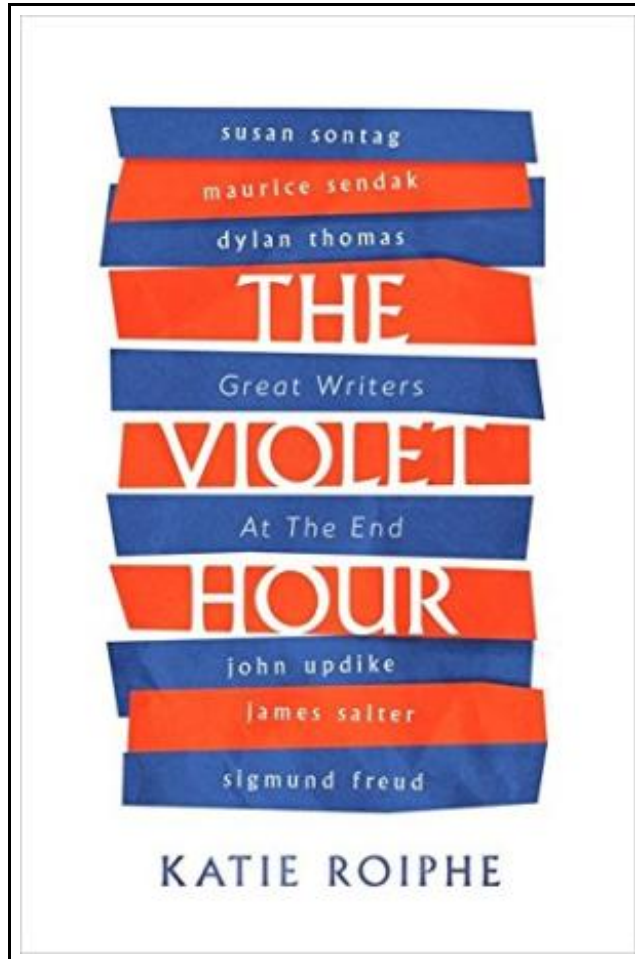


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Little, Brown Book Group, United Kingdom, 2016. Hardback. Book Condition: New. 222 x 141 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. In *The Violet Hour*, Katie Roiphe takes an unexpected and liberating approach to the most unavoidable of subjects. She investigates the last days of six great thinkers, writers and artists as they come to terms with the reality of approaching death. Roiphe draws on her own extraordinary research and access to the family, friends and caretakers of her subjects. Here is Susan Sontag, the consummate public intellectual, who finds her commitment to rational thinking tested during her third bout with cancer. Roiphe takes us to the hospital room where, after receiving the worst possible diagnosis, seventy-six-year-old John Updike begins writing a poem. She vividly re-creates the fortnight of almost suicidal excess that culminated in Dylan Thomas's fatal collapse on the floor of a Greenwich Village tavern. She gives us a bracing portrait of Sigmund Freud fleeing Nazi-occupied Vienna only to continue in his London exile the compulsive cigar smoking that he knows will hasten his decline. She shows us how Maurice Sendak's beloved books for children are infused with his lifelong obsession with death, if you know where to look. And from James Salter she learns that we make our own comfort. *The Violet Hour* is a book filled with intimate and surprising revelations. In the final acts of each of these creative geniuses are examples of courage, passion, self-delusion, pointless suffering and superb devotion. There are also moments of sublime insight and understanding where the mind creates its own comfort. As the author writes, If it's nearly impossible to capture the approach of death in words, who would have the most hope of doing it? By bringing these great writers final days to urgent, unsentimental...



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