



When All Is Said

Anne Griffin

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A tale of a single night. The story of a lifetime.

If you had to pick five people to sum up your life, who would they be? If you were to raise a glass to each of them, what would you say? And what would you learn about yourself, when all is said and done?

This is the story of Maurice Hannigan, who, over the course of a Saturday night in June, orders five different drinks at the Rainford House Hotel. With each he toasts a person vital to him: his doomed older brother, his troubled sister-in-law, his daughter of fifteen minutes, his son far off in America, and his late, lamented wife. And through these people, the ones who left him behind, he tells the story of his own life, with all its regrets and feuds, loves and triumphs.

Beautifully written, powerfully felt, *When All Is Said* promises to be the next great Irish novel.

When All Is Said Details

Date : Expected publication: March 5th 2019 by Thomas Dunne Books (first published January 24th 2019)

ISBN : 9781250200587

Author : Anne Griffin

Format : Hardcover 336 pages

Genre : Fiction, Contemporary

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marilyn says

Eighty four year old Maurice Hannigan is ready to say goodbye. All his affairs are in order, property sold, dog given to new owners, money in various accounts for various people, things given away, boxes packed with names of who gets the contents, everything done and sorted so he can enter a nursing home the next day. At least that is where he tells those in the know, that he is going.

There are five people whose memories he want to toast first though. One of the most poignant is the toast to his late brother. The love between Maurice and his older brother Tony, was something most people could only hope to have. Five years older than Maurice, Tony let Maurice know he would always be there to protect Maurice. Maybe reading wasn't Maurice's thing but Tony knew that Maurice would win in life, doing other things just as big or bigger than reading. When people asked Maurice what he wanted to be when he grew up, Maurice said he wanted to be Tony...it was as simple as that, nothing was better than Tony.

That last person Maurice toasted to was his late wife, Sadie, who had died two years earlier. It's Sadie's death that has broken Maurice's heart and spirit and his depression is a bottomless pit. Maurice was always faithful to Sadie, never wanted another woman, but he knows he let her down in ways that he knew he was doing at the time. Stubbornness was always strong in Maurice, he was a stubborn man, set in his ways, always after money even after he had more than enough, despite the fact that Sadie didn't like that he was so intent on earning more money. So they didn't talk about money but at the same time, Sadie knew she could never order tea with her Sunday dinner because Maurice said they could have tea at home, instead. When Sadie rebelled, Maurice realized how much he'd hurt her at times and even then, he still couldn't just let her have her way. These types of things are on Maurice's mind as he makes his toast to her.

Intertwined in these toasts is another story, a mystery, that concerns a once rich family that was not only unkind but cruel to Maurice's family. A young Maurice does something that ends up hurting that family and also Maurice gets his revenge on that family as he slowly buys up all their properties when they hit hard times. His need for revenge is what drives Maurice to keep working for more money, more than they could possibly need, and this urge colors all parts of his life.

I suspected how the book would end and I was right. I felt sad during the entire book and certainly at the end. Depression can take your life while you are still alive and make you do things you might not do if you could see past that depression.

Thank you to St. Martin's Press and NetGalley for this ARC.

Ova - Excuse My Reading says

Written so purely, the string of emotions this novel stirred in me is massive. When All is Said is the story of 84 years old Maurice and 5 toasts he makes; on a milestone of his life, he is sitting on a barstool and remembers all 5 human beings with feelings of joy, pain, anger, regret, happiness, longing. It's so beautifully written, I confess it made me shed a tear or two, but it's more heartwarming than heart breaking, I promise. Isn't life itself is like that, and this is one of the books that tells slices of other people's life in a mesmerising way, you won't regret reading it.

Fiona says

A heartbreaking and heartwarming story, beautifully told. Maurice, an old man now, sits at the bar toasting the most important people in his life, all of whom have passed away bar his son. He visits his past life through his memories of each of them, regretting words not said and often those he did say. Maurice is a flawed human being - difficult, grumpy, tight-fisted - all by his own admission. We learn through his retelling of his life how loved he was, however. His parents, brother and sisters, wife and son, loved him and cared about him. His problem was that he found it difficult to show them he felt the same way. We learn why he is the way he is and why he couldn't change himself.

Beautifully written in the way only the Irish can write, this story tugged at my heartstrings the whole way through. From his childhood, Maurice remembers his mother laughing when she saw a banana for the first time.

