

# THE BLACKWATER LIGHTSHIP Read Free

The Blackwater Lightship. Review of 'The Blackwater Lightship'. .



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Colm Toibin  
288 pages  
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Pan MacMillan  
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London, United Kingdom



**Dewey Decimal. Further information: The Blackwater Lightship film. Mothers and Sons The Empty Family Beauty in a Broken Place Cush Gap, Return to Montauk**  
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**Namespaces Article Talk. Views Read Edit View history.** Declan was being treated for one of those opportunistic infections which AIDS patients were often afflicted with. In fact, this infection was the latest of many such infections Declan had battled and his health had seriously deteriorated. Although Helen was shocked, not only by Declan's illness, but also by his sudden 'coming out' to her, she agreed to drive to their granny's seaside home to make the request that Declan and his two longtime friends and caregivers, Paul and Larry, be permitted to spend time there convalescing in familiar surroundings..

IT was to be Helen's responsibility to tell both her Granny Dora and her mother Lily about the seriousness of Declan's illness. On the drive to her granny's house, Helen ruminated on her estrangement from her family and it is through these ruminations that you discover that not only were Helen and Declan not particularly close but Helen's granny and her mother had not been invited to her wedding and they had never met her children. The three women in this family were strong, stubborn and opinionated The slights, harsh words and unreasonable expectations that had been exchanged over the years were never far removed from any of them. Helen had been holding tight to her resentment toward her mother, recalling that the family members' estrangement began when she and Declan were children and they had stayed with their granny and granddad while their father had entered the hospital ostensibly for tests.

Helen recalled that she and Declan had stayed at the seaside house for weeks, all the while being reassured that her parents would return home soon I found this book so compelling because it demonstrated so beautifully that no matter how complicated and contentious relationships become between family members As this story demonstrated so vividly, this process is never easy or pretty and is almost always quite painful; but Declan was dying and he needed the comfort of his family. Although Declan was never really developed as a character, there was an obvious childlike quality about him.. Declan's illness and his desire to spend his last days at his granny's house is the catalyst that the three women need to once and for all, put aside their resentment and come together because what they share Just as the death of Helen and Declan's father all those years before had brought silence and resentment, Declan's death might be what finally fixes what has been broken in this family.

And just as Granny's house, perched so precariously at the edge of the cliff, had weathered the stormy seas all of those years so too would the family weather its own storms. The Blackwater Lightship , to me, was a testament to the power of love and the bonds that may be forged by family. View all 11 comments. In The Blackwater Lightship , he transposes this storyline to Ireland in the late 90s, a vastly different setting.

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which he's apparently had "for years". Published just six years after Ireland's decision to decriminalise homosexuality, I feel that its effect was more profound and radical in the late 90s than it is now. They are both set in the same area with the Redmond's from *Blazing* turning up again here. Both novels perfectly encapsulate 90s Ireland, the sensibilities and the lavishness. Characters are school principals and lawyers, they live in noisy cities while their parents are held up in crumbling houses in the countryside. The clash of the nouveau riche with old Catholic Ireland play central parts in both novels. The character of the grandmother in *The Blackwater Lightship* is just fantastic, she binds these two generations together with flawless comical insights.

She is the typical Irish grandmother, an embracer, a voice of solace. I do think this is the superior novel to *The Heather Blazing*, it is a novel about family, whether they be nuclear or non-traditional. It's about who we really go to in our hours of need and who we share our lives with, whether we be stable or crumbling away, into the waves. Apr 24, Connie G rated it really liked it Shelves: ireland-republic-of, death, europe, contemporary-fiction, family. Helen gets a call that her brother, Declan, is dying of AIDS and wants to spend time at their grandmother's home on the Irish coast. Declan had never revealed his gay lifestyle or his illness to his mother or grandmother, and he wants Helen to smooth the way and converse with them first.

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The story is set in the early 90s when AIDS was a new disease with few treatment options. It was a devastating time for the gay community, their friends, and their families. Colm Toibin uses beautiful spare prose to show the troubled relationships and the start of the healing process for this family. Recommended to Wealhtheow by: Dana DesJardins. Shelves: queer-characters, historical. Helen lives a predictable, pleasant life, until suddenly a stranger turns up and tells her that her brother is sick--is, in fact, dying of AIDS in a nearby hospital. Declan wants to stay in their grandmother's cottage while he recuperates from his latest hospital stay.

