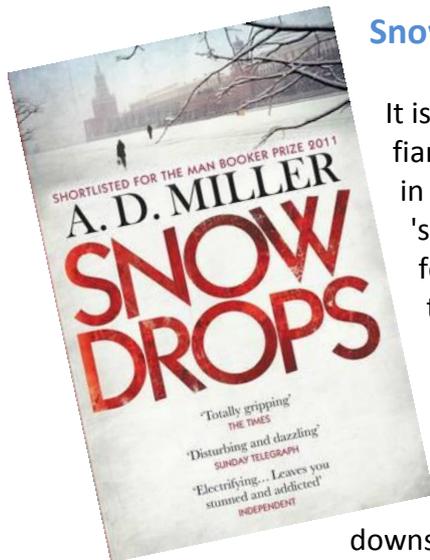


## THE BODECIA BOOK CLUB BOOK REVIEW



### Snow Drops by A D Miller

It is written as a narrative by the main character, Nicholas Pratt to his fiancée, in which he explains events in his life, while working as a lawyer in Moscow, before he met her. It starts with the discovery of a 'snowdrop', close to where Nicholas lives. Snowdrop is a Russian term for a dead body that turns up after a long hard winter, in the spring thaw, where it 'floats up to the light'. In Nicholas's case, the snowdrop is revealed as a foot protruding from a car near where he lives.

At the start, though, the narrator, Nicholas, is naive enough to think it might be a love story. The plot charts this generic migration, his downscaling of hopes and ambitions, with chilling efficiency. You wonder how his wife-to-be feels. *Snowdrops* take the form of a confessional letter to her, saying, in effect: "This is what I did. This is what I allowed myself to become. Do you still want to marry me?" At first we liked Nicholas but as the book progresses and you get to know him we didn't like him, I'm sure his wife-to-be would have thought the same and although Miller doesn't tell us, but we're guessing the marriage was off!

Its boom time in the mid-1990's and Nicholas is an expat lawyer working on behalf of foreign banks that want to lend money to Russian businesses, especially in the oil industry. In his own words, his job is smearing "lipstick on a pig" – sanitising dodgy deals with covenants and sureties no one involved will respect anyway. He has money to spend, so he enjoys Moscow's exotic decadence. He's 38 and rudderless, terrified of suburbia and of ending up in a boring, loveless marriage like his parents'.

The liaison sees Nicholas Platt drawn into the underworld of Russia, as a plot unfolds around him, and his new relationship. The novel is written in a confessional style, leading up to the criminal act into which Nicholas has been drawn.

Miller has described *Snow Drops* as a "moral thriller", because the reader knows that something bad is going to happen, but is not exactly sure what.

These different stories gradually interweave themselves, and all have links to corruption and shows how the impact from old Russia still has hold on modern Russian society.

The book was a real page turner and you can't put it down, it has you gripped for three quarters and lets you down right at the end. The book was trying to be clever putting the angle of the crime from a different perspective but we felt it was a bit too much. It had an opportunity to be amazing, however we wanted a twist and a plot changer but there was not any, we were much underwhelmed at the end.

We gave *Snow Drops* by A D Miller an **OK**

We are now reading *The Equal Rites* by Terry Pratchett