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On a late August night a young man is kicked to death outside a Dublin nightclub and celebration turns to devastation. The reverberations of that event, its genesis and aftermath, is the subject of this extraordinary story, stripping away the veneer of a generation of Celtic cubs, whose social and sexual mores are chronicled and dissected in this tract for our times. The victim, Conor Harris, his killers - three of them are charged with manslaughter - and the trial judge share common childhoods and schooling in the privileged echelons of south Dublin suburbia. The intertwining of these lives leaves their afflicted families in moral free fall as public exposure merges with private anguish and imploded futures.

Bad Day in Blackrock Details

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Author : Kevin Power

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From Reader Review Bad Day in Blackrock for online ebook

Paul says

I didn't enjoy this at all. Kevin Power saw a story on the telly, so he said "If I turn this into a book and change the names, while adding loads of "he might have", "maybe he", "we don't know" blah blah blah tabloid type nonsense, I can haz monies".

If he wrote this as a true story, there could have been the potential for a decent book, but he didn't. He has added so much nonsense, it reads like 250 page article in the Daily Star.

Jane Long says

A powerful book, based on a true life incident. Didn't realise until the end it was actually told by a brother of one of the accused. It makes you wonder about who think what's important.

Tittirossa says

L'ho comperato per affetto (ho abitato a Stillorgan vicino a Blackrock per mesi) ma ho scoperto un bel romanzo.

Il libro inizia con l'uccisione di un ragazzo all'uscita di una discoteca, da subito sappiamo chi sono gli aggressori (3 suoi amici/compagni di scuola), conosciamo la dinamica (3 calci mortali) e la motivazione (gelosia: fidanzata di uno ex fidanzata dell'altro).

Il libro si snoda capitolo dopo capitolo nel tentativo di capire perché si sia arrivata a questo tragico avvenimento, analizzando le cause sociali ed economiche (le poche righe sul boom economico e sui suoi effetti sono notevoli per profondità e per capacità di centrare perfettamente causa-effetto), personali, emotive, familiari, di contesto, etc.

Ogni elemento viene sviscerato, pensieri e motivazioni, caratteri e attitudini. Ma viene fatto con una pietas che coinvolge tutti i (disgraziati) protagonisti. E con uno stile di scrittura notevole per la capacità di non eccedere mai sul côté sentimentale, e per una oggettività narrativa ancora più eclatante quando si arriva alle ultime pagine e si rileva la figura del narratore. Ottimo libro.

Slávek Rydval says

Příběh v knize, inspirovaný skutečnou událostí, vypráví o smrti jednoho ze studentů z prestižní školy v Dublinu. Byl zavražděn třemi kopy do hlavy. Třemi kopy vedenými třemi jinými studenty z téže školy. Všichni z bohatých rodin, všichni v té chvíli opití.

Kniha je ukázkou života dublinské mládeže „z lepší společnosti“, která má na starosti akorát chlastání, píchaní a kupování luxusních věcí. Příjedně z mnoha pijatik se vči zvrtnou a jeden ze studentů je ukopán k smrti.

Jak vypráv?ní postupuje, dozvídáme se mnoho podrobností z minulosti nejen ob?ti, ale i úto?ník?. Vyprav?? se snaží najít d?vod, pro? k vražd? vlastn? došlo a co se toho ve?era všechno stalo. Zda se k n?jakému zá?v?ru opravdu dostane, je spíše na ?tená?ov? posouzení.

Celý text je protkán jistou beznad?jí a tou to i kon?í. Život (tedy ne všech zú?astn?ných) jde dál v zab?hnutých kolejích a lidé se chovají, jako by se vlastn? nic nestalo.

Autor za svou prvotinu získal Rooneyho cenu za irskou literaturu a dostal se do užšího výb?ru Irish Book Awards.

Krátká ukázka (tak p?íšerný p?eklad je moje práce, kniha v ?eštin? dosud nevyšla):

Do této chvíle Stephen tém?? dopil celou basu Stelly a p?lku lahve vodky. Clodagh m?la za sebou n?kolik lahví limonády s alkoholem. Nakonec zašeptala Stephenovi do ucha: „Tak m? už kone?n? p?efikněš?“

Hledali volný pokoj, ale žádný nenašli. A ob? koupelny byly již obsazené. Stephen nakonec našel zam?ené dve?e na konci chodby a ramenem je vyrazil. Poté se s Clodagh vyspal v posteli Barryho otce.

