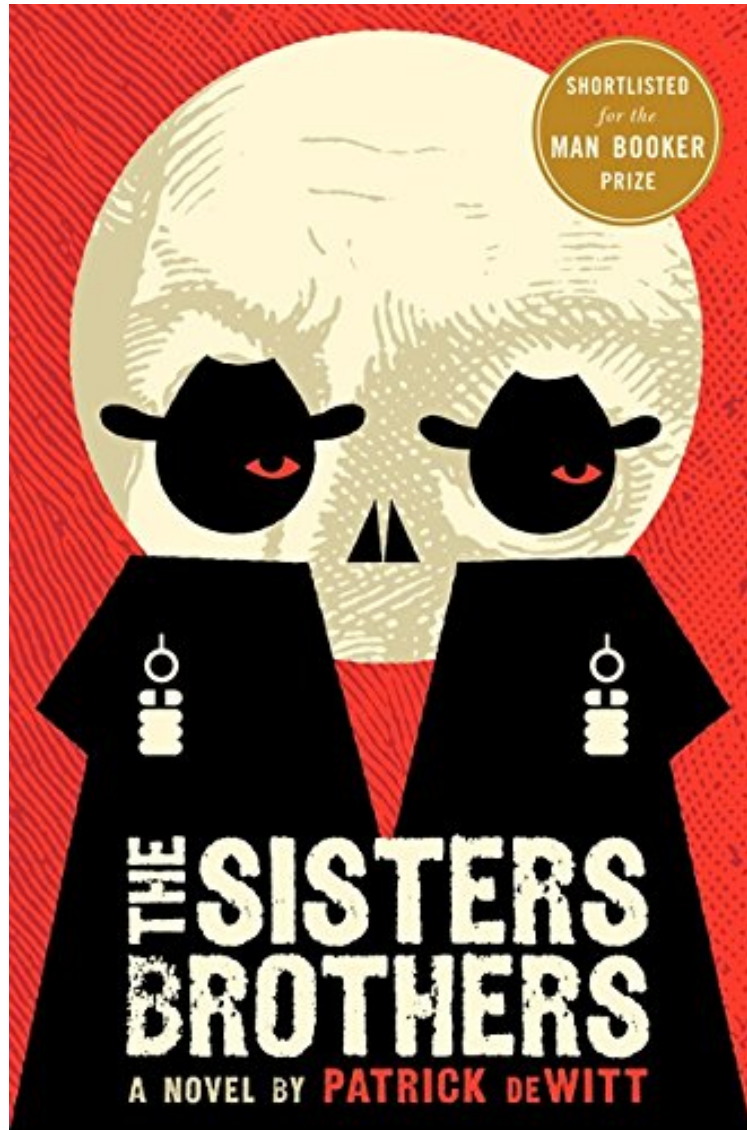


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The Sisters Brothers: A Novel

Patrick deWitt

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#239437 in Books ECCO 2011-04-26 2011-04-26Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.09 x 6.00l, 1.05 #File Name: 0062041266336 pagesThe Sisters Brothers | File size: 45.Mb

Patrick deWitt : The Sisters Brothers: A Novel before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sisters Brothers: A Novel:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Light western, deep thoughtsBy Steven BarrieI didn't know I wanted an Old West picaresque novel, but I did, and Patrick deWitt delivers with THE SISTERS BROTHERS.Eli and Charlie Sisters are notorious killers. They are also, like so many of us, trying to understand why they do what they do and how

