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The Hotel New Hampshire door John Irving

Lieneke

1. Explanation of the title.

In the entire story, the main characters try to run a hotel. They move several times and every time they open a hotel, the name is the same: "The Hotel New Hampshire".

But New Hampshire is also the birthplace of Win Berry and Mary Bates, the father and mother of Frank, Franny, John, Egg and Lily.

Win

een weekend Breda met 3 vrienden en...

ontdek de leukste studentenstad van het zuiden!

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2. Biographical information of the writer.

John Irving, a highly imaginative storyteller whose fictional values and narrative techniques have invited comparison with Charles Dickens and other popular nineteenth-century novelists, was born in Exeter, New Hampshire, on March 2, 1942. Irving was educated at Phillips Exeter Academy, where he acquired his lifelong interests in wrestling and writing. He attended the University of Pittsburgh and the Institute for European Studies in Vienna, a city that figures prominently in his earlier fiction. He graduated from the University of New Hampshire in 1965 and subsequently earned an MFA from the University of Iowa, where he studied with Kurt Vonnegut. Later Irving taught at Mount Holyoke College, the Writers' Workshop in Iowa, and the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. He has been awarded fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. The father of three sons, Irving lives in Vermont and Toronto with his wife, Janet Turnbull, who is also his literary agent. Some short criticisms "The first of my father's illusions was that bears could survive the life lived by human beings, and the second was that human beings could survive a life led in hotels." So says John Berry, son of a hapless dreamer, brother to a cadre of eccentric siblings, and chronicler of the lives lived, the loves experienced, the deaths met, and the myriad strange and wonderful times encountered by the family Berry. Hoteliers, pet-bear owners, friends of Freud (the animal trainer and vaudevillian, that is), and playthings of mad fate, they "dream on" in a funny, sad, outrageous, and moving novel by the remarkable author of *A Son of the Circus* and *A Prayer for Owen Meany*. "Like Garp, [THE HOTEL NEW HAMPSHIRE] is a startlingly original family saga that combines macabre humor with Dickensian sentiment and outrage at cruelty, dogmatism and injustice." --Time "Rejoice! John Irving has written another book according to your world... You must read this book." --Los Angeles Times "Spellbinding... Intensely human... A high-wire act of dazzling virtuosity." --Cosmopolitan "Like Garp... [a] startlingly original family saga that combines macabre humour with a Dickensian sentiment and outrage at cruelty, dogmatism and injustice." — Time "Rejoice! John Irving has written another book according to your world... You must read this book." —Los Angeles Times "Spellbinding... Intensely human... A high-wire act of dazzling virtuosity." —Cosmopolitan From the Paperback edition.

3. Number of pages and edition.

The book has 520 pages. It's the first edition, published in 1981 by Black Swan.

4. Theme(s) like love, revenge, friendship or war.

I think the theme of the book is the family-life. The family-life, remains till the end of the book. Even if Egg and mother die in the plane crash, the family life is still going on. All the time they stick together as a family; they go to New York for Lilly's books and go back to Dairy, to stay there forever.

But maybe is friendship also a theme, because in the whole book it's about people they met, and with who they become friends for a while. Some of their old friends even come back in the book later, like Junior Jones.

5. Setting (where does the story take place).

At the begin the story takes place in Dairy, New Hampshire. In 1956 they move from there old home, to the first Hotel New Hampshire. A circus called Fritz's Act, bought the first hotel in the winter of 1957. The family moved to Vienna; to Freud's hotel, which was called Gasthaus Freud first, but later it was called The Hotel New Hampshire. In 1964 they left the Hotel New Hampshire and flew to New York City. After one year, they went back to New Hampshire, to open the third (and last) hotel there.

6. List of main characters and a description of each.

Winslow Berry, father of the family, had grown up with Mary Bates in Dairy (New Hampshire), but they didn't say much more to each other than hello and goodbye. When he was nineteen he graduated from the Dairy School, the private boy's academy. For the fall he'd been admitted to Harvard. But in 1939, before he went to Harvard, he first married Mary Bates. In 1943 he accelerated his military induction voluntary and went off in the spring for a basic training; he was twenty-three.

