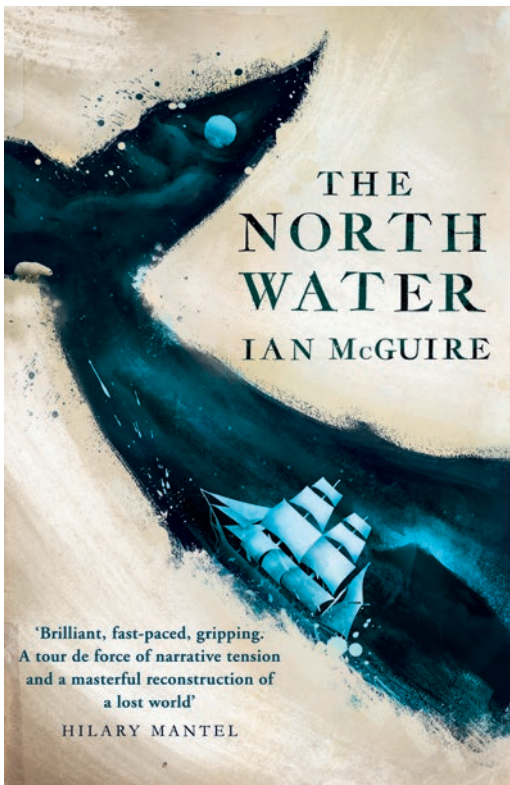


Reader's Guide



Other books by Ian McGuire

Incredible Bodies (2006)

Richard Ford and the Ends of Realism (2014)

The North Water Ian McGuire

Scribner UK

www.themanbookerprize.com

#FinestFiction



About the author	Ian McGuire grew up near Hull and studied at the University of Manchester and the University of Virginia, USA. He is a founder and co-director of the University of Manchester's Centre for New Writing. His stories have been published in the <i>Chicago Review</i> , <i>Paris Review</i> and elsewhere, and his first novel was <i>Incredible Bodies</i> . <i>The North Water</i> is his second novel.
About the book	Behold the man. Stinking, drunk, brutal and bloodthirsty, Henry Drax is a harpooner on the Volunteer, a Yorkshire whaling ship bound for the hunting waters of the Arctic Circle. Also aboard for the first time is Patrick Sumner, an ex-army surgeon with a shattered reputation, no money and no better option than to embark as ship's medic on this violent, filthy, ill-fated voyage. In India during the Siege of Delhi, Sumner thought he had experienced the depths to which a man can stoop, but now, trapped in the wooden belly of the ship with Drax, he encounters pure evil and is forced to act. As the true purposes of the expedition become clear, the confrontation between the two men plays out in the freezing darkness of an Arctic winter.
Discussion points	'Behold the man . . . ' How did you respond to <i>The North Water's</i> opening chapter? How did it foreshadow what was to come? What other portents appear within the novel? How did you find the depiction of violence in <i>The North Water</i> ? Did you feel it was necessary within the themes of the book? 'Only actions count, he thinks for the ten thousandth time, only events'. How does this philosophy echo through the novel? How did you find the portrayal of Drax in the novel? Do you see him as evil, a monster? How does Patrick Sumner develop as a character? How is he affected by events in his past?
Themed reading	Mary Shelley <i>Frankenstein</i> MacDonald Harris <i>The Balloonist</i> William T Vollmann <i>The Rifles</i> Martin Amis <i>House of Meetings</i>
Useful links	https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/feb/19/the-north-water-ian-mcguire-review http://www.goodreads.com/author/show/3004686.Ian_McGuire http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/reviews/ian-mcguire-the-north-water-subtle-as-a-harpoon-in-the-head-but-totally-gripping-book-review-a6856011.html http://www.nytimes.com/2016/04/17/books/review/the-north-water-by-ian-mcguire.html