Mezitím se Barry v kuchyni rozhlížel kolem sebe a zeptal se: „Kde je Stephen a Clodagh?“ Znovu se rozhlížel. Pak vlítul do otcovy ložnice. „Co to má kurva znamenat?“ za?val. „Žádal jsem t? o jednu jedinou v?c, Steve. Jednu jedinou zasranou v?c!“

Andrew Murphy says

It took me a while to get into this book, mainly due to my dislike of the characters. However, once I made my piece with my distaste, I started to get really interested in these people's lives.

Really liked the reveal of whom the narrator was. It made perfect sense, and added to my overall opinion of the book.

Mark Nolan says

This is the book that became the movie 'What Richard Saw'. A great insight into southside Dublin and its private school culture. Essential reading for any northsider or culchie!

Stacey says

One word...Horrid...

hcelvis says

Richard, Barry und Stephen sind Studenten eines Colleges in Dublin, gehören zur traditionsreichen und

finanziell besser gestellten Oberschicht, spielen Rugby und trinken gern mal einen. Am 31. August feiern und zechen sie genauso wie Conor, ebenfalls Rugbyspieler vom College, den sie noch aus ihrer Kindheit kennen, in einem Pub. Als dieser schliesst, geschieht das Unfassbare. Die drei sowie noch einige weitere Jungs prügeln auf Conor ein und treten ihn, als er reglos am Boden liegt. Später im Krankenhaus stirbt er.

Anders als andere Romane stellt "Die letzte Nacht des Sommers" gleich zu Beginn klar, was passiert ist, wer getötet wurde und von wem. Inhalt des Romandebüts von Kevin Power ist, wie es dazu kam, in welchen sozialen Gefügen Täter und Opfer aufwuchsen, welche Rolle Traditionen ihrer Herkunft, Eltern, Schule spielten. Dies baut eine ungeahnte Spannung auf, man liest wie in einem Tatsachenbericht, der voller Mitgefühl ist und dennoch eine gewisse – auch nötige – Distanz bietet. Fassungslos verfolgt man die Untersuchung des Falls, die Gerichtsverhandlung und wie die Familien sowohl des mutmasslichen Haupttäters als auch des Opfers damit umgingen.

"Die letzte Nacht des Sommers" basiert auf einer wahren Geschichte, daher sorgte der Roman bei seinem Erscheinen in Irland für ordentlichen Wirbel. Kevin Power setzte das Thema fesselnd, aber keineswegs reißen um und schuf damit ein außergewöhnliches, sehr empfehlenswertes Buch.

Alby Blazo says

"This is the worst thing that ever happened to us. This is the only story I will ever be able to tell." With these words, Power's story caught me. The reader is whisked along by an unreliable narrator who refuses to identify himself until the very end, who repeatedly tells us that he has no answers and wasn't even present for many of the events, indicating that much of the story is second- or third-hand information. The facts are laid out in a meandering path that slowly adds up to an uncertain future based on an uncertain past.

We all retell, over and over, our own worst story to anyone who will listen. We replay all the variations leading up to those events, examining motivations and nuances in a search for meaning. Reading someone else's obsession over an 'incident' reflects our own practices back to us. Powers did a magnificent job holding up a mirror for society and the reader.

Aine says

A fictionalised telling of events similar to a news story that unfolded in the days of the Celtic Tiger. A young man was kicked and beaten to death in the early hours of the morning outside a Dublin nightclub. What made this drunken fracas different from the routine drunken attacks of a Dublin weekend were two things: the three primary suspects were the children of some of Ireland's wealthiest and most well-connected citizens, and a code of silence descended among the some-two-dozen witnesses shielding the suspects for weeks.

A contemporary of the four boys narrates the story, imperfectly by his own admission. Rebelling against the code of silence, he opines about how private schooling, rugby culture and D4 parenting contributed to the attitudes and perspectives of all four protagonists. A difficult read into events that feel both familiar and hidden.

