



One Moonlit Night

Caradog Prichard

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In a small Welsh village during the dark days of World War I, a nameless narrator chronicles a year of loss, grief, and madness in Caradog Prichard's *One Moonlit Night*. Originally published in 1961, this Welsh-language novel has been eloquently translated into English by Philip Mitchell, perhaps garnering Prichard the wide recognition his novels have long enjoyed in his native land. Less a novel than a loosely connected series of tales, Prichard peoples his fictional world with characters such as Grace Ellen Shoe Shop, Will Starch Collar, and Johnny Beer Barrel. Though *One Moonlit Night* has its lighter moments, its story is primarily a sad one: the narrator's mother is sent to an insane asylum; one close friend dies of tuberculosis while another moves away; village men die in the faraway killing fields of the war as the loved ones they leave behind live in unrelenting poverty. Eventually, something terrible happens.

In *One Moonlit Night*, perfection is in the details--the loving evocations of the townspeople and the physical and emotional landscapes they inhabit. Dark as it is at times, Prichard's tragic tale is leavened by humor and illuminated by prose that is lyrical and deeply stirring.

One Moonlit Night Details

Date : Published February 1st 1997 by New Directions Publishing Corporation (first published 1961)

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Author : Caradog Prichard

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From Reader Review One Moonlit Night for online ebook

Doug H says

Review to follow.

Mark McKenny says

A special book. Sometimes it's just hard to describe why one has enjoyed a book so much, but I guess it's all personal, based on the things we've experienced thus far and the impacts upon our lives. This book for me is something new, something different and highly original. The voice is so loud and so perfect. We are there, with them, living. The almost dreamlike breaks in the book lift us out and take us somewhere magical, and somewhere old Wales-like and mythical. It's the story of a childhood. It's one of my favourite books I've read this year, by a highly talented author.

Karin says

A masterpiece, an extraordinary novel, but yet appears to be little known. So grateful to my Welsh friend for having recommended this book. Set in a Welsh village at the early part of the last century and narrated by an anonymous young boy, it's utterly grim yet beautiful, funny but at the same time, immensely sad. I loved the narrator's voice throughout.

Amy Street says

Oh dear. This book is probably wonderful but I'm just not in the mood.

Aleksandra P. (Parapet Literacki) says

Pi?kna, wzruszaj?ca, perfekcyjnie smutna historia dorastania w przemys?owym miasteczku na p?nocy Walii, w czasach I Wojny ?wiatowej. Swoiste katharsis autora, uporanie si? z trudn? relacj? z matk? w poetycki, subtelny spos?b. Hipnotyzuj?ca.

Robert Burdock says

Memorable! Touching! Endearing! One Moonlit Night is one of those rare books that once read will always remembered!

Philip Mitchell says

As the English translator of this book, I'm probably more than a little biased in my appraisal. That having been said, I remain firmly of the opinion that this is one of the greatest novels ever written.

For some few readers who lack all heart, all soul, all imagination and all compassion for their fellow men and women, this book will appear to be no more than some boring Welsh bloke going on and on about his boring childhood in boring Wales.

For many, many others, however, it's a mind-blowing, life-changing, world-shaking experience akin to being allowed for several hours to stare into the face of God. It will change your life.

"One Moonlit Night" has been likened to Dylan Thomas's "Under Milk Wood" but such similarities as may exist are superficial. Dylan Thomas was a wonderful writer and one of Britain's most eloquent and engaging storytellers. I love his work - but did he bleed his heart and his soul into the pages he wrote? On the whole, I think not.

Prichard was also a wonderful writer but, unlike Thomas whose heart lies interred in the earth and whose soul is in Heaven (hopefully), Prichard's entire being, his entire life-force, his heart, his soul, his mind, his everything are contained - alive and vibrant - within the narrative of this book.

Prichard worked feverishly, eating and drinking very little while writing the book and, as soon as it was finished, he retired to bed for several days and nights. Such was the drain on his resources.

Read it as soon as you can and, if possible, pay for it.

I need the money. ;)

Agnieszka Kalus says

Księżka jako rozliczenie z dzieciństwem i chorobą psychiczną matki.

Więcej: <http://www.czytambolubie.com/jedna-ks...>

Peter says

"There's a full moon tonight. Why won't you let Huw come out to play, O Queen of the Black Lake?"

Half-fictional memories of a long-gone childhood are commonplace enough – but not when they are so hauntingly rooted in landscape, language, and incipient madness as they are in *One Moonlit Night*.