they fit with the world and family around them. Eli straddles the extreme of intense love and intense violence, and I don't know that we can say exactly what lesson there is to learn from his story, except maybe one of mindfulness. This book is the smoothest read I've read in a while. THE SISTERS BROTHERS reads quicks and makes you think if you let it. Read it and let it. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. The ending was lame and abrupt - didn't match the pace of the ...By Suzanne Lewandowski It seemed to have been written with the thought of making it movie or TV show - maybe with the idea of developing the characters over time? The brothers are stereotypes probably based on other criminal portrayals we've seen in the past. The alchemy when looking for gold was somewhat interesting, but not enough to hold the story together. The ending was lame and abrupt - didn't match the pace of the rest of the story. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. and tone described within the premise completely encapsulates all one would need to know about this beautifully bizarre novel By Nick Yarborough Set against the historical backdrop of the California Gold Rush, Patrick DeWitt's titular heroes are brothers Charlie and Eli Sisters, who are also assassins, on a mission to kill a prospector named Hermann Kermit Warm. This combination of memorably comic names, historical setting, and tone described within the premise completely encapsulates all one would need to know about this beautifully bizarre novel. Additionally, however, and to even higher distinction, the novel's picaresque structure is wrought with exceptional creativity that further distinguishes this work from its many contemporary genre peers and deserves very high praise. Narrated by Eli Sisters, the brothers serve as assassins for the Commodore—an authoritative figure that tasks the boys with jobs requiring more dangerous or fatalistic endings. The task at hand demands the brothers seek out and kill a one Hermann Kermit Warm—a prospector that has apparently stolen from the Commodore at the cost of his life. The novel is told with a picaresque structure of extremely short, yet memorable, narration of the brothers' adventures and mishaps in their search for Warm across the Western landscape. Tonally, the novel strikes a very rare and impressive balance between hilariously sharp dialogue and darkly comic situations that slowly navigate toward scenes of heartbreaking tragedy and acute poignancy. The only real tonal parallel that one may suggest is something close to that of the filmic works of the Coen Brothers, though DeWitt's original voice still separates itself from those exceptional storytellers. Moreover, the tone complements the pacing of this episodic narrative to very impressive results. The book is an undeniable page-turner without ever losing the depth of its characterization or sacrificing any of the various emotional levels at play. Though the book touches on a number of familiar Western genre staples—from assassins, to Mexican standoffs, to the larger themes of men imposing their morals upon others within a burgeoning civilization—the novel also successfully eschews many of these classical expectations to surprising and thought-provoking results. Despite the brothers' job title of assassins, and the numerous violent acts that populate the narrative, the characters are imbued with a very touching and moving sense of pathos very unlike those found in the brutal landscapes occupied by traditional Western fiction. There are questions of moral ambiguity explored within this novel to incredibly successful results that bring to mind aspects of contemporary western writer S. Craig Zahler's revelatory work (my favorite fiction writer: both *A Congregation of Jackals* and *Wraiths of the Broken Land* are masterpieces). Specifically, there are interludes wherein the protagonist confronts what may be the Devil/evil incarnate through the form of a little girl that remains one of the book's most resonant and thought-provoking creations. The Western genre stands as one of the best prisms for an author's exploration of those thematic aspects of their obsession in tandem with those central themes to the American narrative at large. Themes of masculinity, spirituality, luck, the cost of success at the sacrifice of a man's morals—these are all ideas embedded within the myth of American man and which the Western genre often explores through its setting of a terrain caught between civilization and barbaric tribalism. As the best Westerns are capable, *The Sisters Brothers* offers a fascinating and praiseworthy peak into DeWitt's version of these central tenets: allowing a new perspective on both those time-honored traditions of the genre and those specific literary realizations brought forth by his singular imagination. <http://nickyarborough.com/book-review-the-sisters-brothers-by-patrick-dewitt/>

