

## = Light House : A Trifle =

Light House : A Trifle , a 2000 satirical novel by American screenwriter William Monahan . Originally serialized in the Amherst literary magazine Old Crow Review from 1993 to 1995 , Monahan sold Light House to Riverhead Books , a Penguin Group imprint , in 1998 . Warner Bros. optioned the film rights while the novel was in manuscript and hired Monahan to write the screenplay adaptation . The novel was delayed for two years , with plans to release it alongside the upcoming film ; however , the film was never produced .

In 2000 , Light House : A Trifle was finally published and garnered critical acclaim : The New York Times proclaimed " Monahan 's cocksure prose gallops along " , and BookPage Fiction called Monahan " a worthy successor to Kingsley Amis " . The story follows an artist named Tim Picasso who runs afoul of a drug lord and seeks refuge at a New England inn in the middle of a nor 'easter . It is a work intentionally referential to the satirical novels of the early 19th @-@ century British author Thomas Love Peacock , such as Headlong Hall and Nightmare Abbey .

## = = Plot summary = =

The story begins with a painter named Tim Picasso who suffers critical rejection from his peers and decides to take a break in the Caribbean , where he ends up crewing on a drug smuggling sailboat . When the captain gets drunk and falls overboard , Picasso takes the boat to Florida , and meets up with Jesus Castro , the lead drug smuggler . Castro intimidates Picasso into running the drugs from Miami to Boston , however after Picasso collects the \$ 1 @.@ 5 million payment from the Irish Republican Army , he escapes by train to the New England town of Tyburn , where a winter storm is picking up force . He decides to lodge at the seaside Admiral Benbow Inn for the weekend , until he can depart for Italy .

Meanwhile , Mr. Glowery , a bitter New York journalist and writer who believes that a rival author is sabotaging his literary career , arrives in Tyburn where he is to speak at a fiction workshop being held at the Admiral Benbow Inn . He is immediately tasered by one of Castro 's detectives , who mistakenly confuses him for Picasso . Back at the Admiral Benbow Inn , the innkeeper , George Hawthorne , worries about Mr. Briscoe , a cross @-@ dressing contract worker who is stranded in the abandoned lighthouse just off the coast because of the raging nor 'easter , while his unhappy wife , Magdalene Hawthorne , threatens to leave him . The next morning , Mr. Glowery is stuck in a restaurant where he is being coerced by a psychotic cook to peddle his novel in order to pay off a debt he incurred during the night . When Professor Eggman , the director of the fiction workshop , comes across Mr. Glowery , he rescues him and brings him back to the inn . However , few people show up for the fiction workshop because of the storm . Hawthorne 's wife returns from a spa with Picasso ; Mr. Hawthorne informs her that he is trying to procure a prostitute for his new arrival , Jesus Castro , who has registered under the false name of Mr. Wassermann . Mr. Hawthorne asks Picasso if he has had sex with his wife and Picasso meekly admits to it .

At the lighthouse , Mr. Briscoe decides to brave the storm in a landing craft , but is immediately swamped with water and carried by the tide towards the mainland . After Castro avails himself of the services of a prostitute , he rampages around the property searching for Picasso . The storm crashes through the inn . A guest is killed by a billiards table that falls on top of him and is dragged off into the sea . Mr. Glowery is also dragged off into the sea by the storm . Castro and his assistant round up the guests and interrogate them about the location of the \$ 1 @.@ 5 million Picasso stole . In another part of the inn a fire starts . Finally , Mr. Briscoe shows up and kills Castro 's assistant before knocking Castro unconscious . While Hawthorne learns his wife is leaving him for the prostitute , the inn becomes completely engulfed in flames . Picasso , Hawthorne , and Briscoe motor a lobster boat over to the lighthouse , and dump Castro 's dead assistant into the sea along with Castro himself , weighed down with two cinder blocks chained to his ankles . When they land on the island , Briscoe runs into the lighthouse and blows himself up . Amongst the rubble of the lighthouse , Picasso notices the inscription " MORTE D 'AUTHOR " painted on one of the surrounding rocks and says to the innkeeper " He 's been thinking about this for some time , George

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## == Publication history ==

Monahan wrote the novel while studying Elizabethan and Jacobean drama at the University of Massachusetts Amherst . Monahan completed a draft of Light House on May 18 , 1991 , but then " stuck it in a drawer " . It remained unpublished until 1993 when he gave it to the literary magazine Old Crow Review to serialize to benefit a food charity . In 1995 , a short review from an editor at Factsheet Five described the serial run of Light House as a " gritty screwball comedy set in a Massachusetts coastal hotel during a raging winter storm " that is " very , very funny " .

