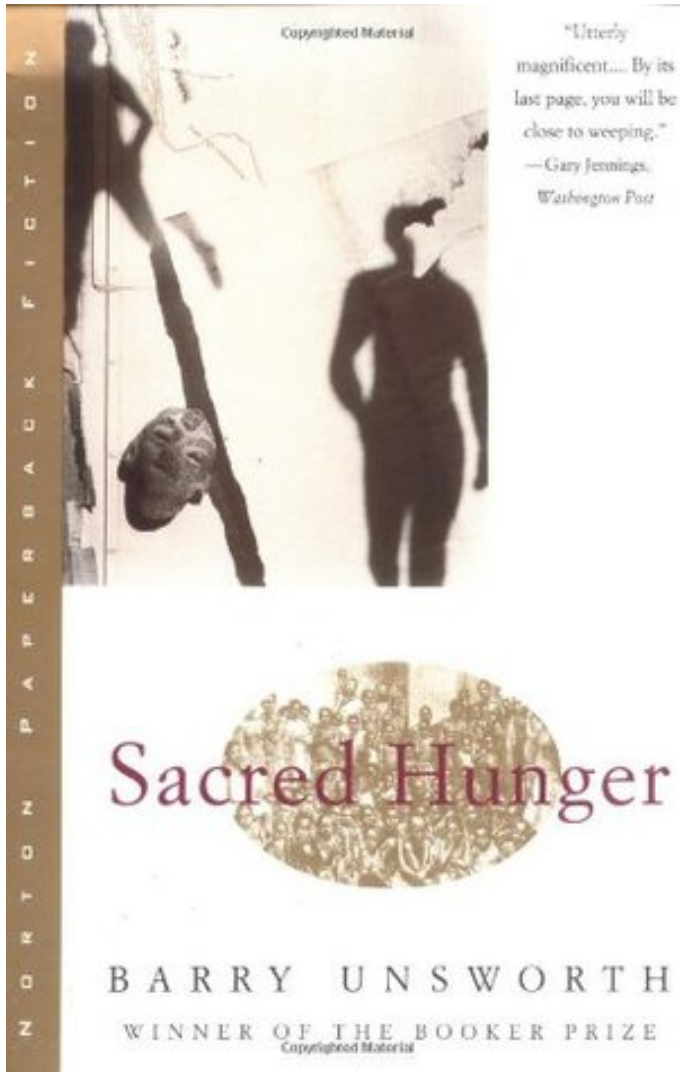

Barry Unsworth

Sacred Hunger (Sacred Hunger #1)



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"Utterly magnificent... By its last page, you will be close to weeping."
—Gary Jennings,
Washington Post

Title: Sacred Hunger (Sacred Hunger #1)

Author: Barry Unsworth

Format: Paperback

Language: English

Pages: 630

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Description

Nominee for the 1992 Booker Prize for Fiction

Sacred Hunger is a stunning and engrossing exploration of power, domination, and greed. Filled with the "sacred hunger" to expand its empire and its profits, England entered full into the slave trade and spread the trade throughout its colonies. In this Booker Prize-winning work, Barry Unsworth follows the failing fortunes of William Kemp, a merchant pinning his last chance to a slave ship; his son who needs a fortune because he is in love with an upper-class woman; and his nephew who sails on the ship as its doctor because he has lost all he has loved. The voyage meets its demise when disease spreads among the slaves and the captain's drastic response provokes a mutiny. Joining together, the sailors and the slaves set up a secret, utopian society in the wilderness of Florida, only to await the vengeance of the single-minded, young Kemp.

From Publishers Weekly

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Insightful reviews

Brian: It's for books such as this that I love reading. One of the most fully realized re-creations of another time and place I've ever come across, coupled with sharply delineated characters, primary and secondary, I have to say this is among the best books I've ever read. Not only does it deal with thought-provoking matters related to morality, greed, and justice, but it is also highly entertaining. Virtually every page is artfully crafted and a joy to read.

The fact that I came upon it during an unplanned visit to the neighborhood bookstore serves as a reminder of the importance of their continued existence. Killing time while Piper was looking at books in the children's section, I saw Unsworth's latest book, *Quality of Mercy*, which struck an uncertain note of familiarity, having apparently seen some recent reference to it. Instead of looking at that, though, knowing I wasn't going to buy a hardcover at the time, I picked up the paperback just to the right of it and read the first page. Being instantly hooked, I bought it without realizing that *Quality of Mercy* is its sequel.

Most highly recommended.

Rachel: I'm not sure why I didn't enjoy this more than I did. The writing was uniformly excellent and the story made great insights into human relationships and power.

I think it may have been timing, and it may have just been me. But as much as I could appreciate the quality of the novel I had a hard time getting back to it after putting it down. In fact, I read about 200 pages today in a sprint because I wanted to finish it before I completely lost interest.

