



Brightness Falls

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Brightness Falls is the story of Russell and Corrine Calloway. Set against the world of New York publishing, McInerney provides a stunningly accomplished portrayal of people contending with early success, then getting lost in the middle of their lives.

Brightness Falls Details

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From Reader Review Brightness Falls for online ebook

Jay Gabler says

As a sucker for anything '80s and culture-industries in general, a novel about hostile takeover drama *in the publishing world?* Done, sign me up.

Jack says

Possibly my favorite book from the entire literary brat pack canon, this book goes beyond New England undergrads in orgies of blow and manages to fully explore the relationship of a Manhattan power couple. The novel opens on a storybook marriage between Corrine and Russell with Russell on the cusp of becoming head editor of a large publishing house, replete with coke fueled parties filled with models and the life of the jet set. Everything crashes down at once: the stock market crashes, Russell sleeps with his agent, and Corrinne admits to sleeping with Russell's best friend. The final sentence of this book is one of the most hauntingly resonant one's I've ever read.

Meryl says

From the doldrums of his rehab facility, Jeff Pierce, the party boy novelist reflects "begin with an individual and you'll find you've got nothing but ambiguity and compassion; if you intend violence, stick with type." He is referring to his best friends, Corrine and Russell, the perfect power couple, or so it seems. Thirty-one and together since college, they are the stabilizing force for their group of friends who are still navigating the Bacchanalian frontier that is New York of 1987.

McInerney lifts the curtains on their marriage, revealing blue-blooded Corrine's loneliness and body dysmorphia, her dissatisfaction with an unfulfilling career in finance that supports the purity of Russell's literary pursuits, and the sense that she is trapped in an interminable cocktail party. Russell Calloway, like Nick Carraway, is the Irish Midwesterner of humble patronage, who never feels quite at home watching the lives of the privileged whose orbit he circles. Russell envies the lives of his single friends, and isn't ready to take the next step to achieving adulthood without more money in his pockets. When Russell embarks upon a scheme to buy the publishing company that he works for, with the backing of Trina Cox, a beautiful Mergers and Acquisitions broker that the couple knew at Brown, the issues plaguing their marriage rise to the forefront.

Where McInerney succeeds is his beautiful descriptions of New York and the social society that is the background for this novel, his funny and realistic dialogue, and his painting of Corrine and Russell as fully realized characters. He inhabits the minds of several characters, some more convincingly than others. Trina Cox's motivations are never clear, and she serves as more of an instigator for conflict than a believable person. The plot is secondary to the novel's exploration of a place and time, and the challenges faced by thirty-somethings on the verge of big changes, as they chart the path for their future.

Charlie Rosenthal says

Beautiful. Could not recommend more.

A.J. says

Brightness Falls -- what an appropriate title. How could McInerney have gone from Bright Lights, a narrative tour de force, to this sprawling, turgid mess? Occasional sharp turns of phrase remind us of what he can do, but they're lost among excruciating passages of (sometimes repetitive) exposition and a narrative voice that's often too distant and disengaged. That distance comes from ambition: McInerney has set up too many threads and doesn't have space to tie them all together convincingly.

Some people have called this McInerney's best. Perhaps it seemed that way when still fresh, and its satire still had bite. But 20 years later, I read passages and then think, "clearly, that was all very funny at the time." This novel hasn't aged well; it is too wrapped up in its own time and place.

