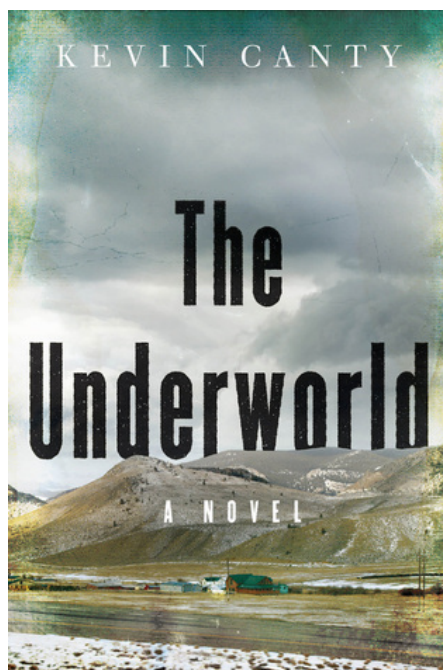




The Underworld

Kevin Canty

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

The Underworld

Kevin Canty

The Underworld Kevin Canty

For readers of Russell Banks and Richard Ford, a novel about loss, love, and redemption following a catastrophe in a small mining town.

In *The Underworld*, Kevin Canty tells a story inspired by a true incident that begins with a disastrous fire in an isolated silver mining town in Idaho in the 1970s. Everyone in town had a friend, a lover, a brother, or a husband killed in the mine. *The Underworld* imagines the lives of a handful of survivors and their loved ones—a young widow with twin children, a college student trying to make a life for himself in another town, a lifelong hardrock miner—as they struggle to come to terms with the loss. It's a tough, hard-working, hard-drinking town, a town of prostitutes and priests and bar fights, but nobody's tough enough to get through this undamaged.

A powerful and unforgettable tale about small-town lives and the healing power of love in the midst of suffering.

The Underworld Details

Date : Published March 7th 2017 by W. W. Norton Company

ISBN : 9780393293050

Author : Kevin Canty

Format : Hardcover 253 pages

Genre : Fiction, Historical, Historical Fiction, Novels, Literary Fiction

 [Download The Underworld ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Underworld ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online The Underworld Kevin Canty

From Reader Review The Underworld for online ebook

Rita says

Geboeid zitten lezen over een westerse maar toch heel andere wereld. Ingetogen geschreven, mooi!

Andy Weston says

Inspired by an actual incident, Canty tells the story of how a small Idaho community deals with a mining accident in the 1970s. The subject matter is therefore dark, as is the atmosphere in the Idaho town. More than half of the men in the town are killed, and everyone has a relative amongst the dead. The majority of the novel concentrates on how the characters deal with the tragedy, with just the first couple of chapters dedicated to the accident itself. That balance doesn't quite work, as there is only so much that can be told about the weeks following. In effect, the most gripping part of the novel is cut short at a stage when it has gathered genuine tension, and much of what follows, to generalise, is in a drunken haze.

Glen Stott says

This is a fictional story about an Idaho mining town where there is a disastrous fire in the mine, killing over 90 miners. The story begins before the fire. Generally, the characters are depressed, unhappy, unhelpful living their lives through drugs and alcohol and, for them men, trips to the bordello. And then major tragedy is inserted. So, on top of everything else, Canty adds grief.

The main characters attempt to face their despondent lives, and some may or may not have an answer.

The End

Canty has pretty well-developed characters within the boundaries of their sad lives and the story is well told. I just didn't get into the general tone of the story, but that's just me.

Started Apr 19, 2018 – finished Apr 25, 2018

Jill says

The underworld in Kevin Canty's new novel, set in an isolated mining town in Silverton, Idaho, is a world largely inhabited by hard-drinking, hard rock miners and the families that surround them. It's the kind of drive-through town that most people pay little attention to, filled with those who hope to escape and those who have settled for a full day's work in the mine, followed by getting totally smashed later on in a nearby bar.

And then something happens: an out-of-control fire kills more than half of the miners and everyone is affected. The book, inspired by a true story, focuses on three of the survivors: David, a college student who has actually escaped from the town's gravitational pull and now feels lured back...Ann, a young wife who is

already learning the implausibility of breaking free...and Lyle, an older miner who has messed up his chances and is now trapped underground.

Written in spare but shining prose, Kevin Canty uses each word judiciously and as a result, Silverton and its inhabitants come fully alive. There are dreams here, yes, but only a glimmer of hope that they can be achieved. "Any direction you set out in," says one of the characters, "it always comes back to the same place. It's like some gravitational cortex or something."