His sister, mother, and grandmother are thus thrown together in a small sea-shore cottage, forced into close quarters after a decade of estrangement. Two of his friends come to keep him company and look after his health, causing Helen to live a predictable, pleasant life, until suddenly a stranger turns up and tells her that her brother is sick--is, in fact, dying of AIDS in a nearby hospital. Two of his friends come to keep him company and look after his health, causing further moments of awkwardness. Basically, six adults hang around a cottage for a few days, constantly splitting off to have one-on-one conversations with each other about the others, and about the past. Helen resents her mother who resents her own mother, and they all

talk and think about it endlessly. Maybe these ruminations on what to do when you don't like or emotionally trust your family would feel more poignant or important if I identified with them more.

As it was, it was all just really boring. Helen would walk along the shore, think about how cold the water looked, how strong and enduring the cliffs looked, and then come to some minor realization about her feelings for her mother. Rinse, repeat. Thrilling stuff. My boredom with the complete lack of plot or conflict might have been alleviated if the characters read more believably. But alas, they're written, particularly Declan, Lily, and Dora, with broad strokes mixed with minutia. By the end of the book I knew that Declan liked self-service restaurants as a child, disliked carrots, and feared escalators, but I still had no idea what he did for a living, how he'd made the friends he did, or even his hobbies. It felt like his sole purpose in the story was to suffer and force Helen and their mother to have uncomfortable emotional moments together.

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Everyone must adjust to each other: the past hurts, misunderstandings, Declan's illness, the other men in the home, their own personal issues and each other. How do have contact again after not having contact for so long. How do you slide back into a relationship? We see more of the women's lives. I do wish we saw more of Declan's life. But this book was really about family relationships, dynamics and healing. That ending though I liked this book but I was hoping for better. I loved Brooklyn and was hoping to be as invested in this book as I was in that. I had a hard time connecting to anyone in this book. The characters irritated me with the stubbornness. I do think this is what the Author wanted. He wanted the reader to be as frustrated with these characters as they were with each other. This book was a little slow moving for me at times.

At other times I thought this book was brilliant. As always his writing was beautiful but at parts it failed to grab me. See more of my review at [www.View1.com](http://www.View1.com). Oct 05, Jim Fonseca rated it it was amazing. A young man in Ireland is dying of AIDS and he wants to spend his last days in his grandmother's seaside house where he has fond childhood memories. His gay friends visit and more-or-less live-in while they care for him. His female family members hover over the dying man as well: mother, sister and grandmother. The relatives all have "issues" with each other and the main character's illness serves to bring the interrelations among the three women to the fore.

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The novel, first published in is also a "period piece. Apr 22, Alina rated it really liked it. You can't go wrong reading one of Colin Toibin's books. His elegant, understated, gorgeous writing style mesmerizes the reader. This book also realistically deals with family and friends dealing with the imminent death of a beloved young man from AIDS. The past and unresolved family issues are dealt with in an organic, natural manner. Loved this book. In the house by a cliff of the southern coast of Ireland, a

reluctant family comes together around a brother, son and grandson, who is dying of AIDS. As his family learns to accept the fact that he's dying, they begin to mend their relationships with each other and to forget a long-time misunderstanding that had kept them apart for many years. I can't find the words to say what a strong, powerful, emotional movie this is about life and love. For fans of Angela Lansbury and Dianne Wiest, this is a must-see although, of course, it's a must-see for everyone.

