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Home
Bliss
Carpentaria
Truth
The Broken Shore
Monkey Grip
Vernon God Little
Voss
The Riders
Seven Types of Ambiguity
My Brother Jack
Big Little Lies
The Tree of Man
The Man Who Loved Children
Tim
The Turning
That Deadman Dance

Posted on 09 May 2019 By Michael Nelson

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You know those dreams where you re running through quicksand trying to catch a bus that you just can t get to That s what reading this is like. Funny rather than witty My Gay Men s

Press edition from the 1980s has an illuminating introduction clarifying the book's autobiographical basis. It was, apparently, his own experience that the author portrayed in the character of Nicholas, a young journalist whose sexual favours Patrick, a fantastically rich man in his 40s, courts through not so subtle financial inducements. The kept boy's perspective comes across so effectively in Nicholas's musings that at times I found myself almost persuaded by it. So much so, in fact, that when I saw a picture of the man on whom the character of Patrick was modelled, the handsome Peter Watson, my first reaction was to wonder why Nicholas played hard to get.

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Merito della copertina se ho notato questo libro fra i tanti che affollano gli scaffali di una grande libreria della città e a questa bella copertina di chi l'immagine. Non c'è scritto nulla nel libro ho scoperto che corrispondeva anche un contenuto potenzialmente interessante, perciò, dopo qualche mese di attesa che comparisse nel mercato dell'usato, ecco che il libro è stato acquistato, letto in poco più di un pomeriggio e ora recensito. Questo romanzo uscì anonimo nel 1958, quando ancora nel Regno Unito l'omosessualità era considerata reato. Oggi sappiamo che l'autore fu il tale Michael Nelson. Si potrebbe pensare a un coraggioso libro di denuncia e di rivendicazione di diritti, in un periodo in cui, come spiegato nella Prefazione di Riccardo Reim, l'opinione pubblica britannica si stava seriamente interrogando se fosse lecito regolare la morale privata dell'individuo con gli strumenti della legge. Invece, gli avvertimenti del curatore e la lettura dello stesso romanzo ci fanno subito capire che non siamo di fronte a nulla di così nobile. A Room in Chelsea Square un romanzo che ha voluto astutamente sfruttare il clima per un tema così scottante e

attuale in origine il protagonista, Patrick, era una donna e che semplicemente si fa beffe crudeli di tutto e di tutti, con un cinismo molto compiaciuto Reim lo definisce farneticamente gay e al tempo stesso omofobo Tanto vale, quindi, leggerlo con il proposito di farsi quattro cattivissime e politicamente scorrettissime risate, confidando nel pi classico e tagliente del british humour e senza dar peso alle esagerazioni pi kitsch. Il ricchissimo, elegantissimo, spudoratissimo, frocissimo e non pi giovanissimo Patrick ha messo gli occhi sul bel Nicholas, appena arrivato a Londra dal paesello con l'aspirazione di diventare giornalista Nel suo tentativo di seduzione utilizza ogni mezzo possibile per vincere l'ostinata resistenza della sua preda, dai regali pi costosi e pacchiani fino alle promesse di appoggio per la sua carriera, manipolando abilmente con la forza del suo denaro e con astuzia machiavellica tutto il suo circolo di amici, ex amanti, protetti per giungere all'obiettivo Nicholas non cos ingenuo da non capire perfettamente cosa il suo mecenate desidera in cambio, e si rende conto benissimo di dipendere in tutto e per tutto dal favore di Patrick, ma i suoi continui tentennamenti, dovuti di volta in volta agli scrupoli morali, all'orgoglio ferito o semplicemente alla sua dabbenaggine, rischiano di fargli perdere tutto, perch , per quanto la sua fortuna sia nelle sue mani, non affatto lui a condurre il gioco La conclusione quanto mai perfida il lettore si aspetterebbe o la rovina completa di Nicholas che cede finalmente alle lusinghe del suo tentatore o il suo riscatto, e invece Nelson pensa a un finale molto pi ambiguo e cinico Proprio quando Nicholas, che non affatto un santo, finalmente si decide, si trova costretto a ritirarsi, da solo, nell'umile cameretta a Chelsea Square che ha preso in affitto e che fino ad allora, ospitato in alberghi di lusso, non aveva mai raggiunto, invece di partire per le Bermuda con Patrick, che l'ha scaricato per un altro giovanotto pi disponibile, a rimuginare sul fatto che, se avesse giocato meglio le sue carte, non avrebbe perso quell'occasione Il finale l'ho nascosto, ma in pratica tutto rivelato nella stessa Prefazione se non volete saperlo, leggetela solo dopo aver letto il romanzo. Non certo un capolavoro anzi, le situazioni sono un po' ripetitive e la struttura tenue , ma scorre via alla velocit della luce e regala un pomeriggio di gradevole intrattenimento scacciapensieri. 3,5 5http

moloch981.wordpress.com 2013 0 Boo. Got to 46% and happily gave up. Lines like That wasn't first prize for the largest marrow at the Four Square Gospellers flower show make no flipping sense. The book is described as camp Maybe in the 1940s when it was written and everyone was still being rationed and rebuilding after the war this was camp, but not now The Green Carnation is a much better example of camp in a much older book Choose that one instead. I couldn't keep the characters straight, didn't care what happened to them, they were all spoiled and ridiculous with no redeeming features. Boo. A sort of Dangerous Liaisons via The Boys in the Band excuse the anachronisms , this short work tells of rich and manipulative Patrick and his select victims and associates in post WWII London Nicholas is his new target and Patrick sets him up as his new boy toy, but Nicholas is deservedly hesitant Patrick toys with his colleagues about starting a magazine Among those he enlists are the eccentric fashion, wine cuisine snob Ronnie, the bumbling painter

Christopher who, despite his self deprecation and poverty, is the only character with a career or any artistic talent and Christopher's muse, the irritable Michael Patrick toys with everyone's goals and plans with the magazine idea, whips them into a frenzy of backstabbing and conniving, until, well, a few unfortunate things happen, some revolving around Michael's plans for Lily, Ronnie's subservient paramour one of few characters who lacks ulterior motives. The historic relevance of Nelson's semi autobiographical tale in the canon of gay literature leaves it a brief and often overlooked work That it dramatizes the sheer bitchiness of desperate gay men and their trade, without any grandstanding pleas for compassion, may leave some readers cold But it's of an honest and cruel depiction of the desperation of the poor, the decadence of the rich, and how deception as a hobby leaves some damaged with a harsh lesson learned.

THE MOUNTAIN COUNTRY



Published in 1958 but written much earlier It is set pre WWII A period piece perhaps The characters are generally effete hedonists who people a world that I rather hope doesn't exist any Patrick is Rich Queen Bitch par excellence There are other characters here who rank pretty high up on the obnoxiousness list too This is the sort of book that can give a queen a bad name..but it is probably worth reading for the times in which it is set and the particular breed depicted here There are shades of Mapp and Lucia I guess.As I was reading it I kept thinking of the line attributed to the late Queen Mother She supposedly greeted a hissy fit of a racket proceeding from her kitchen one morning by standing in the doorway, and saying very quietly When you two queens are quite finished this Queen is ready for her breakfast The scene would not have been out of place here.

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