



## The Fishermen

*Chigozie Obioma*

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**The Fishermen** Chigozie Obioma

**A striking debut novel about an unforgettable childhood, by a Nigerian writer the *New York Times* has crowned "the heir to Chinua Achebe."**

Told by nine-year-old Benjamin, the youngest of four brothers, **THE FISHERMEN** is the Cain and Abel-esque story of a childhood in Nigeria, in the small town of Akure. When their father has to travel to a distant city for work, the brothers take advantage of his absence to skip school and go fishing. At the forbidden nearby river, they meet a madman who persuades the oldest of the boys that he is destined to be killed by one of his siblings. What happens next is an almost mythic event whose impact-both tragic and redemptive-will transcend the lives and imaginations of the book's characters and readers. Dazzling and viscerally powerful, **THE FISHERMEN** is an essential novel about Africa, seen through the prism of one family's destiny.

## The Fishermen Details

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Author : Chigozie Obioma

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## From Reader Review The Fishermen for online ebook

### Thepocobookreader says

This review has been long overdue. I read *The Fishermen* some time ago following a brilliant review by the African Book Addict before the Booker long list was announced and I jumped right into the novel, with no inkling that it would fast become one of my favourite books of the year.

Written from the perspective of younger brother Benjamin, the novel follows the lives of four Nigerian brothers from a close knit family, their prophetic encounter with a madman and the devastating effect that one moment can generate. This notion of external forces wreaking havoc and destroying the great potential of the family is perhaps an allegory for Nigeria, the resource rich nation whose own story could be very different were it not for the ravages of foreign colonialism and internal corruption. But I digress. Whilst there is indeed an undercurrent of political discontent in the story, it is buried deep beneath a beautiful, engaging and intimate portrayal of a family in crisis. Obioma's evocation of the minutiae of life and the foibles of this family are understated yet powerful, compelling the reader to fully imbibe the story. The language is simple, terse and simultaneously emotive, multifaceted and highly efficacious. The narrative, which switches between adult Benjamin and Benjamin as a child feels cathartic, brimmed with animalistic and esoteric allusions that serve as innocent, child-like signifiers of the imminent tragedy. This book is everything and more that I want in a novel, it left my head in that brilliant post good-book head-fog for about a week and my only complaint would be that Obioma doesn't have another novel for me to read! With humble nods to the great Achebe throughout the book, Obioma looks set to follow the success of his literary forefather with this brilliant debut. And he certainly gets my vote for the Man Booker!

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### Cheryl says

Some books need to be read aloud so that the texture comes across in sound. Chukwudi Iwuji did an excellent job of performing this book, at times changing his intonations to suit the mood, switching to Igbo or Yoruba accents, paying attention to words and dialect and meaning in sound. This was a joy to listen to on several three-hour car journeys.

The past and present are beautifully intertwined in this story of brothers. Told from the retrospect of one brother who has just spent a few years as a minor in prison, this is a story of boys who come of age in an economically disadvantaged town in Nigeria. Their parents are determined to raise their four oldest sons to be professors, lawyers, or doctors, when a strange tragedy befalls their family. At the center of this tragedy is a mentally unstable man whose mental health is the result of traumatic brain injury from a car accident, a man who has no help from his community, and one who commits unspeakable crimes. Wrapped into this terrifying cocoon are the hopes and dreams of boys, the darkness of the spirit world, the tears from a mother's heart and a father's lost ambition. This story of 1990s Nigeria, which parallels the political climate of the time, is spellbinding and searing, visceral and unforgettable.

## Amerie says

I loved this story from the start. The first quarter of the novel had me chuckling and nodding my head in recognition at the family dynamics, especially when it comes to strict Education! Education! parents. Chigozie's imagery and metaphors are superb, and something in the prose and unfolding of events gives the story a magical realism bent, though everything is plausible.

