



Breakfast on Pluto

By Patrick McCabe

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Breakfast on Pluto By Patrick McCabe

Patrick McCabe, already acclaimed as one of the most gifted Irish novelist writing today, is increasingly being recognized internationally as a writer of true literary stature, with an ever-growing popular readership.

Breakfast on Pluto, his lyrical and haunting new novel, became a number one bestseller in Ireland, stayed on the bestseller list for months, and was nominated for the Booker Prize, one of the world's most prestigious literary awards. It was the sole Irish novel to be so honored, and McCabe is that rare writer who has had his work twice nominated, having been previously selected in 1992 for his classic novel *The Butcher Boy*, which won the *Irish Times/Aer Lingus Irish Literature Prize*, was recently released as a major motion picture, and joined *Breakfast on Pluto* on the Irish bestseller lists.

With wonderful delicacy and subtle insight and intimation, McCabe creates Mr. Patrick "Pussy" Braden, the enduringly and endearingly hopeful hero(ine) whose gutty survival and yearning quest for love resonate in and drive the glimmering, agonizing narrative in which the Troubles are a distant and immediate echo and refrain.

As *Breakfast on Pluto* opens, her ladyship, resplendent in housecoat and head scarf, reclines in Kilburn, London, writing her story for the elusive psychiatrist Dr. Terence, paring her fingernails as she reawakens the truth behind her life and the chaos of long-ago days in a city filled with hatred. Twenty years ago, she escaped her hometown of Tyreelin, Ireland, fleeing her foster mother, Whisker--prodigious Guinness-guzzler, human chimney--and her mad household (endless doorstep babas!), to begin a new life in London. There, in blousey tops and satin miniskirts, she plies her trade, often risking life and limb among the flotsam and jetsam who fill the bars of Piccadilly Circus ("You want love? That what you want, orphaned boy without a home? Then die for it! Die! Die, sweet Irish!). But suave businessmen and lonely old women are not the only dangers that threaten Pussy's existence. It is the 1970s, and fear haunts the streets of London and Belfast as the critical mass of history builds up, and Pussy is inevitably drawn into a maelstrom of violence and tragedy destined to blow his fragile soul asunder.

Brilliant, startling, profound, and soaring, *Breakfast on Pluto* combines lightness

and darkness, laughter and pain, with such sensitivity, directness, and restraint that the dramatic impact reverberates in our minds and hearts long, long after the initial impression.

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Breakfast on Pluto By Patrick McCabe Bibliography

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Patrick McCabe hit pay dirt with his third novel, *The Butcher Boy*, which was short-listed for the 1992 Booker Prize, filmed by Neil Jordan, and acclaimed as "a masterpiece of literary ventriloquism." In his fifth, *Breakfast on Pluto*, also on the Booker shortlist, McCabe produces another inimitable voice to amuse and infuriate, mimicking perfectly the overwrought, near-hysterical style of a character whose emotional processes were cruelly halted somewhere around the age of 14, and whose tale requires English literature's highest concentration of exclamation marks.

Patrick "Pussy" Brady is recording her memoirs for the mysterious Dr. Terence, and it's quite some story. After randy Father Bernard gets carried away with his temporary housekeeper, a dead ringer for Mitzi Gaynor, the result is Patrick Braden, abandoned on a doorstep in a Rinsobox and condemned to a foster home with the alcoholic Hairy Braden. Escape comes in fantasies of Vic Damone and the occasional glitzy frock, and eventually, inevitably, the rebaptised "Pussy" heads for life as a transvestite rent boy on Piccadilly's Meat Rack. But this is not just Pussy's story; as hitherto-muffled paramilitary violence blows up in her face, Pussy falls apart, providing a vivid and unsettling final comment on the human price paid in 1970s Ireland. --Alan Stewart

From Publishers Weekly

McCabe is a master ventriloquist. In *The Butcher Boy* he projects the voice of a brash, fast-talking, murderous boy in order to tell a story of divisive tension in a small Irish town. In *The Dead School* the liberalization of modern Dublin came to readers in the voice of a doddering headmaster. Here, in this Booker Prize finalist, McCabe walks far out on a limb: in the voice of Patrick "Pussy" Braden, a male transvestite fathered by a priest and brought up by foster parents, he tells of life in a violent Irish border town in the early 1970s and an exiled existence in London. (Imagine Ru Paul discoursing on "the Troubles" over a top-40 soundtrack.) Of course, they are more Pussy's troubles than his countrymen's, but Pussy is perhaps the most unabashed narrator in Irish writing since Beckett's Malone. He's nothing if not full of style: "And who was it within my darkened cellbox upon whom mine eyes did gladly fall as there I sat sky-high a-twiddle, ringed around by stars and planets?" Pussy's tale, brief but never boring, is structured as the story told to his doctor in 56 tiny chapters with theatrical asides. Stigmatized as the bastard son of the town priest whose "starched vestments... were partly responsible for his son's attraction to the airy apparel of the opposite sex," Pussy flees to England, where his transvestitism looks suspiciously like a disguise (his old IRA connections are of no help in this regard) as he moves about Picadilly Circus, picking up men, falling in love and fantasizing various bombing schemes to avenge his own sufferings and that of his down-and-out friends?Charlie, who falls prey to drink, and Irwin, killed by the IRA for informing. Comically self-absorbed, Pussy is nonetheless charming company, and McCabe manages adroitly to paint a tender portrait of lives destined to be lost to history?apolitical folk welcome neither in Catholic Ireland nor in the U.K. while the sectarian war rages on. A recently penned preface reveals the author's hope that this time is over and that a new tolerance of difference will take hold. (Dec.) FYI: The title comes from a 1969 chart-making song in the U.K.

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From Library Journal

It's fair to say that McCabe's Irish novels can be termed tragedies; they usually center on hapless protagonists who are victims of their lifestyle, impulses, or just foolish dreams. The pedigree of his latest "hero" isn't promising either; he's Patrick "Pussy" Braden, a transvestite prostitute and bastard son of a local priest. Patrick's life and times are revealed through a diary he keeps as therapy for his psychic wounds. He struggles

with his family history, loses a friend to the IRA, and falls in and out of love. As tragedies go, though, this is a light one; most of the violence is emotional rather than physical, and McCabe allows Pussy a glimmer of hope for a better life at the end. Nominated for 1998's Booker Prize and a No. 1 best seller in Ireland, this may not be the masterpiece the publisher is claiming, but McCabe (*The Butcher Boy*, LJ 5/1/93) certainly has a talent for creating memorable characters who are worth spending some time with, warts and all. For public libraries.

-?Marc A. Kloszewski, *Indiana Free Lib.*, PA

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alberta Sanchez:

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Shannon Silva:

The event that you get from Breakfast on Pluto could be the more deep you looking the information that hide into the words the more you get enthusiastic about reading it. It does not mean that this book is hard to comprehend but Breakfast on Pluto giving you excitement feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in selected way that can be understood by means of anyone who read the idea because the author of this publication is well-known enough. This kind of book also makes your own personal vocabulary increase well. So it is easy to understand then can go together with you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We recommend you for having that Breakfast on Pluto instantly.

Linda Fite:

Are you kind of stressful person, only have 10 or maybe 15 minute in your moment to upgrading your mind ability or thinking skill actually analytical thinking? Then you are experiencing problem with the book in comparison with can satisfy your short period of time to read it because all of this time you only find book that need more time to be learn. Breakfast on Pluto can be your answer given it can be read by an individual who have those short extra time problems.

Kyle Smallwood:

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