



Belfast Days: A 1972 Teenage Diary

Eimear O'Callaghan

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Belfast 1972. It's the bloodiest year of the Northern Irish 'Troubles', and 16-year-old Eimear O'Callaghan, a Catholic schoolgirl in West Belfast, bears witness in her new diary. What follows is a unique and touching perspective into the daily life of an ordinary teenager coming of age in extraordinary times. The immediacy of the diary entries are complemented with the author's mature reflections written 40 years later. The result is poignant, shocking, wryly funny, and, above all, explicitly honest. Belfast Days is unique book that comes at a time when Northern Ireland is desperately struggling to come to terms with the legacy of its turbulent past. It provides a powerful juxtaposition of the ordinary everyday concerns of a 16-year-old girl - who could be any girl in any British or Irish city at this time, worrying about her hair, exams, boys, clothes, discos - with the unimaginable horror of a society slowly disintegrating before her eyes, a seemingly inevitable descent into a bloody civil war, fuelled by sectarianism, hatred, and fear. Written by an experienced broadcaster and journalist who rediscovered her 1972 diary on the eve of the publication of the Saville Report (also known as the Bloody Sunday Inquiry), Belfast Days demonstrates how one person's examination of her own 'story' provided her with a new perspective on one of the darkest periods in 20th-century Irish and British history. *** "...the writing is extraordinary." -- Stephen Dubner, author of Freakonomics *** ".Brigid Jones in a war-zone." -- Anne Cadwallader, author of Lethal Allies *** "Eimear O'Callaghan's 1972 eloquent eye-witness testimony salutes the hard work, the persistence and the breathtaking courage of those who fought against tyranny and oppression for so many, many years!" - The Celtic Connection, September 2015 [Subject: Memoir, History, Irish Studies, British Studies]

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