He went from Atlantic City to New York for a cryptographic training. He was then sent to Chanute Field and then to Savannah, Georgia. After that he went to Italy, where he had Air Force assignment at a bomber base in Italy. He left Italy and went to Brazil, and then went flew back to the States. After the war, in 1946, Win finished his degree at Harvard. The new headmaster of Dairy School offered him a job, to teach English and coach two sports. Win was twenty-six: he accepted the position at the Dairy school.

Win is a real dreamer and he's very impulsive. When Freud writes him that he has to come to Vienna, he just goes there to run the hotel. I think Winslow is fond of moving and travelling. He likes to learn things and he wants to see a lot of the world.

He had two dreams; becoming a father and run a hotel and that's what he did.

Mary Bates, mother of the family, had the sense of duty to pass up the possibility of her own college education to stay at home and care for her parents when she was nineteen.

She went to the Thompson Female Seminary and graduated in June of 1939. After Winslow and Mary got married, Winslow left. But Mary was pregnant, so while Win was away, they got their first child in 1940: Frank. Franny was born in 1941, John in 1942.

Mary's contribution to the war effort consisted of hospital training; she was in the second class the Dairy Hospital gave to prepare nurses' aides.

When the war was over 1946, she kept house and it was also the year Lilly was born.

In 1957 she died, in a plane crash.

Mary is a very sweet person, she does everything for her children. Freud told her to forgive father, so she does. Even if he is away so much, while she's pregnant. She doesn't say very much, she just goes along with the thing Winslow wants. She doesn't mind or she will like it or not, she want the children and her husband to be happy.

Frank, in the begin he's 10 years old. He goes to Dairy School in Dairy. He admits that he's gay when he's about 15 years old. He detests everything that has to do with sex (that's also why he doesn't like Franny. Especially in the begin of the book). He's very fond of stuffing animals up, that's what he also does with their old dog Sorrow.

Franny, she's 9 years old in the begin of the book. She's a good looking girl, but definitely the weirdest of all kids. She's obsessed by sex, she wants to know everything about it. She loves John. Franny is a kind of leader of the kids. She always knows what John is thinking and she is mothering over Frank in the begin. Sometimes she can be very aggressive, she has very often a fight with Frank.

John, he's 8 years old in the begin . He's the narrator of the book. He loves Franny very much, not only as a sister. In the end they also kiss each other.

John does everything to protect Franny of mean boys, like Chipper Dove, who rapes her.

He also does almost everything she says.

He's very muscled because he runs and trains with his barbells every day. He went to bed with Ronda Ray, the housekeeper in the first Hotel New Hampshire, when he was about 14 years old.

John is very quiet, he doesn't say very much, but he thinks a lot about everything.

Lilly, she's very small. The family thinks she has dwarfism. She really doesn't like it that she's so small. Lilly is very quiet and most of the time she want to be let alone, because then she can write her stories. In the begin she's 4 years old.

Egg, is the youngest of the children and in the begin he's not even born. He was

born in 1950. He's a very childish boy, that's also why he has to share a room with John, in the first Hotel New Hampshire. Because then he can become more mature. Egg and mother died in a plane crash, on their way to Vienna.

7. Summary of the plot.

Father Winslow Berry and mother Mary Bates were both born and raised in Dairy, New Hampshire. They met each other in the Arbuthnot-by-the-Sea, a seaside resort where they both had a summer job.

They get to know each other better when they are sitting together on the verandah of the hotel.

They look at Freud and his bear 'State of Maine', who is performing tricks on an Indian-motorcycle.

Freud was a Viennese Jew with a lame leg; he took the sorrows of the staff away. Win Berry would go to Harvard to study, but because Freud is going back to Austria, Win and Mary get his bear. Win is going to perform tricks in the evening, with the bear.

In that time, there already are three children born: Frank, Franny and John (who's the narrator of the book). Later would Lilly and Egg be born.

Father and mother Berry become the owners of the first Hotel New Hampshire, which was a former girls' school, in New Hampshire.

One day 'State of Maine' is shut by a boy who thought the bear was going to attack him.