“A gorgeous, wise, riveting work of, among other things, cowboy noir...Honestly, I can't recall ever being this fond of a pair of psychopaths.” —David Wroblewski, New York Times bestselling author of *The Story of Edgar Sawtelle* “A masterful, hilarious picaresque that keeps company with the best of Charles Portis and Mark Twain...a relentlessly absorbing feat of novelistic art.” —Wells Tower, author of *Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned* “The Sisters Brothers is dark, dark, and funny, both ha ha and strange...and you'll love the characters you meet along the way.” —Tom Franklin, New York Times bestselling author of *Crooked Letter, Crooked Letter* Patrick deWitt, a young writer whose “stop-you-in-your-tracks writing has snuck up on the world” (Los Angeles Times), brings us *The Sisters Brothers*, a darkly comic, outrageously inventive novel that offers readers a decidedly off-center view of the Wild, Wild West. Set against the back-drop of the great California Gold Rush, this odd and wonderful tour de force at once honors and reshapes the traditional western while chronicling the picaresque misadventures of two hired guns, the fabled Sisters brothers. The most original western since the Coen Brothers re-interpreted *True Grit*—you've never met anyone quite like *The Sisters Brothers*.

From Publishers Weekly Starred . Dewitt's bang-up second novel (after *Ablutions*) is a quirky and stylish revisionist