**Really, the story is presented as a fable**, with nearly each chapter named after an animal and beginning with who that animal represents. At the same time, the overall feel is fresh and modern. *THE FISHERMEN* is humorous and heartbreaking and touching and I'm sure a second read will prove both rewarding and revealing.

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## Book Riot Community says

This book has been on my reading list for a solid two years and I'm thrilled I finally picked it up. *The Fishermen* captures the complex dynamics of brotherhood at a young age in a way that harbors both natural sentimentality and literary gravitas. Narrated by Ben, a nine-year-old Nigerian boy with four brothers living in a rural town, Obioma's novel is adeptly attuned to how enormous and wondrous everything seems during childhood, but what makes *The Fishermen* truly remarkable is the author's ability to transform the most astounding events of youth into believable moments of personal growth, familial pain, and utter joy.

— Aram Mrjoian

from *The Best Books We Read In June 2017*: <https://bookriot.com/2017/07/03/riot-...>

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This book is astonishing. When I decided to give *The Fishermen* a try, I honestly didn't really expect to make it past the first few pages (it's not the sort of plot I usually get excited about). But then all of a sudden I was halfway through and could barely catch my breath. There's just so much that's fascinating, surprising, and exhilarating about the book. The narrator is an observant but not excessively precocious nine-year-old. The story follows the disintegration of a family in small-city Nigeria. The focus is on a group of brothers whose brutal cleaving drives and haunts the plot. The mood is both abstractly mythic and concretely physical. The writing is perfectly tuned, lyrical in places and bracing in others. The characters' shifting multilingualism (Igbo, Yoruba, English) plays an intriguing role. The narrative structure has the past float to the surface of the present, then recede, then reappear. And the whole thing is much, much more than the sum of these parts. — Derek Attig

From *The Best Books We Read In February*: <http://bookriot.com/2015/03/02/riot-r...>

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## Maxwell says

*The Fishermen* tells the story of a family in ruins after a madman's prophesy drives one brother to be plagued with fear. Obioma utilizes a lot of mythological and folkloric story-telling techniques, especially drawing on

the natural world. It reads much like a parable, and I can't help but think that certain parts, especially the title, are direct biblical allusions.

I'll admit I wasn't a big fan of the first half of this story. It seems disjointed and focused on setting up the atmosphere of the boys' Nigerian hometown, Akure, along with the transformation their family undergoes. But about halfway through something happens that triggers the events to come as well as brings together some elements from the beginning, and that propelled me to read the rest of the novel with fervor.

I think Obioma, like Achebe and Adichie, has a strong voice and important things to say. As his debut novel, *The Fishermen* shows the literary prowess of someone far beyond his years. I was moved by the brotherhood these boys shared; I was torn by the grief that Benjamin, the narrator, undergoes; and I was filled with hope by the end of the novel. There is much to be mulled over in this novel. It's packed with motifs and themes that could keep you thinking for days. And I'm sure that the more I reflect on this novel, the more I will enjoy it.

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## somuchreading says

Με τους Ψαρδες μουν περ'εργος. μουν περ'εργος απ' την πρ'τη στιγμ' που ηκουσα για το βιβλ'ο, πριν δω πως ηταν υποψ'φιο για τα Man Booker Prize και Guardian First Book Award, πριν μ'θω πως θα κυκλοφορο'σε σ'ντομα απ' το Μετα'χμιο και πριν το βρω σε πολλ'ς απ' τις λ'στες με τα καλ'τερα βιβλ'α του 2015 που ηδη κυκλοφορο'ν.

Το μυθιστ'ρημα ε'ναι ηνα απλ', ε'κολο αν'γνωσμα εν'ς νεαρο' συγγραφ'α. Παραμ'θια, θρ'λοι και παραδ'σεις της Νιγηρ'ας δανε'ζουν στοιχε'α τους σε μια τραγικ' ιστορ'α που στην αρχ' της δε μοι'ζει καθ'λου με τ'τοια. Στα πρ'τα κεφ'λαι' του το βιβλ'ο βρ'σκει πολ' αργ' ρυθμ', αλλ' απ' ηταν αυτ' επιτυγχ'νεται, η αφ'γηση κορυφ'νεται σε ηνα κρεσ'ντο δυνατ'ν στιγμ'ν.

