



Breakfast on Pluto

Patrick McCabe

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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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