



The Flood

Ian Rankin

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The Flood Details

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Author : Ian Rankin

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From Reader Review *The Flood* for online ebook

Jan C says

Being a big fan of the Inspector Rebus stories, I have to say I think it was a mistake (as I generally do) to re-issue his first novel, especially after getting everyone hooked on Inspector Rebus.

Even knowing that this was not a Rebus story I still felt as though the writing would pick up. Unfortunately, I can't wait that long. OK, I really didn't give this one that much of a chance - I only read to page 28. But they were 28 of the longest pages I have ever read.

And maybe it just takes a couple of years before he starts doing Rebus and his writing has improved.

I'm certainly willing to look forward to other stories of his now this it looks like he has finished the Rebus series.

Renee says

This book was absolutely lost on me, it told many stories but rarely explained a thing, I continually found myself searching for the mystery that surrounded Mary and Sandy's life or more so Mary's past, surely there must be something more than the fact that Sandy is a bastard child right – wrong. I'd considered closing this book many times but persisted knowing that this was not only my first Rankin novel but also Rankin's first novel but when I got to the end I wondered if the book I had was missing pages because it ended so abruptly. I felt there was so much more that could be offered from this novel and I am still at a loss to know why the front cover of my version states that it's a number one best seller?

I'm not certain I will be in any great hurry to read any of his other works, not just yet anyway.

Marvin says

The Flood is a beautifully written tale about depressed people in depressed times. It is about people with little futures in towns that barely sustain those who remain. This is more of a character study than a novel relying on plot and, as such, is a beautiful triumph. The protagonists are three dimensional and quite believable. For me, it is 15 year old Sandy who is the center of the story. His mother is reviled as a witch but he is accepted and this dilemma leads him to his own errors and torment. This is one of those novels in which you can say little about the plot without giving it away. However, it is Rankin's sparse but tense style that is the highlight. The only thing that keeps it from being five stars is an abrupt ending. But the trip there is outstanding.

Gill says

This is early Rankin so not a classic. After a promising start it took an age for anything much to happen, and

the "mystery/secret" of Mary Miller and her son Sandy was pretty obvious from early on.

Nigel says

Flawless. Can't remember the last time I read something this immersive

Brad says

The Flood is a simple story, simply told, with a mystery at its core that only exists (and barely at that) through omission.

Sandy is a bastard who could be the incestuous product of his Uncle and Mother, or maybe the offspring of a rape perpetrated by a family friend, or the incestuous Grandson/Son of his Mother's Father. The answer is the mystery, and it remains something of a mystery even after the last page. Rankin leaves the decision up to us.

Actually, Rankin leaves everything up to us, which is to the detriment of his story. I can't believe I am saying this since I usually love stories with few answers, but it's true. I wanted to know more about Rian and Robbie and what comes of them. I wanted to know more about George Patterson's suicide and what it would mean for those left behind. I wanted to see what Pastor Darroch's obsession with Mary, Sandy's beautiful, alienated mother, would mean for her. I wanted to understand the connection between Tom and Andy, the seemingly unrelated men who most loved Mary. I wanted to see how the beatings of Matt Duncan Sr. and Belly Martin would scar Sandy and influence his future. I didn't need it all tied up neatly, but I did need more. I needed to feel like I'd finished reading a novel rather than the skeletal notes of a talented author rushing through an idea so that he could move on to something he cared more about.

And I really needed the titular flood to be more than a series of puddles and saturated ground in Carsden. The Flood is not much of a flood, but maybe that's intentional, a perfect reflection of the shallow stories Rankin was writing.

I hope his Rebus books are better.

Gary says

This is the very first published novel by the successful writer Ian Rankin.

The novel started fairly strongly and I was pretty confident I was going to enjoy it but unfortunately the second half of the book failed to live up to the promise. Many of the characters had a good strong base but were not fully developed leaving lots of unanswered questions in my head and a hint of disappointment. The lead character Mary Miller is an outcast who during her youth had fallen into a chemical run-off from the local coal mine causing her hair to turn white. Any sympathy for her quickly faded when the man who pushed her in died in a mining accident just two days later. Following that day she was regarded suspiciously by the God-fearing community. Now an adult and a mother of illegitimate son Sandy, she is in love with the local teacher.

If you are comparing this to Ian Rankin's other novels then you will be sorely disappointed, the book is a decent first novel but not the work of a successful crime writer. Maybe should been left in the past rather

than republished.

If you are new to Ian Rankin then keep clear of this one and concentrate on the highly acclaimed Rebus series.

J. Kent Messum says

I dig Ian Rankin big time, and to be fair, this was the guy's first published novel. The Flood was a good story, not always terribly exciting or gripping at times, but thoughtful and insightful. What weak spots and pacing problems it had were atypical of an author's first time out, and the novel more than got the job done in the end.

One of the things to remember too, is that this book is a lot different from what Rankin's fans have grown accustomed to. This is not a crime novel, or a detective story. No Rebus or Fox on the case here. This is a small coming of age tale set in a little Scottish town with a few twists towards the twisted. What this book certainly did was offer more than a few glimpses at the brilliance that was to come from Rankin. I highly recommend it for aspiring writers to see where a now famous man started his literary career.

