

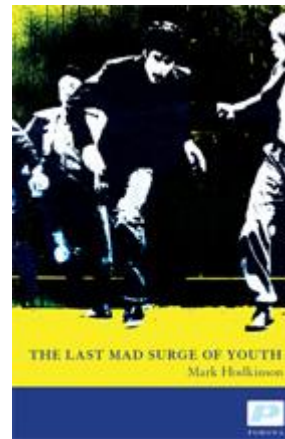


Mark Hodgkinson:

## The Last Mad Surge of Youth

Pomona Books, Juli 2009

ISBN: 978-1-904590-20-0



\*\*\* Rock Novel of the Year \*\*\*

Q – The UK's Biggest Music Magazine ([www.qthemusic.com](http://www.qthemusic.com))

Genre: Belletristik/Roman/Musik

Umfang: 332 Seiten

Inhalt: The Last Mad Surge of Youth – der Titel entstammt einer Liedzeile aus „Don't Fall“ von The Chameleons – zeichnet auf zwei eng ineinander verschränkten Zeitebenen (1980 und 2009) den Lebensweg der Jugendfreunde John Barrett und Dave Carey nach. Bei der Gründung ihrer Band noch von großen Idealen beseelt, trennen sich die Wege, als Carey die Band aus Angst vor Liveauftritten verlässt. Während er sich in einem unspektakulären Leben als Journalist einer Lokalzeitung einrichtet, erobert Barrett mit den *Killing Stars* den Rockhimmel. Doch nach über zwei Jahrzehnten Starruhm endet Barrett als alkoholsüchtiges Wrack, das bei einem Fernsehauftritt einen Eklat auslöst. Auf dem Tiefpunkt angekommen, bekommt er noch eine Chance: Ein großer Verlag möchte seine Biografie veröffentlichen. Seine Wahl des Ghostwriters fällt auf den alten Kumpel Carey, der seinerseits die Chance wittert, doch noch seinen Lebenstraum Buchautor verwirklichen zu können. Doch bei den Interviews zu dem Buch brechen auch alte Wunden auf: Carey hat nie verwunden, von seiner Frau verlassen worden zu sein, die eine kurze Affäre mit Barrett hatte. Ein Roman über Bands, Erwachsenwerden, Ruhm, Selbstmord, Langeweile, Fanzines, Liebe, Alkoholismus, Selbstzweifel. Wie sie wurden, was sie sind ...

**Stimmen zu „The Last Mad Surge of Youth“:** (Ausführliche Rezensionen sind erhältlich unter:

[http://www.markhodkinson.com/pages/newspaper\\_cuttings.htm](http://www.markhodkinson.com/pages/newspaper_cuttings.htm))

‘It's a masterpiece, not a wrong note. Enjoyable to the last line.’

*Alan Sillitoe, engl. Schriftsteller („The Loneliness of the Long Distance Runner“)*

‘This is by far the best book I've read dealing with that rich world of boys growing up, their obsessions, their loves, their music and how this inevitably informs the people they become and the lives they end up leading. I can't recommend it highly enough.’

*Kevin Sampson, engl. Schriftsteller (u. a. „Powder“ über seine Zeit als Manager der Liverpooler Band „The Farm“)*

‘A note-perfect rendition of the early-80s northern English indie scene, it contains all the affection missing from John Niven's similarly biz-themed Kill Your Friends.’

*Andrew Collins, engl. Journalist, Drehbuchautor und Radiomoderator*

**Auszug:**

The band moved out of the working men's club and relocated to the attic at Al's house. He told them to help themselves to biscuits, tea, whatever was in the fridge. Yes, they could smoke and drink; his mum and dad wouldn't mind.

"They're liberals, anything goes!"

Al was obsessive about music. He had boxes full of compilation tapes and the band rarely found a group of which he hadn't heard. They trusted his judgement, bombarding him with questions:

"Is that guitar sound too Bauhaus? Should I chop it up a bit so it's slightly Gang of Four?"

