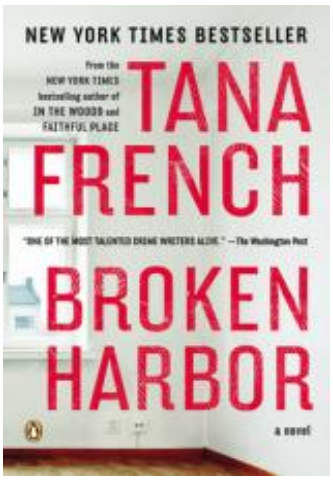
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Broken Harbor

by Tana French



About the Book

The mesmerizing fourth novel of the Dublin murder squad by *New York Times* bestselling author Tana French

Mick "Scorcher" Kennedy, the brash cop from Tana French?s bestselling FAITHFUL PLACE, plays by the book and plays hard. That?s what?s made him the Murder squad?s top detective --- and that?s what puts the biggest case of the year into his hands.

On one of the half-built, half-abandoned "luxury" developments that litter Ireland, Patrick Spain and his two young children are dead. His wife, Jenny, is in intensive care.

At first, Scorcher and his rookie partner, Richie, think it?s going to be an easy solve. But too many small things can?t be explained. The half dozen baby monitors, their cameras pointing at holes smashed in the Spains? walls. The files erased from the Spains? computer. The story Jenny told her sister about a shadowy intruder who was slipping past all the locks.

And Broken Harbor holds memories for Scorcher. Seeing the case on the news sends his sister Dina off the rails again, and she?s resurrecting something that Scorcher thought he had tightly under control: what happened to their family one summer at Broken Harbor, back when they were children.

With her signature blend of police procedural and psychological thriller, French?s new novel goes full throttle with a heinous crime, creating her most complicated detective character and her best book yet.

Discussion Guide

1. French?s protagonist, Mick ?Scorcher? Kennedy, prides himself on his self-control. Is Scorcher?s selfcontrol as strong as he imagines? In what other ways might Scorcher?s self-image be somewhat incorrect?

2. French writes with considerable affection for Ireland. However, her books often contain more than a hint of lament for the country?s recent decline. What aspects of Ireland in the present day seem to sadden her most?

3. Scorcher believes that post-modern society has begun to turn ?feral? and that ?everything that stops us being animals is eroding, washing away like sand? (p. 85). Do you agree with Scorcher?s assessment? Explain why or why not. How does Scorcher?s view of society dovetail with his self-image?

4. How do Scorcher?s class prejudices affect his perceptions of the Spain case? Is class bias the only reason he is so desperate to believe in the integrity of Patrick Spain?

5. The relationship between Scorcher and Richie evolves rapidly, beginning as one between an all-wise mentor and his trainee but transforming into a much more contentious one. Discuss this evolution and the ways French uses it to develop the two men?s characters.

6. Why do you think Scorcher doesn?t want to have children? Try to come up with as many plausible explanations as you can.

7. Tana French is a master of creating characters with virtues that are turned into vices by unlucky circumstances. What are some examples of this kind of characterization in Broken Harbor, and how do they act as a commentary on human nature?

8. Explaining her madness, Dina says, ?There is no why.? Why is this statement especially disturbing to her brother, Scorcher?

9. How has Scorcher?s childhood shaped the person he is now?

10. How have the more youthful experiences of Conor, Pat, and Jenny shaped their characters and destinies?

11. Tana French manages the emotions of her interrogation scenes with great expertise, creating tremendous tensions and moving toward great crescendos of feeling. Read over one of these scenes and discuss how the emotional force builds, breaks, and subsides.

12. Richie?s choices are highly motivated and compassionate but sometimes endanger the investigation. What are your opinions of him as a person? As a detective? Your two answers are likely to be different. Why?

13. What emotional texture is added to Tana?s novel by the presence of the Gogan family?

14. How did you respond to Conor?s surveillance of the Spain family. Did you find it poignant or simply pathetic? Did it seem realistic to you that someone would act this way?

Author Bio

Tana French is the *New York Times* bestselling author of 10 books, including IN THE WOODS, THE LIKENESS and THE SEARCHER. Her novels have sold over eight million copies worldwide and won numerous awards, including the Edgar, Anthony, Macavity and Barry Awards, the *Los Angeles Times* Book Prize for Best Mystery/Thriller, and the Irish Book Award for Crime Fiction. She lives in Dublin with her family.

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