



Ich Will

Axl Barnes

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Adrian Norton is a nerdy, narcissistic university student. When his parents become unable to pay for his education, he starts working full time to save up for school. Meanwhile, his friend Nathan, a student who comes from a rich family, finishes his undergraduate studies and prepares to go to Oxford for graduate school. Tormented by envy and self-pity and repulsed by his social and financial situation, Adrian finds temporary escape in the study of Adolf Hitler's speeches and proclamations coupled with the hypnotic rhythms of German industrial metal. His outbursts of delusional megalomania are cut short by a brief, accidental encounter with Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy. Adrian is rocked to the core by Nietzsche's idea of the Eternal Return of the Identical. This young man decides to take control of his destiny and fight the oppressive social system - in a very unorthodox way.

Ich Will Details

Date : Published April 4th 2018 (first published December 1st 2012)

ISBN :

Author : Axl Barnes

Format : Paperback 190 pages

Genre :

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Darius says

After initially picking up Ich Will, I could only scarcely bring myself to put it down again. To be honest, I only would put it down to attend my needs. I found the story riveting and the characters relatable. The various philosophical viewpoints of the characters brought life to each, as so many perspectives were explored. This form of diversifying the characters was not the only factor that brought the novella its life, but rather the entirety of the story. It was relieving to experience the trials, and reactions to such through a character of so much colour. (the protagonist) Without divulging into precise details, all that is left to say is that this novella is well worth your attention and should most definitely be read to experience the thought-provoking story for yourself. Be warned, it is graphic at times; more the reason to read it.

Jeff says

Ever since Dostoyevsky's "Notes from Underground", at least, the voice of choice for existentialist fictioneers has been the first person inner monologue. It can easily fail. In fact, many writers seem to beg for its failure by imprisoning the reader inside the thoughts of that which she or he hates. The work itself becomes an iron test of writerly power: Here is this wretch, you could always stop reading.

"Ich Will" traps us inside the thoughts of some Adrian: a bitter, underemployed, young philosopher, as he struggles against ideology in the face of his failure at life. He desires to explain this life-as-failure but to blame it on external agents. These desires lead him to adopt various incoherent ideologies. Insofar as we find ourselves subscribing to the similar ideologies, we might sympathize with Adrian, "There's someone out there like me, or at least we have a common enemy". Ideologies bring us together, after all. But they do so only by excluding others. If we are excluded by an ideology (by its own standard or our own choice), we probably also find it repulsive.

If "Ich Will" works, it's only because we find Adrian at least sometimes sympathetic and sometimes repulsive. It is empowering to sympathize with him when acts according to some mutually shared ideology. But when he enacts some repulsive ideology, it becomes a shameful act to even continue reading. Adrian's irrational embracement of ideologies (or embracement of irrational ideologies) should help most readers be both sympathetic with and repulsed by Adrian--at least at first. In the end, perhaps very early on for some readers, continuing on inside Adrian's head becomes simply shameful. Maybe this is the reason that the author chooses to doubly remove himself from the work--first by creating a fictional character with which to voice these thoughts, then by writing it under a heavy metal nom-de-plume.

Repeated news of school shootings perhaps testify to there being an audience for a work like this. There are plenty of Adrian Nortons out there--smart people (if not as smart as they think they are) who are underutilized in society and seeking to externalize their frustrations. The question, I guess, is why they should spend their fast food service industry wages on this book rather than write their own therapeutic novella. I'm not entirely sure why, but the author's informed understanding of the philosophy which attracts such minds is something of a draw in "Ich Will".

Zabrina Mecham says

I enjoyed this read overall, but I felt that a lot of paragraphs were very metaphor heavy and my brain just wanted them to be expanded upon. Rather than getting everything into the same paragraph. Left my brain yearning to explore when instead it was time to move to the next portion of the book.

Some parts of this book aren't for the feint of heart. But if you like twisted reads, you will enjoy the more....'intense' parts of this book.

Glen says

So, do you like a story where the protagonist(s) overcome a huge obstacle or obstacles to win the day, save the friend or romantic interest, and grow as a person? If you answered yes, then boy howdy did you come to the wrong review today. *Ich Will* is the opposite of all of that. A part of liking what you read/watch is first knowing what you are getting yourself into. While I had a very brief description given of the story, I soon learned that I still didn't have much of a clue. And you know what they say about knowing things.

The title *Ich Will* is taken from the Rammstein song of the same name. The story is centered around Adrian, a person who is suffering through some terrible first-world problems; mainly, his parents aren't able to support him financially with college due to his father having a stroke. So instead of living at home and having to face his ailing father on a daily basis, he opts to –gasp—get a job serving fast food! I can't say much for myself, though, as I swore to never work in the fast food industry, so I'm not one to talk about first-world anything.

Between Adrian's mundane job at McDonald's...oops I mean MacDonnell's, and his well-to-do friend Nathan gaining scholastic ground where Adrian believes he deserves it more, he begins to lose what sanity he might have left and begins plotting to take matters into his own hands. Following the philosophy of The Eternal Return from Nietzsche (look it up, I'm not into philosophy enough to properly explain it), he feels confident that doing what he plans to do is in fact an act that's ultimately good and he will be rewarded for it. I won't get into what his plans are because where's the fun in that?

Adrian is not a likeable person. If any of you do like him or feel you can relate to him, I'm very worried about you. My initial notes describing him are as follows: so far Adrian is a whiny little bitch who thinks anyone who is different than him is scum. Basically a normal guy. Also pretty racist. While that description is still fairly accurate, there is more to him than that. The author Axl Barnes brought out quite a number of emotions in me regarding Adrian, ranging from pity to annoyance to outright anger at one point. Very few characters in the many books I've read over the years have elicited such varied responses in one story. So kudos to Mr. Barnes there.

One of the more noticeable aspects of the novella is the descriptive daydreams and hallucinations that Adrian has throughout. I came to think that were *Ich Will* to be made into a film, those scenes, if not the whole movie, would have to be filmed by David Cronenberg, as he came immediately to mind when reading them. They were very surreal and graphic, and someone should send that man a copy of the novella.

While I wasn't digging what I was reading at first, my opinion changed by the end of the story. It delves into some real life horror, like the horror of watching a loved one withering away from a debilitating sickness, the

depression of the life you so badly wanted being just out of your reach, and it's also quite possibly an accurate look inside the mind of a budding psychopath. Was he truly God as he thought he was? You make the call!