At one practice Barrett took hold of Carey's guitar. He coiled his little finger around the volume control, teasing out sound. Abstractedly, he tweaked the tuning pegs with his other hand, tilting his head towards the speaker to listen better.

"The tuning is slipping, can you hear it?"

Carey lied that he could.

"And the action is rubbish. You almost need a clamp to hold down a chord."

Carey was uneasy whenever Barrett used musical terms like the action. It was the vocabulary of separatism, taking them away from the streets.

"If you get a decent guitar you'll feel a lot more confident about your playing," said Barrett.

The next Saturday they walked to Archibald's second-hand shop on the outskirts of town, amid the chip wrappers and discarded drinks cans, the taxi ranks and boarded up houses. Carey had first called there when he was about thirteen, pressed up to the wire grille at the window, staring at the shiny things framed by fairy lights. These were left up all year round as if Christmas never left this speck of the world. A fly's compound eye was needed to see everything jammed in there. And it was all designed to make lives louder, brighter, happier: drum kits, guitars, stylophones, bikes, lava lamps, football games, piles of magazines, model airplanes, flags, mouth organs, fishing rods, microphones, records, snooker cues, table tennis tables, amplifiers, postcards, record players.

At the entrance, hidden beneath oilcloth, was a device to pick up footsteps and trigger an alarm. The noise was so loud it made the floor vibrate. Customers would cover their ears and check for gunshot wounds. Old Archibald was out from the back immediately:

"Yes?"

He always looked at everyone dismissively as if he'd finally found the person responsible for posting dog dirt through his letterbox. His skin was yellow from spending too long under the fairy lights and his cheeks drawn and tense as if he'd eaten his lips in retaliation for a secret they'd revealed years before.

The visitors to his shop were in his web now and he was going to eat them alive or toy with them a while, at least. Carey and Barrett stood there, light-headed among the Calor gas and solder fumes.

"We're looking for an electric guitar. I bought one off you last year and I'd like to swap it for a better one," said Carey.

The alarm screamed. A woman entered with a lad aged about ten. She was carrying an electric guitar too. Archie asked what she wanted.

"This bloody thing doesn't work."

She said her husband had adapted a kettle lead and plugged it into a wall socket but they couldn't hear a thing, not a dicky bird. Archibald's teeth did a kind of jig.

"You stuck it into a plug socket and expected it to work? Without an amplifier?"



**Mark Hodkinson:**

## **Believe in the Sign**

Pomona Books, Dezember 2006

ISBN: 978-1-904590-17-9



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- Genre: Belletristik/Roman/Fußball
- Umfang: 203 Seiten
- Inhalt: Believe in the Sign beschreibt eine gottverlassene Ecke Englands, in der nichts los ist – und doch alles passiert. Es ist eine 'Art Memoiren' eines normalen Durchschnittsjungen, der halbwegs glücklich und normal durchschnittlich aufwachsen könnte, wenn er nicht einer perversen Leidenschaft erlegen wäre: der masochistischen Hingabe an den hoffnungslosen Fußballclub AFC Rochdale ('The Dale'), der seit 35 Jahren ununterbrochen in der vierten Liga, der 'Rochdale Division' spielt. Schnappschussartig wird das Aufwachsen in den 1970ern and 1980ern beleuchtet: verrückte und traurige und gute Kids aus zerbrochenen Familien; jugendliche Absturzparties und Pubschlägereien; lange existenzielle Märsche entlang der Autobahn; Elton Johns Auftreten; und der Clubvorsitzende, der beim 'Auswärtsspiel' erwischt wird. Und dann platzt auf einmal der Tod mitten hinein ins Leben: Ein kleines Mädchen wird entführt, und die ganze Stadt steht unter Schock. Und draußen schleicht sich unterdessen die Zukunft ein: die Fabriken schließen, die Supermärkte schießen aus dem Boden; Schulabgänger hängen herum und alle Mütter halten Tupperware-Parties, um irgendwie die Raten für den Farbfernseher zusammenzukratzen.
- Autor: Mark Hodkinson, geb. in Manchester, aufgewachsen in Rochdale, lebt als Musik- und Sportjournalist sowie Buchautor und Verleger in West Yorkshire. Er war Gitarrist in mehreren Bands, die unter anderem The Stone Roses, Pulp und The Wedding Present auf Tournee begleiteten. Er schrieb über zehn Jahre (davon drei als Kolumnist) für die Times sowie den Observer und verfasste mehrere Sportbücher und (Band-)Biografien über The Wedding Present, Marianne Faithfull, Simply Red (auch auf deutsch erschienen) und Queen.  
Website: [www.markhodkinson.com](http://www.markhodkinson.com)
- Stimmen: 'Hodkinson is the authentic voice of the real football fan - Hornby is a relative lightweight in comparison.' (*4-4-2 Magazine*)  
(Weitere Rezensionen unter:  
[http://www.markhodkinson.com/pages/newspaper\\_cuttings.htm](http://www.markhodkinson.com/pages/newspaper_cuttings.htm))
- Preise: Believe in the Sign war eines der 'sports books of the year' der Times sowie des Guardian und stand auf der Longlist für den renommierten 'William Hill Sports Book of the Year Award'. Der bekannte Drehbuchautor und Dramatiker Alan Plater arbeitet derzeit an einer Bühnenfassung von Believe in the Sign.

