



Purgatory

Ken Bruen

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Recovering from the severe mental and physical wounds inflicted from his recent past, Jack Taylor has finally found a modicum of peace. He has managed to kick the myriad substances that have had a stranglehold over his painful life. Yet this fragile existence is threatened when a vigilante killer begins targeting the scum of Galway, signing mysterious notes with the moniker 'C 33'. The killer addresses these cryptic letters to Jack, trying to goad the former cop into joining the murderous spree and to help cleanse Galway.

While Jack must unravel who this demented killer is, he is also brought into the fold of an enigmatic tech billionaire who has been buying up massive amounts of property in Galway, seemingly in the hopes of offering this downtrodden city a better future. Yet if Jack has learned one thing living in Ireland, it's that people who outwardly claim to be on the side of righteousness are likely harboring far more nefarious motives beneath the surface.

With the help of his friends, former dealer-turned-zen master Stewart and dogged police sergeant Ridge, Jack is determined to track down C 33, even if it jeopardizing his livelihood, his friends, and even the remaining shreds of his own sanity. C 33 is Bruen at his best: lyrical, brutal, and ceaselessly suspenseful.

Purgatory Details

Date : Published November 4th 2013 by Mysterious Press (first published August 1st 2013)

ISBN : 9780802126078

Author : Ken Bruen

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From Reader Review Purgatory for online ebook

Tom Mc Kenna says

3.5 stars rounded up to 4 stars.

Diane S ? says

Jack Taylor is one of the most original characters in fiction. He is an ex-guard, a crusty and dark and cynical individual, a good friend to a few, bad news to those who cross him or the ones he loves, he loves to read and a friend keeps his apartment stocked with novels. Though he once had every bad habit known to man, in this novel he has quit drinking his beloved Jameson's, in fact he has quit drinking period, he has quit smoking and other bad habits that threatened to shorten his life. He has quit taking cases, but of course, someone close to him gets him involved. Fate has other plans for him.

Not everyone will like Bruen's staccato style of writing, his witty observations and one-liners, his irreverence but those of us who do hope this author keeps writing these novels for a long time. In fact I liked one of his lines so much I just have to repeat it, Jack Taylor is a recovering Catholic. She laughed, Jesus wept.

ARC from publisher.

Monica says

Ah...Ken Bruen...what the hell are you doing with my beloved Jack Taylor! Seriously. Bruen writes poetry. Simple truth. The words he writes just flow across and down the pages so smoothly. Vicious, harsh words...blended with the nuances of what it's like to be Jack Taylor...man with a thousand demons in his soul. I couldn't read fast enough, couldn't be shocked often enough. Ah...Ken Bruen...never stop!

Liz says

I've been a fan of this series for years, although sometimes I have to ask myself why that is. It's been over a year since the last Jack Taylor book I read and I should have remembered to go into it guarding myself from the one-two punch. I was truly pummeled more than once this go around.

I don't think I've ever read a more tortured, self-destructive protagonist, ever. This guy is bitter, angry, ferociously violent, and he has no compunctions about killing or maiming, just as long as one is rightly deserving of it. And then he'll stop into the nearest church to light candles for his dead. And slip 50 Euros to every homeless person he encounters. This is Jack Taylor. Boozer. User. Demons and all. I end up crying a little for him every time although he would surely tell me to "fuck off with my pity."

Ken Bruen's writing is very sparse, almost poetic and I sometimes find it challenging to interpret (let's just say I'm no English major). It does make me a more conscientious reader since I have to pay close attention

to each line. Read one of these books and you'll know what I mean!

This is not necessarily the best Taylor book but I'm giving it 3.5 stars because it really yanked me in and hung me out to dry. I don't require a happy ending as long as a book sufficiently moves me, and this one did. Someday I hope that we will have the answer to the question... is Jack Taylor redeemable?