Παρ'λο ημως το δρ'μα του Ικ'να, του Μπ'τζα, του Ομπ'μπε και του Μπ'ν, με τον τελευτα'ο να ε'ναι και ο αφηγητ'ς του Obioma, η ιστορ'α απ'τυχε να συγκιν'σει κ'ποιον ξεκ'θαρα ευσυγκ'νητο ηπως εγ'. ησως σε αυτ' να ηπαιξαν ρ'λο και κομμ'τια των διαλ'γων των χαρακτ'ρων που, και εδ' σοβαρολογ' απ'λυτα, μου θ'μισαν σε σημε'α τους διαλ'γους του Φ'σκολου. Δεν ε'μαι ημως απ'λυτα σ'γουρος πως γι' αυτ' φτα'ει ο συγγραφ'ας και ηχι η μετ'φραση.

Η εικ'να της Νιγηρ'ας στα 90s παρ'τι αποσπασματικ' συμπληρ'νει τ'μια την κ'ρια ιστορ'α, μια ανθρωποκεντρικ', σκοτειν' ιστορ'α για το πεπρωμ'νο, απ' το στ'μα εν'ς παιδιο' κι εν'ς εν'λικα, του ηδιου ανθρ'που, ταυτ'χρονα.

Με τους Ψαρδες εξακολουθ' να ε'μαι περ'εργος. Θ'λω να δω πως θα ανταποκριθε' απ'ναντ' τους το αναγνωστικ' κοιν' της χ'ρας μας, που δεν ηχει συνηθ'σει ιδια'τερα να διαβ'ζει ιστορ'ες απ' την καρδι' της Αφρικ'ς. Αν ε'στε περ'εργοι [και θα ηπρεπε να ε'στε], για το τι βγ'ζει η Αφρικανικ' λογοτεχν'α τα τελευτα'α χρ'νια, νομ'ζω πως οι Ψαρδες ε'ναι ηνα απ' τα ηργα που θα ηταν καλ' να ηχετε στις αγοραστικ'ς σας προτεραι'τητες.

Απ' εμ'να ηχει ηνα καθαρ' και ηνετο 3,5\*/5 που μεταφρ'ζεται στα 3\*/5 εδ' στο Goodreads.

## Nnedi says

Oh yeah, definitely a must read. This was good good Igbo village storytelling. If anyone's work should be compared to Chinua Achebe, it's this one. But it's also got its own unique voice. There were times when it meandered a bit too much for my taste; sometimes there were details that felt included in order to pull the voice away from the point-of-view of a ten year old (these felt heavy-handed and often out of place)... but these moments didn't keep me from continuing. It's not a perfect novel (there is no such thing as a perfect novel), but it's a great first novel and it's the type of story that I love. Plus, I love a good tragedy. ;-)

\*Applause\*.

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## Nicole~ says

### 4.5 stars

*The madman has entered our house with violence  
Defiling our sacred grounds  
Claiming the single truth of the universe  
Bending down our high priests with iron  
Ah! yes the children,  
Who walked on our Forefathers' graves  
Shall be stricken with madness.  
They shall grow the fangs of the lizard  
They shall devour each other before our eyes  
And by ancient command  
It is forbidden to stop them!*

- poem by Mazisi Kunene,  
the epigraph to The Fishermen

Chigozie Obioma's talent as a powerful storyteller and gifted writer is evident from the very first pages. He immediately and vividly evokes the legend behind a key character of the novel's plot: the Omi-Ala - once a pure river, a clean source of fish and drinking water, and worshipped by the people of Akure like a god - became besmirched by rumor, condemned as evil by colonialists tooting Christianity; then defiled, tabooed, and condemned as untouchable in 1995, when its waters became steeped in the blood soaked mystique of a floating mutilated corpse.