Helen says

Loved this book. Bleak but insightful look at the lives of the children of the Irish middle class. Based on a real event, this got embroiled in a bit of controversy but don't get distracted by trying to match the fictional events to the real-life ones - this book is too important for that. This is also the author's first book and while it has a little of that first-book clunkiness you sometimes find with young writers, it's a real achievement. Reminds me a little of the work of Jay McInerney and Bret Easton Ellis but the Dublin 4 setting brings the nihilism and narcissism right home. Never mind the journalistic comment on the wrongs of the Celtic Tiger, Kevin Power nails that sense of entitlement which allows people to think that the law somehow doesn't apply to them.

Scott says

Have to admit i was quite confused about midway when i realised i had no idea who the person was who was narrating this story, thought i might have missed it from the start, but all becomes clear by the end. Wasn't quite sure what to expect from this one, it follows from the death of a young man in an altercation outside a nightclub. Why did the fight take place, who exactly was involved, what happens next? It explores the privilege lives of the moneyed elite of South Dublin.

It was a bit short, and i had hoped for more from the trial side of it. But as the story reveals, the narrator can only tell you so much, they explain their reasons for this, but it was interesting reading more about how the other half live, and the effects such a thing can have even on them.

Greg says

Bad Day in Blackrock tells the story of a young man kicked to death in a fight outside a Dublin nightclub. Power's narrator recounts these events and their aftermath from the viewpoints of the different players in the tragedy. Those involved in the fracas, their friends, the families of the victims and those of the accused all share the spotlight. Power is not judgmental; none of his characters are out-and-out villains, and few are blameless, either.

The book is a cold, hard look at privilege and the old school tie, and what happens when the people who have always benefited from that system find themselves facing the grim reality of the police, the law courts and social ostracism. It also explores the complex gradations of privileged society, where some are more equal than others, but few can really explain why.

This is a taut, beautifully-written crime novel where Power unfolds the details in his plot by examining his characters' actions, rather than having some kind of investigator character uncover it for us. A terrific read.

Seán Rafferty says

It's an incisive dissection of the 'privileged' young Irish adult. I note that many have said that it is non-judgemental which is nonsense. Although written in a spare, lean style and his language avoids tagging his characters with judgemental adverbs or adjectives, his disdain and anger at these 'goys' and girls is palpable.

He very effectively undermines a culture that is at the heart of the Irish legal and banking system. The old school tie mentality is exposed for what it is and the 'rugger bugger' culture of so many young males is expertly portrayed.

The 'goys' enjoy their association with Ross O'Carroll Kelly and quite happily chortle about it but I would imagine that they wouldn't enjoy the manure that is expertly heaped on them here.

It's depressing to realise that nearly 10 years later and very little has changed. Think of David Drumm and the boys and their 'my balls are bigger than yours' phone calls in Anglo Irish Bank.

Andrew Mcq says

This book is a fictionalised re-telling of a real life event, the killing of a young man outside a Dublin nightclub. Power has re-worked many of the details, something which has irked some reviewers. However, the established facts have been well documented, and by distancing himself from them Power has, in my opinion, allowed himself to concentrate on the context rather than on journalistic reporting.

The key element therefore is the picture painted of the privileged world of southside school and college Dublin, where the younger generation grow in pampered impunity and the older generation have an insular and untouchable comfort. Power has observed this first hand and captures the nuances succinctly. In many ways this story is like a dark reflection of the satirical Ross O'Carroll-Kelly comedies, which themselves are an astute observation of the same social class.

Most chilling in some ways is not the actual killing, but the attitude of 'we'll get this sorted out' because 'this type of thing doesn't happen to people like us', something which will strike a chord with many Irish readers. (I recall this being a central line of thought in *Bonfire of the Vanities*).

I found the book engaging and well constructed; as a minor quibble there were some lapses in terminology in the descriptions of rugby (although perhaps Power's narrator is distancing himself from the central part the sport plays in the society depicted).

There were times when I found myself revisiting the real life facts to check the parallels, but it will read as a self-contained story to those not familiar with the true life events.

This has much to recommend it to those who are familiar with the Dublin social classes, but also to a wider book-loving audience.
