



Paradise News

By David Lodge

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Paradise, tourist style. It's a very long way from home.

Bernard Walsh is in Hawaii on family business, escorting his querulous father to the bedside of a long-forgotten aunt. His mission transports him from quiet obscurity in Rummridge, England, to a lush tropical playground, from cloistered solitude into the unfamiliar company of package tourists: honeymooners; young women looking for Mr. Nice; families nuclear and fissile. But it is the island itself that holds the most astonishing surprises, as an accidental encounter opens up to Bernard possibilities of life, and love, never dreamed of in his normally overcast habitat. **Paradise News** is an enchanting--and very funny--portrait of the late flowering of an honest man.

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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Bernard Walsh is planning a quiet visit to his sick aunt in Hawaii. A cynical ex-priest in search of a well-needed vacation, he is unprepared for this zany package tour from Hell populated with all the "types": dueling newlyweds, boring salesmen, video happy seniors, romance starved spinsters, and a sexy native girl on a collision course with fate (or at least Walsh's father). Lodge combines an interesting mix of viewpoints and writing styles, switching among characters and including such diverse approaches as diaries and postcards. Essential for anyone who loves to travel or wishes they could, this is highly recommended for vacation reading collections. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 12/91.

-Suzanne C. Garrison-Terry, Dowling Coll. Lib., Oakdale, N.Y.

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From Kirkus Reviews

Lodge combines his past fictional interests in Catholicism (The British Museum is Falling Down, etc.) and social satire (Nice Work, etc.) to produce this always engaging and clever tale of innocents abroad. The unlikely naif is Bernard Walsh, a rather dour, middle-aged, part-time instructor in theology from a minor college in Lodge's fictional town of Rummidge. What we don't know at first is that he's also a former priest, the son of Irish-born immigrants to South London who have never become reconciled with their son's descent into apostasy--his now ``wasted life.'' When the family's first black sheep summons Bernard to her deathbed in Hawaii, he agrees to attempt a reunion between her and her brother--Bernard's cantankerous father--whom she hasn't spoken to in 40 years. Getting old Jack Walsh to travel halfway around the world is just the start of Bernard's problems. Once they arrive in ``paradise,'' events conspire to postpone the meeting in which brother and sister will confront some long-suppressed family secrets. Bernard's personal journey--his loss of virginity, and his leap forward in self-confidence--is all the more enjoyable because Lodge sets it against a larger profile of the fellow Brits who come to Hawaii on Bernard's charter. There's Russ Harvey, a yuppie honeymooner, and his Ice Maiden wife, whose vacation is spoiled from the start by a revelation at the wedding reception; there are a couple of elderly second honeymooners who record everything on video; there are the two spinster teachers in search of ``Someone Nice.'' And, of course, no Lodge novel would be complete without a pompous academic--in this case, an anthropology prof who specializes in tourism, which he is ``deconstructing'' on a grant from the British Association of Travel Agents. American litigiousness and health policy come in for some well-deserved mockery along the merry way. Narrative tricks aside, Lodge's Catholicism and his gimlet eye make him the true heir of Evelyn Waugh. -- *Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Review

"Extremely funny and sharply perceptive" Evening Standard "The poignant personal relations and the Hawaiian way of life are recorded with the sardonic perception of a latter-day Evelyn Waugh" Spectator "Further proof that Lodge is master of subtle scintillating satire" Daily Mail "Amusing, accessible, intelligent" Financial Times

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Louis Clark:

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