Νατ?σσα says

?χει π?ντα ενδιαφ?ρον να βλ?πεις π?ς ξεκ?νησε ?νας συγγραφ?ας που ?δη αγαπ?ς. Μ' αυτ? το σκεπτικ? ε?ναι αξιοδι?βαστο το πρ?το βιβλ?ο του Ρ?νκιν. ?χι αριστο?ργημα, σαφ?ς ?χι απ? τα καλ?τερ? του, αλλ? ακ?μα και σ' αυτ? ε?ναι φανερ?ς οι αρετ?ς που μας ?καναν να τον αγαπ?με. Επιπλ?ον υπ?ρχει μια κατατοπιστικ? εισαγωγ?, που εξηγε? τις συνθ?κες και την εποχ? που το ?γραψε.

Gael says

I think this is my first Ian Rankin...

I was quite surprised at how clunky the writing is in this novel. I know many people who love Rankin, so I was expecting something pretty good...but this was his first novel, written when he was in his early 20s, and it shows. There are some very odd similes, and odd uses of adjectives (more than you would expect from a PhD student), but maybe that's a Scottish thing. Having said that, the story kept me interested, so it wasn't all bad.

I'll have to read one of his later works, to see how his writing has developed.

Renee says

I can't fault any part of the writing in this book. The characters are haunting, the writing beautiful, but it's a rather strange story. Strange how? I'm not sure I can explain it. The only reason I didn't give a full five stars

is because the ending was kind of disappointing for me. I like a full resolution in a novel-length story. Shorts or flash fiction, I don't mind a bit of ambiguity, but I like more of a payoff for reading more than 100 pages. This felt...not quite over. Perhaps that was his intention. As a reader, it fell flat for me.

However, I'm eager to read another book by Rankin. As I said, the writing is beautiful. I fell into the style and voice almost immediately. It was like wrapping up in a favorite old blanket or sinking your feet into a perfectly worn-in pair of shoes. I haven't felt that immediate comfort with an author's writing in a long time.

Do I recommend this book? Yes and no. I'm betting if you start with a later novel, you'll be blown away. This is one of his first published works if what I've read is correct.

Anyway, I have another waiting for me right now, so I'll just dive in again.

Jill says

This was my first encounter with Ian Rankin. My brother in law has read many of his books and passed them on to me. So this was one of Ian Rankin's first entries into the writing game and isn't one of his murder mysteries..... just as I was getting into the story, it ended. Full stop. So now I have since entered into his Detective Rebus novels. I'll let you know what I think of them when I have finished.

Mark Rice says

The Flood is the first novel Ian Rankin wrote. The story's main characters - a mother and son in the Fife village of Carsden - are so well written that they maintained my interest throughout. Rankin understands small-town prejudices and superstitions; that shines through in his writing. The plot touches on witchcraft's deeply ingrained place in Scottish culture. I wish Rankin had made more of that facet of the story, as it is during these mysterious interludes that his prose truly sparkles. The dialogue isn't always realistic: it's too clean for any Scottish town, least of all a mining community. (We're told that Sandy is a streetwise kid of seventeen, yet he talks like an eight-year-old teacher's pet.) That said, *The Flood* is a well-crafted story with flourishes of originality, but it's held back somewhat by lacklustre dialogue and a half-hearted ending that fails to tie up the loose ends of a plot which could have achieved more.

3.5 to 4.0 stars

Rob says

This is Ian Rankin's first published book. What I was expecting was a watered down version of Rebus or something of its ilk. Got that very wrong.

This is a coming of age story. It also takes a good look at the life and times for the working classes in Scotland around the middle of the 20th century.

I was a kid growing up in Edinburgh at the precise time in history as the book. So inevitably, reading this book was a walk down memory lane for me. I remember all the hopes and aspirations along with the disappointments and, at times, the desperation felt by the characters in the book. Small houses and large

families, shared beds and the struggle to put food on the table food. It's no wonder that there is not a corner of the world where the Scots can't be found.

Fair to say I was spellbound by this book.

This is a first published book and as a result there are a few holes in the plot. The characters are all very believable, believe me, I could have been one of them.

When the end came I could have kicked myself. Because, at the halfway mark, I had it all figured out only to discover I didn't.

There's a line near the beginning of the book that sum up so much of the story.

Mary's father was drinking quite heavily, though her mother tried to hide the the fact from everyone and succeeded only in hiding the truth from herself.

This comes highly recommended but if you are a Rebus fan you won't find him here.

Louise Armstrong says

This was so bad a book - his first. It's the kind of writing that makes me want to reach for Cold Comfort Farm again. I laughed out loud at his aunt's comment on his style (which fair play to Ranking he quotes in the introduction): 'all soiled knickers and fag-ends'.

The chief charm of this book for me, as a person who also writes books which are not as good as I would like, is the fact that he went on from this to write good books.
