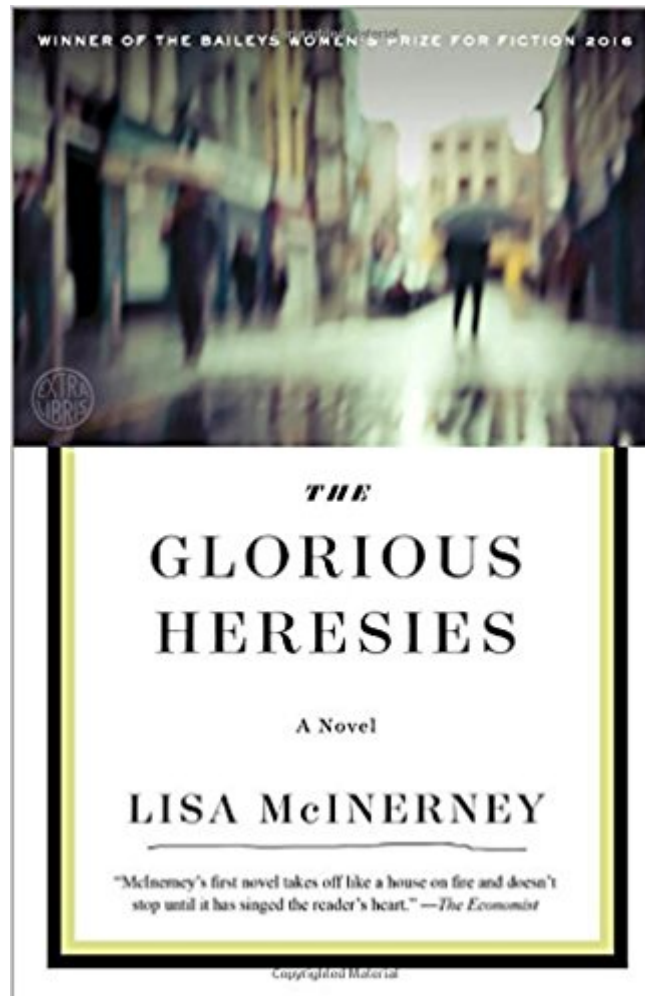




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# The Glorious Heresies: A Novel



## Synopsis

From Lisa McInerney, hailed by The Irish Times as “arguably the most talented writer at work in Ireland today,” comes *The Glorious Heresies*, a searing debut novel about life on the fringes of Ireland’s post-crash society. When grandmother Maureen Phelan is surprised in her home by a stranger, she clubs the intruder with a Holy Stone. The consequences of this unplanned murder connect four misfits struggling against their meager circumstances. Ryan is a fifteen-year-old drug dealer desperate not to turn out like his alcoholic father, Tony, whose feud with his next-door neighbor threatens to ruin his family. Georgie is a sex worker who half-heartedly joins a born-again movement to escape her profession and drug habit. And Jimmy Phelan, the most fearsome gangster in the city and Maureen’s estranged son, finds that his mother’s bizarre attempts at redemption threaten his entire organization. Biting and darkly funny, *The Glorious Heresies* presents an unforgettable vision of a city plagued by poverty and exploitation, where salvation still awaits in the most unexpected places. • New York Time’s Book Review’s “10 Best Crime Novels” of the year

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“Drugs, booze, obscenity, violence and black humor fuel Lisa McInerney’s audacious first novel. . . . *The Glorious Heresies* is impressive for its moral complexity, and for the

energy and virtuosity of its language: a strange, pleasing music that lingers in your mind. *—*•

*—*• The New York Times *—*• “A bleak, powerful novel. . . . Darkly comic. . . . McInerney writes an energetic, profane prose laced with the vibrant idiom of Cork street life. *—*•

*—*• The Washington Post “A wonderfully offbeat voice. . . . McInerney *—*•,s characters aren’t what anyone would call saints, but they’re so richly drawn you have to respect the way they think and sympathize with their moral conflicts.” *—*•

*—*• The New York Times Book Review *—*• “Lisa McInerney *—*•,s first novel takes off like a house on fire and doesn’t stop until it has singed the reader’s heart. Love, crime, and cockeyed redemption meet on a hardscrabble housing estate in County Cork, Ireland, in a rare blend of heartbreak and humour. . . . Ms McInerney is a writer to watch. *—*•

