

Onderstroom

Bart Yates

oorspronkelijke titel: *The Brothers Bishop*

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Na jaren afwezigheid keert Tommy terug naar het kustplaatsje Walcott om zijn broer Nathan te bezoeken. De twee broers zijn opgegroeid in dit slaperige toeristische provinciestadje en Nathan woont nog steeds in het huis dat ooit door hun overgrootvader werd gebouwd, terwijl Tommy naar New York is getrokken voor de opwinding van het leven in de stad.

Tommy is uitbundig en lichtzinnig van aard. Hij is charmant en onweerstaanbaar, lokt mannen zijn bed in met zijn verleidelijke glimlach en gooit ze er net zo snel weer uit. Nathan daarentegen is beheerst en zwaarmoedig. Maar allebei worstelen ze met de gebeurtenissen uit het verleden die hen elk op een andere manier hebben getekend.

De terugkeer van Tommy – met in zijn kielzog drie vrienden met elk hun eigen problemen – brengt het evenwicht dat Nathan gevonden dacht te hebben aan het wankelen. Het verleden komt in flarden terug en confronteert hem met dingen die hij liever was vergeten. En dan duikt Simon op in hun leven, vijftien en een leerling van Nathan. Door hem raken de gebeurtenissen in een stroomversnelling en haalt het verleden hen allemaal in als een vloedgolf.

De bekrompen seksuele moraal in Amerika maakt een vreselijke ontknoping onvermijdelijk.

Een boek over verwrongen vaderliefde en de broederliefde die daardoor ontstaat, en over de dubbele moraal in de samenleving: slaan mag, liefhebben niet.

Bart Yates weet humor en gevoeligheid perfect te combineren om moeilijke onderwerpen aan te snijden.

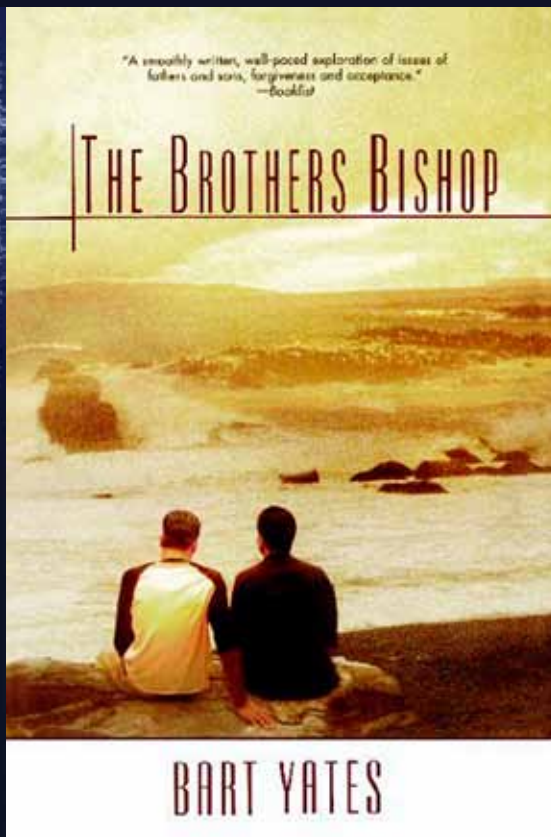
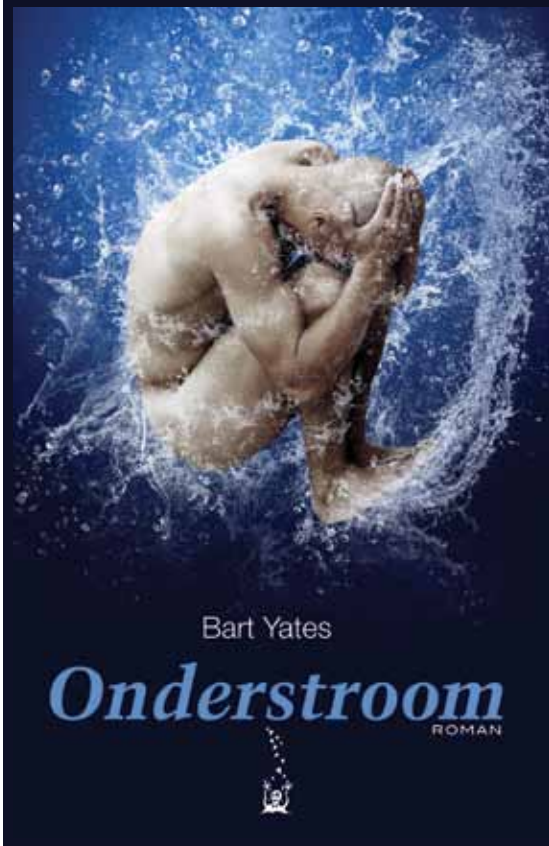
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The Brothers Bishop – Reviews:

“... smoothly written, well-paced exploration of issues of fathers and sons, forgiveness and acceptance.” – *Booklist*

