



The McDead

Ken Bruen

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Chief Inspector Roberts combs London for the bloodthirsty psychopath who killed his brother. When Tommy got out of prison, he decided to become Irish. He changed his last name to Logan, moved to southeast London, and started toting a hurley--an ash stick that's as big as a baseball bat and twice as deadly. This faux-Irish killer quickly distinguished himself as one of the south side's smartest: a master of money laundering, front corporations, and keeping out of the way of the cops. His only weakness is his temper--and it's about to bring his empire tumbling down. The latest target of Tommy Logan's rage is Tony Roberts, a wasted lowlife. But the victim's brother is one of the meanest cops in London. Chief Inspector Roberts is the last man to see Tony alive, and he promises to avenge his brother. Logan is about to find out that no hurley is hard enough to break the word of a determined cop.

The McDead Details

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Author : Ken Bruen

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From Reader Review The McDead for online ebook

Kathy Davie says

Third in the Inspector Brant crime series set in southeast London and revolving around the corrupt, brutish Detective Sergeant Tom Brant.

My Take

Dang, Bruen is dark! Murder, beatings, suicide, betrayal. And those are the highlights! Actually, I'm lying. *McDead* actually seems to have a ray of very faint hope in it. Falls and Cohen get a win. I'm anxious to see where it goes next.

Not much in the way of books or music in this story---very un-Bruen.

Part of what I like about this series is its reality. I'm not saying that all cops are corrupt but that the ones who are in this series all exhibit humanity at its worst and bits of its best. I actually like Brant in spite of the bad because he does have a care for the people with whom he works. He's also aware of their faults and what or who he must protect. He's still an ass...

Roberts? Nah. I hope his wife takes him to the cleaners. I want the Super taken down. And I'm falling in love with Porter Nash. A hopeless love, dang it, but a girl can sure appreciate his sense of humor and tact.

I think this is another of the reasons I like this series..

"The officer looked round, said, '...Were you close, guv?'

'Close?'

'You know, like regular contact?'

'I spoke to him ten years ago...maybe eleven.'

'Ah, so you weren't, then?'

Roberts turned his full look on the officer, said, 'No wonder you're a detective.' "

Then there's the moment when Roberts turns the doctor's oh-so-cute jokes back on him:

" 'Yes you are and, with care, there's no reason you shouldn't live another six months.' When he saw Roberts [sic] face, he said, 'Just kidding, a little medical levity. How often do I get to deliver good news?'

...

On his way out, Roberts said, 'Thank you. I'll do my damnest [sic] now to stop the malpractice suit.'

'What?'

'Just kidding, doc.' "

Great t-shirt: "I am a natural blond. Please talk slowly".

The Story

His brother brutally murdered, Roberts is on a tear and it's only Brant's warning that keeps him from destroying his career. Meanwhile, WPC Falls has been sent undercover with all sorts of ego strokes to find the rapist who is obviously gearing up to his first kill with PC McDonald as her backup.

It's Roberts and Brant's trip to Logan's real estate office that sets off the Masonic hand of protection reaching out to the Superintendent. Then there's the advice Brant gives the new girl, Cohen, about subduing drunks—"Don't get too close". She'll pay attention next time. The Super's wife gets mugged for her Cartier watch and gets a Lorus slung at her...guess Brant'll get his watch back. Wait, he gets two back! Right after he helps his ex-wife's husband off a shoplifting charge.

Tommy Logan's party to celebrate pushing Roberts and Brant off his case is loaded. Loaded with a band he's holding hostage to play for him. The threat of acid being thrown at the singer's model girlfriend is pretty powerful. The party the Superintendent is invited to and which Roberts and Brant crash. The same one the Super has cops protecting it.

The Characters

Detective Sergeant Brant has bugged the Superintendent's office so he can stay ahead of all the attempts to get rid of him. He's an amazingly brutal and corrupt cop yet he has moments of gold.

Chief Inspector Roberts has been suffering with cancer for the past 18 months. His wife left him. His career is in jeopardy. And his brother was just murdered. Superintendent is just another kind of corrupt. The wrong kind when he's protecting the criminals.

PC McDonald is a suck up, a jerk, and tapped by the Super to take Brant down. Who gets his comeuppance in, well, really, a kind way. When he deserves so much less. Kindness that is. **Porter Nash** is a new transfer. The rumor is that he's a pillow-biter, a poufster. The day he shows up at the station, there's graffiti scrawled all over the gents and ladies: "Sergeant Porter Nash sucks any dick". His response? Not *any* dick. He draws the line at Brant's. I'm gonna like him...so will you when you find out who wrote the graffiti!

