



Play the Devil

Henry G. Sheppard

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Wilfred Lever, son of ambitious missionaries, is wrenched from his life in an Indian village by a prophecy: he shall be Elijah in his own country. Sent to Adelaide to stay with a perverted aunt, he is well into adolescence when his family joins him there. In the first manifestation of a burgeoning power complex, he forces himself upon his half-sister, now a deeply desirable young woman. The prophecy seals Wilfred's moral doom as the institutional nature of his life protects him from retribution. A character with no moral compass, he gets away with corruption and hypocrisy. But when Wilfred rapes his niece, it seems his number is up. The board forces Wilfred's resignation, but at his lowest point, it seems the prophecy really is true. The church is priming him for politics: all his travails have led him to this moment, where at last he is on the brink of true power.

Play the Devil Details

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From Reader Review Play the Devil for online ebook

Kathy says

If you have ever wanted to know what goes on behind church doors, look no further than this scorching expos?.

Layered with so much detail it exudes authenticity, this novel is not for the faint hearted, nor for those who wish for a fairy tale happy ending. You could call it a bildungsroman, a story of a boy growing into a man, except the man keeps growing, more and more evilly, with the full support of his church.

In masterly prose (an earlier draft is listed as finaling in the South Australian Premier's prize for an unpublished manuscript) witty, erudite, and sparkling with mischief, Mr Sheppard drags the reader into unwilling connivance with evil, making the reader hope the protagonist will escape justice, and more and more appalled at how things are 'arranged' behind the scenes.

One of the highlights of this novel is the innovative way Mr Sheppard describes those fleeting expressions we instantly recognise in his text. The book hums with originality and every page rewards the discerning reader with new insight.

Read this book and learn more about humanity.
