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# A Star Called Henry Roddy Doyle

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A Star Called Henry Roddy Doyle

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## HOOD SLADE

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Love Random House

Roddy Doyle's last novel, *A Star Called Henry*, was chosen by the *The New York Times Book Review* as one of the eleven Best Books of the Year; *The Washington Post* said it was "not only Doyle's best novel yet; it is a masterpiece, an extraordinarily entertaining epic." Now Doyle, author of six bestselling novels, twice nominated for the Booker Prize and once a winner, turns his protagonist Henry Smart's rich observation and linguistic acrobatics loose on America, in an energetic saga full of epic adventures, breathless escapes, and star-crossed love. *Publishers Weekly* says "Doyle just gets better and better." Our Irish hero arrives in New York in 1924 to bury himself in the teeming city and start a new life; having escaped Dublin after the 1916 Rebellion, Henry Smart is on the run from the Republicans for whom he committed murder and mayhem. Lying to the immigration officer, avoiding Irish eyes that might recognise him, hiding the photograph of himself with his wife because it shows a

gun across his lap, he throws his passport into the river and tries to forge a new identity. He charms his way into the noisy, tough Lower East Side, reads to Puerto Rican cigar makers, hauls bottles for a bootlegger and composes ads on sandwich boards, finally setting up his own business with the intention of making his fortune. But he makes enemies along the way among mobsters such as Johnny No and Fast Olaf. Henry hightails it out of Manhattan with a gun at his back and Fast Olaf's hustler of a half-sister on his arm. This was a time when America was ripe for the picking, however, and a pair of good, strong con artists could have the world at their fingertips. The Depression was sending folks to ride the rails in search of a new life and new hope, and all trains led to Chicago. As Henry's past tries to catch up with him, he takes off on a journey to the great port, where music is everywhere: wild, happy music played by a man with a trumpet called Louis Armstrong. Armstrong needs a white man, and the man he chooses is Henry Smart. The bestselling *A Star Called Henry* followed Henry Smart from his birth in 1902 until the age of twenty, by which time he had already had a lifetime's worth of adventures in his native Ireland. With these books, Doyle was trying in some ways to write a story like Charles Dickens' David

Copperfield, starting at the beginning of his life and following him through many years of adventures. To write the new book, he had to research the vanished world of pre-war America. "I went to Chicago, on the south side, to see if any of the old jazz clubs were still around. I was very keen to see what Henry would have seen as he'd stood outside, under the awnings. But all the jazz clubs that were along State Street, they're all gone; every one of them's gone. There's one that's still standing – it was, originally, The Sunset Cafe, where Louis Armstrong played, but now it's a hardware store. The Vendome Cinema, where he used to play during the intermissions, is now a parking lot for the local college. That I found upsetting. But on the other hand it was very liberating because in its absence I can invent." Music, often American soul or blues, is always important in Roddy Doyle's work, often as escapism for the working-class Dubliners in the Barrytown books. Doyle grew up listening to American music and likes to write while listening to music. For Henry in America, Doyle says, "when he hears this music, he feels he's being baptized. He's new. He feels he's gotten away from Ireland. He's gotten away from the misery of it all and he's listening to this glorious celebration."

#### **The Convert** Gemma

An historical novel like none before it, *A Star Called Henry* marks a new chapter in Booker Prize-winner Roddy Doyle's writing. It is a vastly more ambitious book than any he has previously written. A subversive look behind the legends of Irish republicanism, at its centre a passionate love story, this new novel is a triumphant work of fiction. Born in the slums of Dublin in 1902, his father a one-legged whorehouse bouncer and settler of scores, Henry Smart has to grow up fast. By the time he can walk he's out robbing, begging, charming, often cold, always hungry, but a prince of the streets. At fourteen, already six foot two, Henry's in the General Post Office on Easter Monday 1916, a soldier in the Irish Citizen Army, fighting for freedom. A year later he's ready to die for Ireland again, a rebel, a Fenian, and, soon, a killer. With his father's wooden leg as his weapon, Henry becomes a republican legend – one of Michael Collins' boys, a cop killer, an assassin on a stolen bike, a lover.

