

Advance Information

Happiness Comes From Nowhere

Shauna Gilligan

Happiness Comes From Nowhere follows the lives of the Horn family: Mary, Sepp and Dirk. Their paths cross and intertwine with those of extended family, friends and acquaintances as journeys are made through the changing city of Dublin. People also venture further in search of happiness: Mary and Dirk wander the streets of Rome and Ita watches a cargo ship unload in Spain. Expressed in ways as different as suicide, art and sex, the inseparable pangs of loss and happiness – remembered and present – are threaded through the novel.

Reviews

'A refreshingly thoughtful novel, poised and unpredictable. Delicious in its sensuous details and mischievous sense of humour. *Happiness Comes from Nowhere* is a truly impressive debut from a writer of exceptional talent.' *Éilís Ní Dhuibhne*

'In Shauna Gilligan's unsettling novel-in-stories, Dirk has troubles that his mother Mary may not be able to right, much as she tries. Gilligan writes intimately of one mother's possessiveness, devotion and ambition for her son. Rich with insight, this is a book that informs as much as it haunts. As a début it is a very fine piece of work.'

Nuala Ní Chonchúir

Happiness Comes from Nowhere is the sort of book that rewards a single reading; the parts fit together like a jigsaw, and it's nice to keep them fairly close in one's mind so that the narrative thread remains pretty whole. I liked the way that characters were introduced and having bit parts in one story then become the centre of a later story. And yet, although each part can stand alone, there is a narrative development about loss, which comes together towards the end.

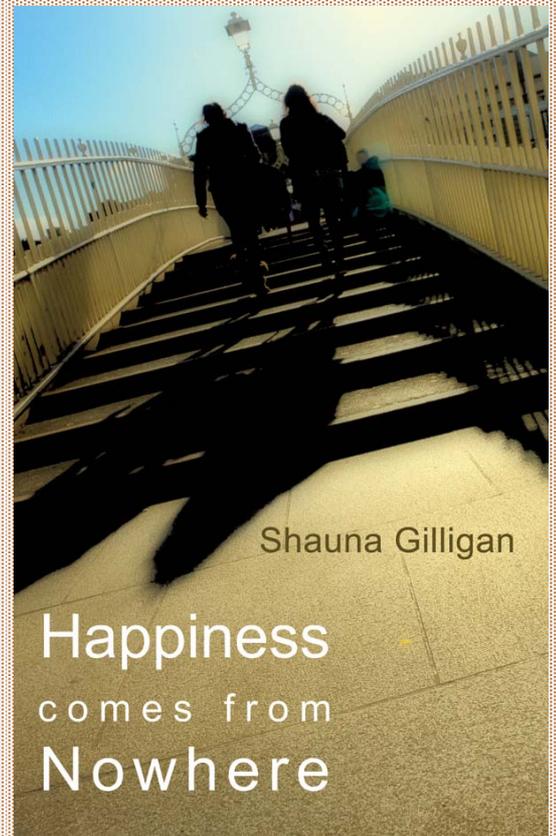
Anne B Ryan, Author of Enough is Plenty

'A daring and truthful book. Gilligan shows us her characters through time and from many angles, charting their troubles and triumphs and changing natures, and those of Dublin itself, with great sensitivity and a deftness of touch. *Happiness Comes From Nowhere* is a poignant, assured first book.' *Trevor Byrne*

About the author

Born in Dublin, Ireland, Shauna has worked and lived in Mexico, Spain, India and the UK. She holds an MA in History from University College Dublin having also studied English as an undergraduate. She is currently completing a PhD in Writing at the University of Glamorgan, Wales. As part of her research, she is examining suicide and writing processes in a selection of novels by and in a series of interviews with Irish writer Desmond Hogan.

Her work has been published in *New Writing: The International Journal for the Practice and Theory of Creative Writing* and in *The Ulster Tatler's Literary Miscellany*. She has given public readings of her fiction in Ireland and USA and has presented on writing at academic conferences in Ireland, UK, Germany and USA. *Happiness Comes From Nowhere* is her first publication.



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