



Ian Bone,

THE SONG
OF AN INNOCENT
BYSTANDER

INTRODUCTION

- Title: The song of an innocent bystander
- Author: Ian Bone
- Genre: crime and thriller, contemporary fiction, psychological fiction
- Why I chose the novel: I found it intriguing for reading for its type of writing and the short summary of the contents

Structure

- Basic facts
- Information of the author
- Character analysis
- The contents – brief summary of the story

- My evaluation
- Recommendations for audience

BASIC FACTS:

Publication: New York, 2003

- Criminal story including some typical contemporary social ideas (corruption) and psychological elements
- Interesting for its structure - type of writing – at some parts in 1. person, in others in 3.
- Mode of telling isn't straightforward and linear; events described in present with flashbacks

- Written as a reminiscent of Robert Cormier's provocative probing of corruption
- Rewarded with good responses, received great critics
- Shortlisted for the South Australian Festival Awards for Literature and the Council Book of the Year Awards
- Nominated for inclusion on the American Library Association's Best Books for Young Adults list
- Adapted by a major Australian film director into a feature film

Ian Bone

- Australian writer, author and novelist
- Born in 1956 in Geelong, Victoria
- Authored over 25 books
- Numerous awards
- Works on children's TV programmes
- Creates online
- Educational programs



CHARACTER ANALYSIS

- Freda Opperman – the victim
- William – the journalist
- John Wayne O'Grady – the perpetrator

Freda Opperman

- 19-year old girl, presented as a 9, 13, 14, 16, and 19-year old girl
- Kept in the siege at the age of 9
- Events from past have significant effect on her
- Confuse adult, struggling to make sense of herself, people around and the past
- Sensitive

- Gets messed with the criminal – the perpetrator
- Hides a secret
- Fighting to find her place in the world
- Split between the person she wants to be / everyone else wants her to be / the person the gunman taught her to be

William

- Young journalist, working for students newspaper
- Gets information about the truth of happening in that siege 10 years ago
- Fighting against his own demons and trying to get a sense of Freda's demons in hopes of curing his own issues
- Determined to reveal the truth

John Wayne O'Grady

- Angry, desperate, tends to revenge to the burger restaurant's manager
- Has some grudges against world
- Wants to be heard
- Weak, with ideas of being something more
- Feels strong in relationship with Freda (she respects him, he's an important individual to her)

CONTENTS

- Freda Opperman is 9 when she and her family go to eat out in a burger restaurant
- Walks back into the store to get a sticker
- Unaware of a man standing on the top of tables holding a gun
- Being trapped as a hostage for 36 hours with 13 people, 2 of them are murdered then
- Comes out as a brave survivor

- She is considered innocent, but in reality she knows she's hiding something
- A secret is written on a napkin by the restaurant's manager Theo Constantine (died), which she hides
- For 10 years tries to live with it and suppress the horror of events
- At the age of 19 she's forced to confront the traumatic events as she begins to receive strange phonecalls referred to it
- William somehow knows of her unspoken secrets

EVALUATION

- The book is not light and easy to understand
- It uncovers gradually; you're given the basic facts at the start, but the interpretation of them keeps shifting till pieces of the past are revealed
- Effective type of narrative – more intimacy
- Ability to compare the situation with current terroristic events

RECOMMENDATION

- To people intrigued by its psychological aspect (good insight into character's behavior, personalities)
- People preferring realistic stories better than trivial contents
- People liking mysterious stories with gradually revelation

Sources:

<http://www.bitemybook.com/2012/12/book-review-song-of-innocent-bystander.html>

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<http://bloodyyank.blogspot.com/2009/11/book-review-song-of-innocent-bystander.html>

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