#### *A Star Called Henry* Random House Trade Paperbacks

Two men meet for a pint in a Dublin pub. They chew the fat, set the world to rights, take the piss... They talk about their wives, their kids, their kids' pets, their football teams and – this being Ireland in 2011–12 – about the euro, the crash, the presidential election, the Queen's visit. But these men are not parochial or small-minded; one of them knows where to find the missing Colonel Gaddafi (he's working as a cleaner at Dublin Airport); they worry about Greek debt, the IMF and the bondholders (whatever they might be); in their fashion, they mourn the deaths of Whitney Houston, Donna Summer, Davy Jones and Robin Gibb; and they ask each other the really important questions like 'Would you ever let yourself be digitally enhanced?' Inspired by a year's worth of news, *Two Pints* distils the essence of Roddy Doyle's comic genius. This book shares the concision of a collection of poems, and the timing of a virtuoso comedian.

#### The Snapper *A Star Called Henry*

Roddy Doyle's acclaimed novel about an intrepid Irishman's years of reckless heroism and adventure – "An extraordinarily entertaining epic." (The Washington Post) Look for Roddy Doyle's new novel, *Smile*, coming in October of 2017 Born at the beginning of the twentieth century, Henry Smart lives through the evolution of modern Ireland, and in this extraordinary novel he brilliantly tells his story. From his own birth and childhood on the streets of Dublin to his role as soldier (and lover) in the Irish Rebellion, Henry recounts his early years of reckless heroism and adventure. At once an epic, a love story, and a portrait of Irish

history, *A Star Called Henry* is a grand picaresque novel brimming with both poignant moments and comic ones, and told in a voice that is both quintessentially Irish and inimitably Roddy Doyle's.

#### **Two Plays** Vintage Canada

The Black Dog of Depression has descended over the adults of Dublin. Uncles are losing their businesses, dads won't get out of bed, mothers no longer smile at their children. Siblings Raymond and Gloria have had enough and set out one night with one goal in mind: to stop the Black Dog, whatever it takes. In a chase through the streets and parks and beaches of Dublin, the children run after the Black Dog, and soon dozens, then hundreds, then thousands of kids join in their fight. They discover they have one weapon against the Black Dog. The weapon is a word: brilliant. Illustrated throughout by a bright new talent and told through the masterful dialogue for which the acclaimed Roddy Doyle is known, *Brilliant* is a very special book with a storybook feel.

#### **A Novel** Knopf Canada

"Riveting . . . Readers will quickly warm to [Frank] Delaney's vividly described Ireland of the 1950s, its fully realized inhabitants, and the dynamic political and personal relationships that make for a remarkable story."—Publishers Weekly (starred review) "If we're to live good lives, we have to tell ourselves our own story. In a good way." So says Ben MacCarthy's beloved mentor, and it is this fateful advice that will guide Ben through the tumultuous events of Ireland in 1956. The national mood is downtrodden; poverty, corruption, and an armed rebellion rattle the countryside; and although Ben wants no part of the insurrection, he unknowingly falls in with an IRA sympathizer. Yet despite his perilous circumstances, all he can think about is finding his former wife and true love, Venetia Kelly, who after many years has returned to Ireland with her brutish new husband, a popular stage performer. Determined not to lose Venetia again, Ben calls upon every bit of his passion and courage to win her back, while finally reconciling his violent past with his hopes for a bright future. Brimming with fascinating Irish history, daring intrigue, and the drama of legendary love, *The Last Storyteller* is an unforgettable novel as richly textured and inspiring as Ireland itself. "A colorful, leisurely tale, with dark moments as well as humor and grace."—The Star-Ledger "A magical tale [that] weaves in a jackpot of Irish myths."—Bookreporter "Character-rich and dramatic."—Library Journal

