

MOVIE REVIEW



SHUPROVO ARKO

DIRECTED BY: DAVID FINCHER
STARRING: BEN AFFLECK, ROSAMUND PIKE, NEIL PATRICK HARRIS
RATING: 8.5/10

When the opening shot of a movie is of a man musing over cracking open his wife's head as if he were writing her a love poem, something's clearly not right.

Smart, eerie, and darkly absurd, "Gone Girl" is the latest feature film of David Fincher, director of acclaimed movies like "The Social Network", "Se7en" and another I'm not supposed to talk about. Continuing Fincher's tradition of making movies that are better than the book, "Gone Girl" is probably his most terrifying film to date.

The plot revolves around Nick Dunne (Ben Affleck), an everyman who comes home on his anniversary to find that his house has been broken into and his wife, Amy (Rosamund Pike) has disappeared. The story follows the search for Amy, intertwined with entries from her diary. At first, the entries are cute and romantic tales of their first date and how he proposed, but soon they devolve and get

darker and darker, detailing marital strains and Nick's history of domestic violence. Pretty obvious who's the culprit now, right? Wrong.

The more you watch "Gone Girl", the more you notice that something is off. Some characters seem too perfect and everyone looks and sounds like they're hiding something. You become paranoid and start questioning everything. You ask whether that fairy-tale first date really did happen, or if Nick really is the nice guy he seems to be. The sense of tension and apprehension is only heightened by the ominous soundtrack by Nine Inch Nails frontman Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross.

"Gone Girl" makes fun of people who'd jump to conclusions just by reading four sentences. Fincher satirises the current surge of mass media sensationalism and news channels dumping accusations on people without evidence. Rosamund Pike is simply amazing and is bound to get awards for her performance. Ben Affleck also does a fantastic job, and everyone crying over him being the new Batman should check this out. This movie managed to keep me guessing for the entirety of its runtime, and that's saying something.

"Gone Girl" is playing at Blockbuster Cinemas. Watch it, it's good.

2014 in Literature

HASAN SHAHRIAR

This was perhaps the year of nonfiction. That being said, a fair amount of good fiction did get published as well. John Green got more popular. Amazon and Hachette fought over E-book pricing that made many prominent people in the literary community take Hachette's side. English translations of the new Murakami finally made it to bookstores. J.K. Rowling wrote Harry Potter stuff for us — at length, it was a pretty fun year, literarily.

Patrick Modiano won the Nobel Prize for Literature. Australian writer Richard Flanagan clinched the Man Booker Prize for his sixth novel, *The Narrow Road to the Deep North*. The Pulitzer Prize was given to Donna Tartt's mystery novel, *The Goldfinch*.

Now getting back to what I said about nonfiction, it is getting a lot of traction lately. There has been an outpouring of memoirs, autobiographical novels and the so-called "nonfiction novel" -- perhaps more so than one probably would want to read. Still, it's nice to see the genre getting a much deserved limelight.

Essay collections from this year that I recommend: *The Empathy Exams* by Leslie Jamison and *Bad Feminist* by Roxane Gay.

Memoirs: if you have to read only one from 2014, then Gary Steynart's *Little Failure* is the one for you. A deeply felt yet uproariously funny account of the author's life, it's a treat for literary fanatics.

But if you're the type that wants to get into the nonfiction hype, yet still can't discard fiction completely, then Teju Cole's *Every Day is for the Thief* will be a good choice. Cole's novella is the product

of his experiences in Nigeria. A photographer as well, he has juxtaposed the text in his book with beautiful pictures, creating a realistic and evocative portrayal of corruption in Nigeria. #MustRead.

In the YA universe, this new book called *Girl Online* by internet celeb Zoe Sugg broke first week record sales by any new author.

This brings me to say that this was also a year of fantastic debuts. *A Girl is a Half Formed Thing* is one of those debut books that although being conventional in style and content is totally worth your time.

The Wallcreeper by Nell Zink is another debut book you should read.

Redeployment by Phil Klay, a collection of short stories on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, is another debut that has been getting a lot of praise this year. Even Barack Obama is reading it.

Other short story collections from 2014 that you should read: *Tenth of December* by George Saunders and *Can't and Won't* by Lydia Davis.

One book that really shook me this year was *Boy, Snow, Bird* by Helen Oyeyemi. The British novelist's fifth novel is an imaginative tale of aesthetic obsessions. It was strikingly original.

Let's not forget the luminaries we lost in 2014. Writers like Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Nadine Gordimer, Maya Angelou and Alistair MacLeod, among others, will be missed.

And what about upcoming titles? 2015 will see Kazuo Ishiguro (Author of *Never Let Me Go*) publish his first novel in a decade, titled *A Buried Giant*. Jonathan Franzen is getting one out too. He'll be calling his book *Purity*. Who names their book "Purity"?



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