



The Trout

Peter Cunningham

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Alex and Kay began their relationship many years ago in Ireland where Alex was destined to become a priest. His father, a well-respected doctor, is immensely proud of him until the day Alex meets Kay, a meeting which changes Alex's life and his relationship with his father forever. Rejected by his father and his friends, Alex and Kay eventually settle in Canada to lead a normal family life. Normal life, however, is only a thin veneer covering a world of childhood secrets and lies and a letter arriving out of the blue triggers a long-buried guilt in Alex, leading him to risk all to track down its secrets. In a spellbinding story of one man's search for the crucial secret locked in his memory since childhood, *The Trout* bursts up through the conventions and falsehoods of the past and hangs, beautiful and shimmering, in the clear and vital light of truth.

The Trout Details

Date :

ISBN :

Author : Peter Cunningham

Format :

Genre : Fiction, Mystery, Thriller, Cultural, Ireland, Audiobook, Literary Fiction, Canada

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From Reader Review The Trout for online ebook

Dna says

It's amazing to me that I picked this book up a year ago, read a fair bit, then put it down because I couldn't get into it. This time, I came across it as I was cleaning up my eReader and decided to try again before giving the ePub the heave-ho, and reading page one was like falling head first down a dark well.

The vignettes about trouts and trout fishing at the beginning of chapters are not only full of good, useful information, but the beautiful writing forms a tapestry supporting the story itself. A sad, dark story that unfurls like a ribbon and wraps itself around your heart, or mind, whichever you lead with when reading.

The Trout is a beautifully-written book about a terrible thing: lyrical, haunting, and sensitive. Cunningham presents imperfect characters without judging them and -- amazingly -- without inviting the reader to judge either, showing us instead that crime does not always equal punishment.

Just. Incredible. This should be a classic.

Toni Osborne says

This is a well-crafted crisply written, gripping story of one man search for the crucial secret locked in his memory since childhood and the ability of whole societies to deny the evidence of their eyes.

When writer Alex Smyth receives a letter at his home in rural Bayport Ontario containing only a fishing lure, unsettling childhood memories are triggered. Alex thinks he may have killed another boy when he was seven, he then decides to return to Ireland to seek answers from his father.

Alex is the narrator and recounts events from both a child's and an adult's perspective. His voice is gentle almost mesmerizing it is easy to adapt to his tone. As the tale unfolds, the author artfully spins several stories at once: Ex: when Kay, Alex's wife, alone has doubts about their marriage and has fears of a stalker we are into some interesting interludes.

It takes time to connect with the characters but when several layers of tension are introduced and memories crisscrossed with the present they immediately become accessible. The short chapters and a credible narrative keep the pages turning and the pacing holds up to the tension beautifully when it picks up. Serving simply as a metaphor and to provide a connecting thread in this delicate and powerful tale, the author has intercepted his narrative with brief and cogent paragraphs with the art of fly-fishing and its pursuit of the trout. (Interesting).

I had a hard time getting into this psychological thriller and staying focused during the initial section, it drags too much as it recounts the couple peaceful existence in Canada till mid-way threatened by Alex's visions everything meshed and I understood where the author was leading. From then on I was hooked.

The last half of the book reveals the monstrous crime that took place in a country populated by good people who are conscious of the truth but prefer to leave it deep beneath the surface till one day they uncover the truth....it burst to light like the beautiful trout....

I received an advance copy of this book from the publisher via Edelweiss

Alan says

I've been trying to avoid reading a depressing Irish novel for the last year or so. This novel tricked me with its title and dust jacket, looking all fly fishing-like. Instead, it turned out to be a mediocre novel of suppressed trauma and Irish melancholy. And the latter was not even done well; Cunningham is no Sebastian Barry. At least the typeface was large, so it went quickly. And a pet peeve. Every time the protagonist introduces himself, he adds "I'm from Canada". Yeah, we got it the first 5 times you said it.

Dolly says

I am giving it 4.5 stars (rounded up to 5). An intriguing psychological mystery. Beautifully written, beautiful prose. Paragraphs about the life of "trout" are interspersed with the telling of the story in an enlightening way. This book is different and is well worth your while to read it.

Rosemary says

Trout descriptions begin each chapter, and the story begins with a mysterious trout fly arriving in the mail, but this is an evil and sinister trout, not at all the quiet relaxing trout streams we may expect. Alex and Kay, married without children, live in a small town in Canada when their lives are interrupted by the mysterious trout fly. Alex returns to Ireland to confront his estranged father, and the past returns with a vengeance. Without giving away the story, there's not much more I can say except once again, the victims are blamed for the sins of their aggressors, and the children suffer most of all. Sad story, too familiar, unfortunately.

M says

I read this right before reading Roddy Doyle's *Smile*. They are an excellent pair. A former Irish seminarian, now a Canadian retiree, Alex Smyth receives a trout fly in the mail. Eventually he believes he is being stalked by someone because of a book he has recently written, a book based on his childhood. He must return to Ireland to speak with his estranged father and others in order to unravel the lies, betrayals, and pain. A fabulous thriller.

Luan Mitchell says

A surprise

I thought this book was going to be a murder mystery, a thriller. But it is so much more than that. A coming of age story in some ways, it explores the idea of memory and how memories are sometimes deceiving and

often wrong. It's a compelling read and I look forward to reading more books by Peter Cunningham.

Karen says

I liked this book a lot, and will probably put it on my book club's voting list for next year. The author is also a poet, and the prose is, in fact, very poetic. It moves back and forth in time, and the narrator seems to know more than he plausibly could about what others are thinking and doing, but that's a minor matter. It's gripping.

