

Judging a book by its cover

BY NEAL GRAHAM

I must admit that I chose this book, *The Statement*, by its cover.

I have never read anything by Brian Moore before, but now, after having finished this book, I am curious to read more of his work.

The Statement opens with an investigator, code named R, narrating his surveillance of a war criminal named Pierre Brossard. All the necessary elements of a spy adventure occur in the pages that follow. Brossard receives a mysterious payoff; R follows Brossard out of town by car; R ambushes Brossard outside a monastery in true secret agent style; R's murder attempt is

botched by Brossard and R ends up being murdered. If any of this sounds familiar, that's because it is. The opening, and the story that follows, is pretty standard spy fiction. We have all seen this type of story before.

Familiarity can be good. Despite its spy clichés, I thoroughly enjoyed reading *The Statement* in the same way that I enjoyed watching episode after episode of the formula sitcom *Perfect Strangers*.

Moore's storytelling style is an important part of this book. The role of narrator is frequently switched between characters. This provides interesting insights into many different personalities, instead of just giving a surface view. Moore's writing style is easily comparable to the omnipotence of a movie camera. This

technique not only grants access to character information that a fixed narrator wouldn't reveal, but it also allows us to sympathize with the motives of both the good and the bad guys. Moore's style produces real characters, but it can sometimes be confusing.

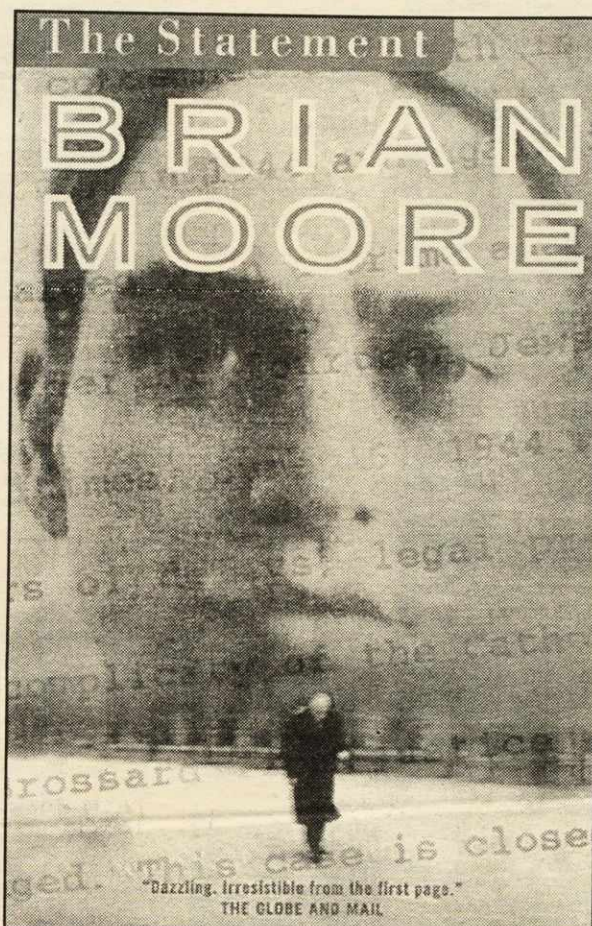
Brian Moore jumps around in his writing as much as he bounces around the world in real life. He was born in Belfast in 1921, and served with the British Ministry of War Transport during the Second World War in North Africa, Italy, and France. Following the war Moore worked for the United Nations in Europe and in 1948 he emigrated to Canada. He has since moved to California — I guess it is easier to turn novels into films in the Golden State. Moore can be credited with having 5 of his many novels made into movies.

The conclusion of *The Statement* is very predictable, but you'll wait a long time before it happens. The last chapter is packed with action and is easily the most intense part of the entire book. Moore attempts to persuade us that the ending we expect, the happy ending, isn't going to happen. This persuasion comes late and subsequently fails. Moore should have been working to prepare us for the conclusion as the novel unfolded, rather than engaging the main characters in bouts of introspection for much of the book.

Thankfully, the problems of *The Statement* do not outweigh the story itself. Brian Moore has written an engaging novel that is a worthwhile read.

The Statement

Brian Moore
Vintage Canada



BIRDLAND C A B A R E T

Thursday April 3rd
VANCOUVER'S MARACUJAH & HUNU \$4

Friday-Saturday April 4th-5th
SKYDIGGERS & ART BERGMAN \$9 ADVANCE \$11 AT DOOR
AVAILABLE AT: BISCUIT-PARKLANE • BLOWERS'S ST. PAPERCHASE • DISCHORD • ROW SCOTIA SQ. • BIRDLAND

Sunday April 6th
SOUP NO COVER

Thursday April 10th
3 PENNY OPERA \$4

Friday April 11th
MONOXIDES WITH MADHAT & CLEVELAND STEAMER \$5

Saturday April 12th
PHONOCOMB \$6
(FEATURING FORMER MEMBERS OF SHADOWY MEN ON A SHADOWY PLANET)
WITH THE SADIES AND THE ROME PLOWS

• OPEN 'TIL 3:30 AM EVERY NIGHT •
2021 Brunswick St. at Cogswell • 425-0889

BIRDLAND ON-LINE:
<http://www.textureweb.ns.ca/birdland>

RETRO NIGHT EVERY WEDNESDAY

Sam the Record Man

CANADA'S LARGEST AND BEST KNOWN RECORD STORE



"The most groundbreaking record of this new year comes from a Canadian four-piece rock band. Thrush Hermit have become innovators with *Sweet Homewrecker* (Elektra)" - *New York Press*

THRUSH HERMIT SWEET HOMEWRECKER

Available on CD and cassette.



IAN MCGETTIGAN BASS
CLIFF CIBB DRUMS
JOEL PLATRETT GUITAR
ROBERT BENVIE GUITAR



SAM THE RECORD MAN LOCATIONS:

<http://www.warnermusic.ca>

BARRINGTON STREET • PARKLANE MALL • HALIFAX SHOPPING CENTRE • SUNNYSIDE MALL • MIC MAC MALL