### **Auszug:**

I knew something strange had happened as soon as I opened the front door. The Fletchers, Steven and Philip, for the first time ever looked like brothers. They stood very close together and appeared to have their arms around one another.

"Have you heard about Lesley?" said Steven. I didn't know anyone called Lesley.

"It's this little girl. They can't find her. They want people to help."  
They took turns to talk, one nodding while the other spoke.

"I'll ask my mum if I can come," I said. My dinner had just been put out. I said I'd follow on later.

Lesley Molseed lived on an estate about a mile from our house. When news broke that she was missing, people stopped washing their cars and left their Sunday dinner on a low light. They gathered on street corners, formed search parties and retraced Lesley's route to the shop where she had gone on an errand for her mum. Kids combed wasteland, believing they stood a better chance of finding her because she was one of them. They knew the short cuts, the hidey-holes, the rickety wooden garages, the millponds and the mill yards, the abandoned cars, the tree-swings, the secreted piles of wood ready for bonfire night. They'd find her lost in the long grass, sunk to her knees, cradling a doll, sobbing. It was an adventure: Christopher Robin had come to town and they were preparing trestle tables and cakes for the hero's party.

Tesco abandoned Rochdale FC. The petrol vouchers, car stickers and autograph free-for-alls came to an end.

"We have not had one telephone call about our involvement with Rochdale FC," grumbled the store's manager to the Rochdale Observer.

The high point of my first full season as a fan, 1975/76, was a stirring win against Tranmere Rovers who were top of the league at the time. Rochdale were 3-0 up at half-time and serving up, according to the Rochdale Observer, a 'feast of footballing skills'. The game ended 4-1. I missed it. I was poorly on the settee, shivering under a pile of blankets.

Two days later I was still wheezing and coughing and the colour of chicken soup. Rochdale had another home game; they often played on the Monday after a Saturday. The pilgrimage to Spotland was no longer a matter of choice for me and dad. We had to be there, sometimes together or separately if I went with my mates.

Dad made an appeal to mum on my behalf. I'd wrap up well. The fresh air would do me good. I was the 'other side' of my cold. He told her why it was so important: Rochdale had just won 4-1 and Northampton were next in line to get a bloody good hiding. He'd carry me there if necessary. Okay then, if you insist: he can go.

That night the biggest crowd of the season, 2,995, turned out to gorge themselves on another feast of football. We lost 2-0.

Before she went missing Lesley was known to a few people only. The day afterwards, her picture was in the papers and on television and we got to know everything about her. She was eleven but looked much younger because she was barely four feet tall and weighed under four stones. She was born with a heart condition and susceptible to coughs and colds. On that Sunday she had been sent for a loaf and hairspray. When she was late back her mum became worried and began looking for her, shouting across garden fences to neighbours:

"Seen our Lesley?"



