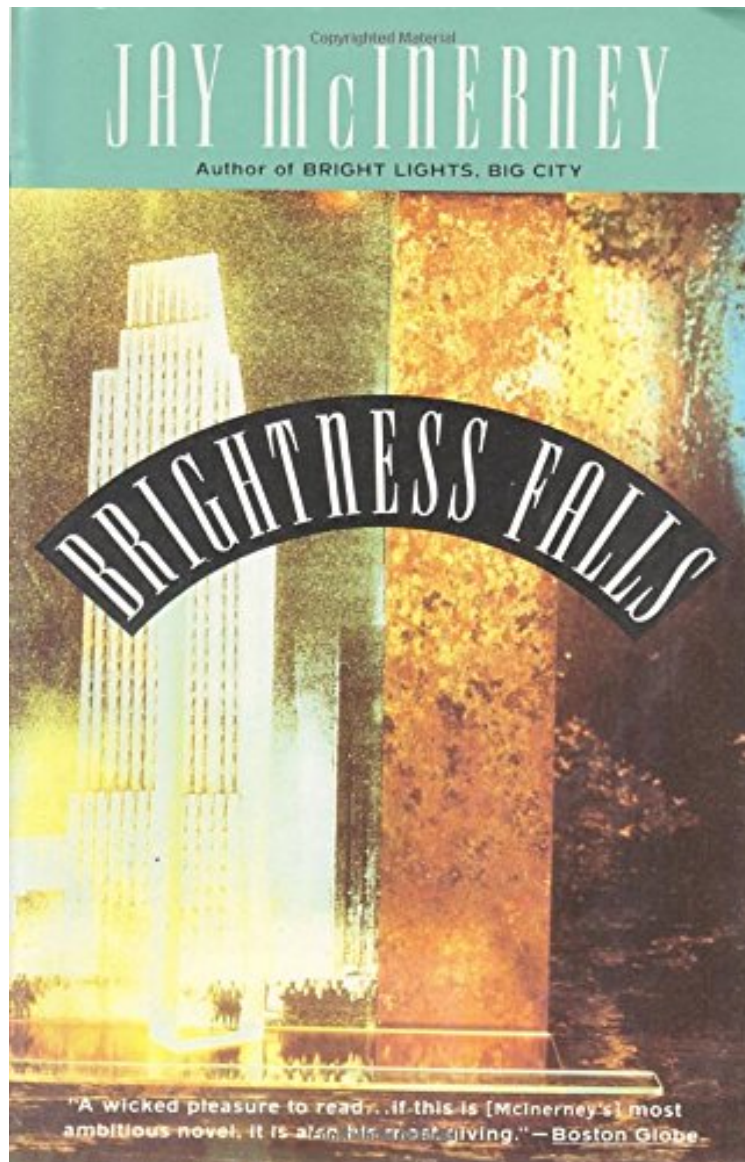


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## Brightness Falls

Jay McInerney

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**Jay McInerney : Brightness Falls** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Brightness Falls:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. The Mind of a YuppyBy Randy EhrlerHaving witnessed the recent (and on going) collapse of the real estate, mortgage, and banking industries, which were preceded by only a few years by the Dot Com bubble of the late - 90's - I wonder - will we ever learn? Brightness Falls is a needed morality tale (and history lesson) for a lost generation. I read this book nearly twenty years ago, yet the characters and story still

resonant within me. Our culture is ruled by greed, unbridled ambition and more of everything. This is the fuel for our very lives – a good citizen today is a good consumer. Our responsibility, if we do not wish for the house of cards to fall, is to buy lots of crap – crap we not need, with money we do not have to impress people we do not like! Brightness Falls features the quest of a couple for the golden ring – wealth, fame and privilege. It is a story about all of us – about Americans who came of age in the Reagan Era and beyond. It speaks the truth about what rests in our hearts. To be rich. Why? The rich live a different life. This is the story we have been told, and sold, anyway. Over last century, beginning with the stories of Horatio Alger, we've been indoctrinated with the belief that every man can attain high-society status. Everyone can be rich, famous and "important." One he does so, all of his troubles will disappear. For many, this has become an obsession – one for which they will sacrifice their morals, ethics and their very soul to attain. We have witnessed this time and again over the past 30 years. Watch Wall Street, The Smartest Guys in the Room, Margin Call, or Glengarry Glen Ross for great depictions – real and fictional – of our ethical slide. Brightness Falls places us in the front row of this mania – to witness the gradual surrender of everything of importance to two individuals – all in exchange for the chance to strike it rich. The scenes I remember the most are those involving the main characters father – who is a retired auto worker living a simple, frugal life in Michigan on his pension. The conversations between son and father were heartbreaking – as the son buried all the values of his Mid-western upbringing in exchange for the values of the big city. Father and son had nothing in common. The wholesome values of the father didn't produce enough fruit fast enough for the son. This is the story of our times. We look to the founders of Facebook and Google – billionaires before 30 – free to live large, never to punch a clock or drudge through a morning commute. We all want what they have – and we want it now, while we're young. We do not wish to work, earn, save, and grow. Unfortunately, we do not recognize that from the simple life comes great wisdom. Only through years of experience – of seeing it all – can one begin to understand the world and our place in it. In Brightness Falls we see the crash in slow motion. We see how every decision impacts relationships and compromises the individuals involved. We can see what will happen and learn from the experience of these characters. Slow and steady wins the race! 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic writing. By Virditas This is the first book by McInerney that follows NYC alpha-couple Corrine and Russell. It is a technical firecracker, with dazzling edgy depictions and satire of NYC 1980s capitalist shallowness, and the very real emotional desires of humans both trapped within and promoting cutthroat cynicism and power games. The book is dominated by sexual predators and is occasionally problematic from a feminist point of view, though in McInerney's favour he "describes cynically," and emphatically does not "justify" much of the chauvinism in this book. Perhaps the empathy his characters possess in their most difficult moments barely overcomes the machismo present in so much of the book. If the book retained only the scandal and cynicism, the sexual machismo and predation, it would be a no-go. However, there is just enough sympathy and objectivity in the writing style to see and feel the characters, and thus to begin to like them, even. In the end this book is a page-turner, and at best it truly brings the characters and their lives from the page directly into the conscious minds of the reader. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. The Beginning of McInerney's Greatness By Customer Jay McInerney was a decent novelist before he began his Calloway trilogy, capturing some of the quirky characters of '80s Manhattan in a satisfactory way, but 'Brightness Falls' is where he really turned into a chronicler of the city's saga in the way of his idols like Fitzgerald. Falls begins the story of Russell and Corinne Calloway, a young married couple navigating life in late '80s, stock-market crazed Manhattan. Russell is a dissatisfied, idealistic book editor looking for a better future, Corrine is beautiful but full of doubts, and McInerney takes us through a ride of heartbreak and nostalgia as no other contemporary novelist has. Read this, 2006's The Good Life, and 2016's "Bright, Precious Days." You'll feel as if you've lived Russell and Corinne's lives with them, a journey well worth taking.