Mark: This is a very good novel about the slave trade, but what takes it beyond simply a retelling

of the brutality of capturing and buying slaves is the on-board rebellion that occurs during the Middle Passage and the makeshift society that the seamen and slaves fashion afterward.

Donna Callea: i will not say that I loved examining this book. yet I did locate it fascinating, enlightening, splendidly written and concept provoking. The identify refers back to the starvation for revenue and societal prestige that's obviously engrained in human beings-- at the least a few of us, perhaps so much of us-- and the price of this starvation to the remainder of humanity. Set within the mid-18th century, the 2 imperative characters are English cousins. Erasmus Kemp is the son of an bold service provider whose hopes for monetary redemption lie in a slave send that he's backing. Erasmus is a materialistic, self-centered younger guy who's centred merely on his personal aggrandizement. He hates his cousin Matthew Paris, who's every little thing Erasmus is not. Paris is a doctor, an intellectual, and a revolutionary thinker. he is been imprisoned for publishing his heretical perspectives on evolution, and whereas he was once being humiliated and incarcerated his liked spouse and unborn baby died. he is guilt-ridden and does not a lot care approximately his future, that's why he concurs to turn into the health care professional at the slave send his uncle owns.No one, it seems, is innocent within the slave trade. no longer the sailors compelled into provider and treated, in a few cases, as cruelly because the human cargo. no longer the Africans who promote their captured countrymen for beads and muskets. now not the English, whose starvation for valueless and damaging sugar fuels their starvation for an inhuman alternate in humanity. no longer Matthew Paris, who, regardless of his distaste for cruelty and injustice, is complicit within the slave trade. He examines the Africans prompted board to make sure that they're fit adequate to outlive the adventure to allow them to be resold.It's transparent from the start of the unconventional that not anything sturdy will finally come of all this. How may it? yet for a quick time there's wish A Paradise found. A Paradise lost.Barry Unsworth's view of human nature can be on target. it can be the best way issues have been and are and consistently will be, in a single means or another. yet there is not any pleasure in examining approximately it.

-Karen-: ancient novels are "a a little gimcrack style no longer precisely jammed with greatness" in accordance with James wooden within the New Yorker. (Where he is, however, exceeding well mannered to Ms Mantel.)I can merely think that this is often a kind of rarities whose lifestyles he grudgingly allows. it truly is magnificent. It used to be extraordinary the 1st time I learn all of it these years in the past whilst it shared the Booker prize with The English Patient, and it keeps its beauty now. A re-read is usually a brand new experience: this time around I knew precisely the place we have been going so my awareness used to be greater directed on how we have been getting there. The constitution is an item lesson in plotting, with a panoramic hiatus on the maximum aspect of anxiety and strife on board the ship. The beautiful torture of what-happened-next is drawn out to the virtually (but now not quite) unbearable. much more wondrous is the best way that the complete motion is completely grounded in character, and never a unmarried fake notice between these myriad lives. yet maybe the main striking point is how one of these tale of the appalling previous can light up our oh much more civilised present. As an ethical story of the depredations of greed - the sacred starvation of the identify - it was once first written within the speedy aftermath of the Thatcher years. As I wrote i started to determine extra strongly that there have been inescapable analogies. you could not rather pass though the Eighties with no feeling how crass and distasteful a number of the financial doctrines were. The slave exchange is an ideal version for that sort of overall devotion to the revenue

reason with no reckoning the human consequences. (Quote taken from his obituary within the Independent)How even more suitable now, as we see the fallout from one other case of overall devotion to the revenue purpose with out reckoning the human consequences?Mr Unsworth died simply final month from lung cancer.

Emma: This was once a wealthy and specific account on lifestyles on a slave dealer ship. regardless of it is length, the pages flowed effortlessly. a few reviewers have acknowledged that they discovered the dialect and pidgin language a hindrance, yet i discovered it additional instead of detracted. The sacred starvation is the quest to generate income in any respect costs. Slavery was once (is) a bad a part of our collective consciousness. the main points and outline and the distinction to lifestyles as an prosperous service provider in overdue eighteenth century Britain are as you will expect.The actual middle of the tragedy during this booklet lies within the lack of know-how that Kemp has for his cousin Paris till it truly is too late: to have spent so much of his existence fed on by way of contempt and hatred.I relatively cherished this booklet and it absorbed me for numerous days. however it doesn't get five stars. i presumed the mulatto under the influence of alcohol personality firstly and finish of the tale was once unnecessary, no longer including something more. additionally I did not, to my surprise, locate the part detailing the recent neighborhood confirmed that attention-grabbing and located myself skimming to get to the end. This was once disappointing as virtually the complete booklet used to be completely absorbing.

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