



I Hate Martin Amis et al.

Peter Barry

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His literary ambitions frustrated, Milan Zorec decides to give himself something original to write about. It is 1995, and Zorec heads from London to the black heart of Europe's most brutal war in half a century, the Bosnia War. There, he joins Serbian militia forces as a sniper, and helps them pick off civilians cowering in the besieged city of Sarajevo. Excited by the violence, seduced by the carnage, intrigued by the lost souls who are his comrades, Zorec manages to find the time to reflect on the power of words, the evils of the literary establishment, and the absurdities of modern culture and warfare.

Alternating between London and Sarajevo, I Hate Martin Amis et al. is a literary novel unlike any other. It is a black, black comedy, a very twisted tale, a stunningly unconventional perspective on war crimes. Zorec is disgusting, but he's also intelligent, eloquent, amusing, even sympathetic. He sees the savagery and madness of those around him but barely glimpses his own journey from dreamer to monster.

A chilling, unforgettable satire, I Hate Martin Amis et al. drills down to the very core of why we write, why we read, and what we might be prepared do to realize our dreams in these strange times.

I Hate Martin Amis et al. Details

Date : Published July 1st 2013 by Roaring Forties Press (first published 2011)

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Author : Peter Barry

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From Reader Review I Hate Martin Amis et al. for online ebook

Ljiljana Stancic says

I stumbled upon this book by chance (was looking for a Martin Amis in fact). When I read that the book was about the frustrations of an aspiring novelist who joins Serb snipers in Sarajevo in 1994 after his novel is rejected by every imaginable publisher, I just had to read it. The results are mixed and where the novel works exceedingly well is where I counted on it to fail: in getting into the mind of a cold-blooded killer and in surprisingly accurately conveying the atmosphere of ultimate madness, sadness and despair of war-blighted Sarajevo. It is the chilling descriptions of everyday vagaries of sniping, that ultimately inhumane activity, with long hours of waiting for prey, calculated targeting and vantage point selection that were seamlessly executed (the pun was in fact intended). Hence this novel is not for the faint-hearted. Let us hope that thwarted literary ambition does not take such a macabre turn in real life.

John Farebrother says

Barry recreates the atmosphere of the siege of Sarajevo superbly (although his inclusion of a Catholic priest among the besiegers appears to be erroneous; surely it would have been an Orthodox priest?). The drunken, dark, and dehumanised society of the VRS is captured in grotesque detail. The plot itself is bizarre, and I would even say pointless - but the evocative power of the description makes me wonder whether the author was actually there himself.

Brenda Kittelty says

A really interesting premise, if somewhat unbelievable. Still not completely convinced of the leading character's motivations to head off to the Balkans war and shoot a few dozen people. A classic case of enjoying the book while despising all the characters in it!

Kris McCracken says

A somewhat uneven book. First of all, it features a narrator and central protagonist who is decidedly unlikeable. Knowing that this was a deliberate choice by the author does not make the process of spending time inhabiting his mind any easier.

I suspect that much of this is supposed to be black comedy, but it is far more "black" than "comic". While the concept of artistic rejection is explored, I can't help but feel that the message is lost underneath such a bleak setting.

Not for the faint hearted.

Nicole says

I received a free copy of I Hate Martin Amis et al. via a Goodreads giveaway. I enjoyed this book. I would label this a dark twisted almost comical tale of a journey into madness. Thank-you Goodreads and thank-you Mr. Barry.

Rowena says

Peter Barry's debut novel I hate Martin Amis et al. can be summed up as 'when rejection turns a writer into a sniper'. Milan has written four books and all of them have been rejected. Usually he receives the standard, impersonal rejection slip, but then he receives a personal comment, 'Scarcely original. Feel I've read this before', and this tips him over the edge.

His father is Serbian and although he doesn't even believe in the cause, he goes to Sarajevo to become a sniper and to gather material for a book that he hopes will be completely original and like nothing any agent or publisher has ever read before.

I hate Martin Amis certainly is a gem, but not the sparkling and polished kind, it is rough around the edges, slightly cracked and damaged. Milan is a complex character, spiralling into the depths of madness. He becomes adept at sniping, he shoots a boy and allows his mother to die slowly cradling her dead son against her chest – so that she feels the full brunt of the pain of losing her son. Milan's only saving grace is when he leaves the farmhouse disapproving the treatment of the women imprisoned and raped there. He describes his fellow snipers at the farmhouse, 'They were like vultures squabbling over carcasses.'

The story of Sarajevo is wretched, but what allowed me to actually enjoy the book was the understated, but perfectly timed, black humour and the tale of a writer who wants so desperately to be published.

Philip Taffs says

A black comedy that assassinates both war and the publishing industry.

Hilarious and heartfelt, imagine Martin Amis crossed with Milan Kundera, both reporting from the front lines.

Geoff says

Interesting take on the writing industry, mixed with sniping in Sarajevo... strange combination that works really well, except for the ending, which I found anti-climactic...

Dennis Rhein says

This author writes quite well and it's certainly a story very much out of the ordinary, about a subject rarely seen. Although I found it very dark and not the least bit amusing, the work was otherwise adequately reviewed by others here - so I'll limit my comments to the more mundane. Improper word usage in a book that has won awards strikes me as very strange. A good example is the usage of 'site' and 'sight', which were both used to describe the rifle sight. Oddly enough, this was the only mistake of its type I saw and the author made it multiple times. A very good example of how spell-checker can't entirely be relied upon. Also the formatting at each chapters beginning was a bit odd, with what I thought were some misplaced hard carriage returns and different type sizes for the first word or so. That really threw off the flow for me on a kindle reader - although it might work fine on a printed version. The book would benefit greatly with a final polish by a good editor other than the author. My experience is that when you labor over a book you tend to see what you want to see and keep missing the mistakes a fresh set of eyes will notice right away.

Lisa says

The plot in Peter Barry's novel is bizarre: failed novelist becomes a successful sniper in the Siege of Sarajevo (1992-1996) because he needs a unique experience as inspiration for a novel in order to attract attention. The writing is superb; the technique is masterful; and the subject matter is deeply unsettling.

To read the rest of my review please visit <http://anzlitlovers.wordpress.com/201...>
