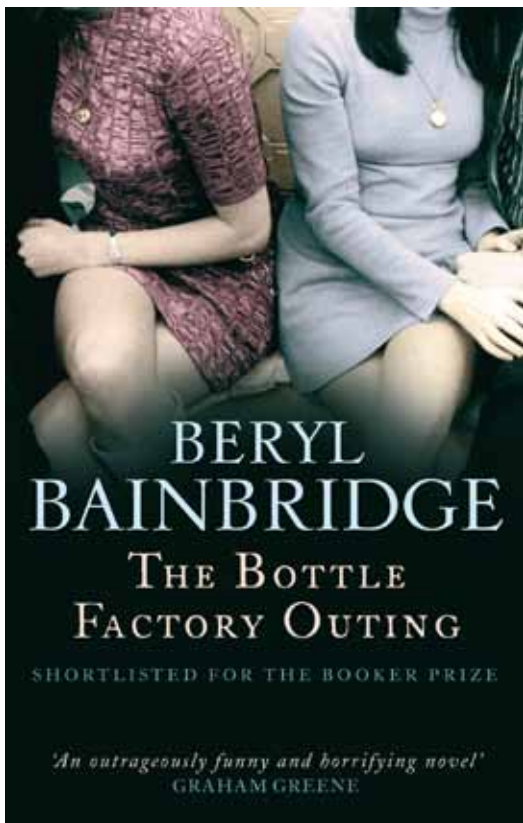




Reader's Guide



The Bottle Factory Outing Beryl Bainbridge

Abacus
Price £8.99

www.themanbookerprize.com

The Bottle Factory Outing

Freda and Brenda spend their days working in an Italian-run wine-bottling factory. A work outing offers promise for Freda and terror for Brenda; passions run high on that chilly day of freedom, and life after the outing never returns to normal. Beryl Bainbridge dazzles readers in this offbeat, haunting yet hilarious novel.

Discussion points

Loneliness is one of the key themes of the novel. It is apparent from the beginning that Brenda is very lonely. In what ways does Beryl Bainbridge portray the loneliness of other key characters¹, such as Freda and Rossi?

The Bottle Factory Outing is narrated in the third person. How does this impact on the reader's interpretation of events and understanding of the characters?

How are the differences in Freda and Brenda apparent as they watch the funeral from the window?

Many ~~of~~ aspects of the novel are ~~about~~ about a power struggle. Freda is the most obvious character vying for control, how is this demonstrated through her actions and relationships with other key characters?

What do you think is Brenda's motivation at the end of the story, after Freda's death?

Background information

Link to the Man Booker Prize website
<http://themanbookerprize.com>

Link to the publisher's website
<http://www.littlebrown.co.uk>

A BBC sponsored film adaptation was made in 1991 starring Dawn French and Jennifer Saunders with a script by Alan Plater.
<http://ftvdb.bfi.org.uk/sift/title/459716>

The 100 greatest novels of all time
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2003/oct/12/features.fiction>