

The Unmade World

Steve Yarbrough

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With the flavor of an international thriller and deep explorations of grieving and healing, The Unmade World is a novel with heart.

Spanning many years and traversing two continents, *The Unmade World* by Steve Yarbrough weaves together the worlds of sports journalism, Polish immigration to America, and burglary for an insightful story about the grieving process.

When Richard, an American journalist, and Bogdan, a Polish thief, cross paths on a snowy Krakow evening, the tragic results leave them scarred in drastically different ways. The juxtaposition of these two men's lives over the next two decades reveals the array of emotions that the human heart is capable of, both in the wake of catastrophe and through slow movements toward redemption.

Three years after a shattering car wreck, Richard begins researching a murder case that sends him deep into the corrupt world of major league sports. Meanwhile, Bogdan desperately attempts to extricate himself from his criminal lifestyle but loses his wife and stability in the process. It's a slow and treacherous road for both men, but their relationships with friends, family, lovers, and colleagues strengthen their respective recoveries, as well as giving shape to the narrative.

Supporting characters are richly rendered and often prove more sympathetic than Richard and Bogdan themselves. Bogdan's wife becomes dejected by her husband's unemployment as she grows her own career, and she leaves him for a woman; though her story is not as fleshed out as his, her movements toward self-discovery are just as rich.

Richard's research may seem unrelated to the main story line, but it is an intriguing subplot nonetheless. Dialogue from his interviews with people involved in the case is realistic and vivid, and its literary flair moves the plot forward with deep suspense.

The Unmade World contains the flavor of an international thriller, if it unfolds at a slower pace than genre titles. Its are deep and sympathetic explorations.

AIMÉE JODOIN (January/February 2018)

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