



His Bloody Project: Documents relating to the case of Roderick Macrae (Shortlisted for the Booker Prize 2016)



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Kurzbeschreibung

SHORTLISTED FOR THE MAN BOOKER PRIZE 2016The year is 1869. A brutal triple murder in a remote community in the Scottish Highlands leads to the arrest of a young man by the name of Roderick Macrae. A memoir written by the accused makes it clear that he is guilty, but it falls to the country's finest legal and psychiatric minds to uncover what drove him to commit such merciless acts of violence. Was he mad? Only the persuasive powers of his advocate stand between Macrae and the gallows. Graeme Macrae Burnet tells an irresistible and original story about the provisional nature of truth, even when the facts seem clear. His Bloody Project is a mesmerising literary thriller set in an unforgiving landscape where the exercise of power is arbitrary. *Pressestimmen*

-It's only a story -- or is it? Graeme Macrae Burnet makes such masterly use of the narrative form that the horrifying tale he tells in HIS BLOODY PROJECT, a finalist for this year's Man Booker Prize, seems plucked straight out of Scotland's sanguinary historical archives.---Marilyn Stasio, *The New York Times Book Review*

-Thought-provoking fiction.---The New York Times Book Review, Editors' Choice

-[A] powerful, absorbing novel... Fiction authors from Henry James to Vladimir Nabokov to Gillian Flynn have used [an unreliable narrator] to induce ambiguity, heighten suspense and fold an alternative story between the lines of a printed text. Mr. Burnet, a Glasgow author, does all of that and more in this page-turning period account of pathos and violence in 19th-century Scotland... [A] cleverly constructed tale... Has the lineaments of the crime thriller but some of the sociology of a Thomas Hardy novel.---Tom Nolan, *Wall Street Journal*

-. . . recalls William Styron's *The Confessions of Nat Turner* in the way it portrays an abused people and makes the ensuing violence understandable. . . *Bloody Project* shows that the power held by landowners and overseers allowed cruelties just like those suffered by the Virginia slaves in *Confessions*. Halfway between a thriller and a sociological study of an exploitive economic system with eerie echoes to our own time, *His Bloody Project* is a gripping and relevant read.- *Newsweek*

-Burnet is a writer of great skill and authority . . . few readers will be able to put down *His Bloody Project* as it speeds towards a surprising (and ultimately puzzling) conclusion.---*Financial Times*

-*His Bloody Project* is an ingenious, artful tale of a 19th century triple murder in the Scottish Highlands. Though a novel--and shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize--it masquerades as the tale of a true crime, made up of a collection of historical documents supposedly unearthed by the writer, each bit shedding further light on what drove a 17-year-old to kill three people--including an infant--in his small crofting community.---*NPR*

-. . . an intricate, interactive puzzle, a crime novel written, excuse my British, bloody well.---*Los Angeles Times*

-A stellar crime novel and a wrenching historical portrait, HIS BLOODY PROJECT also succeeds at lyrically questioning whether it's possible to know another man's mind--or even desirable. The novel sends out vines in all directions, its characters' tangled motives obscured by tragedy and lies.---Lyndsay Faye, author of *Gods of Gotham*

-A thriller with a fine literary pedigree . . . *His Bloody Project*- offers an intricate, interactive puzzle, a crime novel written, excuse my British, bloody well.---Steph Cha, *Los Angeles Times*

-It [*His Bloody Project*] had such an engrossing plot that I couldn't put it down once I started reading it, so it was no surprise that Graeme Macrae Burnet's excellent work was short listed for the Man Booker Prize . .

.The interesting and innovative structure used by the author, where you feel like you are reading original historical records, sets the book apart from others of a similar genre and his skillful writing means the reader can't help but empathise with the 'murderer'. In addition to the gripping story, the book gives the reader a

fascinating insight into Highland life at the time - its harshness, poverty and brutality. Definitely one of the best books this year.---First Minister of Scotland, Nicola Sturgeon

-Clever and gripping---*Library Journal*, starred review

-Psychologically astute and convincingly grounded in its environment . . . a fine achievement.---*The National*

-Fiendishly readable . . . A psychological thriller masquerading as a slice of true crime. . . The book is also a blackly funny investigation into madness and motivation.---*The Guardian*

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-I disappeared inside the pages of Graeme Macrae Burnet's *His Bloody Project*. . . fascinating---*The Seattle Times*

-Burnet has created an eloquent character who will stick with you long after the book is read.---*The Seattle Review of Books*

-Both a horrific tale of violence and a rumination on the societal problems for poor sharecroppers of the era.---*TIME*

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-Masterful, clever and playful . . . one of the most experimental and assured authors currently writing in Scotland---Louise Hutcheson, *A Novel Bookblog*

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-It's only a story -- or is it? Graeme Macrae Burnet makes such masterly use of the narrative form that the horrifying tale he tells in *HIS BLOODY PROJECT*, a finalist for this year's Man Booker Prize, seems plucked straight out of Scotland's sanguinary historical archives. Roderick and his family brave feudal conditions, toiling as tenant farmers on a small allotment, harvesting peat for fuel and scavenging seaweed to fertilize their gardens. It's a hard existence, made even harder by Lachlan Mackenzie, a vindictive constable who systematically strips the Macraes of their livelihood. When father and son bravely take their grievances to the factor, the man charged with running the estate on behalf of the laird, he cruelly dismisses their request to see the regulations they're accused of violating. -The reason you may not 'see' the regulations is because there are no regulations, - he informs them. -You might as well ask to see the air we breathe.-

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For a -semiliterate peasant, - he has recorded a testament so -sustained and eloquent- that the Edinburgh literati suspect a hoax. Not so Roderick's lawyer, Andrew Sinclair, who marvels at the prisoner's graceful writing and command of language even as he's sickened by the conditions under which people like the Macraes must toil. But the lawyer's defense may not be enough to counter the contemptuous testimony of men like the bigoted prison surgeon, J. Bruce Thomson, who contributes his own sour observations to the medical reports and witness statements presented in court. Thomson's examination of the prisoner confirms his view that criminal behavior is determined by heredity. In Macrae's case, though, what might be inherited is sheer desperation.---Marilyn Stasio, *The New York Times Book Review*

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