My mother looked at it and laughed. Clear and melodious it was, like a song thrush. As each member of the family arrived to see the peculiar-looking fruit, my mother's laugh started up once more. I willed others to come so she wouldn't stop. I moved as close to her as I could, to taste and feel her happiness. I remember my head pushed in against the material of her apron, closing my eyes to hear her joy and feel her body vibrate. Irresistible.

An easy 5 stars from me and I look forward to reading more by Anne Griffin. With thanks to Hodder & Stoughton/Sceptre and NetGalley for a free review copy.

Karen says

4+ stars

I am becoming a huge fan of Irish stories and authors!

I loved 84 year old Maurice, who has lost his beloved wife 2 yrs ago, and isn't doing well without her. He plans a memorable night at a hotel bar that holds a personal history...and through the course of the night makes narrative toasts with a fine whiskey to five people, this followed by a stay in the honeymoon suite at the same hotel.

At each toast during this night, we find out the history of Maurice and the significance of each of these five people in his life.

I so enjoyed his story! Recommended!

Thank you to Netgalley and St. Martin's Press for the ARC!

Kendall says

Woo hoo!! Just got my copy... won this in a Goodreads giveaway! :) This never happens!! EEEEEK with excitement.

Miriam Smith says

I'm always emotional at Christmas and reading this exceedingly powerful book, "When All Is Said" by Anne Griffin, over the Christmas holidays had me brimming with tears from the start.

Although a very poignant, thoughtful and emotional book there are times you find yourself smiling through the tears and I absolutely adored reading this book.

This is the story of 84 year old Maurice Hannigan, who, over the course of a Saturday night in June, orders five different drinks at the Rainford House Hotel in Ireland. With each drink, he toasts a person vital to him and who made an impact and through these people, he tells the story of his own life, with all its regrets and feuds, loves and triumphs. 'A tale of a single night. The story of a lifetime.'

The author has written from the heart and soul to create something very special in this unique and compelling and utterly engrossing story of a man reflecting on his life, his achievement, failures and loves lost and found, each recounter had me captivated and I felt lovingly connected to Maurice personally, touched by how he was now finally expressing his true feelings.

I imagine a lot of people will have very similar thoughts towards the end of their lives and it made the story all the more thought provoking and emotionally compelling knowing the feelings of Maurice to be so obviously true to life.

I really enjoyed this wholeheartedly Irish tale, I would happily recommend to anyone who enjoys Irish or family sagas, you shouldn't be disappointed and I would definitely read more by this talented author again.

4.5 stars rounded up to 5.

Katie B says

This is a perfect example of a book I didn't want to end. I just fell in love with the main character to the point that by the end of the story I felt like he was an old friend. Maybe this book isn't going to be special for everyone, but I found it to be incredibly touching and brilliant.

84-year-old Maurice Hannigan takes a seat at a hotel bar in a small Irish town. Before the night is over, he will toast 5 people who made an impact in his life.

The thing I kept thinking about while reading is how there are certain moments in life that might be insignificant to others, but they end up shaping you as a person. They might be things you want to forget, but you can't deny they helped define you. And that's why I was so moved by Maurice as he revisited these moments. The premise of the book sounds so simple, but yet there is so much substance. He's a complicated man and I was incredibly moved as I learned everything about him, the good, the bad, and all the stuff in between. I'm not even joking when I say it felt like I was sitting right there with him at the bar and when the night was over, I didn't want him to leave. I love when I feel emotionally connected to a character because it's a feeling that doesn't always happen, at least not on this level.

I rarely pay much attention when other authors endorse a book, but I do find it worth noting John Boyne had some good things to say about the author and her novel. If you enjoyed *The Heart's Invisible Furies*, consider checking this book out.

I won a free advance copy of this book in a giveaway but was under no obligation to post a review. All views expressed are my honest opinion.

??? Shelley ??? says

If you had to pick five people to sum up your life and raise a glass to each of them, who would they be and what would you say?

This is a book with great depth and interest, the pace of which is kept alive by subtle humour of what is potentially a mostly sad story of the protagonist, Maurice, who suffers so deeply from the loss of his wife. There are bits of Maurice within us all everywhere. Whether you find this book hilarious, sad, moving, comforting or bewildering will depend on you. What is certain is that you will not be unaffected by the many characters and events in it.

It's an awful thing, to witness your mother cry. You cannot cure nor mend nor stick a plaster on.

