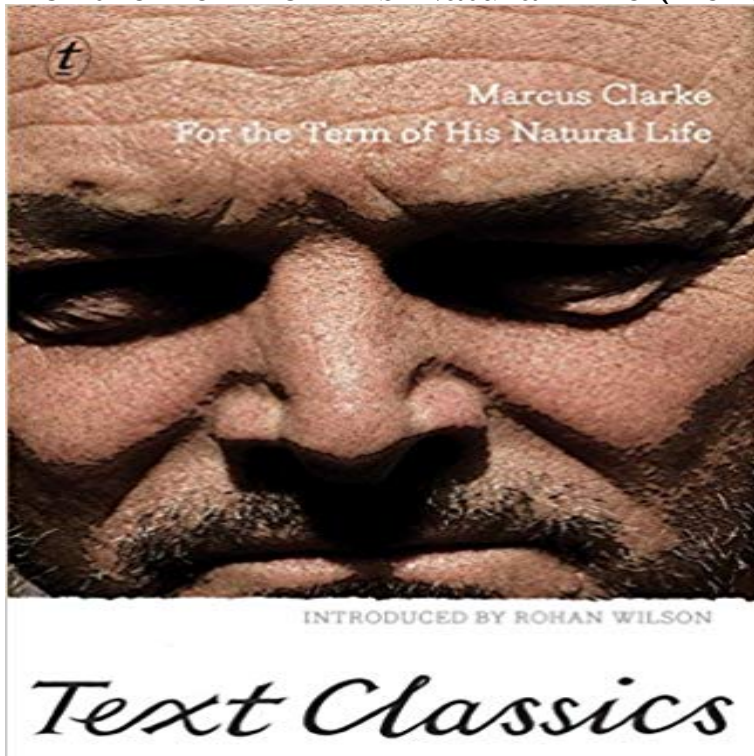


## For the Term of His Natural Life (Text Classics)



A masterpiece in style and scope, Marcus Clarke's *For the Term of His Natural Life* is an ambitious tale of tragedy, redemption, and the ugliness and resilience of man. Wrongfully convicted of a crime he did not commit, a young aristocrat is sent to pay his dues in Van Diemens Land. As a criminal in this new colony, Rufus Dawes is forced to endure tremendous suffering and inhumanity, from the baseless cruelty of those in power to the harsh brutalities of an untamed country. Yet, with enduring human spirit and unrelenting determination, Dawes remains ever desperate to clear his name, no matter the trials that come his way. First published in 1874, Marcus Clarke's vivid and brutal depictions of convict life have come to define our colonial history. Still beloved by readers today, *For the Term of His Natural Life* remains the most important Australian book of the nineteenth century, and a vital part of our cultural and literary identity. Marcus Clarke was born in 1846 in Kensington, London. At age seventeen Clarke left England for Australia, where his uncle was a county court judge. Despite an early career in banking, Clarke had begun to write professionally by 1867, penning stories for the *Australian Magazine* and working as a theatre critic for the *Melbourne Argus*. Commissioned by the *Australian Journal* to write a serial about convict life, Clarke produced his masterwork, *His Natural Life*. Republished as a novel in 1874 under the new title *For the Term of His Natural Life*, Clarke's epic tale of crime and punishment was later distributed in Britain, America, Germany and many other countries. Marcus Clarke died in Melbourne in 1881, aged thirty-five.

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