



Adam Resurrected

Yoram Kaniuk , Seymour Simckes (Translation)

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The crowning achievement of one of Israel's literary masters, *Adam Resurrected* remains one of the most powerful works of Holocaust fiction ever written. A former circus clown who was spared the gas chamber so that he might entertain thousands of other Jews as they marched to their deaths, Adam Stein is now the ringleader at an asylum in the Negev desert populated solely by Holocaust survivors. Alternately more brilliant than the doctors and more insane than any of the patients, Adam struggles wildly to make sense of a world in which the line between sanity and madness has been irreversibly blurred. With the biting irony of *Catch-22*, the intellectual vigor of Saul Bellow, and the pathos and humanity that are Kaniuk's hallmarks, *Adam Resurrected* offers a vision of a modern hell that devastates even as it inches toward redemption.

Adam Resurrected Details

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Author : Yoram Kaniuk , Seymour Simckes (Translation)

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Noam says

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Joe says

This was an extremely intensive novel to read, and probably not a book for the casual reader. There are no spoilers here, but reading this novel is like being in the mind of an insane person from beginning to end. Wretching at times, this certainly can be what is there in the minds of people who have suffered physically, but mostly mentally. The crowning achievement of one of Israel's literary masters, Adam Resurrected remains one of the most powerful works of Holocaust fiction ever written. A former circus clown who was spared the gas chamber so that he might entertain thousands of other Jews as they marched to their deaths, Adam Stein is now the ringleader at an asylum in the Negev desert populated solely by Holocaust survivors. Alternately more brilliant than the doctors and more insane than any of the patients, Adam struggles wildly to make sense of a world in which the line between sanity and madness has been irreversibly blurred. With the biting irony of Catch-22, the intellectual vigor of Saul Bellow, and the pathos and humanity that are Kaniuk's hallmarks, Adam Resurrected offers a vision of a modern hell that devastates even as it inches toward redemption

Charles Ellenbogen says

The surreal style of this book hooked me right off, but I kept waiting for it to build and never felt like it did. This is an angry rant of a book about how God abandoned the Jews during the Holocaust. Interesting, but not for the classroom.

Maurizio Manco says

"Noi recitiamo in uno spettacolo disertato tanto dal regista quanto dall'autore, siamo rimasti soli. Non c'è nessuno cui rivolgersi. Chiedere. Appellarsi." (p. 215)

"Come la morte, anche l'amore ha un lato oscuro, incomprensibile, cieco. Siamo davvero nati per amare?" (p. 425)

Yair Ben-Zvi says

For this, picture the most barren labyrinth imaginable, full of mirrors, dead ends, doors to other doors to

other doors, endless staircases, and no exits or entrances. There are no people but there are whispers of voices, small catches in the stretches of hallways and in a random corner here and there, but the only solid walking entity is you, so you assure yourself.

The glass of the mirrors cracks and shatters, the wood of the doors splinters and breaks apart, as well as the metal rusting and breaking down, and finally, the entire structure, whatever it could be classed, house of mirrors, asylum, abandoned this or that, collapses in flames, and it keeps happening, time and again, built up and gone, the instinct screaming at you to be terrified, that what's happening isn't right, is being muffled, drowned and silenced by your growing complacency, and the only slightly disconcerting idea that maybe you belong here.

The five star rating I've given this book isn't, is definitely NOT, a mark of this work's perfection. Firstly, to me, the pursuit of perfection in anything, let alone in art, and especially in literature, is a waste of time, talent, and the reader's time if they're wading through such a work. Okay, that aside, this book is a definite masterwork because of its splintered and schizophrenic style, and is similarly undercut by that style making it an arduous journey that wrings you completely and leaves you destroyed, not beautifully, but awakened just a bit.

I can see why the blurb on the back of the book compared it to Heller's *Catch 22*, the two books definitely share the non linearity and lack of cohesion, but whereas Heller could balance the slight levity to great effect in the great horror and darkness of world war, Kaniuk here opts for a different route and casts his characters in total darkness...with the backdrop being the south of Israel in the Negev Desert with a blazingly bright sun that almost leaves no capacity or room for shadows. Nice irony there.

As far as brass tacks all I can say is that Kaniuk is a master storyteller. His use of the nonsensically poetic, and some of the passages in that style, are maddening and beautiful, hearkening back to high modernism and even the best of Woolf and Joyce. Along with that, holding its hand, is the humanity on display. All of the characters though not all explored equally or given enough time in the text, are so passionately constructed in their mental, emotional, and psychological frailties that to call them heartbreaking would be, putting it almost criminally lightly, a disservice.

So, this is a hell of a book, something that stands head and shoulders with the very darkest, and very best, explorations of humanity's dark side along with the potential, no matter how small or even barely visible, potential to reach and connect with another human being, during, after, or before a horrific atrocity, and possibly make ourselves well again, or 'better' whatever the hell that term might mean. Never before have I seen the permanently shattering effect of the holocaust explored so jaggedly, or in such a darkly wonderful way, and I honestly doubt that I ever will again.