WPC Falls has been through a lot so far. Attempted murder, a beating that resulted in a miscarriage. It was so bad she considered suicide but Roberts and Brant rescued her, stayed with her, brought her back. Now, she's helping to achieve a bit of revenge. **Rosie**. Well, Rosie was bitten by a wifebeater with AIDS. She couldn't take the stress of it. She's been replaced by **Sarah Cohen**. A nice, sweet girl. Gawd help her.

Tommy Logan is taking over the neighborhood crime king mantle from Bert and is definitely not an improvement. He makes Brant look like an angel. **Tina Logan** is Tommy's wife. Poor thing. He beats her just for living so it was no surprise when she fell in love with Tony Roberts. Poor Tony. **Harry** is Logan's lawyer. And a Mason. **Mick Ryan** is Logan's lieutenant. Another brute. Except for the face he shows Falls.

Barry Lewis is the Clapham Rapist whom WPC Falls has been sent undercover to find; "hey, they all bin askin' fer it".

Spiro Zacharopoulos owns the Spirit of Athens, a Greek taverna; he's also a snitch who runs into a bit of trouble. **Neville Smith** is a stockbroker and drives like an ass. He's about to pay for it when he flips off Tommy Logan. I must confess, as much as I despise Logan, I did rather enjoy his idea of punishment! Of course, it just set Logan's doom. Oh darn, not. **Paul Johnson** is Brant's ex-wife's husband. The one pulled in for shoplifting a tin of beans.

The Cover

The cover is stark with a glimpse of a fist holding a butcher's knife against a black background. I haven't a clue as to the why of the title.

Ian Mapp says

Instantly forgettable. The only things holding the later books together are the constant references to music and literature which is like talking to your friends about good entertainment.

These have none of those quips but are written in a similar style;

detailed
quick chapters
three descriptions

I seem to remember something about a rapist getting killed by one of the two cops and that's about it.

Like a fast food meal.

Sebastian says

One dark ride.

If you have been following this series it won't surprise you to know that this novel delivers another dark story where you can see wretchedness at its best. It is mesmerizing though that there are infrequent times where a glimmer of hope rises from the darkness and we are left to hope that maybe there will be redemption for some of these characters.

As the book starts we find out that the new big bag in town killed Roberts' brother. Luckily the victim held on long enough to let his brother know who did the deed and therefore, started a chain of events that take us on a wild ride through the city. Meanwhile, Falls is dealing with her lost baby and gets involved in the search of a rapist. Last but not least, Brant is up to his usual shenanigans, pissing everyone off, acting tough and getting involved in pretty much everything that is going on.

There is plenty of humor in this installment and the blend with the violence sets up a nice balance. As we get to know more and more about the main characters we find ourselves guessing some of their erratic behaviors. On top of that, we already know that the solution to the cases won't come from great detecting, but instead from luck or similar. I found out that trying to guess how the resolution will come about is as entertaining as trying to figure out whodunit in other books.

I have to say I am completely hooked by this series. In my eyes, Bruen is an absolute master!

Nik W says

super quick read - and fun, which seems to be the theme of the inspector brant line. there doesn't seem to be a major conflict - its more of a chronicle of daily chaos. it's cool - but leaves me a slight feeling of dissatisfaction that all things are *really* resolved - leaves me wanting. great series

Mkb says

These make me think of Elmore Leonard a little in that they are pretty stripped down. (Although, unlike Leonard, Bruen is not above using an occasional "he said".) I like the way that characters have complicated and ambiguous feelings about each other. It is a dirty world they inhabit though and one does not really have the feeling that the world has been put to right, as is often the case in detective/mystery novels. This would also be something that Bruen has in common with Leonard.

Ladiibbug says

#3 White Trilogy - Trilogy = first 3 books in the Inspector Brant Crime series

Cphe says

This novella opens with DI Roberts answering the phone to his dying brother James. On arrival at his brother's house he is in time to hear that it is the psychopath, Tommy Logan, who is the perpetrator. Tommy Logan may well have bitten off more than he can handle when he has to deal with DI Roberts and his partner Sergeant Brandt. Neither Brandt nor Roberts are known for their "by the book" attitude.

What follows are best described as snapshots of the the Irish police and criminals. Each tries to get the best of the other with often hilarious results. Often it is difficult to see who are the "bad guys". Sometimes there is very little comparison.

I've never read Ken Bruen before, although I have been recommended his work many times and I can clearly see why. I like his sense of deadpan humour in this novella. There is not a lot of mystery involved, but the writing is top notch and well worth a look..
