



Islandbridge

Declan Kelly, an off-duty Garda (Irish police officer) witnesses a double murder in a Dublin alleyway in 1991. Blackmailed into an impossible position, he kills himself. His pregnant widow soon turns vengeful, toward the police as much as the criminals. She remarries, to another cop destined for promotion. In the boomtown Dublin of 2004, Inspector Minogue sits on an interview. An informant offering a rumour about a Dublin crime boss having a senior police officer 'on side,' and that the death of an undercover detective last year, was connected. Said to have been a dirty cop, investigations into his death were muffled.

Minogue is wary. His colleague is not over the drug death of his own brother. Is he being played by powerful crime families? Minogue is summoned to Garda Internal Affairs next day to account for yesterday's interview: the informant was killed last night. Minogue inveigles his way into the cold file on the detective's death. He learns an asylum seeker from Moldova with whom the dead detective had a relationship has vanished. He's soon in contact with a prostitution racket run by an affable, accented 'George.' Following an oblique lead, Minogue is confronted by a motorcyclist who brazenly tries to gun him down.

Then he picks up on a 'follow-on,' a mention of a 'cop who topped himself years ago': Kelly. Long remarried, Kelly's widow had changed her Christian name also in an effort to recast a new identity. Minogue's friend Chief Inspector Jim ('Killer') Kilmartin provides the means to bring the threads together: his own wife was also Kelly's widow. Minogue must now follow up what his friend has unwittingly disclosed. The story closes on betrayal, shots in the night in a cop's home. It ends with a man in a remote, windswept field that faces the sea, and yelling over the long grasses that hiss all about him.

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- ❑ 'Wonderland, John Brady's 2003 novel featuring Matt Minogue, was brilliant and melodic, one of his best works. Now comes Islandbridge, which is even better. Brady takes his talent to new heights, and this is sure to be one of the top books of the year, must reading... As usual, there's a murder and Minogue is on the hunt, but that's less than 10 per cent of this beautifully written novel. ... Brady takes his time. Death comes, but in its own time and place. ... The end is heartbreaking. I couldn't stop reading.'
 - ❑ 'A haunting new tale of memory and loss set in the new Ireland'(Globe and Mail, Canada Top dozen titles for 2005)
 - ❑ 'Brady's linking of characters and consequences separated by more than two decades is uncommonly clever. How does Declan Kelly's torment in 1983 connect to Minogue's concerns in 2005? As things turn out, it's in the answer to the question that the genius of the storytelling in Islandbridge is to be found.' (Toronto Star)
 - ❑ 'What Brady offers in Islandbridge is a glimpse at the worst of humanity. But the power of his story, as usual, is in the telling the very worst by the very best — in a superb, ongoing little series.'(Ottawa Citizen)