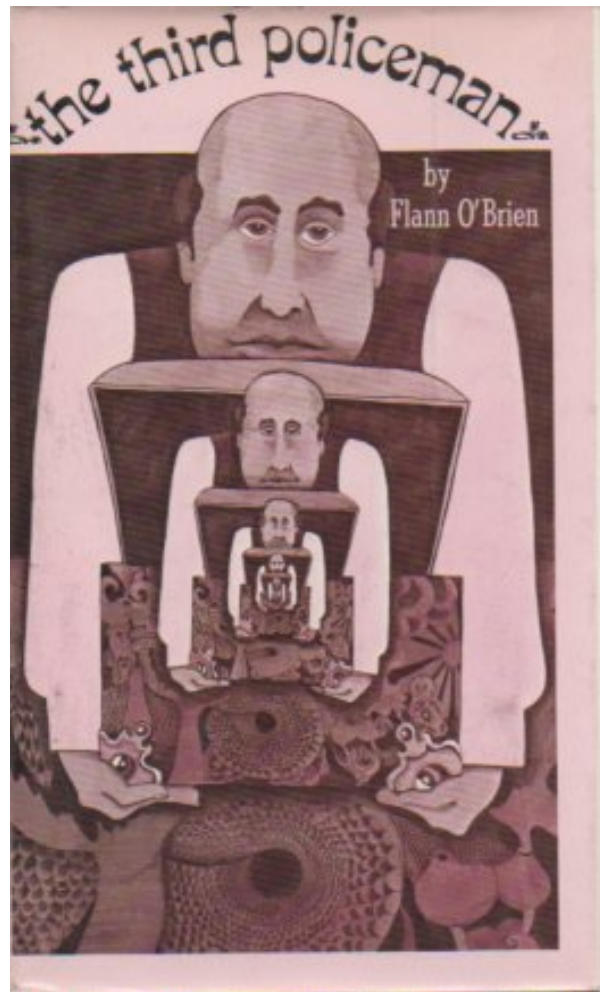
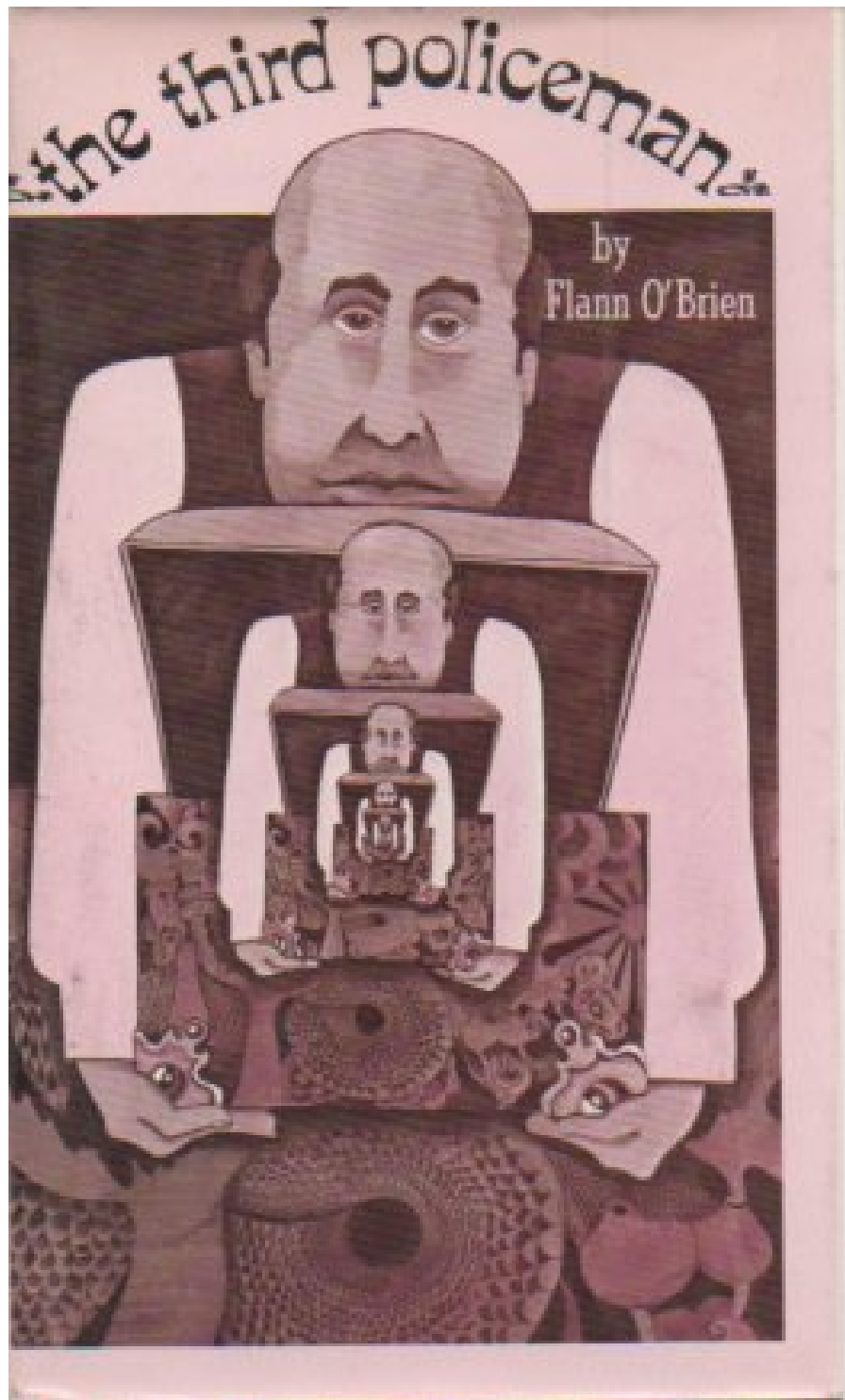