#### The Last Roundup Trilogy Random House

From the author of the Booker Prize winning *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*, a bold, haunting novel about the uncertainty of memory and how we contend with the past. "It's his bravest novel yet; it's also, by far, his best." -- npr.org "The closest thing he's written to a psychological thriller."—The New York Times Book Review Just moved into a new apartment, alone for the first time in years, Victor Forde goes every evening to Donnelly's for a pint, a slow one. One evening his drink is interrupted. A man in shorts and a pink shirt comes over and sits down. He seems to know Victor's name and to remember him from secondary school. His name is Fitzpatrick. Victor dislikes him on sight, dislikes, too, the memories that Fitzpatrick stirs up of five years being taught by the Christian Brothers. He prompts other memories—of Rachel, his beautiful wife who became a celebrity, and of Victor's own small claim to fame, as the man who would say the unsayable on the radio. But it's the memories of school, and of one particular brother, that Victor cannot control and which eventually threaten to destroy his sanity. *Smile* has all the features for which Roddy Doyle has become famous: the razor-sharp dialogue, the humor, the superb evocation of adolescence, but this is a novel unlike any he has written before. When you finish the last page you will have been challenged to reevaluate everything you think you

remember so clearly.

**Brilliant** Vintage Canada

In a story set against the backdrop of Dublin in 1915, two boys who meet at the local swimming hole plan to swim to an island in Dublin Bay the following Easter, but their plans coincide with the Easter uprising--a historic rebellion that changes their li

**Rover Saves Christmas** N A L Trade

**\*\*SHORTLISTED FOR THE TS ELIOT PRIZE 2020\*\*** From the winner of the Costa Poetry Award A lone martian returns to Earth. He leaves behind him a hardened survivalist culture, its muddled myths and songs, its continued abuse of the environment that sustains it. During this journey back to the now-broken and long-abandoned mother planet, the martian begins to consider his own uncertain origins, and his own future. Cut off from his people, the martian's story is that of the individual: his duty at odds with his desire; the race of which he's still a part playing always on his mind, as well as the race that once was. This is the story of what life becomes when stripped of all that makes it worth living - of what humans become when they lose their humanity. The Martian's Regress is a brilliant, provocative, often darkly comic work that explores what a fragile environment eventually makes of those who persist in tampering with it.

A Novel Penguin

LONGLISTED 2015 - International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award A triumphant return to the characters of Booker Prize-winning writer Roddy Doyle's breakout first novel, *The Commitments*, now older, wiser, up against cancer and midlife. Jimmy Rabbitte is back. The man who invented the Commitments back in the 1980s is now 47, with a loving wife, 4 kids...and bowel cancer. He isn't dying, he thinks, but he might be. Jimmy still loves his music, and he still loves to hustle--his new thing is finding old bands and then finding the people who loved them enough to pay money online for their resurrected singles and albums. On his path through Dublin, between chemo and work he meets two of the Commitments--Outspan Foster, whose own illness is probably terminal, and Imelda Quirk, still as gorgeous as ever. He is reunited with his long-lost brother, Les, and learns to play the trumpet.... This warm, funny novel is about friendship and family, about facing death and opting for life. It climaxes in one of the great passages in Roddy Doyle's fiction: 4 middle-aged men at Ireland's hottest rock festival watching Jimmy's son's band, *Moanin'* at Midnight, pretending to be Bulgarian and playing a song called "I'm Goin' to Hell" that apparently hasn't been heard since 1932.... Why? You'll have to read *The Guts* to find out.

*Stories* Vintage Books

Reading level: 3 [orange].

The Guts Penguin

Meet Charlie Savage. Charlie is a middle-aged Dubliner with an indefatigable wife, an exasperated daughter, a drinking buddy who's realised that he's been a woman all along ... Compiled here for the first time is a whole year's worth of Roddy Doyle's hilarious series for the Irish Independent. Giving a unique voice to the everyday, he draws a portrait of a man - funny, loyal, somewhat bewildered - trying to keep pace with the modern world (if his knees don't give out first). SHORTLISTED FOR THE BOLLINGER EVERYMAN WODEHOUSE PRIZE FOR COMIC WRITING 2019 'A delight from start to finish' Irish Mail on Sunday

A Star Called Henry Springer

For his many devoted readers: the first collection of stories from Booker Prize-winning author Roddy Doyle. Roddy Doyle has written stories for *Metro Eireann*, a magazine by and for immigrants to Ireland. Each of the stories takes a new slant on the immigrant experience, something of increasing relevance and importance in Ireland today. *The Deportees* now brings those stories together for all of Roddy's devoted readers, ranging from

a terrifying ghost story, "The Pram," in which a Polish nanny grows impatient with her charge's older sisters and decides--using a phrase she has just learnt--to "scare them shitless," to the glorious title story itself, where Jimmy Rabbitte, the man who formed the beloved Commitments, decides it's time to find a new band, and this time no white Irish need apply. Multicultural to a fault, the *Deportees* specialize not in soul music, but in the songs of Woody Guthrie.