If you missed it when it aired in February, catch it when it's on again [Details](#) [Edit](#).  
Release date February 4, United States. United States. CBS United States. Greystones, County Wicklow, Ireland. Technical specs [Edit](#). Runtime 2h. Dolby SR. Related news.  
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### **The Blackwater Lightship (film) - Wikipedia**

[View all 4 comments](#). Feb 06, Jay rated it really liked it [Shelves: literature-english-language , booker-listed , irish-themed , irish-writers](#). They are all stylistically brilliant and all three weave worlds that address significant issues regarding the human condition. All, also, have received significant recognition for the quality of their production. He is less attentive to traditional grammar, punctuation and style. And the worlds he created are categorically darker, disheartening. Hope and redemption dissipate in the ravaged earth. The futures their people face are not suffocatingly black. But like McCarthy, his prose is ultimately lyrical. It is clear and expressive—beautifully poetic that never misses a beat. It moves quietly—stealthfully—page to page, focusing on what appears to be the mundane, on minutiae. The preparations seem to be limited to the delivery and the final pick up of chair and tables.

But that economy of description ultimately explodes in the reader more than the words would seem to do. The physical environment also plays a different role with each of the three. For Winton, the physical environment is integral to his plots. It is a within that littoral that the bulk of Western Australians live. But they play a role in his other works as well, linked often to the very souls of his characters. With their differences, the three writers are similar in regard to their voices. All three tell engaging and compelling stories. But those stories engage and compel because they embroil the reader in the very themes of life. They all translate into words the same questions Paul Gauguin asked in paint: Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going? [View all 3 comments](#). Jun 18, Julie rated it it was amazing [Shelves: contemporary-fiction , ireland-theme-setting , read , best-of I've held onto this book since first reading it in , through moves local and trans-Pacific when hundreds of other books were given away, knowing it was too special to me as a reader, and eventually a writer, to let go](#).

After all these years, I was left with only vague memories of awe and sadness, poignancy, and softness. In this time of shelter-in-place, when I long ago ran out of library books, I am rereading the few beloved books I have carried with me through all these years and life changes. What a book to read now. How prophetic, sublime, and sad. Set in the early '80s, *The Blackwater Lightship* takes place over a few days at a remote seaside home outside Wexford, Ireland. Helen Breen, her estranged mother, Lily, and her grandmother set aside their hurts and complications to welcome Helen's beloved brother, Declan, who is dying of AIDS.

Two of Declan's friends, Larry and Paul, join the small gathering. Their coming together at Helen's grandmother's home is a kind of a limbo, to soothe Declan's beleaguered mind and body. In the few days they spend in seclusion, Helen and Lily ferret out the hurts and misunderstandings that have kept them apart since Helen's beloved father died twenty years earlier, when Helen and Declan were children. Lily and her mother, no longer able to pretend they don't know Declan is gay, openly overcome their prejudices as they befriend Paul and Larry. Told from Helen's point-of-view, *The Blackwater Lightship* is a rich examination of one family facing a pandemic that to this day has no known cure, in a country only just beginning its economic ascent. It's a precious snapshot of a particular time and place that now seems so simple in the light of all that would follow in the years after this story was set, and even after its publication.

But it is timeless in its examination of families, how they can hurt and heal, of an Ireland that exists today no matter how modern and fast it soared. His quietness is all the more powerful and resonant for what he leaves

out, and trusts the reader to intuit on her own. A gorgeous, profound book. I'm so very glad to have discovered it anew. View all 8 comments. His father had died young too, of cancer. He wants to see that part of the coast he remembers as a child when he and his sister Helen stayed with their grandparents, throughout their father's prolonged final illness at hospital in Dublin.

It is in these waters that the Blackwater Lightship once shone, a secondary source of light alongside the more powerful Tusker lighthouse. His mettlesome granny, Dora, now widowed, is host in her remote and shabby home to Declan and his entourage — 2 gay friends, his mother Lily Dora's daughter and sister Helen. The three women have an uneasy relationship, to say the least and those tensions build as Declan's illness progresses.

We gain an understanding of the reasons for this as Declan fights for life, reviving memories of his father's death and its effects on his family - bitterness, recrimination and deep misunderstanding. Laughter and tears will alternate throughout this deeply human situation, particularly in those last days at Granny's, something Toibin excels at portraying. Such are his skills that his words will resonate, I suspect, with most of us. If my own experience is anything to go by it will teach us things about ourselves and those near and far from us.

This is why he is one of my very favourite writers. View all 10 comments. In , homosexuality was decriminalized in Ireland; and it is also important to note that at this time, the world was in the midst of the AIDS epidemic. It was the end of another school year and Helen, a school principal in Dublin, was looking forward to a holiday with her husband and two young children. That holiday, however, would have to wait.

