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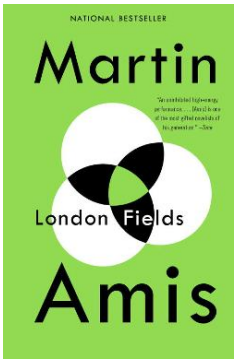

Preview

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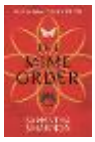

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Overview

From Follett

Psychic Nicola Six senses that she is about to be murdered by one of the two men she meets at a London bar and systematically sets out to humiliate them both and make them pay in advance.

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London Fields is Amis's murder story for the end of the millennium. The murderee is Nicola Six, a "black hole" of sex and self-loathing intent on orchestrating her own extinction. The murderer may be Keith Talent, a violent lowlife whose only passions are pornography and darts. Or is the killer the rich, honorable, and dimly romantic Guy Clinch?

Product Details

Publisher: Vintage International
Publication Date: April 3, 1991
Interest Level: AD

Format: Paperback (mass market)
Edition: 1st Vintage international ed.
Dewey: 823
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Description: 470 pages ; 21 cm
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Follett Number: 34264Q0

Reviews & Awards

Booklist
Wilson's Fiction, 10/01/10
New York Times

Full-Text Reviews

Kirkus Reviews (1990)

The bright, no longer so young, hope of English fiction doesn't exactly bomb on this outing--it's more a crash landing (at 480 pp.) into the "big" issues of our day: sadomasochism, environmental destruction, random violence, threats of nuclear war. The book is set in 1999 (it's billed as a "murder story for the end of the millennium") and is centered upon the dark, unwholesome beauty Nicola Six, who is gifted with a foreknowledge of events, including her own murder, which is scheduled to take place on her 33rd birthday. Nicola is responsible for her own brutal death as only a victim can be in Amis' epistemology: even though the murderer has not yet murdered, Nicola "was already a murderee." Not that she has our sympathy: Nicola is like a spider sitting in the middle of her web, conducting a long, maddening tease--even though she still doesn't know who will do the murder, the pages here are spent filling out, in dense and sordid detail, clues and counterclues. The two suspected men symbolize dual sides of English life: Keith, a petty criminal whose mind is filled with tabloid sex and violence ("Keith didn't look like a murderer. He looked like a murderer's dog"), and Guy Clinch ("A good guy or at least a nice one"). Their tangos with Nicola are filtered through the lens of an American hack-journalist, Samson Young, who is suffering from writer's block (so that Nicola, as she full well knows, is a gift from the gods, as she theatrically dumps her diaries into the dustbin opposite his window) and dying of a mysterious disease. Young will be the fall guy in a plot of patent coincidence, all ironically underlined by the narrator. As if to lift the moral tone of the novel ("Crawling through the iodized shithouse that used to be England . . ."), or to act as substitute for a reader's emotional involvement, nuclear war is used as filler, apocalypse as local color. Chill cynicisms from Amis in his longer form--for those who care to follow.

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