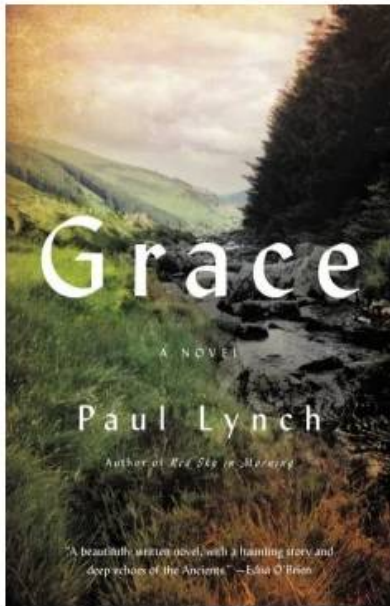


February 2020



Irish author [Paul Lynch](#)'s 3rd book *Grace* was published in 2017 to massive international acclaim. The book has been described by the Washington Post as *"a moving work of lyrical and at times hallucinatory beauty"*.

The novel is set during the Great Famine in Ireland, 1845-1849 and tells the story of a 14 year old girl, Grace who is torn from her home by her mother and told to leave the family home. With winter close at hand, and Ireland suffering from the famine, she must become the strong one now. The novel follows Grace's 5 year journey. Each encounter on her journey marks another rebirth on a seemingly endless road filled with people who look like they are *"losing both their inwardness*

and outwardness, and those who have gone past want to a point that is longing narrowed down to the forgetting of all else".

Grace is a story of ghosts but it isn't a ghost story. *Grace* is a story of the Great Famine, but it's not narrowly political. *Grace* is a tale of misery, but it's not a misery memoir.

The broken land *Grace* passes through reveals untold suffering as well as unexpected beauty.

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The broken land *Grace* passes through reveals untold suffering as well as unexpected beauty. To survive, *Grace* must become a boy, a bandit, a penitent and finally, a woman—all the while afflicted by inner voices that arise out of what she has seen and what she has lost. The book is ultimately a journey of spiritual regeneration after dealing with crises in Ireland's darkest hour.

The overall group discussion agreed that the visceral descriptions, and haunting lyrical prose, whilst they could be seen to be over done with metaphors and overly lyrical, was fitting for the period and style of the novel and made it extraordinary. The comments ranged from "lush lyricism", "evocation was extraordinary" "language and writing beautiful", and the book was very well accepted by everyone.

Ratings: Pauline 4, Nicola 4.5, Jenny 4, Sandy 4.5, Margie 4, Karin, 4, Janet 3.5, Judy 3, Lynda 3, Claudia 3.5, Kim DNF (but is going to).

Our next meeting will be 9/03/20 at 6:30PM at [Preece House, 50 Nerang St Bischof Pioneer Park, Nerang \(next to 54 Nerang St. shops\)](#) to discuss [In My Mind's Eye](#) by Jan Morris.

Hope to see you all there and happy reading!

Other Books We Read

February 2020

Cloudstreet by Tim Winton, 4.5

Educated by Tara Westover, 2.5

Burial Rites by Hannah Kent, 4.5

Lanny by Max Porter, 4

The art of growing up by John Marsden, 3

The idea of perfection by Kate Grenville, 4

Paris or die by Jayne Tuttle 2.5

Love in the time of cholera by Gabriel Garcia Marquez 4.5

Letters to Alice, on first reading Jane Austen by Fay Weldon, 3.5

Unquiet by Linn Ullmann, 4

The World that we Knew by Alice Hoffman, 2.5

The Cherry Orchard, by Anton Chekov, 3

The World That We Knew by Alice Hoffman, 3.5

Olive, Again by Elizabeth Strout, 4.5

Grief is the thing with Feathers by Max Porter, 4

[fay/weldon/](#)