

[PDF] Barney's Version

Mordecai Richler, Gregory J. Sinclair - pdf download free book

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Description:

Barney Panofsky smokes too many cigars, drinks too much whiskey, and is obsessed with two things: the Montreal Canadiens hockey team and his ex-wife Miriam. An acquaintance from his youthful years in Paris, Terry McIver, is about to publish his autobiography. In its pages he accuses Barney of an assortment of sins, including murder. It's time, Barney decides, to present the world with his own version of events. *Barney's Version* is his memoir, a rambling, digressive rant, full of revisions and factual errors (corrected in footnotes written by his son) and enough insults for everyone, particularly vegetarians and Quebec separatists.

But Barney does get around to telling his life story, a desperately funny but sad series of bungled relationships. His first wife, an artist and poet, commits suicide and becomes--à la Sylvia Plath--a feminist icon, and Barney is widely reviled for goading her toward death, if not actually murdering

her. He marries the second Mrs. Panofsky, whom he calls a "Jewish-Canadian Princess," as an antidote to the first; it turns out to be a horrible mistake. The third, "Miriam, my heart's desire," is quite possibly his soul mate, but Barney botches this one, too. It's painful to watch him ruin everything, and even more painful to bear witness to his deteriorating memory. The mystery at the heart of Barney's story--did he or did he not kill his friend Boogie?--provides enough forward momentum to propel the reader through endless digressions, all three wives, and every one of Barney's nearly heartbreaking episodes of forgetfulness. *Barney's Version*, winner of Canada's 1997 Giller Prize, is Richler's 10th novel, and a dense, energetic, and ultimately poignant read. --R. Ellis -- This text refers to the edition.

From Library Journal You have to like a narrator who can ask about libel after being accused "in print, of being a wife-abuser, an intellectual fraud, a purveyor of pap, a drunk with a penchant for violence, and probably a murderer as well" only to have his lawyer answer "Sounds like [the writer] got things just about right." Richler is in top form with this first-person voice of Barney Panovsky, 67-year-old TV producer at Totally Useless Productions, thrice-married (the third being the one that matters, and she's gone; the second, after being found in bed with Barney's best friend, Boogie, is the catalyst for the putative murder), fretting over liver spots and mental slippage. The book is always hilarious, but the humor is sharpened by the psychological accuracy/honesty and the richness of detail; in short, this is one well-written book. There are even footnotes to help out when Barney gets something wrong. Absolutely for all collections, this is what Barney calls his third wife: "a keeper."?Robert E. Brown, Onondaga Cty. P.L., Syracuse, N.Y.
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