Combining the lyrical observation of F. Scott Fitzgerald with the laser-bright social satire of Evelyn Waugh, Jay McInerney gives us a novel that is stunningly accomplished and profoundly affecting. As he maps the fault lines spreading through the once-impenetrable marriage of Russell and Corinne Calloway and chronicles Russell's wildly ambitious scheme to seize control of the publishing house at which he works, Jay McInerney creates an elegy for New York in the 1980s. From the literary chimeras and corporate raiders to those dispossessed by the pandemonium of money and power, Brightness Falls captures a rash era at its moment of reckoning and gives reality back to a time that now seems decidedly unreal.

From Publishers Weekly While the strengths of McInerney's writing are in evidence, the characterizations in this well-plotted generational portrait of late-'80s Manhattan yuppies fail to convince. A BOMC alternate and a three-week PW bestseller in cloth. Author tour. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal The author of Bright Lights, Big City ( LJ 10/1/84) again offers an amusing and perceptive morality tale of Eighties excess. Russell Calloway, an editor for a major publishing house, and his stockbroker wife Corrine appear to be the perfect New York couple. Dissatisfied with the management of his publishing company, Russell organizes a hostile takeover bid and embarks on an affair with Trina, his investment banker. But he loses his shirt in the 1987 stock market crash, Corrine

leaves him, and his best friend commits suicide. McInerney wryly examines the dilemma of people in their 30s who came of age with sex, drugs, and rock and roll and must now come to grips with adult responsibilities. Replete with ironic insight, wit, and style, this is highly recommended for popular fiction collections. Previewed in Prepub Alert, LJ 2/1/92.- Patricia Ross, Westerville P.L., OhioCopyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc.From Kirkus sHis own career very much a creation of 80's hype, McInerney here attempts an unironic post-mortem on the era of leveraged buyouts and consumer excess. Not surprisingly, it reads like an apologia pro vita sua, without any of the bite or wit of *Bright Lights, Big City*. Publishing insiders will no doubt find much of interest in the roman ... clef aspects of this overwrought saga. Otherwise, it's a pretentious morality tale with all the depth and subtlety of Oliver Stone's *Wall Street*. ( Both Stone and McInerney thank businessman Ken Lipper for his insider's expertise.) The golden couple at the center of things are Corrine and Russell Calloway, handsome college sweethearts, whose cozy domesticity is envied by their swinging single friends. Though she's a stockbroker, Corrine also works in a soup kitchen and has a "Mother Teresa syndrome," according to her husband. He's a Wunderkind editor at a distinguished publishing house but feels his career is being stymied by his mentor, Harold Stone, "a former radical intellectual" who now spends his lunch hour at the Four Seasons. Together with a street-smart, young black editor, Russell and an investment-banker friend plan a hostile takeover of his employer. They enlist the help of Bernie Melman, a short and pudgy corporate raider who eventually sells Russell down the river. So much for the intrigue. McInerney fills out his melodrama with hunks of undigested business chat; a textbook's worth of college-level literary quotations; and pathetic running jokes about exploding breast implants. The personal lives of the key players suffer from predictable problems: infidelity, alcoholism, anorexia, satyriasis, drug addiction, and depression. With all its soap-opera turns, it's hard to take this thirtysomethingish novel seriously. Despite its purple patches, McInerney's latest is more Krantz than Fitzgerald. And he can probably take that to the bank, no matter how much it wounds his literary credit. -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.