“In his assured debut, *Leave Myself Behind*, Bart Yates wrung bittersweet romance and wry humor out of brutal fag-bashing and family secrets. His sad, witty follow-up, *The Brothers Bishop*, begins like a snappy beach read, but soon treads equally dark thematic waters. [Yates]... finds hard-won joy in hot-button issues. His compelling debut novel was no fluke.” – Brian Dillard, *Out.com*

“Bart Yates combines the tender and the toe-curling in a novel about two gay brothers reuniting at the old family home – in the company of a half-crazed clutch of friends... This is a surefire recipe for comedy, but there are undercurrents of tragedy and emotional scarring at work that take the story to disturbing places. Yates puts his novel together like a one-two punch... Nathan, ever the reluctant host, watches as his guests torment each other – and him – and take out their spleen on his furnishings. But it’s Tommy, with his cheeky optimism and his inability to think his actions through, who yanks events into nightmare territory – after which there’s no turning back. ...you can’t put it down.” – Kilian Melloy, *edgeboston.com*

“One of the strengths of Yates’s writing is his ability to work out complicated plot points and weave together the threads of the story in a dramatically effective manner.” – *Bay Area Reporter*

“Bart Yates made an impressive debut with *Leave Myself Behind*, and he’s come up with an equally intriguing second novel... his story will hold you to its rueful finish.” – *Frontiers*

Amazon Book reviews:

I hate being speechless

“This book really should have been marked as being a bit scandalous. There is intercourse with minors, incest, multiple attempted suicides, the list goes on. A lesser author would dredge up the most obvious emotions and the associated trite characterizations of the seemingly typical damaged characters and clobber us with a storyline that reeks with the familiar “I can tell which heart string he’s going to pull on next”.

If you’ve not yet read *Leave Myself Behind* ... then you might not realize that Bart Yates is not a lesser author, and that buying and experiencing this book is really something you’ll want to thank him for making possible.

He takes emotionally wrenching subject matter and mixes it with characters that should be easily predictable and transparent and turns them into these simple yet epic portrayals of the intricacy of the human condition, and it’s amazing to read. He certainly does put most, if not all, of his characters through hell and back before allowing them a bit of redemption, but as with most of the rewarding things in life, the journey is a hell of a lot more important than the destination.

I fully suggest setting aside however much time you’ll need to get through it in one sitting...”

Michael T. Rognlien -

Amazon book reviews

Superb Writing and an Engrossing Study of Brotherly Love

Bart Yates burns up the pages with a writing style that very rapidly becomes addictive. He is able to say more in a short paragraph than most writers can say in a chapter. There is a sense of presence in his style that seduces the reader into the feeling of being in the same space as his characters, making the story flow smoothly and far too quickly!

...

One of the stunning aspects of this fine novel is Yates’ concept of brotherhood that binds Nathan and Tommy, a brotherhood that has no equal in contemporary literature. The brothers truly love each other and struggle through their childhood with an abusive father, finding solace with each other, even to the point that they carry on a mutually successful sex life with each other. In some writers’ hands this topic of incestuous relationship would be ruinous: in Yates hands he gives us one of the most beautifully rich bondings that is equally sensuous and spiritual. The boys are both so desperate to be loved that they find satisfaction in each other ... and a few memories of their mother’s love. ...

It is one of those books you hope never ends and when it ends with the heart-tugging tragedy Yates has us by the throat. A finely written, intelligent, engrossing novel that begs to be re-read. Highly Recommended.

Grady Harp –

Amazon book review

Brave in its approach, daring in its execution

Exhumation, elimination, death and secrets – these are the touchstones with which Bart Yates works, and in this great novel, he doesn’t disappoint. While that might sound dark, you’ll be surprised at the humor, love and life in this book. Yates has moved a step beyond his first novel, *Leave Myself Behind*, writing a tale of mature angst that is somewhat more consistent and even deeper than his first novel.

This story is of two brothers: Nathan, a stalwart teacher in a small Connecticut town, and Tommy, an outgoing, daring and sensual pirate who lives for the moment. Both are gay, have survived years of physical abuse from their widowed and angry (and recently deceased) father, and lead somewhat confused lives.

The story does not disappoint, turning over one surprise after another when Tommy, his boyfriend, and their friends Kyle and Camille come to visit Nathan. This menagerie unravels as their secrets are spilled, and all their lives move fast-forward when events fuel the angst that all of them possess.

...

The inclusion of Simon, a 15-year-old student of Nathan’s who becomes enchanted with Tommy, is expertly done, and you will probably be riveted by this startling and little-trod pathway in the novel. If you yearn for a “big ending,” you won’t be disappointed. It got so “big” I almost wondered if Yates could carry it, but he did.

The incest and teen-love plots are on the edge--sharp, and yet carefully handled. I was very surprised at some of the plot turns that were included, and you will be, too. A good novel always takes a few jerks in the unexpected direction, and this book is certainly no exception.

Chad Sosna – *Amazon book reviews*