Ms. Griffin's stories, in their simplicity and honesty, are an exercise in pleasure. Exploring the most ordinary concepts, she creates profound understanding, and even with the most difficult subjects, like life and death, she manages to make the tale uplifting. This is a story about love and life, simply and elegantly told.

The same things matter the world over: saving face and money.

I found this book to be absolutely delightful, even though the theme isn't. There is sadness and heartbreak, happiness and many laugh out loud moments. It is extremely profound and deeply moving. This is a debut novel by Irish author Anne Griffin, and one I have no hesitation in recommending extremely highly. Overall I found the book a thoroughly enjoyable read.

Thank you NetGalley, St. Martin's Press, Thomas Dunne Books and Anne Griffin for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an impartial review; all opinions are my own.

#WhenAllIsSaid #NetGalley

All my reviews can be found on my blog:
<https://shelleyann01.blogspot.com>

Kristy K says

When All is Said is a poignant and heartfelt novel. It is slow, flawed, and beautiful and I got emotional many times while reading it. Maurice sits at a bar alone looking back over his life and makes a toast to five people who influenced and changed his life: his brother, his daughter, his sister-in-law, his son, and his wife.

He's a cantankerous old man, in some ways reminiscent of Ove (A Man Called Ove), but where that book had dry humor this one is steeped in nostalgia. Early on you can see where it's heading but when you get there, you're still gutted.

The writing is that of a seasoned author, yet I believe this is Griffin's debut book. I'm eagerly awaiting her next novel where I hope she can mend the broken heart she left me with.

TW: (view spoiler)

Emily May says

ARC provided in exchange for honest review ?

Maria Hill AKA MH Books says

Waitress just caught me crying ? in the restaurant finishing this - how embarrassing:)

Louise Wilson says

At the bar in a grand hotel in a small Irish town sits 84 year old Maurice Hannigan. He's alone as usual. So pull up a chair and charge your glass, because Maurice is finally ready to tell his story. He will raise 5 toasts to the five people who have meant the most to him. Stories of joy, regret, a secret tragedy kept hidden and a fierce love that never found its voice.

What a heartwarming but also a heartbreaking story this is. A beautifully written story. An old man sits at the bar and toast the most important people that have been in his life. All but his son have passed away. This tear jerker of a story covers every emotion from joy, sadness, love, compassion and much much more.

Intertwined with these toasts lies another story, a mystery that involves a once rich family that was cruel to Maurice's family. You will guess the ending but that won't make you think any less of this wonderful story, I do recommend this book.

I would like to thank NetGalley, Hodder & Stoughton and the author Anne Griffin for my ARC in exchange for an honest review.

Felicia says

3.5 Stars ?

I'll begin this review by explaining why I chose this book in the first place. To put it simply, the author is

Irish. I have become an avid fan of the modern Irish authors of late, John Boyne (who endorsed this book), Liz Nugent and Tana French just to name a few, and this debut by Anne Griffin definitely shows promise. I don't know what they are putting in the stout over there but it's working.

This story involves a night at a bar with 80+ year old Maurice as he makes a toast to the five most important and influential people to grace his life. Between toasts he reflects on the history with each person in his head as if he is speaking to his son.

Each story is an in-depth look into the life and times of Maurice but he sometimes swerves off subject and becomes a bit wordy for my liking, although, through the magic of Griffin's writing, he eventually comes back around, seamlessly connecting the dots.

Anne Griffin's storytelling is incredible and up there with some of the greats. Very talented and adept at giving each character a voice of their own despite the fact that they are all introduced through the eyes of Maurice.

With all of that being said, had I not been reading this as an ARC with the promise of a review, I may have given up on this book around the 50% mark. It just wasn't for me and that fact has nothing to do with the quality of Anne Griffin's prose. I found myself bored at times, feeling like this story really had no direction, no plateau, no progression at all, especially since the reader already knows the ending from the get-go.

I've no doubt that most will fall in love with this story so I certainly do not discourage any reader from adding it to their shelves. I'm in no way put off from reading a book by this author in the future. For me, this particular effort feels like a premise that has been done before and better.

I was provided an ARC of this book by NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

TL says

I recieved this via goodreads giveaways ,thanks! All my opinions are my own.