western. When a frontier baron known as the Commodore orders Charlie and Eli Sisters, his hired gunslingers, to track down and kill a prospector named Herman Kermit Warm, the brothers journey from Oregon to San Francisco, and eventually to Warm's claim in the Sierra foothills, running into a witch, a bear, a dead Indian, a parlor of drunken floozies, and a gang of murderous fur trappers. Eli's deadpan narration is at times strangely funny (as when he discovers dental hygiene, thanks to a frontier dentist dispensing free samples of "tooth powder that produced a minty foam") but maintains the power to stir heartbreak, as with Eli's infatuation with a consumptive hotel bookkeeper. As more of the brothers' story is teased out, Charlie and Eli explore the human implications of many of the clichés of the old west and come off looking less and less like killers and more like traumatized young men. With nods to Charles Portis and Frank Norris, DeWitt has produced a genre-bending frontier saga that is exciting, funny, and, perhaps unexpectedly, moving. (May) (c) Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved. "Patrick deWitt's Booker-nominated tale of two hired guns during the Gold Rush, is 'weirdly funny, startlingly violent and steeped in sadness,' according to Ron Charles." (Washington Post) "[A]n odd gem...that has one of most engaging and thoughtful narrators I've come across in a long time....The novel belongs to the great tradition of subversive westerns...but deWitt has a deadpan comic voice and a sneaky philosophical bent that's all his own." (Tom Perrotta's Favorite Fiction of 2011 on Salon.com) "This bloody buddy tale of two hired guns during the Gold Rush is weirdly funny, startlingly violent and steeped in sadness — a reaffirmation of the endurance of the Western." (Notable Fiction of 2011, Washington Post) "DeWitt's THE SISTERS BROTHERS is a glorious picaresque Western; everything about this book is stylish, from its conceit to its cover design making it a truly worthy inclusion on the shortlist." (Daily Beast) "If Cormac McCarthy had a sense of humor, he might have concocted a story like Patrick DeWitt's bloody, darkly funny western THE SISTERS BROTHERS...[DeWitt has] a skillfully polished voice and a penchant for gleefully looking under bloody bandages." (Los Angeles Times) "Thrilling...a lushly voiced picaresque story...so richly told, so detailed, that what emerges is a weird circus of existence, all steel shanks and ponies, gut shots and medication poured into the eyeholes of the dying. At some level, this too is a kind of revenge story, marvelously blurry." (Esquire) "[T]here's something cinematic about Mr. deWitt's unadorned prose style, which at first made this reader do a double-take—can this be serious?—only to continue flicking the pages with pleasure." (Wall Street Journal) "By turns hilarious, graphic and meditative, The Sisters Brothers hooked me from page one all the way to 300 — and I could have stayed on for many more." (NPR.org) "Wandering his Western landscape with the cool confidence of a practiced pistoleer, deWitt's steady hand belies a hair trigger, a poet's heart and an acute sense of gallows humor...the reader is likely to reach the adventure's end in the same shape as Eli: wounded but bettered by the ride." (Time Out New York) "A feast of delights in short punchy chapters.... Deliciously original and rhapsodically funny, this is one novel that ropes you in on page one, and isn't about to ride off into the sunset any time soon." (Boston Globe) "Mesmerizing... The book seduces us to its characters, and draws us on the strength of deWitt's subtle, nothing-wasted prose. He writes with gorgeous precision about the grotesque: an amputation, a gouged eye, a con in a dive bar, a nauseating body count [without] macho brutishness." (Cleveland Plain Dealer) "DeWitt's exploitations of the picaresque form are striking, and he has a wonderful way of exercising his comic gifts without ever compromising the novel's gradual accumulation of darkness, disgust, and foreboding." (The Millions) "A gorgeous, wise, riveting work of, among other things, cowboy noir....Honestly, I can't recall ever being this fond of a pair of psychopaths." (David Wroblewski, bestselling author of The Story of Edgar Sawtelle) "Like Tarantino, deWitt knows that attitude makes blood funny; like Twain, he understands a reader's willingness to forgive a good narrator's personal flaws." (Cleveland Plain Dealer) "[THE SISTERS BROTHERS] is full of surprises, among them...is the quirky beauty of the language Patrick deWitt has devised for his narrator.... THE SISTERS BROTHERS is deWitt's second novel...and is an inventive and ingenious character study. It will make you impatient for the third." (Dallas Morning News) "Original, entrancing and entertaining." (Denver Post) "Weirdly funny, startlingly violent and steeped in sadness... It's all rendered irresistible by Eli Sisters, who narrates with a mixture of melancholy and thoughtfulness." (Washington Post) "The brothers' punchily poetic banter and the book's bracing bursts of violence keep this campfire yarn pulled taut." (The Onion AV Club) "Funny and strange [and] oddly warm...you'll find yourself ashamedly pulling for the brothers Sisters like you did for Jules and Vinnie in Pulp Fiction." (Outside magazine) "Patrick deWitt's narrator--a hired killer with a bad conscience and a melancholy disposition--is a brilliant and memorable creation." (Tom Perrotta, bestselling author of Little Children) "A bright, brutal revision of the Western, The Sisters Brothers offers an unexpected meditation on life, and on the crucial difference between power and strength." (Gil Adamson, author of The Outlander) "At once dark and touching, The Sisters Brothers has something on every page to make you laugh. Patrick deWitt has given us a gift, reimagining the old west in a thoroughly original manner. Readers are all the better for it." (Charles Bock, New York Times bestselling author of Beautiful Children) "...gritty, as well as deadpan and often very comic...DeWitt has chosen a narrative voice so sharp and distinctive...it's very narrowing of possibilities opens new doors in the imagination." (New York Times Book) "A masterful, hilarious picaresque that keeps company with the best of Charles Portis and Mark Twain, The Sisters Brothers is a relentlessly absorbing feat of novelistic art." (Wells Tower, author of Everything Ravaged, Everything Burned) From the Back Cover Shortlisted for the Booker Prize Hermann Kermit Warm is going to die. The enigmatic and powerful man known only as the Commodore has ordered it, and his henchmen, Eli

and Charlie Sisters, will make sure of it. Though Eli doesn't share his brother's appetite for whiskey and killing, he's never known anything else. But their prey isn't an easy mark, and on the road from Oregon City to Warm's gold-mining claim outside Sacramento, Eli begins to question what he does for a living—and whom he does it for. With *The Sisters Brothers*, Patrick deWitt pays homage to the classic Western, transforming it into an unforgettable comic tour de force. Filled with a remarkable cast of characters—losers, cheaters, and ne'er-do-wells from all stripes of life—and told by a complex and compelling narrator, it is a violent, lustful odyssey through the underworld of the 1850s frontier that beautifully captures the humor, melancholy, and grit of the Old West and two brothers bound by blood, violence, and love.