Ed says

Jack Taylor, an alcoholic ex-Guarda who does favors for his assorted friends and acquaintances drifts along here, while this 10th book in an otherwise excellent series, fades away like Galway sunshine. I have no problem with author Ken Bruen's style of using one word paragraphs or sub referencing everything from TV's "Breaking Bad" to quoting Oscar Wilde and every other source he could find, but not at the expense of the plot structure in this sluggish, bleak slice of Irish noir. I get it, Ken Bruen's a smart guy but I had a justifiable expectation of Jack executing his unique brand of vigilante justice on the serial killer C33 thus satisfying my American desire for fictional justice. I just hope Jack Taylor does not board the bus for an unmagical mystery tour with Jack Reacher and Harry Bosch. He's much too dynamic a character - and so were they!.....Ed

Frank says

This is the first novel by Ken Bruen that I have ever read and he has written many. He is an extremely well educated Irish writer who has received numerous awards for his writing. However, I personally do not care for Bruen's cryptic, abrupt prose. To say it is sparse is being polite, that is for certain and I don't think it would be every ones cup of tea; certainly not mine. I do enjoy a good Noir novel and Bruen's character Jack Taylor does have the potential for becoming a standout in this genre but, he is not there yet as far as I am concerned. Jack Taylor threatens mayhem often but, very seldom carries through in the true Noir manner. I would prefer a Connelly, LeHane, Pelecanos, Block or Child over a Bruen any day.

Raven says

Ken Bruen, being a personal favourite of mine, would mean that I could wax lyrical for hours about Purgatory, the tenth outing for Jack Taylor, a man destined for melancholy punctuated by acts of random violence. I could draw attention to the pitch perfect characterisation of Jack, with his regular mounting and dismounting of the wagon of physical pleasures, the booze and the fags, and his less than harmonious forays into the pleasures of the flesh. Always the wrong woman Jack. I could highlight the intrinsic morality buried deep in his soul, that manifests itself at times in observations of an almost lyrical beauty and his steadfast engagement with books, culture and current events that Bruen effortlessly weaves into the plot. At the same time it would be foolish to ignore the dark side of our erstwhile hero though, and the black places he inhabits mentally, and gets taken to, in the demands of this case all beautifully rendered by the sparsity yet richness of Bruen's language which ebbs and flows with laconic perfection throughout Jack's travails. I could mention the twisted, yet ultimately affectionate, relationship between Jack and his native Galway, as the seedier aspects of this community and those that wish to exploit it, come to bear in this tale of avarice and murder...

Or I could keep it simple in a homage to Jack himself with his honest, sweary nature and gravitation to the simple pronouncement. Purgatory? Feckin' great.

Yasheve says

Hate reading books where the writer spends more energy on style than storytelling... Then read reviews of how clever he was

Richard T. says

Jack Taylor is a tremendous character. A former policeman turned private detective, Jack has the wonder sense of Irish irony. In this work, Jack is on the wagon, as only he can be, having given up booze and cigarettes. His existence is disrupted when when he receives a letter from a vigilante with the moniker C33. Having decided to eliminate the scum of Galway, C33 has appealed to Jack's sense of justice, asking if he would care to help. When he finally accepts that C33 is for real, Jack is determined to bring the killer to justice. There are some richly detailed supporting characters here, but this is a Jack-centric universe and readers should be glad that it is.

Bettie? says

Description: *Recovering from the severe mental and physical wounds inflicted from his recent past, Jack Taylor has finally found a modicum of peace. He has managed to kick the myriad substances that have had a stranglehold over his painful life. Yet this fragile existence is threatened when a vigilante killer begins targeting the scum of Galway, signing mysterious notes with the moniker 'C 33'. The killer addresses these cryptic letters to Jack, trying to goad the former cop into joining the murderous spree and to help cleanse Galway.*

While Jack must unravel who this demented killer is, he is also brought into the fold of an enigmatic tech billionaire who has been buying up massive amounts of property in Galway, seemingly in the hopes of offering this downtrodden city a better future. Yet if Jack has learned one thing living in Ireland, it's that people who outwardly claim to be on the side of righteousness are likely harboring far more nefarious motives beneath the surface.

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Minty McBunny says

Sad to see a series that started strong and reached such dizzying heights of excellence lose its freshness and its bite. The last two books have felt very forced, unrealistic and dispassionate. Am I disappointed?

Am I \$&*.

Robert Intrago says

The satire is dark, the irreverence is outstanding, the violence over the edge, the dialogue short and to the point and the humor is edgy. Another Taylor story that for us devotees of Bruen delivers a fix for us that long for his books. On the other hand, it does not reach the levels of "Head Hunter" or the "The Devil". The story is typical Bruen. An individual acting as a vigilante is killing bad actors that somehow have beaten the justice system. Taylor is trying to reform, for the 40th time, when he receives an invite from the vigilante to participate in the execution of future killings. The usual cast of characters participate in the story which grows darker and more philosophical the deeper the mystery goes. Enjoy.