Of all the money that e'er I had

I spent it in good company

And all the harm I've ever done

Alas it was to none but me

And all I've done for want of wit

To mem'ry now I can't recall

So fill to me the parting glass

Good night and joy be to you all

So fill to me the parting glass

And drink a health whate'er befall,

And gently rise and softly call

Good night and joy be to you all

Of all the comrades that e'er I had

They're sorry for my going away

And all the sweethearts that e'er I had

They'd wish me one more day to stay

But since it fell unto my lot

That I should rise and you should not

I gently rise and softly call

Good night and joy be to you all

A man may drink and not be drunk

A man may fight and not be slain

A man may court a pretty girl

And perhaps be welcomed back again

But since it has so ought to be

By a time to rise and a time to fall

Come fill to me the parting glass

Good night and joy be with you all

Good night and joy be with you all

This song kept running through my mind when I was reading this. Not everything is applicable but the spirit of it I think fits nicely.

I don't remember who said it was the Irish that were the best storytellers (Glen Hansard maybe?) but it's definitely right here.

This is one of those books that makes me so happy I am a reader.

We follow Maurice through his life as he toasts each person and tells the story of why they were important to him and instrumental in his life. He tells the story at his own pace and doesn't skip the warts of it all either.

Some instances I felt for him, other times I felt sad/pity for him, and sometimes I just wanted to smack him upside the head or take him aside and tell him to stop being an idiot.

Through it all though, I understood him in a way and never stopped being an eager listener. It felt like I was keeping him company beside his barstool and a fly on the wall when he was back in the past. It feels precious when he opens up, this man who kept things close to the vest.

I guessed what he was planning early on.. Maurice doesn't keep it a secret but he doesn't lay everything out all at once either. Another one Pop Pop would have liked methinks.

The ending is sad but a little bit beautiful in that way (to me at least)... it had me gripping the book a bit tighter and reading slower.. not wanting to say goodbye.

The writing is so gorgeous and atmospheric but isn't loud and in your face... it's a quiet thing, letting you come to it. Make sense?

Kudos to the author, can't wait to hear more from her.. highly recommend. :)

Paromjit says

This is an exceptional, undeniably Irish, debut from Anne Griffin, the prose is effortlessly engaging and it is simultaneously heartbreaking and life affirming as we get intimately acquainted with the life and times of 84 year old Maurice Hannigan. Hannigan has packed up his life, leaving no loose threads prior to booking the most exclusive suite at the Rainsford House Hotel. Early on, we cotton on to how the night will end, but before that, Maurice settles in for an evening at the hotel bar to raise a toast for the five most important loves of his life. They are Tony, his brother, Molly, his daughter, Noreen or Auntie No-no, his son, Kevin, who emigrated to New Jersey, USA, becoming a notable journalist, and lastly, but of the most vital importance, his wife, Sadie.

As Maurice reminisces, we become aware of just how close his bond with Tony is, of how school became a tortuous experience as he became convinced of just how stupid he is. He leaves at 10 years old to work, like his mother, for the local rich family, the Dollards, where he undergoes a plethora of the most unhappiest of experiences that are to leave him scarred for life and shape him to be the most unforgiving of men. The scales shift as through the years the Dollard fortunes drop substantially whilst Maurice becomes a astute entrepreneurial farmer, buying up the land around his farm, becoming financially secure and wealthy. He falls for Sadie hook, line and sinker, and to his surprise and joy, she returns his love. Sadie's sister, Noreen, is fiercely drawn to the sparkle, and she will go to any lengths to acquire it when she sees it, not afraid of making a fuss in public. Kevin makes a ritual of providing his father with rare whiskies. To Maurice's eternal regret, he has not been an expressive man, he has never been able to articulate the depth of his love to those nearest and dearest. It becomes transparently clear that loneliness has seeped into Maurice's heart and soul.

Anne Griffin has written a touchingly profound and moving novel, of the oh so very human Maurice, his joys and tragedies, the ghosts who have been there in his life, and his concerns that the one ghost he really wants to see has proved to be elusive. Maurice is a character you cannot help but get emotionally invested in, despite his obsession for business and making money, which, of course, left him open to missing the opportunities to be with his loved ones when they may have needed him. This novel hones in what is important in life, family, friends and love. Maurice is not infallible, he had a drive for vengeance, not always aware of the consequences of his actions but I loved and adored him. This is a brilliantly enthralling story of Maurice, of his dyslexia, his family, heartbreak, and the Ireland he lives through. Hugely recommended. Many thanks to Hodder and Stoughton for an ARC.