This pitch-perfect elegy to grief and the way it is experienced confirms the old wisdom that adversity tests us and that some can rise up while others can be weighed down. Kevin Canty writes, "Sleepwalkers...David saw it everywhere, the blank, distracted look on the sidewalks downtown when he went to fetch a prescription for his mother, the face of the boy in his blue uniform who checks David's oil and cleans his windshield..."

Yet in this town that is literally stunned with the weight of its loss and sorrow, David, Ann, Lyle and the secondary characters are tested and their lives are transformed, each in its own way. Ultimately, the novel is really about hope, and how the beginning seeds of it are capable of sprouting into the light, even in the darkest and most airless of places. 4.5, rounded up.

Tucker says

As a lifelong resident of the Rocky Mountains, I have some familiarity with hard rock miners and their communities. The immediacy with which Kevin Canty brings that world to life in "The Underworld" is remarkable. Based on an actual fatal underground mine fire in Silverton, Idaho in the 1970's, Canty recreates in a fictionalized manner how all the residents of this hard drinking and hard living community are impacted in some way. By focusing on three specific characters and the effects of the devastating fire and loss on them, Canty gives the reader an intimate look into their suffering. He also touches on the effects of the tragedy on other members of the community and the community itself. All of these characters are brilliantly brought to life and their pain is palpable. Although this a story of grief and loss, there are also powerful moments of redemption, transformation, love, and hope in this impressive and memorable novel.

Thank you to W.W. Norton and NetGalley for an advance copy of this book.

Cheri says

Maybe the best book I will read this year.

Kevin says

Another great gut-punch from Kevin Canty. Focusing on people from a small Idaho town in the aftermath of

a mining accident that kills ninety-one people, Canty shows deep empathy for his surviving characters and how people cope after such an event. Canty knows how to build a moving novel with authentic dialogue and that specific kind of small-town depression and loneliness. He's one of my favorite writers.

Beverly says

Based on a true life story, tells of the sad aftermath of a horrific mining accident.

Nancy says

Why is it so hard to escape the town of our birth? What keeps us from growing into a new life? Are we trapped in brutal, short lives?

In 1972, Silverton, Idaho is in the middle of nowhere, it's only reason for being the silver mine that needs workers. Men are paid well, trading long lives and their health for good money. They work hard, then play hard, frequenting the bar to drink and brawl. They are proud of their toughness.

Silverton is infused with toxins that ruin skin and health.

"There was arsenic in the smoke, chromium, cadmium, lead. Part of what it cost to live here...people died here after a while, lung cancer, liver cancer, for a few months the other year everybody seemed to have leukemia."

The women think about leaving their men, and do leave men who can't leave the only life they know. And when someone does break out, like David who is in college, they feel alienated and conflicted, resenting the pampered life of green shady lawns and uncalled soft hands.

"This was never going to be his life, anyways, these leafy maples that meet overhead, a canopy over the street. Shingled houses with white trim, green lawns, third stories, turrets and arches. In a way, it feels good to let go, stop pretending. This place has its membership and he isn't part of it."

The third year of college is ending when David hears there has been a disaster at the mine. He drives his VW home. His father and his brother work in the mines.

The disaster claims 91 lives. David's brother is one of the dead. The stunned town struggles. Widows drown their sorrows in booze but find there is no haven from regret and grief. Two men are trapped for 14 days, and coming above ground reevaluate their lives. David reconsiders his choice to leave for another life.

This is a story about grief.

"Everything in life can be taken from you in an instant. Any minute. She had known this before. But now she understands it."

"Her friend is dead. But she could only forget it or else think about nothing else, and there is nothing to think, nothing to say. It cannot be undone. It cannot be fixed. It cannot be tolerated...Something breaks inside her, a little thing like a Popsicle stick."

One widow, Ann, who at twenty-two was already weary of her life and childlessness before the accident, now regrets not cherishing her husband more. Ann realizes she had closed the door on so many possibilities when she decided to stay in Silverton and marry. Now she is 'free' to choose again, but the choices seem limited.

Ann goes to a bar seeking a bartender who once seemed interested in her; now he doesn't recognize her and she thinks, "all this just seems so corrupt. A stimulus, a response, a line, a body. People just want to fuck...They see a woman, alone, vulnerable, they move in for the kill. That's how it is. A lonely woman is the devil's playground."

Ann had sung as a schoolgirl and now joins the church choir. She experiences the sense of greater community found in choral singing.

"The third time through the 'Ave Maria' she feels it, that lovely moment in which everything else drops away and she becomes this column of air, supported by the hips, her jaw dropping into the high notes, this physical thing becomes musical, becomes music, and all around her the same thing is happening and they are singing together, almost beautifully."

