



Dark As The Grave Wherein My Friend Is Laid

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Dark As the Grave Wherein My Friend is Laid was Malcolm Lowry's last book. It is an autobiographical novel of Lowry's return to Mexico to look for his friend Marquez. The main character, an alcoholic writer, has problems finishing his books and with his publishers.

Dark As The Grave Wherein My Friend Is Laid Details

Date : Published February 8th 1991 by Picador (first published January 1st 1968)

ISBN : 9780330313186

Author : Malcolm Lowry

Format : Paperback 276 pages

Genre : Fiction

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From Reader Review Dark As The Grave Wherein My Friend Is Laid for online ebook

Barry Pierce says

A fictionalised version of a real journey that the author and his wife took to Mexico which was left unfinished when Lowry died. Thankfully it was edited together and here we have this fantastic book about turmoil and disaster and longing and Poe. This book is infested with literary references that I just *lived* for. The first half of this novel is somewhat plot reliant but as we slip into the second half (and especially the third act) plot becomes tertiary. It is about the mind of a writer and how that mind is usually not incredibly sound. The prose reminds me of Pynchon with its gigantic solid blocks of text and almost lucid narrative at times. I really, *really* enjoyed this novel but it is definitely not for everybody. I need more Lowry.

Simon Robs says

When I like a book it's almost always due to some "personal" connection having occurred through reading - something(s) just happen(s) when your experience overlays with mood, characters, plot, place etc. It can be some tangential thing or it can be verisimilitude of an almost exacting sense of being within the story's confines. Have you ever returned to some place of your own tragic/traumatic occurrence?

This was a book full of ghostly goings back, revisitation and recapitulation where [Lowery] Sigbjorn Wilderness as protag. returns to Mexico with his new wife Primrose from Canada where they now live after their house burns down and, to celebrate a honeymoon they never took after being married for some five years. Sigbjorn is a writer/poet though only ostensibly so with few if any published credits. His worked on and finished novel is received and under consideration with both English/American publishers while the story takes place. There's an eerie limbo at pace throughout, a sense of subdued foreboding in Wilderness's mind that he shields from his wife - she knows from having read and typed his manuscript about the clouded and debouched time in Mexico which is what his book ("The Valley of the Shadow of Death") is mostly about but not the trepidation of this return. He has mainly refrained from drinking while married and she has not picked up on this uneasiness as they travel by plane south. Wilderness is also seeking to reconnect with a mysterious friend in Oaxaca, Juan Fernando Martinez, who called him 'my maker of tragedies' and who was his benefactor if not savior from ruin. Lowery's own book 'Under the Volcano' and this story are coterminous as he and Wilderness are one and the same bibulous writers in search of their will to expression. Sure there's plenty more drinking and confused/unsettled moving about but, there's also beautiful scenery and descriptive passages of rickety bus travel in 1945 Mexican heartland replete in volcanos and high mountain deserts flora/fauna. The Mezcal flows and the winds blow, time changes all we know, you can never go back to what was and you never should 'cause past is past and Día de Muertos abides.

Jmurray says

I could have sworn I already saved this review, but this is the straight autobiographical companion to 'Under The Volcano', which is an incredible book. So this is the ideal book to read shortly after you read that.

Count Duckula says

golly what a title! and the book includes amongst other heartbreakers the image of writing as a burning house ... is it my imagination or does the old drunk almost get political here? a fan of cardenas' 30s socialist mexico dream?

Cody says

"The progression would have sounded to a spiritual and omniscient listener somewhat as follows: butterflies fire : butterflies fear : butterflies liar : butterflies Primrose : butterflies ruined holiday : butterflies guilt : butterflies Erikson : butterflies Eridanus : butterflies auto camps of the better class : butterflies failure : butterflies anguish : butterflies no one will ever buy The Valley of the Shadow of Death : butterflies Erikson : butterflies Fernando : butterflies I am failing Primrose : butterflies plagiarism : butterflies will they find out? butterflies after all : butterflies middle age : butterflies feet : butterflies where is that resolution I made last night : butterflies still kept, or is it: butterflies nonsense : butterflies middle age : butterflies disgrace : butterflies death : butterflies Erikson : to which might be added butterflies Communism : butterflies am I : butterflies people being tortured in China : butterflies atom bomb : and so on."

If the above looks and sounds like your idea of a good time—I know it's mine—proceed directly to the "Lowry, Fatalism, and Intoxication; Graduate Studies" course and gobble this post haste. It is absolutely essential to anyone that appreciated *Under the Volcano* (which, looking through your ratings, seems to be nearly all of my friends). This is the indispensable other half of *Volcano*, a barely-fictionalized account of Lowry on a bender as his masterpiece is rejected by every publisher with working presses.

This being Lowry, the whole book is about a long and prodigious drunk. But there's so much more. *Grave* has a level of self-referentialism that I'd never encountered in print prior to Borges. This isn't 'meta' (ugh, that word) like *At Swim-Two-Birds*. This is *Ficciones* with mescalbreath *y borracho perfectamente*. It is a book about the failings of *Volcano* — explaining the origin stories of the characters and meeting their real-life inspirations— while the author of the same (Lowry as "Sigbjørn Wilderness"— beat that fucking name!) is writing another, last book about the trip he is on (same Mexican setting) in the book that is to be called, yep, *Dark as the Grave Wherein My Friend is Laid*. Zing-zang-zong! Talk about your Chinese box stories! Someone get McCaffery on the phone.

