

Medley of review re re Anne Enright and 'The Green Road', 2015:

'Spanning thirty years and three continents, *The Green Road* tells the story of Rosaleen, matriarch of the Madigan family, and her four children.....

Ardeevin, County Clare, Ireland. 1980. When her oldest brother Dan announces he will enter the priesthood, young Hanna watches her mother howl in agony and retreat to her room. In the years that follow, the Madigan children leave one by one: Dan for the frenzy of New York under the shadow of AIDS; Constance for a hospital in Limerick, where petty antics follow simple tragedy; Emmet for the backlands of Mali, where he learns the fragility of love and order; and Hanna for modern-day Dublin and the trials of her own motherhood. When Christmas Day reunites the children under one roof, each confronts the terrible weight of family ties and the journey that brought them home. *The Green Road* is a major work of fiction about the battles we wage for family, faith, and love.'

<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/23316521-the-green-road>

'Anne Enright's first novels were whimsical, mannered, driven by plot devices that might have come from the discarded first drafts of the magic realists. They were redeemed by her style - always precise and deft and lyrical. ...

In *The Gathering*, the narrator, Veronica, goes over the events of her life, of that of her brother, trying to understand "what hurt may linger in the bones", inventing that which she cannot know. *The Green Road* operates quite differently, showing us the Madigan children in early incarnations - Hanna, a quizzing schoolgirl who smells on her father "the day's work: fresh air, diesel, hay, with the memory of cattle in there somewhere, and beyond that again the memory of milk". We see Dan in the New York art scene of the 1990s, a wonderful chapter that glows with nostalgia and feeling. We meet Constance in 1997, a mother of young children, dealing with the small joys and disappointments of her circumscribed life. Finally we find Emmet, an aid worker in Mali, endlessly drifting. The novel then leaps ahead to show us the four children all older, all damaged. We are given a few clues about the intervening years, but largely we must fill in the gaps, write our own history of the family that explains "the horrors of the Madigans - their small hearts... and the small lives they put themselves through." It's a neat conceit that Carol Shields uses in *The Stone Diaries*, a family saga that kept coming to mind as I read *The Green Road*. It draws the reader into the story, making us imaginative co-conspirators in the creation of its fictional world.'

Alex Preston Guardian 3.5.2015

"“And the novelist must bounce us; that is imperative.” So E.M. Forster told the audience.....Anne Enright's "The Green Road," an impressive novel that bounces its readers through some fairly rocky terrain, ....

.Palm Sunday 1980...From that moment straight through to the end, the novel bounced me.'

David Leavitt, New York Times,, May 12, 2015

' "Family happiness completely absorbs me," Tolstoy wrote in his diary, in 1863, "and it's impossible to do anything."...More than most contemporary writers, the Irish novelist Anne Enright finds it hard to escape the tidal pull of the family. In a series of funny, bleak, radically unsentimental novels, she has examined the engrossments of such life ....Enright possesses an unusual combination of talents. She is a rich, lyrical prose writer, who cascades among novelties—again and again, she finds the unexpected adjective, the just noun. ...This is storytelling, with the blood-pulse of lived gossip, that little run-on final sentence bearing witness to its coursing unstoppableity.'

James Wood, The New Yorker, 25.3. 2015