Ann becomes friends with David's brother's widow Jordan, whose grief plays out in angry and self-destructive behavior. David is drawn to Ann.

Some don't survive the death of their loved one, some try to leave. Ann and David turn to each other in their grief and in their need reach, again, for love. They have been to hell and back. Perhaps they will yet find some comfort in the world.

The Underworld is fiction based on an actual mine disaster. I loved the writing and Canty's moving characters. I look forward to reading more of Canty's work.

I received a free book from the publisher in exchange for a fair and unbiased review.

Diane S ? says

Silverton, Idaho, a small hard drinking, hardworking town. Main employee, the silver mines, everyone know someone who is employed there, sometimes generations work together down in the dark. Life involves around the bars and the mine. Until a disastrous fire breaks out in the mine, and more than ninety men are killed. Now it is a town defined by grief, many have lost a husband, a son, a brother, a father and there is nowhere to go to escape this communal and personal grief.

O

Although the book centers on three characters, one who got away but returns after the tragedy, one man, who though he has enough money in the bank and collects social security, continues to work in the mines and Anne, a young women married to a miner, who wants only a child she cannot seem to have. How these people navigate through their grief is the story and it is an interesting one. How does one move forward when every thought, action, place and thing is now defined by tragedy. Go or stay? Try for a new life in another place? Drink your sorrows away? Make the life you have better somehow? Real life problems with difficult solutions.

Sparsely written, a quiet character oriented story it was fascinating to see how these people all handled this tragedy differently, some tragically. A wonderful story that is based on a real life disaster that happened in the 1970's,

ARC from goodreads.

Releases on March 7th by W. W. Norton.

Judith says

This is a work of fiction inspired by a true event that happened in the early 1970's in a small town in Idaho when a silver mine fire killed a large number of miners, leaving the town devastated. The descriptions of small town life are so vivid and realistic that I felt like I knew the town, knew the people. Since the mine was the town's main source of employment almost everyone in the town was affected by the tragedy whether directly or indirectly. And of course, the tragedy didn't end with the fire itself but continued on in the daily struggles the survivors suffered trying to put their lives back together. This isn't the kind of book you could call suspenseful per se, but it's a short book and I couldn't put it down till I finished it.

Rob says

THE UNDERWORLD (2017)

By Kevin Canty

W. W. Norton, 256 pages

★★★★

One of the autopsy findings from the election of 2016 is that Democrats largely ignored the white working class. That's rather amazing when we have so many fine novelists in America who write of that life. Even a cursory reading of Richard Russo might have reminded party leaders there was a part of America they needed to investigate more thoroughly. So too would readings of recent titles such as Mark Slouka's *Brewster* or Phillip Meyer's *American Rust*. So now that your attention has been refocused, check out Kevin Canty's *The Underworld*, a novel whose tone is reminiscent of Slouka and Meyer.

The title, in my view, isn't wisely chosen. First, Don DeLillo used the same title—sans the article—in his sprawling 2003 novel. Second, most people associate the term with organized crime. Canty, however, means it literally: the underworld as the realm of miners working more than a half-mile beneath the surface. His is a fictional reimaging of the 1972 Sunshine Mine fire in Idaho in which 91 miners lost their lives. His setting of Silverton, Idaho is a thinly veiled pastiche of Kellogg and Wallace, located in the heart of the silver mining Coeur d'Alene region. Ninety-one people also perish in Canty's novel. So why write a novel at all? Wouldn't a collection of news clippings accomplish the same task?

Nope! That's because, in many ways, the major character of the book is Silverton, located in the thin thumb of Idaho that pokes up between Montana and Washington. It's a place that's hard to love, yet locals talk more about getting out of town than actually doing so. And when they do leave, they seldom venture much further than Missoula to the east or Spokane to the west. I instantly related to Canty's book, though I'm an Easterner—my own postindustrial Pennsylvania hometown has the same ensnaring qualities. I did not fall prey to them and left in the 1970s, the same period under Canty's microscope. To leave or to stay is the dilemma facing David, the book's central character.

Canty also uses *Underworld* metaphorically—those mental, often non-verbalized, excavations of people trapped by circumstance, depression, and indecision. David's one of the latter. He's a student at the University of Montana Missoula, which is just 120 miles from Silverton as the crow flies—though its network of culture, restaurants, upscale bars, intellectual life, and veneer of bourgeois respectability are light years away. He also knows—and his landlord reminds him—that Silverton can't objectively compare. It's a

town of dangers: toxic air, seedy bars where a misinterpreted glance can mean being smashed with a cue stick, rampant alcoholism, and unhealthy diets. Silverton is a town of weathered whores that have no trouble staying busy; it has dozens of bars, but just two TV channels that most view in glorious black and white. Above all it's a place where death in the mines can come without warning and wears a man down fast even if he isn't killed outright. David knows of mining: his father and his beloved brother Ray are miners.

