



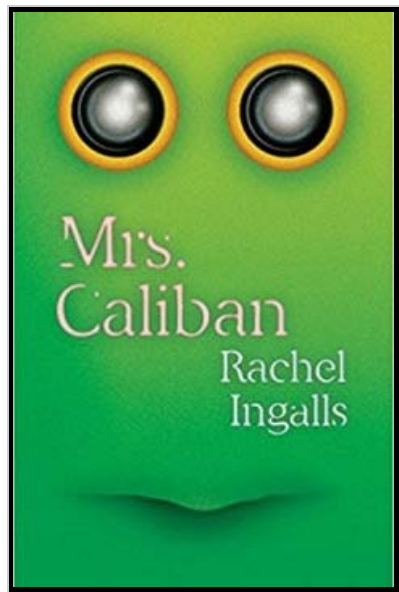
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Mrs. Caliban

by Rachel Ingalls, Rivka Galchen

Price: \$13.95(Paperback)

Published: November 28, 2017



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From the Publisher: In the quiet suburbs, while Dorothy is doing chores and waiting for her husband to come home from work, not in the least anticipating romance, she hears a strange radio announcement about a monster who has just escaped from the Institute for Oceanographic Research... Reviewers have compared Rachel Ingalls's Mrs. Caliban to King Kong, Edgar Allan Poe's stories, the films of David Lynch, Beauty and the Beast, The Wizard of Oz, E.T., Richard Yates's domestic realism, B-horror movies, and the fairy tales of Angela Carter—how such a short novel could contain all of these disparate elements is a testament to its startling and singular charm.

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About The Author

Rachel Ingalls, Rivka Galchen

Rachel Ingalls is an American-born author who has lived in the UK since 1965. She is the author of the novels Mrs. Caliban and Binstead's Safari as well as numerous novellas and short stories.

RIVKA GALCHEN's 2008 first novel Atmospheric Disturbances and her 2014 story collection American Innovations were both New York Times Best Books of the Year. She received her MD from the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. "Conspicuously talented" (Time), Galchen lives in New York City.

Release Info

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What We Say

"Mrs. Caliban," where have you been all my life? This slim 1982 novel by Rachel Ingalls apparently resurfaces every few years when someone reads it, says, "My god, this is amazing!" and demands everyone around them read it. John Updike was an early advocate for the unprolific Ingalls. Daniel Handler is a big fan. Just four years after it came out, The British Book Marketing Council named "Mrs. Caliban" one of the 20 greatest American novels since WW II. And no, I'd never heard of the British Book Marketing Council either but still. Ingalls often writes novellas, the red-headed bastard child of literature and this 128 page gem is no exception. One is tempted to call it unclassifiable, but that's wrong. This fairy tale/ psychological

portrait of madness/ suburban satire/ horror story/ hellish depiction of an unhappy marriage/ droll romance is very classifiable indeed. It's memorable, unique, beguiling and very good. Mrs. Caliban is indeed in a loveless marriage. She and her husband have separate single beds, go about their lives and are drifting inexorably apart, strained by their inability to have children, his brief affair and the smothering anomie of suburban American existence. Mrs. Caliban's only friend is a hard-drinking divorcee; when they're together she can actually breathe for a few minutes. It's not enough, however, and Mrs. Caliban fears she is literally losing her mind -- the radio seems to be speaking to her directly, assuring her things will turn out alright. One news item in particular catches her ear: a monster of some sort has escaped from a local lab, a human-sized creature with a frog-like head that was being experimented on. And suddenly there he is, this fierce-some creature, standing right there in her kitchen! Entertaining company at the time, Mrs. Caliban can't quite process the creature's presence but she senses his desperation, his loneliness, his hunger for...affection? She stashes him in the guest room and what soon follows is one of the odder romances you'll read, complete with late night drives to the beach, strolling through parks hand in webbed hand (after dark, of course) and plans to flee together to Mexico. It's daft, sweet, dangerous and you're never quite sure if it's actually happening or just a figment of Mrs. Caliban's imagination. The result is gentler and lovelier than you might expect, though not without its share of monster fury, violence, confusion, betrayal and heartbreak. As with many fairy tales, even the happiest-seeming stories become rather grim. -- Michael Giltz

What Others Say

A masterpiece and totally off the wall. - **Electric Literature**

It's not just Disney that can ruminate on romance between a beauty and a beast. In this reissue of Rachel Ingalls' 1982 novel, housewife Dorothy hears on the radio that a potentially dangerous monster has just escaped a research facility. But when the creature walks through her door, he awakens something new in her. This is our pick for feminist social satire that's deliciously weird. - **Estelle Tang Elle**

Every volume Rachel Ingalls has written displays the craft of a quite remarkable talent. Tales of love, terror, betrayal and grief, which others would spin out for hundreds of pages, are given the occluded force of poetry. - **Independent**

The love story is a delight, the social commentary sharp, the writing funny and fun—and yet the sorrow, even bitterness, at the core of this book about our perfidious species is inescapable and profound. - **Kirkus**

[A] slim surrealist masterpiece. - **LA Times**

By marrying domestic realism with the literature of the bizarre, Ingalls brings tenderness to the monstrous and renders the recognizable utterly weird. Compact yet capacious, the novel wonders at all the ways we can desire and destroy one another. It's unabashedly campy and deadly serious; it dares the reader to admit that these aims are not at all at odds. - **Literary Hub**

A love affair with a 6-foot-7-inch amphibian might not be every woman's fantasy, but for Dorothy—the lonely housewife at the center of this soon-to-be-reissued 1982 novel—it's working out just fine. A short, funny, bizarre novel that's worth your time. - **Los Angeles Magazine**

In her best work, Ingalls is as monochromatic as Edgar Allan Poe, going straight to her target with the same ease and surety as an arrow skims to its bull's-eye... And just as Poe's craft was exactly suited to the conventions of the short story form, so Ingalls' vision is exactly suited to the length and scope of the novella... Like Poe, Rachel Ingalls is more than a master storyteller: She is also a superb artist. - **Los Angeles Times**

Ms. Ingalls is an experienced writer of novels and stories, and her performances are immensely skillful, reminiscent of the best film thrillers. - **Ursula K. Le Guin The New York Times**

Rachel Ingalls has created a tight, intriguing portrait of a woman's escape from unacceptable reality and presented an account of derangement so matter-of-fact, so ordinary and at the same time so bizarre, that through her words we experience new insight. - **The New York Times Book Review**

As deranged as the whole thing is, Ingalls's prose, strikingly austere, taps into a profound sadness, too: Is Mrs. Caliban a work of fantasy or are we inhabiting the psyche of a woman unhinged? ...Begg to be read over and over again. - **The Paris Review**

Mrs. Caliban is one of my favorite novels in the world. - **Daniel Handler**

I loved Mrs. Caliban. So deft and austere in its prose, so drolly casual in its fantasy, but opening up into a deep female sadness that makes us stare. An impeccable parable, beautifully written from first paragraph to last. - **John Updike**

Mrs. Caliban has the melancholy, bittersweet air of a romance that has come to no significant resolution - **Joyce Carol Oates**

A perfect novel. - **Rivka Galchen**

Some writers make me laugh out loud; Rachel Ingalls makes me cackle. For her 1982 masterpiece, the short novel Mrs. Caliban, Ingalls takes a B-movie premise and pounds it into a thrilling new shape. - **Ed Park Village Voice**

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