The Fishermen, set in Nigeria in the 1990's when it was under the military rule of General Sani Abacha, recounts the fall of the Agwu family. Obioma skillfully mixes national unrest, westernization and modernity to parallel the paths of his characters without turning the novel into a political diatribe. Striking from the start, Obioma's prose is hypnotic, casting spells on the reader with the folklore of the land, the myth and legends that contribute to the decline of the Agwus whose lives are ensnared by their customs and beliefs. For Ikenna, Boja, Obembe, and Benjamin (the youngest brother of the four and the narrator): this is no uplifting coming-of-age tale or revelatory retrospective contemplation. The interwoven parables are hard-lessons, dark, brutal, mournful, and tragic.

## Crime and punishment

I had to take a breath as a paralyzing sense of pain was palpable when the boys, caught for skipping school to

go fishing in the forbidden Omi-Ala river, are severely whipped by their father, Eme. But just when I felt extreme hatred for Eme, there's comprehension ( not justification) for the corporal beating : *“What I want you to be is a group of fishermen who will be fishers of good dreams, who will not relent until they have caught the biggest catch. I want you to be juggernauts, menacing and unstoppable fishermen...Not the kind that fish at a filthy swamp like the Omi-Ala, but fishermen of the mind. Go-getters. Children who will dip their hands into rivers, seas, oceans of this life and become successful: doctors, pilots, professors, lawyers. ”*

### **Prophet of Doom**

The boys' fates were already sealed at the forbidden Omi-Ala river by an encounter with the town's madman ( because, you know, every town has one), Abulu, a soothsayer said to be possessed by the demon, *"robbed from head to foot in filth. As he rose spryly to stand, some of the filth rose with him...his back was caked with a dripping mess from some dead mango in a state of putrefaction...I observed that he carried on his body a variety of odours, the most noticeable of which was a faecal smell that wafted at me like a drone of flies when I drew closer to him. This smell, I thought, might have been a result of his going for long without cleaning his anus after excretion."* Abulu calls Ikenna by name and foretells his murder at the hand of one of his brothers, evoking the biblical Cain and Abel fratricide. The gravity of the prophecy and belief in superstition run through the brothers' veins like an infection morbidly threatening its host, because even in the hearts of a loving band of brothers harbor the germs of distrust, deception, jealousy, rage and violence. Which one of them could be the future killer of his own brother? Realizing that Abulu is the cause of conflict between the brothers, a gruesome revenge is planned, tragically furthering the break down of the family mosaic.

*To look into the future one would see nothing; it was like peeping into a person's earhole.*

### **Historical context**

The author also masterfully uses the Nigerian tradition of storytelling as a literary subversive blanket for socio-political criticism; cautious not to overwhelm the central themes, it is subtle yet effective. Obioma acknowledges that *"countries can take a wrong turn just as people can."* Nigeria was created from the ideas of madness, deceit and false prophets who have caused disharmony and destruction to Africa: allegories in the Fishermen of British intrusion that strongly resemble Chinua Achebe's acclaimed work Things Fall Apart, The African Trilogy #1 - one could classify it as the latter's metaphoric grandchild.

*When the British left in 1960 and Nigeria gained independence, the people immediately saw their differences....(three major tribes with nothing in common, cohabiting to form a 'nation')...and that they could not exist as a nation, but it was too late. I intend Abulu as a metaphor for this entity that infiltrates the lives of others, creates chaos through mere words, and causes suffering among the people, while the family of four boys is a metaphor for the major tribes of Nigeria. - Chigozie Obioma*

The Agwu family story unravels between 1993-2003, putting them in the midst of the 1993 elections and its overturning by the junta; MKO Abiola's imprisonment and execution; the dictatorial rule of General Sani Abacha, to finally civil governance. Whereas a little historical background gives the novel grounding and realness, its presence is not necessary to be blown away by the brilliant, artful authorship of Chigozie Obioma.