*—*• The Economist *—*• “McInerney’s debut won the 2016 Baileys Prize for Women’s Fiction, and you can see why from the first page. Her lively, unexpected prose brings these characters and the crucible of their surroundings to life. *—*•

*—*• Elle *—*• “The novel *—*•,s searing take on contemporary Cork is elegantly leavened by empathy and humor. . . . McInerney *—*•,s characters are vibrantly-drawn, richly-rendered, and wonderfully full of surprises. *—*•

*—*• The Boston Globe *—*• “Wonderful. . . . What could be a grim tale is lifted by McInerney *—*•,s eye for black comedy. . . . I would highly recommend it for the sheer musicality of the language. *—*•

*—*• The Paris Review Daily *—*• “A smart and sharp tale of Ireland *—*•,s fringe inhabitants, *The Glorious Heresies* *—*• only cements its author’s esteemed reputation as one of her nation’s most brilliant novelists. *—*•

*—*• Refinery29 *—*• “*The Glorious Heresies* is a blisteringly good debut which manifests the true coming of a brilliant new energy in Irish fiction. It’s a love story which captures perfectly the feeling of what it is to be young and bowled over by the beauty of another; it’s the story of a city, savage and hilarious and coursing deeper and deeper, with every page into that city’s dark veins. It’s so much more. It’s talent, undeniable and aglow. *—*•

*—*• Belinda McKeon *—*• “*The Glorious Heresies* heralds the arrival of a glorious, foul-mouthed, fizzing new talent. *—*•

*—*• The Sunday Times *—*• “A spectacular debut . . . Tough and tender, gothic and lyrical, it is a head-spinning, stomach-churning state-of-the-nation novel about a nation falling apart. *—*•

*—*• The Telegraph *—*• “This book is a riot . . . McInerney *—*•,s sentences are like snowballs rolling down a hill, accumulating jokes and fecks and similes spun from pitch-black humor. *—*•

*—*• *BOMB* *—*• “Here’s a writer who’s totally and unmistakably the real deal and whose every page pulses with vim and vitality and mad twisty insights and terrific description and with real tenderness, too. *—*•

*—*• Kevin Barry *—*• “A gripping and

often riotously funny. A tale . . . McNerney gives us a memorable cast that are tough as nails, savagely articulate, and helplessly human. — Colin Barrett — “A real stunner; a wild ride of a read — Donal Ryan — “A punchy, edgy, sexy, fizzing feast — of a debut novel from — an immensely skilled storyteller — with a glorious passion for words. — I loved it — Joseph O’Connor — “A spectacular debut . . . Tough and tender, gothic and lyrical, it is a head-spinning, stomach-churning state-of-the-nation novel about a nation falling apart — The Telegraph — “Fiendishly hilarious. — • The Times — “McNerney has talent to burn — The Guardian — “A superb debut from a confident and comic writer. — Mail on Sunday — “A rich, touching, hilarious novel. — Financial Times — “A big, brassy sexy beast of a book. — The Irish Times — “This is a daring, exuberant and generous novel. And a work to which you will want — eagerly — to return. — The Observer — “Impressive and imaginative — . . . a superb debut from a confident and comic writer with no fear of taking on serious material; — McNerney is a new talent to watch out for. — Irish Mail on Sunday

Lisa McNerney’s — first novel, *The Glorious Heresies*, won the 2016 Baileys Women’s — Prize for Fiction and the Desmond Elliott Prize, was shortlisted for Best Newcomer at the Irish Book Awards, and longlisted for the Dylan Thomas Prize. Her short stories have been featured on BBC Radio 4 and in *Granta*, *the Stinging Fly*, and the anthologies *The Long Gaze Back* and *Faber’s Town and Country*. Lisa lives in Galway with her husband, their daughter, and a dog named Angua. From the Hardcover edition.

