



Brightness Falls

By Jay McInerney

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Combining the lyrical observation of F. Scott Fitzgerald with the laser-bright social satire of Evelyn Waugh, Jay McInerney gives us a novel that is stunningly accomplished and profoundly affecting.

As he maps the fault lines spreading through the once-impenetrable marriage of Russell and Corrine Calloway and chronicles Russell's wildly ambitious scheme to seize control of the publishing house at which he works, Jay McInerney creates an elegy for New York in the 1980s. From the literary chimeras and corporate raiders to those dispossessed by the pandemonium of money and power, *Brightness Falls* captures a rash era at its moment of reckoning and gives reality back to a time that now seems decidedly unreal.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

While the strengths of McInerney's writing are in evidence, the characterizations in this well-plotted generational portrait of late-'80s Manhattan yuppies fail to convince. A BOMC alternate and a three-week PW bestseller in cloth. Author tour.

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From Library Journal

The author of *Bright Lights, Big City* (LJ 10/1/84) again offers an amusing and perceptive morality tale of Eighties excess. Russell Calloway, an editor for a major publishing house, and his stockbroker wife Corrine appear to be the perfect New York couple. Dissatisfied with the management of his publishing company, Russell organizes a hostile takeover bid and embarks on an affair with Trina, his investment banker. But he loses his shirt in the 1987 stock market crash, Corrine leaves him, and his best friend commits suicide. McInerney wryly examines the dilemma of people in their 30s who came of age with sex, drugs, and rock and roll and must now come to grips with adult responsibilities. Replete with ironic insight, wit, and style, this is highly recommended for popular fiction collections. Previewed in *Prepub Alert*, LJ 2/1/92.

- *Patricia Ross, Westerville P.L., Ohio*

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From Kirkus Reviews

His own career very much a creation of 80's hype, McInerney here attempts an unironic post-mortem on the era of leveraged buyouts and consumer excess. Not surprisingly, it reads like an *apologia pro vita sua*, without any of the bite or wit of *Bright Lights, Big City*. Publishing insiders will no doubt find much of interest in the roman ... clef aspects of this overwrought saga. Otherwise, it's a pretentious morality tale with all the depth and subtlety of Oliver Stone's *Wall Street*. (Both Stone and McInerney thank businessman Ken Lipper for his insider's expertise.) The golden couple at the center of things are Corrine and Russell Calloway, handsome college sweethearts, whose cozy domesticity is envied by their swinging single friends. Though she's a stockbroker, Corrine also works in a soup kitchen and has a "Mother Teresa syndrome," according to her husband. He's a Wunderkind editor at a distinguished publishing house but feels his career is being stymied by his mentor, Harold Stone, "a former radical intellectual" who now spends his lunch hour at the Four Seasons. Together with a street-smart, young black editor, Russell and an investment-banker friend plan a hostile takeover of his employer. They enlist the help of Bernie Melman, a short and pudgy corporate raider who eventually sells Russell down the river. So much for the intrigue. McInerney fills out his melodrama with hunks of undigested business chat; a textbook's worth of college-level literary quotations; and pathetic running jokes about exploding breast implants. The personal lives of the key players suffer from predictable problems: infidelity, alcoholism, anorexia, satyriasis, drug addiction, and depression. With all its soap-opera turns, it's hard to take this thirtysomethingish novel seriously. Despite its purple patches, McInerney's latest is more Krantz than Fitzgerald. And he can probably take that to the bank, no matter how much it wounds his literary credit. -- Copyright ©1992, *Kirkus Associates, LP*. All rights reserved.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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