THE THIRD POLICEMAN BY FLANN O'BRIEN



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Amazon.com Review

A comic trip through hell in Ireland, as told by a murderer, *The Third Policeman* is another inspired bit of confusing and comic lunacy from the warped imagination and lovably demented pen of Flann O'Brien, author of *At Swim-Two-Birds*. There's even a small chance you'll figure out what's going on if you read the publisher's note that appears on the last page.

From Publishers Weekly

Starred Review. If ever a book was brought to life by a reading, it is this presentation of O'Brien's posthumously published classic. Norton individually crafts voices and personalities for each character in such a way that a listener might imagine an entire cast of voice talent working overtime. This is a comic/surreal tale of a one-legged gentleman farmer who participates in a poorly planned botched robbery-turned-murder, only to find himself having a long conversation with the dead man shortly after the deed. In addition he hears from his own soul, who he names Joe. Joe's voice is that of a wry observer with a voice of calm, removed authority, whereas dead man Mathers' voice is completely nasal, at once sickly and droll. Mathers sends the farmer to a two-dimensional barracks of three metaphysical policemen. Here he finds himself in a world where people can become bicycles and eternity is within walking distance. Norton's rendition of the main policeman, Sergeant Pluck, tips the reading into a full-out performance. The enormous blustery fellow with red cheeks and brushy mustache and eyebrows is portrayed like a jolly yet dangerous Disney walrus. Norton's Irish brogue, accentuated to different degrees with the various characters, ties the ribbon on a perfect presentation of this absurd and chilling masterpiece. (Apr.)

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'Flann O'Brien learned from Joyce the art of tuning language to a lyrical pitch, which he could then turn to his purpose, whether it was to be plain foolery, unconcealed indignation or high comedy. The best of his contemporaries and many subsequent Irish writers have much to thank him for.' Sunday Times 'Flann O'Brien is inventive, his storytelling is swift and sure, making the eccentric seem natural and the commonplace hilarious.' The Times 'Even with "Ulysses" and "Finnegans Wake" behind him, James Joyce might have been envious.' Observer 'Wonderful. "The Third Policeman" is a great masterpiece of black humour.' George Mackay Brown

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THE THIRD POLICEMAN BY FLANN O'BRIEN PDF

A masterpiece of black humour from the renown comic and acclaimed author of 'At Swim-Two-Birds' - Flann O'Brien. A thriller, a hilarious comic satire about an archetypal village police force, a surrealistic vision of eternity, the story of a tender, brief, unrequited love affair between a man and his bicycle, and a chilling fable of unending guilt, 'The Third Policeman' is comparable only to 'Alice in Wonderland' as an allegory of the absurd. Distinguished by endless comic invention and its delicate balancing of logic and fantasy, 'The Third Policeman' is unique in the English language.