So tie several on, get 'tight' with Lowry, and prepare for things to start shitty and go downhill from there. Fast. There is one leap made between chapters that, to channel McElroy, is as flawless, yet violent in its way, as a diver breaking the skin of a pool's still surface. The jump is as electrical and instinctive as a triggered synapse, and you just *whince* at its inevitable logic. Rubber, meet road.

Makis Dionis says

βυσσος, φβος, μοναξι?, δαμονες.

Χανγκοβερ: η κοντιντερη αναλογα με το ασημα της χαμνης αγπης

Εξσου συγκλονιστικ με το "Κτω απ το ηφαστειο" κινεται παρλληλα αλλ και ανμεσα απ τις σελδες αυτο?. Μια σπειροειδς κατβαση στους καταραμνους ρωτες κ τις ανατες παθογνεις για την ομοφι?, το πθος, τον ρωτα, το ταξδι, το αλκολ και την οριστικ αμοιβαα

ἔξοδο, με αὐτὸ που δὲν δόναται νὰ ξαναπῆρξει, ἀπὸ τὸν παραδεισίο κῆπο (που φαντᾶζει ἴμῳς προτιμότερη ἀπὸ οποιαδήποτε ἄλλη ἐκδοχὴ ζωῆς)

Μὴν ἀφ᾽σέτε τὰ παιδιὰ σας νὰ καταστρῶσουν τὸν κῆπο αὐτὸ

Zalman says

For some reason I read this before "Under the Volcano"; it served to whet my appetite for the more famous book. Although it was not published in Lowry's lifetime, but assembled from a much longer but unfinished typescript by his second wife, Margerie Bonner Lowry, and an Editor, Douglas Day, the writing displays all of the desperate brilliance that characterized "Under the Volcano". In this even more autobiographical story, the protagonist, Sigbjorn Wilderness, clearly modelled on Lowry himself, is an unsuccessful and alcoholic writer, returning to Mexico to see an old friend and revisit old haunts, while waiting to hear from his publisher about the fate of his latest novel (here given the original title for "Volcano", "The Valley of the Shadow of Death"). Upon learning that the manuscript has been rejected (just as Lowry's "Under the Volcano" was rejected repeatedly before finally being published in 1947), he descends into a self-obliterating cycle of drinking and hangovers. Many of the same key elements of "Volcano" are present: the hallucinogenic landscape of southern Mexico, relationships based on compulsive alcohol dependence, the tormented meditations on hope and despair. If this isn't your cup of tea, stay away. Otherwise, dig in; despite the unfinished feel and the knowledge that editorial choices had to be made when Lowry was no longer around to give his assent, it's a formidable and unforgettable trip into his darkly brooding consciousness.

Lacascario says

This is a hellishly introspective book that delves deeply into self doubt, paranoia, and shame. Lowry, like no other author captures the despair of an addict. This book is a direct companion to "Under the Volcano," and should be read as such. It is painfully slow at times, and contains perhaps the longest paragraphs in existence, but it is also a powerfully moving work that unflinchingly stairs into the authors greatest nightmares. As a work of art it is a tremendous achievement and I am in awe of its courage and honesty.

Zachary says

An altogether brilliant and confusing exploration into the mind of a genius alcoholic. Nearly completely autobiographical in nature, Lowry's tale of Sigbjorn (Lowry himself) is an interesting but difficult read. Moments of sheer brilliance blend into interesting but disjointed explorations of big-picture philosophy and are often followed by nearly nonsensical forays into drunken half-memories. A worthwhile read only if you are willing to study the text rather than read it as a novel, as many of the concepts are vague and abstract, and often difficult to glean from the text without close reading. Lowry is unquestionable a genius and impressive writer, but his alcoholism inevitably led to the disjointed and confusing narrative.

Jonathan says

Please see Cody's review <https://www.goodreads.com/review/show...>

Connor says

A story more about the failings of Lowry than anything. Its extremely self-referential, full of doubt and self-reflection on Lowry's failings as a novelist and a human being.

Amerynth says

My habit of picking books to read based upon interesting titles led me astray this time. I haven't read Malcolm Lowry's much lauded "Under the Volcano" so many of the references in "Dark as the Grave wherein my Friend is Laid" were right over my head.

Apparently written after Lowry died from notes he made during a real-life journey to Mexico, "Dark As..." explores the colossally bad idea of taking your second wife on a vacation to visit the places where your marriage to your first wife finally went kaput and you wandered soused wondering what to do with yourself. Cue more soused wanderings and a few philosophical ramblings.

This was a very difficult book to get into -- the first 75 pages document the flight from Canada to Mexico. But it started to grow on me as it went on and I adjusted to Lowry's writing style. Overall, the book seemed to ramble a bit but had entertaining bits interspersed in it too.

my name is corey irl says

here i took a better photo for you goodreads

Ian says

Excellent novel by one of the finest writers in the English language. I wrote about the book - it's sort of a review, I suppose - in more detail here <http://iansales.com/2014/09/19/the-wr...>

Nick says

The essential follow-up to one of my favorite books of all time (and criminally underrated/read), Under the Volcano.

This book is nearly perfect and 4 measly stars just seems entirely too inadequate.