**Simon Armitage:**  
**The Not Dead**

Pomona Books, September 2008  
ISBN: 978-1-904590-18-7



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- Genre:** Poetry  
**Extent:** 80 pages  
**Description:** The Not Dead is a short collection of poems originally aired on a Channel 4 documentary. The poems focus on the testimonies of veterans of the Gulf, Bosnia and Malayan wars - whose voices have seldom been heard before. A book of quiet profundity.  
**Author:** Simon Armitage, born 1963 in Marsden, lives in West Yorkshire. He is a graduate of Portsmouth University, where he studied Geography. He has received numerous awards for his poetry including the Sunday Times Young Author of the Year, one of the first Forward Prizes and a Lannan Award. He writes for radio, television and film, and is the author of four stage plays. Simon Armitage has taught at the University of Leeds and the University of Iowa's Writers' Workshop, and is currently a senior lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University. His books were short-listed for the Forward Prize, the T.S. Eliot Prize and the Whitbread Prize, for which he has also served as a judge.

**Extract:**

We are the not dead.  
In battle, life would not say goodbye to us.  
And crack-shot snipers seemed to turn a blind eye to us.  
And even though guns and grenades let fly at us  
we somehow survived.

We are the not dead.  
When we were young and fully alive for her,  
we worshipped Britannia.  
We the undersigned  
put our names on the line for her.  
From the day we were born we were loaded and primed for her.  
Prepared as we were, though, to lie down and die for her,  
we somehow survived.

So why did she cheat on us?  
Didn't we come running when she most needed us?  
When tub-thumping preachers  
and bullet-brained leaders  
gave solemn oaths and stirring speeches  
then fisted the air and pointed eastwards,

didn't we turn our backs on our nearest and dearest?  
From runways and slipways Britannia cheered us,  
but returning home refused to meet us,  
sent out a crowd of back-biting jeerers  
and mealy-mouthed sneerers.  
Two-timing, two-faced Britannia deceived us.

We are morbidly ill.  
Soldiers with nothing but time to kill,  
we idle now in everyday clothes and ordinary towns,  
blowing up, breaking down.  
If we dive for cover or wake in a heap,  
Britannia, from horseback, now crosses the street  
or looks right through us.  
We seem changed and ghostly to those who knew us.  
The country which flew the red white and blue for us  
now shows her true colours.  
We are the not dead.  
Neither happy and proud  
with a bar-code of medals across the heart  
nor laid in a box and draped in a flag,  
we wander this no man's land instead,  
creatures of a different stripe – the awkward, unwanted, unlovable type –  
haunted with fears and guilt,  
wounded in spirit and mind.

So what shall we do with the not dead and all of his kind?

### Reviews:

1 | The Not Dead is uniquely impressive. In transmuting the stories of particular soldiers into the lyrical music of Simon Armitage's poems, something exceptional is achieved: the painful truth of lives damaged beyond help is made meaningful for the rest of us. We can only catch our breath and read them again and again.

*(Joan Bakewell, English journalist, author and TV presenter)*

2 | Originally broadcast a year ago in a Channel 4 documentary of the same name, The Not Dead is a short collection of war poems written, not in battle, but as a response to the testimonies of ex-soldiers featured in the programme. As Simon Armitage points out in his eloquent, self-effacing introduction, time is no "great healer" for people scarred by war. One of the former soldiers in the documentary is still unable to talk without crying about a jungle ambush he took part in nearly 50 years previously in Malaya.

Each poem focuses on a flashback scene one of the ex-soldiers has struggled to forget. "Remains", for example, written for someone who served in Basra, tries to capture the moment when he shot a man looting a bank. The body was disposed of but the man's "blood shadow" remained on the street: "I blink / and he bursts again through the doors of the bank. / Sleep, and he's probably armed, possibly not."

Who are the Not Dead? The ex-servicemen and the ghosts trapped in their memories; the people who live and die and live again every time one of the veterans experiences a bad memory. This collection offers a strange, painful kind of memorial.

*(Tom Bocza-Tomaszewski, The Independent)*