Still says

Hell -it's Ken Bruen.

I love the guy's writing.

If you enjoyed the last nine Jack Taylor novels, this is more of same. Only it just stops sudden like.

I think someone might have removed the last couple of chapters from my edition.

Or maybe it's like the final season of *Breaking Bad* and broken into two parts.

Which would make this ...Part *One*?

2nd time around

I explained somewhere why I had to re-read this.

You could maybe Google it but who cares?

Bruen is never less than entertaining and his novels in the Jack Taylor series are compelling yet fun.

Sometimes they can make one a bit weepy eyed.

I'm having to re-read the last 4-5 novels because ... neglected to buy one entry in the series that forms the glue in the continuation (serialization?) of the Jack Taylor tribulations and had to restart the series with this entry.

This is "fun" reading and eases past like highway markers on a state highway. Highway markers fail to haunt a reader like these novels (this the night of the following day -absolutely no idea what the preceding jive was supposed to have meant. sorry)

The ending of this one is a real pisser.

Demands the reader follow through and read the next entry in the series.

If you're invested in the series by this point (either #10 or #11), you're cursed to hunt down the follow-up.

Damned if I can articulate my thoughts on this one.

It's a good one.

No better than the previous entry; no better than the next- but no one writes with the same voice as Ken Bruen.

Jacky has a new girl friend - an Oscar Wilde fiend.
His friend Stewart embarks on an uncharacteristic vigilante-hunt.
Really weird stuff happens.

Highest recommendation.

Bumping this one up to 5 stars on account.
On account of I've had one glass too many.

Anthony Vacca says

Faithful readers of this series know that a new entry into the life and times of Galwegian PI Jack Taylor can be a dubious affair, especially as later entries settled into a predictable - albeit offbeat - formula. Some kind of crazy starts offing the good people of Galway but Jack's not interested. Jack's two allies - a lesbian police officer and a former drug dealer turned Zen master - feel compelled to stop the killer but Jack's not interested. What Jack is interested in is drinking and drugs, or not drinking and no drugs, resenting his long dead mom, reading crime novels, watching Breaking Bad, feeling sorry for himself, bemoaning the loss of moral order in a modern world and occasionally getting laid with a mentally unstable American. Taylor will be guilted into small jobs for no pay by the Church while still swearing non-involvement in whatever is passing as a main plotline. Eventually, random chance or tragedy will force Taylor to confront the antagonist in some, often violent, fashion. And by book's end Jack Taylor is as miserable as he was on page one.

But you don't read Ken Bruen for his well-oiled plots. There's a beat-poetical style to his throwaway one paragraph sentences and sentence fragments. But Bruen is not a consistent nor subtle writer, so aspects of his plots and characters can take on overly cartoonish casts. This clashes against the grace notes of melancholy that Bruen can still occasionally hit when relaying the thoughts of Jack Taylor and his many woes.

This is a stronger entry than the last few, featuring some serious hits to Taylor's dwindling social circle. While a hip, Americanese-speaking billionaire buys up Galway, a deranged killer who dubs their gender-neutral self C33 goes about killing "bad" people and sending Jack and his friends taunting letters. These two characters fuel what plot there is and make for some interesting interactions between the gracelessly aging Taylor and the representatives of "New Ireland." Bruen portrays his hero as the eternally hopeless loser, in often interesting ways, but the past five novels have all resembled one another a little too much. Maybe what this series needs is an entry with a focused Jack Taylor investigating a mystery; but in Bruen's bleak view of the world and human nature, that may never happen.

Josh says

Purgatory feels like a tipping point in the Jack Taylor series, one which looks set to transition the tainted yet endearing protagonist from one phase of his life to another darker phase - which is saying something given Jack sure hasn't had it easy to this point.

The focus is on a mysterious vigilante working under the name C33 who tries court Jack and Stewart into

joining their murderous past time to rid criminals and underworld types from the street.

Then there's Jack's interesting love/hate working relationship with a sly billionaire named Reardon who hires Jack to find out who's leaking trade secrets to his competitors. Jack not only gets handed a bundle of cash for his troubles but is also introduced to a femme fatale in Kelly, a take-charge character who has Jack falling for her in jig time; she's Reardon's assistant and plays a large part in Purgatory; one of the freshest new characters to enter the series in a while.

Purgatory has a number of jaw dropping scenes adding fuel to a series full of jaw dropping moments. Long time readers of Jack Taylor won't forget this book in a long time.