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### **Erika says**

This novel was selected for my book club, but I actually skipped the meeting since I didn't want to heap negativity on other people who may have liked it.

But here, no one is stuck in a room with me so I'll let it rip.

*The Fishermen* takes place in Nigeria in the mid-90s. It's the story of four brothers in a small village who sneak out to the river—a place they are forbidden to go—and fish. One day, a terrifying, mentally ill man foretells that the oldest one will be killed by one of the others. The madman is known for his prophecies which are always horribly grim.

The novels' first half deals with the effect of the man's prediction—it ruins the oldest brother and tears the family apart. The second half chronicles a series of events that transform the brothers' lives.

Sounds interesting, right? I thought so too and was excited to pick up *The Fishermen*. It won a slew of awards including being shortlisted for the Booker Prize, and most of the reviews on GRs were very positive.

After finishing it though, I feel like I read the wrong book.

Orioma clearly has talent. There is a mythic quality to his writing, and he does a great job capturing the relationships between the brothers as well as looking at the prediction itself. (view spoiler) This brings up the questions of how much of our lives occur because they are roadmapped by others. Who are those others and where does their power come from?

Yet, I don't believe *The Fishermen* deserved its accolades. The themes are hopelessly muddled and inconsistent and much of the writing lacks control and maturity. Here are two sample passages.

His eyes were bloodshot and his face pale, but there was an expression on it that was so indescribable, so beyond recognition—as my memory at the time could afford—that it became the face that I now mostly remember of him.

and

All we did for the rest of that evening was sing, the dying sun pitched in a corner of the sky as faint as a nipple on the chest of a teenage girl a distance away.

Orioma has a habit of depicting the most important moments of the plot either in flashback or off-stage entirely, which robs the novel of much of its urgency. The dialogue feels stilted, the pacing jerky, the action awkward.

Finally, I was left wondering what the book was really about. There's plenty of religious symbolism, glimpses of Nigerian politics, some family dynamics and an exploration of mental illness, but nothing adds up or pays off. In an interview, Orioma was asked when he first had the impulse to write the book. Here is part of his answer:

I have been looking for a way to capture... the situation in Nigeria: Why is it that Nigeria can't progress? We have abundant oil, a strong elite educated class, a sizable youth population... Why are we still backwards as a people? The issue I think lies in the foundation itself. The distinct tribes, like Yoruba and Igbo, they are their own states. They used to have no contact and they progressed in their own way. But then a colonizing force came in and said, "Be a nation." It is tantamount to the prophecy of a madman. Why are we subscribing to this British idea of a nation? Why can't we decide for ourselves?

What an interesting metaphor! For me, this short quote is cleaner and more controlled than anything *The Fishermen* has to offer.

## Nikoleta says

3,5/5 αστερ?κια

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## Jen Campbell says

Video review to follow :)

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## Emer says

*“The things my brother read shaped him; they became his visions. He believed in them. I have now come to know that what one believes often becomes permanent, and what becomes permanent can be indestructible”*

When I looked at the list of nominees for the Man Booker Prize last year this was the book that jumped out at me. I was immediately intrigued by the premise and what I found on reading this book was a different kind of story-telling than I am used to... and I liked it!!

The book tells the story of a family living in Akure, Nigeria in the early 1990s from the viewpoint of nine year old Benjamin, the fourth child, and in particular focuses on the relationships between each of the four eldest boys in the family. When their father has to move away for work and with their mother busy, these boys decide to start fishing in the forbidden Omi-Ala river in the hopes of catching fish to sell: Omi-Ala, *“the source of dark rumours”*. What happens at the river alters the lives of each of the boys and sets in motion a seemingly unstoppable destructive force.

