



## Jacqueline Susann

*August 20, 1918 - September 21, 1974*

New York, New York

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Jacqueline Susann - American novelist whose *Valley of the Dolls* became one of the best-selling books of the twentieth century, died in New York City on September 21, 1974, of cancer. She was fifty-six. Born August 20, 1918, in Philadelphia, she chased acting and Broadway before turning the machinery of fame into fiction that millions recognized as gossip given novelistic form.

*Valley of the Dolls* (1966) followed three women through ambition, pills, and the brutal economics of show business; critics often dismissed it while readers kept it on bestseller lists for years. *The Love Machine* and *Once Is Not Enough* extended the franchise of glamorous disaster. She marketed herself with relentless precision - talk shows, bookstore tours, a public persona as polished as her characters' fates - and proved that popular fiction could outpace critical scorn.

Breast cancer, diagnosed years earlier, returned. She kept the illness largely private while continuing to write and appear, treating publicity as another craft she refused to surrender. New York, the city that fed her plots, was also the place of her death, the same calendar day that claimed actor Walter Brennan a continent away - a coincidence of September 21 that linked two very different American celebrities.

She died in New York on September 21, 1974. The novel remains a cultural shorthand for ambition's cost; the sales figures still startle literary historians.

Susann's gift was commercial candor - turning Hollywood's backstage into a mass-market American myth. Notice Nearby keeps the death date so September 21 remembers the Philadelphia-born novelist who made

Valley of the Dolls a national habit.

## Services

Died in New York City, September 21, 1974. Novelist; author of Valley of the Dolls (1966), The Love Machine, and Once Is Not Enough.

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