Read this book but with a warning: it won't be beach reading, and the answers to the questions given are anything but simple, or even rational and logical, but if you feel like you're ready to begin to understand catastrophe and human suffering, and maybe you want to broaden your empathetic and sympathetic horizons, then you must let this book take you where it may.

Peter Edelman says

Sontag was right, he's one of the world's greatest writers, possibly a genius.

Steven says

A very moving look at the after-effects of the Holocaust.

The book can be surreal at times, but it seems to capture Israel's trauma of dealing with both the trials of being a new nation and the mental health of the survivors of World War II.

It's about to be released as a movie, so I'm curious how all of the characters and disparate plotlines will come across on film.

Jo Wilkinson says

I see why they say this remains one of the most powerful Holocaust fiction books ever written. The back story of Adam, the main character but certainly not the only compelling one, is so tragic and gut-wrenching. Imagine what you would do to survive the death camps. I listened to the audio book while exercising, and sometimes it was hard to continue without crying on the treadmill. Equally beautiful and terrifying, this book will stay with me. Highly recommend.

Ana Lúcia says

Adam sobrevive ao campo de concentração, tornando-se o “cão” do Comandante, divertindo-o, enquanto a mulher e a filha são exterminadas.

Um livro perturbador, com um humor escuríssimo.

Uma outra visão do Holocausto que nos leva numa viagem tenebrosa.

Num mundo louco, ser louco é a única forma possível de nos adaptarmos.

Elazar says

Take one: I didn't finish this book. It is very well written but too disturbing and depressing for my taste. I don't know how to rate it... Take two: I had to go back and finish this book. Despite the sadness and horror. This is an amazing book. Bravo!

ashlee says

This is the story of Adam Stein who survives the Holocaust, but by acting as a dog and performing music for the commandant. Afterwards, he is stricken with survivor's guilt and all of the trauma that is attached with the Holocaust and is taken to a sanitarium to become cured. This is a dark and chilling book that I would recommend to anyone that loves history.

Stephen Durrant says

This is a powerful and exceedingly grim work of holocaust literature. The setting is a mental hospital in Israel, generously funded by an eccentric American donor, exclusively for holocaust survivors. The central character, Adam Stein, survived the horror of the prison camps by using his talents as a clown to entertain a German officer. Particularly amusing to the officer was Stein's imitation of a dog, an act he would so regularly perform that he essentially became a dog himself. Stein is both brilliant and insane, and we spend much of this novel inside his mind, which means I was frequently felt confused or very much adrift. No, I cannot say I "enjoyed" this novel ("There is no future to life, life's an invention that didn't succeed" [p232]), nor even found myself pushed forward rapidly toward the conclusion, a conclusion that holds its share of surprises. Let's say that I suffered through "Adam Resurrected"—happy I read it, happy I'm done--while all the time feeling admiration for Kaniuk's genius in adding significantly, I think, to a body of literature about the holocaust that has already attracted a very large quantity of literary genius.

Israel Montoya Baquero says

Tengo un serio problema con los escritores hebreos. Ya me ocurrió con Yeshoua, y me ha vuelto a ocurrir con este Yoram Kaniuk; no conecto con ellos, con su tempo, sus temas, sus preocupaciones, su forma de escribir...

Es posible que este libro, tal y como dice mucha gente, mucho más leída y sabia que yo, sea una obra maestra, reconocida tardíamente; que sea una valiente aproximación a la "cuestión judía", a la situación en la que se encontraron cientos de miles de judíos tras conseguir salvarse de los campos nazis; y también es posible que dicha cuestión esté, magníficamente o no (yo no sabría decirlo), representada en el personaje de Adan Stein y en su caótico y loco mundo dentro del manicomio...puede que todo esto sea así, pero lo cierto es que yo no he podido, o quizás no he sabido, verlo en la novela, la cual, para mi, es un caos y un batiburrillo de frases, personajes y escenas, con más bien poco sentido aparente. Algunos dicen que esto es parte de la maestría de Kaniuk, que escribe, gracias a su experiencia norteamericana, con un estilo literario comparable al jazz en lo musical; bueno, a mi me gusta el jazz y, la verdad, poco de eso he visto en esta obra que nos ocupa...

Y aun así le doy tres estrellas, valoración que la incluye en la categoría de "novelas interesantes" ya que, en algunos momentos si ha conseguido interesarme...que demonios, si he llegado hasta el final, con lo árida que es en ocasiones, es que algunas partes de esta novela son más que salvables. Pero, sobre todo, se lleva las tres estrellas por el final, es carta final que si, que ha conseguido que se me oprima el pecho, que devore las últimas páginas con ansia, y que, casi casi, suelte la lagrimilla...

¿Merece la pena tragarse las casi cuatrocientas páginas anteriores para ese breve, brevísimo, momento de agón casi griego? Eso ya es decisión propia de cada uno...

Shelley says

I wonder if this book was the basis for the lost Jerry Lewis film about the Holocaust called The Day the Clown Cried?

This is a difficult book to read. The setting is a mental asylum for Holocaust survivors in Israel. They have