This book had an almost mythic quality to it. The chapters were laid out almost like fables and always began with a description of some sort.

*“Mother was a falconer: The one who stood on the hills and watched, trying to stave off whatever ill she perceived was coming to her children. She owned copies of our minds in the pockets of her own mind and so could easily sniff troubles early in their forming, the same way sailors discern the forming foetus of a coming storm”*

It made for a very smart plot device in my opinion. I felt the author was constantly weaving us into the world of this young boy and his brothers.

For a story that focuses on the lives of young brothers this book was quite dark in its themes, there were never really any sunny moments and perhaps this is why it took me a little longer to read this than I

expected. I did find myself putting it down from time to time and finding it a little hard to pick back up...but that is not a slight on the book. It is just the way I read. I am a very emotional reader and events in this book between the brothers affected me deeply. In fact, the book is all the better for its sombre tone. It felt both rich and deep.

*“Hatred is a leech: The thing that sticks to a person’s skin; that feeds off them and drains the sap out of one’s spirit. It changes a person, and does not leave until it has sucked the last drop of peace from them. It clings to one’s skin, the way a leech does, burrowing deeper and deeper into the epidermis, so that to pull the parasite off the skin is to tear out that part of the flesh, and to kill it is self-flagellating. People once used fire, a hot rod, and when they burned the leech, they left the skin singed”*

The writing style was wonderfully descriptive. Obioma paid great attention to detailing the world of Benjamin and his brothers and the characters they all met. Descriptions in the book, and an overriding religious theme, evoked a sense that something biblical was occurring. I found the book to be laden with theistic imagery which added a somewhat heaviness to what was happening. The idea of whether or not there are such things as prophecies, the exploration of rights, of wrongs, of vengeance, of brotherhood... Are there such people as this so-called mad man who are somehow linked to an other-worldly power and possess the knowledge of foresight? Or was this prophecy nothing more than the evil intent of a dangerous man? Can faith protect us from such evil? Is there such a thing as righteous vengeance? This book throws up a lot of spiritual questions that are left to the reader to ponder on and decide what is true for them.

And all interspersed with the breakdown of family life and religious ideologies were references to the Nigerian political establishment at the time and to political unrest... it was actually very deftly handled, almost subtle and it added a grounding dimension to the story; myths and fables happily sitting alongside political on-goings.

*“Then we knew we were safe and had escaped the 1993 election uprising in which more than a hundred people were killed in Akure. June the 12th became a seminal day in the history of Nigeria. Every year, as this day approached, it seemed as if a band of a thousand invisible surgeons, armed to the teeth with knives, trephine, needles and extraordinary anaesthetic materials, came with the influx of the north wind and settled in Akure. Then at night-time, while the people slept, they would commit frantic, temporal lobotomy of their souls in quick painless snatches, and vanish at dawn before the effects of the surgeries began to show. The people would wake with bodies sodden with anxiety, hearts pulsating with fear, heads drooping with the memory of loss, eyes dripping with tears, lips gyrating in solemn prayers, and bodies trembling with fright. They would all become like blurred pencil portraits in a child’s wrinkled drawing book, waiting to be erased. In that grim condition, the city would retract inwards like a threatened snail.”*

This book left me confused at times... but really by that I mean by the strangeness of life. Of how a thought, someone else’s words could impact so greatly on the life of one family... I am still left pondering many questions that this story raised regarding faith and beliefs. It was such a different type of story than I am used to. It felt almost like a story that should be related orally rather than written and subsequently read. The writing was wonderful, the plot brilliantly woven and it all came together to create a memorable reading

experience.