The Barrytown Trilogy Penguin

In *The Last Roundup Trilogy*, Booker Prize-winner and bestselling author Roddy Doyle gives us a pulsing saga full of epic adventures, breathless escapes, star-crossed love, and an unforgettable Irish hero--Henry Smart. In *A Star Called Henry*, hailed as "Doyle's best novel yet . . . a masterpiece, an extraordinarily entertaining epic" (*The Washington Post*), we meet a young Henry Smart on the dangerous streets of early 1900s Dublin, on his way to becoming an Irish Republican legend. Oh, *Play That Thing* turns Smart loose on 1920s America, where he tries to escape a history of murder and mayhem, and befriends up-and-coming musician Louis Armstrong in vividly evoked Jazz Age Chicago. *The Dead Republic*, the moving finale to the trilogy, finds Smart back in Ireland, where worlds collide and he is thrust back into the life he thought he'd left behind decades before. In three brilliant novels, Roddy Doyle has told the whole history of Ireland in the twentieth century. And in the person of his Henry Smart, he has created one of the great characters of modern fiction.

War Pantheon

When Rudolph comes down with the flu, it's up to Rover the dog and the Mack children to help Santa complete his Christmas deliveries.

*Wilderness* Simon and Schuster

Here, in one volume, are Roddy Doyle's three acclaimed novels about the Rabbitte family from Barrytown, Dublin. In them we follow the rapid rise of Jimmy Rabbitte's soul band, the Commitments, and their equally rapid fall; Sharon Rabbitte's attempts to keep the identity of her unborn child's father a secret, amid intense speculation from her family and friends; and the fortunes of the travelling fish 'n' chips van that Jimmy Rabbitte Sr and his friend Bimbo launch for the good people of Barrytown. 'Mr Doyle has made his own the gritty world of modern Dublin' *New York Times* 'An absurd comedy of the commonplacea charming, truthful and immensely funny story which leaves you gasping for more' *Sunday Times* on *The Commitments* 'A superb creation, exploding with cheerful chauvinism and black Celtic humour' You finish the book hungry for more' *The Times* on *The Snapper* 'A wonderfully funny book, that crackles and spits like fat in the fryer. It is also very touchingafine entertainment' *Daily Telegraph* on *The Van and Other Stories* Penguin

Stories within a story, written as separate chapters by ten juvenile authors including Linda Sue Park, Eoin Colfer, and Tim Wynne-Jones, reveal the adventurous life and legacy of George "Gee" Keane, a photojournalist and world traveler.

**Stories** Random House

From the Booker Prize-winning author of *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*, two plays set in the north Dublin suburb of Barrytown Watch for Roddy Doyle's new novel, *Smile*, coming in October of 2017 From novelist and screenwriter Roddy Doyle come these two colorful plays. both set in the North Dublin suburb of Barrytown. In *Brownbread*, three young men kidnap a bishop but soon come to realize--when the U.S. Marines invade--that their brilliant adventure is nothing more than a colossal mistake. *War* is set at the Hiker's Rest, a pub where two trivia addicts meet every month to answer questions posed by Denis trhe quizmaster who

hates wrong answers and shoots to kill. These earthy, exuberant works show why The New York Times Book Review says Doyle's "versatility and brio...may shock the neighbors, but...you can't take your eyes off him."

**The Martian's Regress** Knopf Canada

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**A Collection** Weidenfeld & Nicolson

Born in the Dublin slums of 1901, his father a one-legged whorehouse bouncer and settler of scores, Henry Smart has to grow up fast. By the time he can walk he's out robbing and begging, often cold and always hungry, but a prince of the streets. By Easter Monday, 1916, he's fourteen years old and already six-foot-two, a soldier in the Irish Citizen Army. A year later he's ready to die for Ireland again, a rebel, a Fenian and a killer. With his father's wooden leg as his weapon, Henry becomes a Republican legend - one of Michael Collins' boys, a cop killer, an assassin on a stolen bike.

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