- Sales Rank: #5411288 in Books
- Published on: 1968
- Number of items: 1
- Binding: Hardcover
- 200 pages

Amazon.com Review

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humour.' George Mackay Brown

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

O'Brien is just WEIRD!!! and that's a good thing.

By Colton C. Sorrels

Flann O'Brien isn't for everyone. There are quite a few one star ratings (and I'm sure those people would have rather given it a zero if they could), but I think that's a good thing. Here's why. O'Brien is just weird, bizarre, and perhaps the most "out there" writer I have ever read. Your classic drug trip books like "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas" and "On the Road" have nothing on this guy. If you aren't paying attention to every little detail in the writing then you just aren't going to get it. With that being said, some people are just too dense to get his prose. This is a novelist I want people to hate, because honestly he's my guy...I don't want you to get it.

"The Third Policeman" didn't immerse the reader into O'Brien's unique and bizarre writing style immediately. In fact that was one of the things about this novel that I found interesting. I thought I was reading gothic literature like Hawthorne, or Brockden Brown at first. It wasn't until the first twenty pages that O'Brien introduces you to the bizarre world in which you will inhabit for the remainder of the novel. There are certain aspects of this novel that I didn't enjoy as much as his first novel, "At Swim Two Birds," but I thought this novel didn't have as many nonsensical moments that dragged on for too long. All in all, this is a great read. This was his second novel, which became his last since it wasn't published until after his death, and it is only the second novel of his I have read. I can't wait to read the rest of them!

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Is it about a bicycle?

By Ron Ginzler

Yes, and how people turn into bicycles and vice-versa. It's impossible to categorize this wonderful novel. It combines elements of fantasy, magic realism, horror, humor, satire, and it could only have been written by an Irishman. Finished in 1940 but not published until 1967, a year after the author's death, the main text concerns the adventures of a man who commits a robbery and murder in rural Ireland, but following this, bizarre and impossible things occur when he is captured by two peculiar policemen and imprisoned in a peculiar police station. A series of long footnotes parallel the text, detailing the protagonist's obsession with the absurd physicist De Selby and his crackpot ideas. (This device is copied by Robert Anton Wilson in his Historical Illuminatus Chronicles, and possibly by Nabokov in Pale Fire, though it seems unlikely Nabokov had read the manuscript of the then-unpublished Third Policeman.) Another device, of separating the protagonist into two separate characters who then converse with each other, may have been copied by Phillip K. Dick in his equally strange novel Valis.

The only other writer I know who measures up to this standard of originality, humor and strangeness, is the late, great, R. A. Lafferty. Read this book. Then read it again.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Interesting Narrator, Strong Absurdity

By Unruly Louise

I personally love stories that have a very distant tone in them - they always make me wonder what the narrator is hiding, why they are so detached from themselves, and rather like a person drawing backwards, it makes me very curious indeed.

The Third Policeman is a book exactly like that. From the start I was really drawn in by this sense of a very odd narrator who tells a story that, for the first few chapters at least, left me feeling unsettled and a bit

scared. After that it moves into the realm of pure absurdity. The good thing about this was that I stopped feeling so unsettled as I had at the start. The bad thing about it was that I did put it down a number of times and forget to pick it back up. But every time I would pick it up again, I did enjoy it, I just kept losing the thread that was tying it all together.

I read somewhere that this book found difficulties in being published - that, I think, is a bit shame. It is a good book in terms of its originality and voice, and I'm glad it finally found a publisher. The author is adept at his craft - I love his use of words and conversations - and if you're the kind of reader who enjoys strong absurdity, I think this would really entertain you.

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