#### **four stars**

*“On the other hand, I want you all to know that even though what you did was wrong, it reflected once again that you have the courage to indulge in something adventurous. Such adventurous spirit is the spirit of men. So, from now onwards, I want you all to channel that spirit into something more fruitful. I want you to be a different kind of fishermen... What I want you to be is a group of fishermen who will be fishers of good dreams, who will not relent until they have caught the biggest catch. I want you to be juggernauts, menacing and unstoppable fishermen.”*

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I'm so confused right now.... I definitely liked this book but at times my attention waned and I am struggling with how to rate it... But the writing was.... I don't have the right word right now. Let's go with good for the time being.

Review and rating to come when I can gather my thoughts together

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#### **Dianne says**

Oh, how I loved the end of this book! It made my heart soar.

Really, really well done debut novel that is worthy of the Man Booker shortlisting. It is a family drama with overtones of a Greek tragedy. The story is narrated by Ben, both as a 10-year old child and an adult man looking back. Ben is the 4th son of a tightly knit Nigerian family that begins to unravel when the disciplinarian father takes a job at the Nigerian Central Bank in another city. Without the father's watchful eyes on them, the four oldest boys decide they are going to become fishermen. For six weeks, the brothers and their friends tramp down to the foul, forbidden Omi-Ala river to fish and catch tadpoles. One fateful day at the river, the brothers' paths cross with Abulu the Prophet, a local madman. Abulu makes a prophecy that the oldest son, Ikenna, will be brutally killed by a fisherman - which Ikenna interprets to be one of his own brothers. With mythic overtones, the family, one by one, becomes undone by the prophecy.

There is richness and beauty in the details of this story - the daily life and interactions of the family set against the political and social backdrop of Nigeria in the late 90's. Ben describes each member of his family as an animal, often a bird, and poetically describes how that family member embodies that animal's characteristics.

I had a hard time finishing this book - it took me almost a week because I would become overwhelmed by dread as the prophecy wreaked its havoc on the family. I feared what would happen next and to whom, so I would have to put the book down and walk away. (Yes, I am a "wuss.")

Lest you avoid this book thinking it may be a downer, ultimately it is uplifting and moving. Do read it. It's a worthy contender for the Man Booker. I look forward to what is next from Mr. Obioma.

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## **Darkowaa says**

!!! <http://africanbookaddict.com/2015/07/...>

I'm just floored right now. This is a dark, haunting, tragic, heart-wrenching BUT amazing story of 4 brothers and their family and a madman - Abulu. Right when you think things get better and the craziness plateaus, something pops up! I feel like I know/knew Ikenna, Boja, Obembe and Ben - their love and brotherhood are so dear to me, I don't know why. Chigozie Obioma wrote about these boys in such a tender way that had me ALLLLL in my feelings. I felt alllll types of feelings reading this book - every word counts! Obioma's use of metaphors made this story too palpable. References to 'Things Fall Apart' in this book, alongside other contemporary works and worldly happenings made this all the more a satisfying read. I'm SUPER proud of this author and I wish him nothing but more success! This has been the best book I've read all summer .... and maybe for this year (its a little too early though, we're only in June!) I'm still trying to digest some stuff from the book...I'm just sitting here thinking about stuff...  
Pick this up if you get the chance. Please - just do it.

Official review on my book blog: <http://africanbookaddict.com/2015/07/...>

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## **Helene Jeppesen says**

For some reason, it took me a long time to finish this book even though it's relatively short. But when I did read in it, I loved it! I think I just needed to process it, because this is a really heavy story that, however, starts very abruptly and makes you question the purpose of this narrative in the beginning.

The Fishermen are a bunch of brothers who live in Nigeria and who are very connected. They seem to really grow up over the course of one year, and what starts out as a bittersweet, amusing story becomes a tragic and divastating narrative.

I definitely see why this novel was short-listed for the Man Booker Prize, but something about this book made me not love it as much as I was hoping for. As stated earlier, I read it very slowly and wasn't really interested in picking it back up, but once I got into it I was fascinated. I'm happy that I've now read it, and I think that it speaks of a lot of truths and horrors that teenage boys can go through.

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