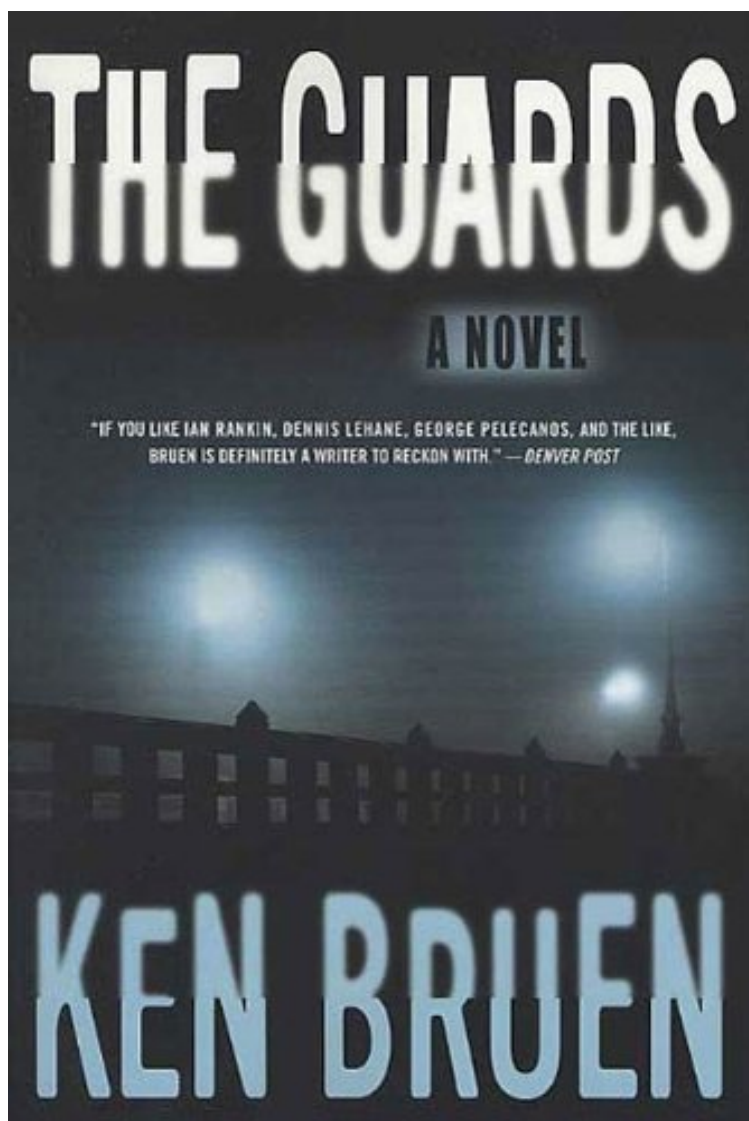


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The Guards: A Jack Taylor Novel



Par Ken Bruen
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Par Ken Bruen : The Guards: A Jack Taylor Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Guards: A Jack Taylor Novel:

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Description : Description du produitPraised by critics around the globe, The Guards introduces Jack Taylor, a disgraced ex-cop battling boredom and addiction on the gritty Galway streets. Still mourning the decades-old death of his father, stinging from his unceremonious ouster from the Garda Siochana-The Guards, Ireland's police force-and staring at the world through the smoky bottom of his beer mug, Jack has nothing to look forward to. Nothing, that is, until a dazzling woman walks into the bar because of a rumor about Jack's talent for finding things. A riveting hard-boiled novel fueled by dark humor and stark violence, The Guards kicks off an exceptional new series.

Prsentation de l'diteurStill stinging from his unceremonious ouster from the Garda Sochnathe Guards, Ireland's police forceand staring at the world through the smoky bottom of his beer mug, Jack Taylor is stuck in Galway with nothing to look forward to. In his sober moments Jack aspires to become Ireland's best

private investigator, not to mention its first Irish history, full of betrayal and espionage, discourages any profession so closely related to informing. But in truth Jack is teetering on the brink of his life's sharpest edges, his memories of the past cutting deep into his soul and his prospects for the future nonexistent. Nonexistent, that is, until a dazzling woman walks into the bar with a strange request and a rumor about Jack's talent for finding things. Odds are he won't be able to climb off his barstool long enough to get involved with his radiant new client, but when he surprises himself by getting hired, Jack has little idea of what he's getting into. Stark, violent, sharp, and funny, *The Guards* is an exceptional novel, one that leaves you stunned and breathless, flipping back to the beginning in a mad dash to find Jack Taylor and enter his world all over again. It's an unforgettable story that's gritty, absorbing, and saturated with the rough-edged rhythms of the Galway streets. Praised by authors and critics around the globe, *The Guards* heralds the arrival of an essential new novelist in contemporary crime fiction. Ken Bruen's *The Guards* is a 2004 Edgar Award Nominee for Best Novel.

There's something about the job that leads (fictional) cops and PIs to drink, which is why booze always seems to be a minor character in the genre. This is certainly the case in Ken Bruen's debut thriller about melancholy Irishman Jack Taylor, whose luck at finding things keeps him in beer money after he's kicked out of Ireland's Garda Siochana. When the mother of a young suicide victim asks him to investigate her daughter's death, Taylor discovers that Sarah Henderson isn't the only teenager to take a long walk off a short Galway pier. His search for the perpetrator gets his best friend killed, destroys his nascent relationship with his client, and sets him up for a final betrayal few readers will see coming. This promising writer doesn't need all the tricky punctuation and excess quotations from other writers to punch up his sharp, lyrical prose, but these are minor quibbles--he's a newcomer to watch.

--Jane Adams

From Publishers Weekly

Bruen flaunts genre cliches (the tough cop who loves books; the beating victim who insists on checking himself out of a hospital too soon) on virtually every page of this outstanding debut mystery. He gets away with it thanks to his novel setting, the Irish seaside city of Galway, and unusual characters who are either current or former members of the Garda Siochana, the Guards, Ireland's shadowy police force. Bruen, a teacher of English in schools in Africa and Japan, has a rich and mordant writing style, full of offbeat humor. "You don't know hell till you stand in a damp dance hall in South Armagh as the crowd sing along to 'Surfing Safari,'" says Jack Taylor, kicked out of the Guards for various booze-related infractions and now working sporadically as a "finder." An attractive woman pays him to look into the supposed suicide of her teenaged daughter, and Taylor manages to stay sober long enough to do it, after a fashion. There's a tendency toward cuteness (three-line lists dot the already sparse narrative), and Bruen is determined to tell us just how well read and well listened his hero is by dropping in dozens of references to writers and musical groups. But these are minor failings. With the recent accidental death of Mark McGarrity, the American who wrote (as Bartholomew Gill) about a top Dublin cop, Bruen now has a chance to become that country's version of Scotland's Ian Rankin--and perhaps the standard bearer for a new subgenre called "Hibernian Noir."

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