After the original serialization of Light House , Monahan reluctantly rewrote the novel several times at the urging of his agent in New York City . In 1998 Light House was sold to Riverhead Books , an imprint of Penguin Putnam , and Warner Bros. immediately optioned the film rights while the novel was still in manuscript . Penguin Putnam wanted to delay publishing the novel in order to release it concurrent with the anticipated film release . Warner Bros. hired Monahan to write the screenplay adaptation of Light House .

In 2000 , Light House : A Trifle was finally published in hardcover , and then , the following year , in paperback . Monahan and Bruno Maddox , a fellow former Spy editor , went on a joint book tour billed as the " Minor Novelists Tour " that was interrupted by the 9 / 11 attacks .

Less than four years after the novel 's publication , Monahan bought back the film rights to Light House " I didn 't like how the book was published . They wanted to wait for the movie to be made . I got a little hostile . When I was in Spain on Kingdom , I realized I could buy it back . It was an empty , damaging gesture . " In an interview with Collider.com he stated that , " It was demoralizing to write a really good book and to realize how little the rewards were , even though the book did quite well , as far as first novels are concerned . " Light House was available in a German edition , translated by Ulrike Seeberger .

## === Original serialization ===

? ( January 1993 ) . " Venus and the Rain ( part 1 ) " . Old Crow Review ( FkB Press ) ( 1 ) .

? ( June 1993 ) . " Venus and the Rain ( part 2 ) " . Old Crow Review ( FkB Press ) ( 2 ) .

? ( January 1994 ) . " Venus and the Rain ( part 3 ) " . Old Crow Review ( FkB Press ) ( 3 ) .

? ( June 1994 ) . " Venus and the Rain / Light house " . Old Crow Review ( FkB Press ) ( 4 ) .

? ( January 1995 ) . " Light house " . Old Crow Review ( FkB Press ) ( 5 ) .

## === English and German editions ===

? ( June 2000 ) . Light house : a trifle . New York : Riverhead Books . ISBN 978 @-@ 1 @-@ 57322 @-@ 158 @-@ 0 .

? ( 2001 ) . Light house : Roman . Berlin : Aufbau @-@ Taschenbuch @-@ Verl ( translated by Ulrike Seeberger ) . ISBN 978 @-@ 3 @-@ 7466 @-@ 1722 @-@ 0 .

## == Literary significance and reception ==

Light House intentionally references the satirical novels of the early 19th @-@ century British author and satirist Thomas Love Peacock , such as Headlong Hall and Nightmare Abbey . Peacock 's novels have little plot and are best known for parodying the intellectual modes and pretenses of his contemporaries ; his characters normally assemble in characteristic English country houses and predominantly engage in conversation . Nightmare Abbey satirized the English romantic movement and included characters based on Samuel Taylor Coleridge , Lord Byron , and Percy Bysshe Shelley .

When Light House was published in 2000 it was critically acclaimed , however , it had lackluster sales . William Georgiades , in a review for The New York Times , called it " a sort of old English

farce that allows Monahan [ ? ] to skewer whatever comes to mind : modern art , magazine writing , education , the young " . The Chicago Sun @-@ Times construed the storyline as one that " allows Monahan to indulge in wisecracks , lampoons and slurs of seemingly infinite variety " with " literary and artistic pretenders [ taking ] heavy fire " . Mark Rozzo of the Los Angeles Times praised Monahan 's " refreshing disregard for believability , making Light House ? which contains asides on Freud , Emerson , race and fiction itself ? a seriously adult cartoon " .

BookPage Fiction 's Bruce Tierney called Monahan " a worthy successor to Kingsley Amis " and Alfred Alcorn of the Boston Herald detected " delightful echoes of Vladimir Nabokov , Kingsley Amis , Evelyn Waugh , Flann O 'Brien and other modern masters of drollery " in the novel , concluding that " [ i ] n the end , the girl gets the girl , the bad guys lose , and an old Yankee blows himself up with the eponymous lighthouse and a few chunks of the Virginia Woolf legacy " .

After describing the women in Light House as " mainly vehicles for sex " and the men as " mostly hapless " , The Boston Globe 's Jules Verdone generalized that the entire cast of characters appeared to be created " simply so that [ Monahan ] can skewer them " , allowing that " it makes for a pretty good spectator sport " .