It is an astonishing book. A dreamscape that inextricably melds together the pignut-hunting, hymn-singing, game-playing, bread-and-butter-eating memories of a boy in a Welsh slate-mining village in the time of the Great War with the suicides, adulteries, perversions, violence, and deaths that accompany them. The recurring phrase *"It was a moonlit night just like tonight"* only emphasizes the dreamlike quality of the novel – wonderfully translated from the Welsh by Philip Mitchell.

Much of it is actually very funny, though often in a dark sort of way. The old Welsh fondness for identifying people by their trade, residence, and family connexion rather than by their surnames leads to one of the narrator's childhood schoolfriends being called Little Will Policeman, the policeman himself being called Little Will Policeman's Dad – though this is not quite so long-winded as Emyr, Little Owen the Coal's Big Brother, one of the book's more disturbing characters. And then there's the narrator's Mam, destined for the asylum – and the mad dichotomy between Brenhines y Llyn Du, the Queen of the Black Lake, and Brenhines yr Wyddfa, the Queen of Snowdon. Are all the villagers creatures of the Black Lake called up one moonlit night? Dew, it's an odd book this one. Enigmatic, engrossing, and unsettling.

Bert says

Weird, skeevey books like this need to be kept alive and celebrated. This feels not quite like any other book, and well, i think that's something. It does do the whole horror of the adult world seen through the eyes of an innocent child thing, which has become horribly tacky, but it did it a long time ago and with a uniquely Welsh valleys lilt; folkloric, unsettling, also endearing. It is a narrative about bearing witness - the kid sees everything, the everydayness of poverty, insanity, death, and adultery in the village, but he also sings a bunch of church hymns, picks berries with his mates, and eats a shitload of bread and butter. It is lots of things at once, but by the end it's the old-world religious fervour and the brooding gothicness that was there the whole time but you never noticed, that really sticks. A great, bewildering novel.

Georgina says

I got this book from this site as a freebie and I am so grateful

It is a masterpiece, to rank alognside Heart of Darkness. Its precision, lucidity, characterisation, evocation of place and time, narrative drive, and entrancing sense of mystery place it amongst the best books I have ever read. I surprised myself in my enjoyment as, as a foreigner in Wales, I sometimes feel ostracised, and avoid any heightening of that sense. This book however, embraced me as a reader, and a lover of Wales, despite my status as an alien.

Diane Barnes says

This book really defies description. Reading the plot outline is just a beginning, but you have to be willing to inhabit the mind and body of a 10 year old boy to really get a sense of the brilliance of this author. The Welsh people seem to be born with poetry in their marrow. This has been compared with Dylan Thomas' Under Milkwood, but for my part, I associated it strongly with How Green Was My Valley.

The last two chapters threw this childhood tale into an entirely different realm, and I may be sorting those scenes out for a while. But a worthy read for those not afraid to work for their literary understanding. If I can ever make sense of the book's conclusion, I may change my four star rating to five.

My favorite line: The unnamed narrator and his best friend Huw are discussing their possible futures as clergymen. "But I don't want to be Godly. I just want to be good".

Mateusz Woliński says

Nawet jeżeli potraktować walijskość tej książki jako ciekawostkę, to spełnia ona swoje zadanie zwrócenia uwagi.

Caradog zaskakuje co idealnie wpisuje się w ostatni nurt, szczególnie w polskiej literaturze, na odkrywanie dzieciństwa poza centrum. U Caradoga jest to Miasteczko bez nazwy, przy Rzece obok Wzgórza. Perspektywy są tam dosyć mizerne, co najwyżej praca w kopalni, która szybko może zakończyć się śmiercią.

A jednak Prichard opisuje swoje dzieciństwo z dziwną nutą beztroski. Nie zabranie jednak trudnych momentów.

To też ciekawy portret małej społeczności żyjącej według własnego rytmu. W zasadzie z dala od wielkich wydarzeń, które jedynie nawiedzają mieszkańców od czasu do czasu. Portret już tylko opisany, bo w prozie Pricharda czuć nieunikniony koniec tego świata.

Max says

as if someone's memory had broken from their head and cauterised on the page in indiscriminate consummation. it is in part (aside from the intimacy to madness and death) a fossil of every childhood, or at least mine too. it contains the richness of a gullible world, where sight and meaning can be altered by the flightiest of sentiments. a funny and desolate jumble of masterpiece.

John Mitchell says

In the first few pages we are shocked by the innocence of a young boy's observations of death, insanity and abuse. The narrative is so matter-of-fact as we are taken on this disturbing journey through a Welsh village. Caradog Pritchard deftly allows the reader to see through the child's eyes in a poem to poverty, madness and death. It is a work of utter genius.
