

Dead As Doornails - Anthony Cronin

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'A classic; of his mastery of language there can be no doubt'- Anthony Burgess. This paperback reissue of Dead as Doornails, first published in 1976, brings back into print a true classic of Irish memoir. Anthony Cronin's account of life in post-war literary Dublin is as funny and colourful as one would expect from an intimate of Brendan Behan, Patrick Kavanagh and Myles na Gopaleen; but it is also a clear-eyed and bracing antidote to the kitsch that passes for literary history and memory in the Dublin of today. Cronin writes with remarkable subtlety of the frustrations and pathologies of this generation: the excess of drink, the shortage of sex, the insecurity and begrudgery, the painful limitations of cultural life, and the bittersweet pull of exile. We read of a comical sojourn in France with Behan, and of Cronin's years in London as a literary editor and a friend of the writer Julian Maclaren-Ross and the painters Robert MacBryde and Robert Colquhoun. The generation chronicled by Cronin was one of wasted promise. That waste is redressed through the shimmering prose of Dead as Doornails, which has earned its place in Irish literary history alongside the best works of Behan, Kavanagh and Myles.

Author: Cronin, Anthony
Publisher: The Lilliput Press
Illustration: N
Language: ENG
Title: Dead as Doornails
Pages: 00208
(Encrypted EPUB)
On Sale: 2011-09-01
SKU-13/ISBN: 9781901866421
Category: Biography & Autobiography : Literary

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