Marjorie says

Alex Smyth is living in Canada with his wife when he receives a strange piece of mail containing only a trout fly. Alex has always thought that something terrible had happened when he was a child but the memory is always just a bit past his grasp. Memories now start coming back and he starts to believe that he may have killed someone when he was a child. He must return to Ireland to confront his past and get to the bottom of these fragmented memories.

This is one of the most beautifully written books I've read in a long time. I'm adding Peter Cunningham to my list of all-time favorite authors and will be reading the rest of his books soon. This book grabbed my heart and wouldn't let go nor could I put the book down. It was completely mesmerizing and awakened my love for truly well-written literature. I read a lot of books but far too many pass through me without much lasting effect. This is one that I will treasure and always remember.

The book touches on how elusive memories can be and how they can harm our lives if not brought to the surface. It also touches on how society can convince itself that what they're seeing isn't actually happening. This book is set in such a beautiful location with valleys and hills and rivers and streams and yet what happened there is so tragic and heart breaking. Predator and prey dominate this story and the author has included short snippets about trout and their lives and their most dangerous predator – man. It's a perfect accompaniment for this story that centers on horrific events that take place while fishing.

Most highly recommended.

This book was given to me by the publisher in return for an honest review.

Mary says

I really enjoyed this story and finished it in a couple of days. It is a sad story of an Irish author now living in Ontario who is forced to confront some awful childhood memories when he receives a fishing fly in the mail. He visits Ireland to try to uncover the mystery of what happened to a boy he knew when he was just 7 years old.

Kathleen Gray says

It's hard to categorize this beautifully written novel - it's a quiet psychological thriller where old secrets come back to haunt a man many years later. I loved the descriptions of rural Canada and the info about trout. Alex is one of the most complex characters I've read lately; I was especially impressed with how Cunningham was able to convey so much with so few words. Keep your eye on Kay as she's key to this tale. Thanks to Edelweiss for the ARC. Try this one!

Carolyn Boatner says

Cunningham's story was a compelling read. Its brief chapters move the plot along, and the author carefully imparts just enough to keep the reader intrigued. The conclusion immediately left me feeling that something was missing; it was only in the day or two that followed as my mind played over the story that I realized what power lay in Cunningham leaving a missing piece up to the reader. He expects the reader to conclude a powerful truth that is both unsettling, yet entirely human... the mark of an excellent writer.

Anne Goodwin says

Alex and Kay have traded in thirty-year careers in Toronto – he as a teacher and she as a psychotherapist – to pursue more creative pursuits in rural Ontario, but things aren't working out as well as they'd hoped. The financial crash has put their travel plans on hold and, alongside her painting, Kay is working part-time at the hospital in the next town, perhaps as much to escape their limping marriage as to boost the household's economy. Both their Irish childhoods were overshadowed by early parental loss and she wonders if, at nineteen, they married too young. Alex sees that "her glance ... contains sadness, as if she is harbouring personal regrets, or fears that our happiness is never more than provisional" (p9); she is frustrated with his failure to seek help for panic attacks and depression. These feelings come to a head when he appears distinctly unenthusiastic about the proposed publicity tour for his recently published novel, *Sulphur*, loosely based on his own childhood, featuring a boy out fishing with his father.

Full review Quarry: *The Trout* by Peter Cunningham <http://annegoodwin.weebly.com/1/post/...>

Diane S ? says

4+ A quiet but meaningful story about a past that haunts, affecting the present. Alex Smyth, now living in Ontario, Canada has written a book detailing the relationship between he and his father, a man he has not spoken to in many years. A blank sheet of paper is delivered in an envelope, but what freaks him out is it includes a trout fishing fly. Many years ago, and after his mother's death he was raised by his father, the local doctor, and he and his father would often go fishing, sometimes in the company of the village priest. They lived in a small village in Dublin then and he is haunted by something that happened when he was seven, something he doesn't remember but often gets glimpses of, a feeling that he was involved in the death of a man.. His marriage buckling under the strain, he makes the decision to journey back to Dublin, to his past and try to reconnect the pieces of his memory.

A simply written but beautifully described novel, the depictions of nature so incredibly beautiful, set against

a horrible conspiracy of silence. What happened to a young boy in that village, many young everywhere and those who knew but our equally guilty by their silence, the scope of which is still being uncovered today. Incidents in the past that we little remember or need to forget to move on, but can still rear it's ugly head when we least expect it. As Kay says n the novel, "It takes a whole lifetime to come to terms with what we have hidden as children." Throughout the novel there are various excerpts about trout, how they feed, where they go, the many different colors they are, and if one reads carefully they can see how perfectly this blends into the story being told.

I was touched, and appalled because I know much of this, is based on truisms. Written in a very understated manner, highlighting the kind of culture that exists, those who look away instead of confronting, failing to protect the innocent and how these type of situations and others can occur again and again in different circumstances, different places.

ARC from publisher.
Publishes July 4th.

Phil says

Beautifully constructed and written, Cunningham's novel begins laid-back, idyllic. But a back-story slowly emerges, and slowly tension builds. Waves of tension rise and fall like the water on a lake as a storm begins to gather.

The book begins with an epigram by Franz Schubert, "We think that we can reach one another but, in reality, all we can do is to approach and pass each other by."

When I began reading the book, I was puzzled by its meaning. Having just finished reading it, I simply nod my head in accent ...