Nanou says

Dans les années 80, à Manhattan, Russel et Corinne forme un couple modèle, envié par tous leurs amis. Lui est éditeur chez Corbin, Dern & Cie, elle est courtière en bourse et est bénévole dans une association d'aide aux démunis. Ils ont trente ans, ils s'aiment et ont l'avenir devant eux, ils s'amusent dans toutes les fêtes où il faut être vu, écument les vernissages et les cocktails. Pourtant, chacun commence à ressentir une insatisfaction, un manque dans sa vie. Russel s'ennuie dans son activité professionnelle, il est tenté par des propositions cinématographiques sur la côte Ouest. Ou alors, pourquoi ne pas profiter de sa rencontre avec un riche homme d'affaires et lancer une OPA sur Corbin, Dern et Cie. Et puis, la routine matrimoniale commence à lui peser, il est attiré par d'autres femmes que la sienne. Quant à Corinne, elle se sent de plus en plus mal à l'aise dans le milieu boursier et voudrait faire une pause, avoir un bébé, arrêter de boire, moins sortir, souffler, quoi. Et puis, il y a leur ami Jeff, un écrivain qui n'a plus écrit depuis plusieurs années, qui a replongé dans la drogue. Cette rechute et la part active qu'ils doivent prendre pour faire entrer Jeff en cure de désintoxication sont un choc pour eux, le passage dans l'âge adulte en quelque sorte.

En commençant ce livre, j'ai souvent pensé aux romans de Paula Fox. Comme chez elle, les personnages ne sont pas forcément très sympathiques. Tout l'art de l'auteur est de donner, malgré cela, envie de les accompagner, de s'intéresser aux évènements qu'ils vivent, tant ils sont ancrés dans une époque décrite de façon très réaliste, très concrète. Ici, c'est la crise boursière de 1987 à New York qui va venir contrer les projets de Russel et de Corinne, bouleverser leur existence confortable et les forcer à se remettre en question. C'est une description très vivante du New York de la fin des années 80, dans le milieu des yuppies, de leurs excès, du toujours plus et du difficile retour aux réalités, quand la crise vous oblige à réduire la voilure.

C'est ma deuxième lecture de Jay McInerney, après Bright Lights, Big City, et j'ai vraiment envie de découvrir davantage cet auteur. Ça tombe bien, il existe une espèce de suite à Trente ans et des poussières, La belle vie, où l'on retrouve Russel et Corinne après les attentats de septembre 2001.

Justin Hall says

I will thoroughly review soon don't worry

J. says

Found this in the laundry room.

I don't want any giddy expectations to get in the way of an eventual critical response, but in the early going, it's already showing signs this one looks like it might have "dumpster" written all over it ...

Edijkelly Salvatore says

Though the story may be dated, mired as it is in the M&A craze of the late '80s, this is one of the few books I've desired to go back to and re-read. I remember getting to a critical part on an airplane and not realizing I was sobbing until the elderly lady next to me offered a tissue. Truly a moving story about characters you hate, but still care about.

Angelina says

God, I think I'm finally ready to let go of my love for the 80s brat pack writers (save janowitz).

Colleen says

I could read this book a hundred times. I may already have; I don't know why, maybe child of the 80s mentality. I just love it.

Brendan says

Holy shit this book was good. I decided recently that because it is possible to read all of McInerney's fiction in a month that one should do so. This whole book really rocked. I like the characters and the arc. I've said this before but a few years ago McInerney seemed dated, but now it's more like his eighties books are a perfect time capsule of a forgotten era that came on the heels of a depressed, near bankrupt 70s. I turned the last page and immediately went on to read his next and then ordered two more on line.

Isa Timon says

Cuando empecé a leer este libro supe que se iba a convertir inmediatamente en uno de mis libros favoritos. Es un libro maravilloso, que te engancha al instante y vives lo que viven los protagonistas. Las ultimas 100 paginas son un horror, en el buen sentido y la forma de escribir del autor es increible. Que ganas de que saquen las continuaciones de este libro y poder ver que ha ocurrido en la vida de Russell y Corrine.

Cmamer says

Have you ever attended a long cocktail party at an elegant hotel with crowds of well dressed people chattering while a piano player provides background music and after the ball is over find yourself at home with the vague impression that you have not actually been anywhere? If so, you have a good idea of what this book is about.

Jay McInerney enjoyed some acclaim for "Bright Lights, Big City," but this effort is eminently forgettable. It is well written, mildly humorous at times but ultimately inconclusive and totally inconsequential. I found the characters as polite and as interesting as talking to a courteous necktie salesman, a bathroom attendant or a high rise building doorman. To put it another way, you could have watched two reruns of "Mad About You" and gotten the same result.