"The parents cast the mould for the little ones, and the little ones curved to fit." This, in a nutshell, is the theme of this amazing novel from a young Irish author. This is really a microcosm of the Irish underbelly in, of all cities, Cork. I was reminded of the Seattle depicted in the series *The Killing* since both are cities on water, of similar size, and both enjoy a public reputation as tourist destinations. But that is far from the seedy portrait depicted here, a world of gangsters and prostitutes and people scraping by on the fringes. It really began 40 years ago when unmarried pregnant girls were shipped off to the horrors of the Magdalene Laundries. Maureen was 19 when she gave birth to J P, and was thenceforth shipped off again, this time to London for 40 years, her son rising in notorious prominence to be the kingpin of Cork’s crime world. When the book begins, Maureen finds herself back in Cork, being put up in one of her son’s former brothels, and she is

standing with a religious artifact in her hand which she has used to bash in the head of an intruder. The book rises out of this messy murder with at least 6 people's lives changed forever. Each character holds his or her own. The language is almost poetic in its brutality at times. McNerney is another of the amazing women writers coming out of Ireland these days, authors who don't write about the Ireland of shamrocks and pubs. It's no wonder that this book has won prestigious prizes already.

This is a wonderfully poetic slice of lowlife set in Cork City, and the first novel by the prodigiously talented young Irish writer Lisa McNerney. Write what you know: if that's the advice Lisa has followed, she's rubbed up against some pretty rum characters in her time. The (anti) hero of her book is 15-year-old Ryan, too bright for his environment, too rebellious for school, who falls into drug dealing and an increasingly toxic relationship with his girlfriend Karine. Looming threateningly on the horizon is Cork gangster Jimmy Phelan, a brick-shit house of a character, full of sinister bonhomie. Perhaps even more terrifying than Jimmy Phelan is Ryan's predatory neighbour, Tara Duane. McNerney has got a terrific turn of phrase, from the poetic: "sobriety became a memory that glimmered only in his children's disappointment" to the earthy: "as popular as a Guinness fart in a snug" and the vividly descriptive: "She had cropped dark hair, laughing eyes and a great wide mouth like a sock puppet." Take this account of Ryan's court appearance: "Parents sat gloomy and still, like rows of turnips in a grocer's box. Their little criminals sat with them, tapping LOLs on their phones, or milled in the yard outside stinking of Lynx and nonchalance. Solicitors strode in and out in a twist of slacks and briefcases." Funny, tragic, with something important to say about youth, opportunity, and the latest lost generation... Recommended!

Lisa McNerney's "The Glorious Heresies" captures the gritty life and pain of the underclass in present day Cork. Usually, even amongst the downtrodden there are some occasions of happiness, contentment and joy - but there are none to be found in this well-written but dark book. The strength of this novel is its attention to its fairly large cast of characters who are examined in detailed but not in a way that detracts from the narrative. I found it particularly interesting to hear and see the generational differences amongst them from 20ish Katrina and Ryan through 70ish Maureen who has appointed herself something of a "cleansing" angel. You are left to wonder whether Maureen is on to something tangible here in setting her cleansing fires (like burning down a Magdalene Laundry a place of horror for generations of poor Irish women which Maureen had fortunately avoided

herself) or is she simply a nutter. I recommend this novel for its interesting characters and its focus on time and place and its uncompromising unsentimentality - but be aware that this is not a happy book.

Amazing group of characters that I really came to care about. Struggled a bit with some Irish idioms but that's just a dumb American talking.

Really liked this book - refreshing style of writing, and quirky interweaved story lines. At the centre tragic hero, stuck in the grim reality by his family circumstances with his intelligence helping him navigate the Cork criminal scene and try to help others in trouble. You can't help but like him. The ending seemed a little bit forced, and maybe all worked out a little too cleanly at the end, but it didn't spoil my enjoyment at all. One of the best books I've read this year.

One of those books that gives you a window into another world. The characters are so vivid. You can understand how the bleak landscapes of their lives, in their parent's violence, absolutism or absence, and systems; school and church, that do a better job of shaming versus support, impact the roads they take. The story unfolds in layers, revealing more depths as you go and the writing has cadence and poetry. And with its truths it is a very dark read.

The dark underbelly of contemporary Cork. A group of flawed people whose paths crossed because of an accidental death. None of the characters are good people, but neither are they bad, most are trying to be better. The writing and character development are excellent, although I think the ending left some loose ends. I don't know why reviews talk about the humor. To me it is a very dark story, with nothing humorous about it, but well worth reading!

A highly imaginative debut novel set in Cork city. The voices of the various characters (3 different generations) are vivid and raw. The story successfully weaves together Cork's working class with the city's violent underworld. When the characters succumb to their addictions, their decisions invariably lead to despair or tragedy. Building to a grim and gruesome ending, sadly the comic relief is offered by only one character - Maureen - who delivers the blackest of wit.

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