Paul, a longtime friend of Helen's brother Declan, arrived on In , homosexuality was decriminalized in Ireland; and it is also important to note that at this time, the world was in the midst of the AIDS epidemic. Paul, a longtime friend of Helen's brother Declan, arrived on her doorstep and he brought bad news. Declan had sent him to request that Helen come to St. James Hospital. Declan was being treated for one of those opportunistic infections which AIDS patients were often afflicted with.

In fact, this infection was the latest of many such infections Declan had battled and his health had seriously deteriorated. Although Helen was shocked, not only by Declan's illness, but also by his sudden 'coming out' to her, she agreed to drive to their granny's seaside home to make the request that Declan and his two longtime friends and caregivers, Paul and Larry, be permitted to spend time there convalescing in familiar surroundings.. IT was to be Helen's responsibility to tell both her Granny Dora and her mother Lily about the seriousness of Declan's illness. On the drive to her granny's house, Helen ruminated on her estrangement from her family and it is through these ruminations that you discover that not only were Helen and Declan not particularly close but Helen's granny and her mother had not been invited to her wedding and they had never met her children.

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Rinse, repeat. Thrilling stuff. My boredom with the complete lack of plot or conflict might have been alleviated if the characters read more believably. But alas, they're written, particularly Declan, Lily, and Dora, with broad strokes mixed with minutia. By the end of the book I knew that Declan liked self-service restaurants as a child, disliked carrots, and feared escalators, but I still had no idea what he did for a living, how he'd made the friends he did, or even his hobbies.

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Family relationships depend on people forgiving the past allowing them to move forward into the future. The choice is in everyone's hands. The strength of the book is that the reader is left wondering what happens after the story ends. While the issue of AIDS is ever present, it is not laboured. Filter result by type: Articles Images Media. Next - Review of 'Ghosts'. Upload to this page Upload to this page Add your photos, text, videos, etc. A Changing Libraries Initiative - This site and all content is made available under respective copyrights.

#### The Blackwater Lightship by Colm Tóibín

Storyline Edit. When his A. Caring boyfriends help him and his whining female relatives deal with unresolved family issues, as well as his physical syndrome. Three generations of secrets. Did you know Edit. Goofs When their father photographs Helen and Declan they look straight into the camera. When the picture develops they look to the side. Connections Edited into Hallmark Hall of Fame User reviews 8 Review. Top review. As his family learns to accept the fact that he's dying, they begin to mend their relationships with each other and to forget a long-time misunderstanding that had kept them apart for many years. I can't find the words to say what a strong, powerful, emotional movie this is about life and love.

For fans of Angela Lansbury and Dianne Wiest, this is a must-see although, of course, it's a must-see for everyone. If you missed it when it aired in February, catch it when it's on again Details Edit. Release date February 4, United States. United States. CBS United States. Greystones, County Wicklow, Ireland. Devereux all of whom have a fraught relationship with one another. As his illness progresses, Declan's friends provide a highly supportive network for him, highlighting the absence of a warmer family relationship. It is the final stages of Declan's illness that brings the three women together. The characterisation of Declan's friends, Paul and Larry, and that of the grandmother, are strong and present some lovely scenes. Lily and Helen's characters are less developed. Regal Coming Soon. By opting to have your ticket verified for this movie, you are allowing us to check the email address associated with your Rotten Tomatoes account against an email address associated with a Fandango ticket purchase for the same movie.

All Critics 1 Top Critics 1 Fresh 1. There are no featured reviews for The Blackwater Lightship because the movie has not released yet. Top Box Office. More Top Movies Trailers. Certified Fresh Picks. Loki: Season 1. The Falcon and the Winter Soldier: Season 1. The Walking Dead: Season Certified Fresh Pick. View All. Celebrating Hispanic Heritage. Log in with Facebook. Email address. Log In. First Name. Last Name. By signing up, you agree to receiving newsletters from Rotten Tomatoes. You may later unsubscribe. Create your account Already have an account? Email Address. Real Quick. We want to hear what you have to say but need to verify your email.

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