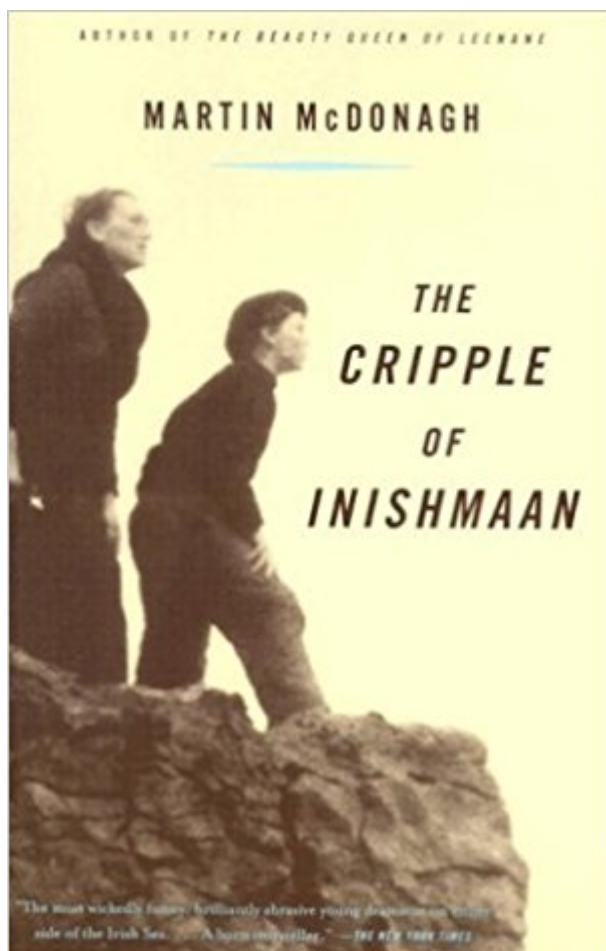


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# The Cripple Of Inishmaan



## Synopsis

In 1934, the people of Inishmaan learn that the Hollywood director Robert Flaherty is coming to the neighboring island to film a documentary. No one is more excited than Cripple Billy, an unloved boy whose chief occupation has been grazing at cows and yearning for a girl who wants no part of him. For Billy is determined to cross the sea and audition for the Yank. And as news of his audacity ripples through his rumor-starved community, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* becomes a merciless portrayal of a world so comically cramped and mean-spirited that hope is an affront to its order.

## Book Information

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: Vintage; 1 edition (September 8, 1998)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0375705236

ISBN-13: 978-0375705236

Product Dimensions: 5.2 x 0.3 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.7 out of 5 stars 33 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #184,414 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 in [Books > Humor & Entertainment > Movies > Industry](#) #365 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > British & Irish > Dramas & Plays](#) #502 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Dramas & Plays > Regional & Cultural > European](#)

## Customer Reviews

McDonagh's play wittily exposes the multiple layers of myth that surround Ireland. -- Michael Billington \* *Guardian* \* McDonagh is a writer with a gift for scorching entertainment. -- Henry Hitchings \* *London Evening Standard* \* McDonagh is a master technician -- he can whip up larger-than-life yet convincing characters and situations faster than any of his peers...he's expert at creating laugh-aloud comedy out of private cruelty. But if, to put it mildly, compassion has never been his strong suit, this is his play which most elicits genuine empathy. -- David Benedict \* *Variety* \* Written with verbal brio and gleefully scant regard for sensitivities -- Sarah Hemming \* *Financial Times* \* McDonagh - with his mastery of caustic dialogue - has drawn such weird, funny characters ... that this black comedy comes across as strangely celebratory of rural misery. \* *Time Out* \* McDonagh refuses to romanticise ... emotionally cunning plot and themes of romanticism punctured, trapped rurality and the power of stories true or false ... each character has its own rhythm and

eloquence, absurdity and dignity ... as ever in McDonagh, a jagged, violent darkness feeds the comedy, and laughter glistens in the deepest despair. In its final moments the see-saw of hope and tragedy moves so fast you gasp. -- Libby Purves \* The Times \* A gloriously perverse writing talent ... playing with Irish stereotypes, flaunting the scabrous and outrageous is McDonagh's stock in trade ... his gift for teasing with comic caricature romps away ... language to bite on and speeches that ring with unusual cadences. -- Susannah Clapp \* Observer \* Packed with cranky characters, running gags and entertainingly rude slurs, plus psychopathic moments -- Kate Bassett \* Independent on Sunday \* As soon as you encounter any literary representations of 'the real Ireland', you enter the world of myth and myth-making, and the play has great ironic fun with all this. It's a mash-up of Irishness and stage Irishness, poverty and groping priests, ignorance supplemented by an utterly untrammelled imagination, a pastiche of Synge and Yeats and all that old Oirishy ... But there's also a genuinely haunting sense here that your impoverished Irish peasant, before cars and TV and radio and the net, really did have a freedom of imagination now lost -- Christopher Hart \* The Sunday Times \* Wistful ... McDonagh's greatest skill is investing his characters with authentic voices and distinct personalities ... this is theatre with a living, beating heart -- Tim Walker \* Sunday Telegraph \* --This text refers to an alternate Paperback edition.