Why on earth wouldn't David flee and not look back? If you have to ask that question, you need to learn more about blue-collar life. David goes to Missoula, but he is not of that world. His is the classic college first generation dilemma. Put simply, David feels like an outsider—a poseur, not a scholar. He's right; the university crowd doesn't have a clue about what he thinks, what his life has been like, or how he feels. As bad as it is, Silverton is where people understand him—though they don't exactly. Man! I know that feeling! You become the walking definition of liminality—trapped between the working and middle classes and uncertain whether to step backward or more forward. So when someone tells you there's a job opening up that pays over \$10 an hour (about \$57 in today's coin), do you pursue a life of materialism and danger, or stay on the middle class track? Ray has stayed; maybe David should too: get a new truck, keep up with a longtime affair with his former piano teacher he thinks is a big secret, but isn't, and eventually get married and have a few kids like Ray and his wife Jordan.

Then the mine blows up when David is at school. Ray was in there. Did he make it out? What about Malloy, another guy from town? He and Ray are a lot alike—tough, funny, hard drinking, bombastic, and easier to love in the abstract than in person. What about Terry and Lyle and all the others? What about the women who will be widowed if their husbands come out under a sheet? Jordan? Ann Malloy? Let's just say that, in 1972, feminism hadn't yet had a big impact in this part of the world.

The sections of Canty's book chronicling the fate of two men trapped in an air seam 3,500 feet underground are gripping and harrowing. It would behoove all middle class readers to contemplate what manual labor means. Do not think of this event as a museum piece either. Think upon West Virginia's Upper Big Branch disaster that killed 29 miners in 2010, the Deepwater Horizon explosion that killed 11 that same year, or the 14 who died at a Waco, Texas fertilizer plant in 2013.

Yeah—maybe it's time to think about this kind of stuff. Canty—the author of five previous novels and an English professor at the University of Montana—has written a novel filled with action, pathos, despair, and glimmers of hope. His writing is direct, vivid, and so crisply paced that *The Underworld* feels like a short book. Is it ultimately a work of literature, or sociological commentary? Yes.

Rob Weir

Marvin says

Captivating story of the people of a small Idaho town impacted by the tragedy of a silver-mine fire in the 1970s. Great characters, wonderful setting, deft writing. Great in the way all Canty's work is great. I actually think it's a little too short; there's a certain amount of space the narrative could've spread to fill. A relationship or two, a subplot that could unfolded a bit more slowly. Though maybe that just my wanting more of the great writing to read. It's a very enjoyable book.

Karen says

This story in which 91 rock miners die in a silver mine fire in the tightly-knit town of Silverton, Idaho is inspired by a 1970's real catastrophe.

The disaster affects everyone in this small blue collar community but focuses on three characters, David, Ann and Lyle. They are rich characters who come to life. I got caught up in the dynamics, sympathized with their struggles. I felt the devastating loss of loved ones, friends and neighbors and the rhythm of a community. Canty writes of the human condition in a stunning, sparse and realistic way and I was engrossed from cover to cover.

Carol says

Ever since I met a Kentucky coal miner, a relative of my first husband, I have been drawn to stories about mining disasters, working conditions, and what miners think.

For me this was a fast read and it kept me interested in the lives of the miners and their relatives. The Underworld starts off before a terrible fire and was inspired by a real mine fire. The Underworld by Kevin Canty is set in Idaho and puts you directly in the different cultures of the miner's family versus the city dwellers.

Lyle is the character that I was most drawn to and he is also the most developed character. The development of the other main characters are the only thing that I was missing. There is a theme running through the miners' lives, mining is very risky, on any day, you could lose your life but the money is so much better than the other job opportunities in the area. As the miners say "It comes with the job".

Another interesting observation is made by the wife and mother to miners. No matter, how hard they scrub, it is impossible to get the dirt, oil and darkness of the mine off. But the part of her husband's body that were not exposed to the mine were still young and pure, that belonged to her. That is a loose paraphrase from the book.

So in summary, I really enjoyed this book and understand more about mining families but some of the characters were good enough to flesh out some more.

I received this Advance Reading Copy of The Underworld from the publisher by a win from FirstReads. My thoughts and feelings in this review are totally my own.
