, and each of these three women—Abigail, Maxine, and Teddy—will have a chance to tell the truth as they experienced it.

The Great Man is a scintillating comedy of life among the avant-garde—of the untidy truths, needy egos, and jostlings for position behind the glossy facade of artistic greatness. Not a pretty picture—but a provocative and entertaining one that incarnates the take-no-prisoners satirical spirit of Dawn Powell and Mary McCarthy.

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