In 1934, the people of Inishmaan learn that the Hollywood director Robert Flaherty is coming to the neighboring island to film a documentary. No one is more excited than Cripple Billy, an unloved boy whose chief occupation has been grazing at cows and yearning for a girl who wants no part of him. For Billy is determined to cross the sea and audition for the Yank. And as news of his audacity ripples through his rumor-starved community, *The Cripple of Inishmaan* becomes a merciless portrayal of a world so comically cramped and mean-spirited that hope is an affront to its order.

A crippled boy on an Irish island in 1934 aspires to be in a Hollywood documentary to escape the dreary life on Inishmaan, only to find the grass is not always greener of the other side of the fence. He returns from America, hoping to reassume his life in this barren wilderness, realizing how fortunate he had been to have friends there. Now he discovers it is not always possible to "Go Back" to the way things were. The play often seem unreal; however, I had to realize it was 1934. By today's standards life would be boring; life then was simple, and perhaps, not all that bad. A sad play with a moral. I did see the play after reading the book. I especially enjoyed the post-play discussion with friends. I felt I had more insight having read the book. Not quite as intense or unpredictable as "The Beauty Queen of Leenane", McDonagh's other play twice on Broadway.

On Broadway I saw productions of Martin McDonagh's "The Pillowman" and the "The Lieutenant of Inishmore;" the latter play had more blood and guts spread over the stage than any play within memory; the former was a dark, scary play that shocked even blasphemous New York audiences. This play is about simple folk in a small village in 1934, and one could be forgiven for considering them simple-minded as well. Elements of theater of the absurd, farce, vaudeville-like routines, and inane dialogue add to the great comic effects achieved in this piece. Two women run a grocery store that seems to be overstocked with cans of peas. There is no doubt that Cripple Billy is a cripple because the other characters are constantly mentioning it and calling him Cripple Billy. Some of the jokes are stupid, but nonetheless funny. Billy even goes to Hollywood to seek fame and fortune. Billy cons a boatman into taking him to a nearby island where Robert Flaherty is filming his documentary "Man of Aran." Billy stares at cows, Helen pegs eggs at Father Barratt, and Aunt Kate talks to a stone. Johnnypateenmike, the village gossip, (characters use long names in addressing each other) ferrets out and carries the news around the village. He keeps his Mammy in her nineties drunk and hopes she'll croak. These are like stage Irish types, stock characters. McDonagh is not aiming for realistic portrayals. This is farcical stuff with the flaky characters uttering vaudeville-like riffs. Some of the dialogue sounds nonsensical, absurdist, but somehow the plot gets moved along, and the audience gets entertained by these nut cases. It's almost like a hillbilly comedy. The play has its darker elements because McDonagh is not going to let the audience leave with a happy ending. Violence and cruelty are never far out of sight. If it plays as well as it reads, I'm sure it would be a hilarious theater experience.

Love McDonagh's writing, this is another great one from him

Martin McDonagh is a genius of dark comedy. The Cripple of Inishmaan beautifully balances some really very bitter events with hilarious dialogue. Each of the characters is complex and layered. Even the cruel have depths of kindness and sympathy, and the sympathetic have hidden cruelty. The play is incredibly engaging and keeps moving. If you're not familiar with Irish dialect it might be a bit confusing and tricky to navigate, but you pick up the colloquialisms as you read. It was truly enjoyable and I would love to see a production of it.

It was a dark comedy with the most unexpected ending and truth to characters. A lot of Irish humor suits the scene.

I bought this book before going to see the play on Broadway. The Irish accents were hard for me to understand, but thanks to the book I was able to follow along with the play. The story itself is quite tragic, but the language is rather comic, and I enjoyed this contrast. Also, the characters are all very distinct and made a deep impression on me. I enjoyed both the play and this script.

Great Item! Great Sale! Thanks very much!

I've read all of McDonagh's plays and this one lives up to the rest. It's hard to give anything of his anything less than a 5 out of 5. Instead I am inclined only to give some of them a 6 or seven out of 5. Personally I think that McDonagh has raised the bar for all modern play-writes.

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