Joan Roure says

El maravilloso y complejo mundo de las relaciones sentimentales. El retrato de una época y un lugar perfectamente ambientado y descrito: el Nueva York de los ochenta, el de la vanidad, las fiestas sin control, las drogas, el de los brokers más ávidos... El libro muestra la forma de vivir de entonces a través del aparentemente perfecto y joven matrimonio Calloway. Corrine y Russell tienen un futuro prometedor, pero no será tan fácil, los problemas empiezan a surgir y se convertirán en prueba de fuego de su relación. La forma de narrar de McInerney es brillante, al igual que los diálogos, llenos de chispa e ironía. Para muestra un botón:

—Te queremos, Jeff.
—¿Queremos? ¿A qué viene ese plural? El amor no es una actividad de grupo, maldita sea. Aunque las higienistas mentales de aquí hagan como si lo fuera. Me cago en la terapia de grupo. ¿Sabes?, nos animan a compartir un montón de cosas. La palabra «compartir» aquí es un puto verbo intransitivo. Se supone que debemos llevar un diario donde digamos: «Hoy compartí con Tony... Fran ha compartido con nosotros que no era capaz de compartir con su familia». Ya sé que a ti y a Russell os gusta hacerlo todo juntos, pero en este caso, ¿por qué no te limitas a hablar por ti misma? —Hizo una pausa, imaginando el rostro apenado y bello de Corrine al otro lado de la línea—. Yo también te quiero —añadió, enfadado—. Dame algún tiempo para que deje de odiarte."

El fascinante universo McInerney; con ganas ya de leer la siguiente entrega y saber que deparará el futuro de Corrine y Russell.

christa says

this reminded me of how "the beautiful and damned" is technically better than "the great gatsby" but not as well-known. this is better than "bright lights, big city."

David Lentz says

Brightness Falls is a great American novel, which owes a great deal to F. Scott Fitzgerald and his Gatsby. At times, it seems as if McInerney wants to re-tell the Gatsby tale on Wall Street during the Crash of '87. McInerney's Nick Carraway is, after all, Crash Galloway. However, the meaning of this novel transcends this decade and its hideous "greed is good" mantra: it's not simply a "period piece." The story is about the mad pursuit of wealth, the shallowness of the great Faustian trade and the price paid in unintended consequences. The story replays time after time and has done so since Helen of Troy and it always will stand as a poignant, cyclical, cautionary tale about those with unfettered ambition blindly seeking wealth and power. For all the apparent allure and trappings of wealth in New York high society and in big business, Russell Galloway is engaged in a zero-sum game. The writing in this novel is exquisite: I know this is absolute heresy but, at times, McInerney out-Fitzgeralds Fitzgerald. The main characters are round, full, human, distinctive and complex: I found myself intrigued by all of them. The dialogue is witty, funny, honest, real and each character spoke with a distinctive voice. The story-line was unexpected, credible and ambitious in its scale. The final chapter is one of the great closes among 20th century, literary novels. Having worked for global corporations during this time, I was deeply impressed with how well McInerney captured the essence of the era and then rendered his depiction timeless. I really can't say enough about this truly great American novel as the greed, arrogance and quotidian materialism of the late '80s just keeps on re-playing in the 90's of the day trader and in this decade as hedge funds are about to free-fall below the zero-line in their forthcoming decadent, dizzying downside. I was moved by the closing allusions to redemption in this prophetic novel and the optimism inherent in the premise that salvation can be experienced even after epic catastrophe and transcend it through the beauty of love and forgiveness -- even as brightness falls from the air.

John McDermott says

A truly brilliant novel. Without question, one of my all time favourites.

Cherie says

A+ Fantastic story of two couples and their love, affairs, and complications in NYC--the kind of book that takes you over

Parvathy says

A passage to adulthood tale set in '80s New York. Loved the writing - clever and pretty. My review here:
<http://happysmalltalk.blogspot.in/201...>
