



The Monkey's Wrench

By Primo Levi

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The Monkey's Wrench By Primo Levi

A chemist-turned-writer and a construction rigger in a remote factory pass the time swapping tales of their lives and voyages. Primo Levi's most light-hearted novel, *The Monkey's Wrench* is a tribute to storytelling, human ingenuity, and the importance of finding meaningful work in life.

"A lot of stories have happened to me," says Faussone, the mysterious construction rigger at the center of this comic novel by Primo Levi. Far from home on a work assignment, Liberto Faussone befriends the book's narrator, a chemist based loosely off of Levi himself. Although he can't quite explain it, the chemist is immediately entranced by the wandering laborer who has traveled to every corner of the world. The two embark on an unlikely friendship, trading tales filled with curses and spies, scandal and heartbreak.

With its easy-going and even whimsical tone, *The Monkey's Wrench* is a change from Primo Levi's other works. Yet its message is just as vital. The novel reminds us about the importance of connection between strangers, our endless capacity to solve even the most challenging of problems, and finding fulfillment in work.

Along with Elie Wiesel and Hannah Arendt, Primo Levi is remembered as one of the most powerful and perceptive writers on the Holocaust and the Jewish experience during World War II. This is an essential book both for students and literary readers. Reading Primo Levi is a lesson in the resiliency of the human spirit.

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The Monkey's Wrench By Primo Levi Bibliography

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- 171 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

In his second novel, Levi abandons the painful subject of the Holocaust and World War II with mixed results. His previous works, such as the memoirs *Survival in Auschwitz* and *Moments of Reprieve*, reveal his talent for careful, detailed storytelling and consciously artless dialogue, and this is a somewhat contrived celebration of that craft through the narrator's conversations with Fausone, an itinerant steelworker. Readers may find the technical minutiae on steel-rigging and paint chemistry (like Levi, the narrator is a paint chemist turned writer) less than compelling. But the novel also glistens with inspiring reflections on the disparate yet similar joys of mental and physical labor (the rigging of words vs. steel or molecules), and the relationship between storyteller/writer and listener/reader. Fausone passionately describes a truss tower-in-progress ("It was like seeing a baby grow") and a finished crane ("It seemed to walk in the sky, smooth as silk, I felt like they'd made me a duke") and offers his tales to the narrator ("You can work on it, grind it, hone it, deburr it, hammer it into shape, and you'll have a story"). The narrator similarly finds that "loving your work . . . represents the best, most concrete approximation of happiness on earth" but cautions that "paper is too tolerant a material. You can write any old absurdity on it, and it never complains." (October Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc.)

From Library Journal

An Italian ironworker or rigger, Tino loves his work. Just read his story of the disaster on that bridge in India, or follow his description, given in loving detail, of how he assembled that off-shore oil platform in Alaska. He has traveled the world as a rigger, and now he unfolds his adventures to his chemist friend in monologues swirling with danger and exuberance. As these two men talk, the reader comes to see how one's work expresses one's life. Departing from the Holocaust themes of his previous works, Levi pays tribute to happiness on earth, of which he finds "loving your work represents the best, most concrete approximation." William Weaver's fine translation from the original Italian catches Tino's ebullience, effectively bringing Levi's genius to the English audience. Highly recommended. Paul E. Hutchison, English Dept., Pennsylvania State Univ., University Park
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Language Notes

Text: English, Italian (translation)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Eden Davis:

Information is provisions for people to get better life, information currently can get by anyone at everywhere. The information can be a know-how or any news even a huge concern. What people must be consider while those information which is from the former life are difficult to be find than now is taking seriously which one would work to believe or which one typically the resource are convinced. If you obtain the unstable resource then you get it as your main information you will have huge disadvantage for you. All of those possibilities will not happen within you if you take *The Monkey's Wrench* as your daily resource information.

Allan Nguyen:

The guide with title The Monkey's Wrench includes a lot of information that you can study it. You can get a lot of benefit after read this book. This specific book exist new know-how the information that exist in this book represented the condition of the world right now. That is important to yo7u to find out how the improvement of the world. This specific book will bring you inside new era of the globalization. You can read the e-book with your smart phone, so you can read the idea anywhere you want.

Wilma Richards:

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Rebbeca Farley:

Many people spending their time frame by playing outside along with friends, fun activity together with family or just watching TV the whole day. You can have new activity to invest your whole day by studying a book. Ugh, you think reading a book will surely hard because you have to accept the book everywhere? It ok you can have the e-book, taking everywhere you want in your Cell phone. Like The Monkey's Wrench which is obtaining the e-book version. So , try out this book? Let's observe.

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