



Dead Souls (Barnes & Noble Classics)

Nikolai Gogol

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Dead Souls, by **Nikolai Gogol**, is part of the *Barnes & Noble Classics* series, which offers quality editions at affordable prices to the student and the general reader, including new scholarship, thoughtful design, and pages of carefully crafted extras. Here are some of the remarkable features of *Barnes & Noble Classics*:

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Russia's first major novel, and perhaps still its most popular, **Nikolai Gogol's** *Dead Souls* is a comic epic of greed and gluttony that is admired not only for its colorful cast of characters and devastating satire, but also for its sense of moral fervor.

The anti-hero of the novel is a man named Chichikov, who hatches a brilliant plan to get rich quick. He will journey through Russia and buy up, at reduced rates, the recently deceased serfs of landowners, who now won't have to pay government taxes on the 'dead souls.' With this list of fictitious serfs as collateral, Chichikov can buy an estate and begin amassing his fortune. What follows is a series of grotesquely humorous transactions with Russian landowners, each more queer and repellant than the last. Although Gogol spends much of the novel exposing the evils of the Russian gentry through absurd and hilarious satire, he also expresses a passionate love for his country that resonates with readers even today.

A stylistic tour de force, encompassing an astonishing range of voices from delicate, intimate lyricism to robust, bawdy ribaldry, *Dead Souls* is an intensely felt anatomy of the human condition.

Jeffrey Meyers, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature, has published forty-three books, including biographies of Ernest Hemingway, Robert Frost, D. H. Lawrence, Joseph Conrad, and George Orwell. He also wrote the Introductions and Notes to the Barnes & Noble Classics editions of Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth* and Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*.

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