The whole family was very sad because they were attached to the bear so much. But in this time, the children are going to the local school in Dairy (Dairy-school). Frank the oldest of the five children admits he's gay and Franny is raped by three quarterbacks of the football team.

John is feeling very attracted to his sister Franny. That's why they're lying in bed together, very often.

The dog Sorrow dies and Frank has the idea to stuff the dog and then give him to Egg as a present. His mother thinks this isn't a good idea and wants that he throws the dog away.

One day father Berry gets a letter of Freud from Austria, he asks father if he wants to help him run his new hotel in Vienna.

The family decide to split up in two groups, and then go to Vienna. Mother Berry and Egg die sadly enough in a plane crash.

In Vienna the rest of the family runs Freud's hotel, where at day live anarchists who want to blow up the Opera and at night is utilized by whores and their customers. This hotel becomes the second Hotel New Hampshire. There also is a 'bear' in the hotel, who takes care of the amusement programme in the hotel. However, the bear isn't a real bear. She's a woman, called Suzie, but because she's so ugly she wraps herself everyday in a bear-suit.

After the second hotel is sold, the family goes back to America to pick up their old life again.

Franny writes to Junior Jones and Chipper Dove, one of the quarterbacks who raped her, that she's coming back to America.

Chipper wants to meet her, but Franny is so scared of him, that she doesn't dare to see him. Together with John, Frank, Lilly and Suzie she decides to rape Chipper, because he has done her so much horror. Finally they don't really rape him, but they really scare him.

Lilly has dwarfism and she really doesn't like that. She tries to grow mentally by writing books. If her third book also is a disaster, she jumps out of the window of her hotelroom on the fourteenth floor.

Father Berry wants to buy the Arbuthnot-by-the-Sea to make a new hotel of it. John thinks it probably won't be good hotels, because the foregoing hotels also didn't work out.

Finally they buy the hotel, which becomes the third Hotel New Hampshire. In this hotel the bear Suzie is also there to amuse the guests.

John tells that they're settled down for the rest of their lives in the third Hotel New Hampshire.

In the end tells about all the things which happened and he says some personal things to his died mother and little brother Egg.

He also tells about Franny who became a celebrated actrice and married Junior Jones, the Negro who used to be at the same school in the past.

8. Say whether you liked the book or not and give reasons why.

I liked the book, although it has very much pages. I liked it so much, because it wasn't boring. Just when it became a bit boring and ordinary in one of the hotels, they moved to another. So every time you think, now it's becoming a bit boring, they change of neighbourhood and have to fit in there and make new friends.

On the other hand, I also think it's a strange book. All the main characters have something unusual and bizarre.

Some parts of the book are very realistic, but others are full of imagination. That makes the book very fascinating.

The construction of the book is very easy to follow, in the beginning father and mother Berry tell to their children about how they met, how they met Freud etc.

John, the third child, tells the rest of the book in chronological order.

This is one of the weirdest but nicest books I've ever read!

9. Quote one passage which you liked and one you didn't like.

I didn't like the passage from page 64 to 65. On page 64, a little boy killed the bear. I thought the bear was a very funny part of the story, so I would have liked it more if he had stayed alive.

I found the passage on page 218, third alinea, to 219 very funny. It's the part where John just has kissed Titsy. She was a bit shocked that he could kiss so good, so she had to go to the bathroom for a second. But there she found the stuffed Sorrow, lying in the bathtub. Egg had tried to make Sorrow dry with the hairdryer, but then Sorrows coat was burned. That's why Egg had to put the dog in the bathtub.

I really liked this part, because everyone knew Egg was doing something with the dog, but they didn't know where he was doing it. This really is a typical situation for the Berry family.

10. Would you advice other people to read this book? Explain why.

Yes, I definitely would advice other people to read the book.

As I already said it isn't a difficult book to read. The construction is very logical and good to follow.

Although it has so many pages, it's never boring. It's such a strange family; they all have their own weird character. There just happens so much and their lives are so hectic; every time the family surprises you by their actions.

It gripped me from the begin till the end! That's why it's a real recommendation.