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Devil's advocate book summary

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The Devil's Advocate, a novel by Morris West, is a thought-provoking exploration of faith and its meaning. The story takes place in southern Italy, where the life and death of Giacamo Nerone has sparked talk of sainthood. A priest from the Vatican is sent to investigate the facts surrounding Nerone's life, amidst a web of rumors and lies. As the narrative unfolds, it highlights the power of goodness over despair, despite spiritual frailty. The author, Morris West, drew inspiration from his own experiences as a Christian Brother seminarian. Born in 1916, he entered the seminary at 14 as an escape from a difficult childhood. West's life was marked by various careers, including teaching and working as a code-breaker during World War II. He became a successful writer and producer of radio serials before building an international career. West wrote 30 books, with The Devil's Advocate being his best-selling novel. It has been translated into 28 languages and sold over 60 million copies worldwide. The book received several awards, including the James Tait Black Memorial Prize and the W.H. Heinemann Award of the Royal Society of Literature. A recent reviewer noted that West's depiction of the 'Devil's Advocate' in his novel parallels the role played by this priest in the canonization process of the Roman Catholic Church. The story is set in Calabria, Italy, in the late 1950s or pre-Vatican II era, and explores themes of faith, spirituality, and the human condition. In the unlikeliest of places, God often uses ordinary individuals and settings to achieve extraordinary outcomes. A dying priest, tasked with one final assignment from Rome, finds himself in Southern Italy investigating a possible case for sainthood. Monsignor Blaise Meredith, a British Roman Catholic priest, is summoned by Rome to serve as the Devil's Advocate, examining both the good and bad reasons for beatification. As Meredith delves deeper into the case, he encounters a cast of characters in the village of Gemello Minore, each with their own secrets and struggles. From the dead martyr to the bishop, local priest, Jewish doctor, and others, Meredith uncovers hidden truths that bring healing and transformation. This thoughtful book is not an action-packed thriller but rather a beautiful exploration of character and time. While the plot may be negligible, the depth and beauty of the story make it a captivating read. As a tribute to the priesthood, this book is highly recommended for anyone looking for a thought-provoking novel that celebrates the human spirit. The Devil's Advocate has been adapted into a film, starring John Mills in 1977. Morris West, the author, is also known for his other works, including The Shoes of the Fisherman. This classic fiction novel is a must-read for anyone interested in faith and character-driven stories. any rate, the priest has been assigned the task not only because he would be good at it but also to help his superior spiritually. Facing eternity, the priest admits to living a lukewarm life without passion. I've read this before and am looking forward to re-reading it and discussing it with fellow Catholics. As I began reading, I was struck by how well West brings us into the atmosphere of the Italian countryside and clerical attitudes of the time. Finished and I'm still blown away by the masterpiece that this book is in so many ways, but primarily in examining human nature (often within the same person) and our institutions, the depth of the human soul, and our capacity for faith and change. This all happens without relying on miracles or God speaking, except through those same human beings. It's amazing and highly recommended. I'm really looking forward to discussing this one next week at Elements of Faith book club. I picked up this book on a whim - and it turned out to be a real page-turner; it's just well-written and enjoyable... One review on the inside cover says it somehow manages to be as exciting as a murder mystery, which is surprising given its about a priest who goes to a small Italian village to decide whether a recently deceased man should be canonized. The only real issue I have with it is that the ending wraps things up really swiftly - (SPOILER ALERT) in the last few dozen pages, it seems like the author is kinda hurrying to a close, getting all the loose ends tied up really conveniently, having the main character run around solving things... That was the impression I got, anyway. But I feel like I'll need to revisit my thoughts on this book at a later time - I just finished reading it yesterday, and I think my true review will take some thought. But anyways, it's a book I'd read again. I had seen this author on my mother's bookshelves when I was little, so expected it to read like "popular fiction". I've now read 2 Morris West books, and I think when the 20th century reaches the "classic literature" stage, Morris West will be one of the writers whose names and works remain in circulation. Set in the rural mountains of Italy, this very powerful novel tells of an aging and ill Vatican leader's last gift to his community. Crossing religions, class, and politics, this story of old secrets and new self-discovery is pure literary art. I highly recommend it. "Uno es libre, pero libre en el caos, en un mundo inexplicable e inexplicable. Uno es libre en un desierto del cual no hay otra retrada que el camino hacia el núcleo vano de uno mismo. No hay más fundamento sobre el cual construir que la pequeña ropa de la propia estimación, que es una nada basada en la nada... Pienso, luego existo. Pero, ¿Qué soy? Un accidente del desorden que no va a parte alguna." - I randomly picked this book from my city's public library (since the author's name sounds familiar from other books I didn't read like "The Fisherman's Sandals") and it's set in post-war context. With very agile prose to read, a description of La narrativa del libro es un reflejo de la compleja relación entre fe y debilidad humana, una paradoja que persiste hasta nuestros días. A pesar de ser publicada hace más de sesenta años, la novela sigue siendo relevante en su representación de la moralidad católica de las décadas del 50 y el 60 y refleja los desafíos que enfrenta el catolicismo contemporáneo. Escrita por Morris West, quien tenía un conocimiento profundo del cristianismo debido a su participación como sacerdote marista, la novela cuenta la historia de Monseñor Meredith, un inglés católico y destacado sacerdote de la Congregación de Ritos de Roma que enfrenta una misión crucial antes de morir de cáncer. Su tarea es actuar como abogado del diablo en el proceso para beatificar a Giacomo Nerone, un hombre cuya vida está marcada por la deserción, un hijo no reconocido, y enemistades que culminan en su muerte en los años de la posguerra. Fr. Blaise Meredith, a world-weary English devil's advocate, is forced to confront mortality after learning he has a shortened life expectancy due to illness. His existential crisis leads him to disengage from his surroundings and the people in them, causing an emotional death before his physical one. Eugenio Cardinal Marotta tries to shake him out of this funk by acknowledging that they have lost touch with the faithful and reduced faith to intellectual assent. Over time, Meredith has lost sight of what drew him to a life of devotion, instead clinging to partial illusions. His emotional numbness is gradually lifted through his investigation into the cause for canonization of martyred witness Giacomo Nerone, whose adherence to doctrine inspires redemption in those around him. As Meredith delves deeper into Nerone's story, he finds his own faith slowly restored. The novel's flawed characters are redeemed by their choices, and despite reprehensible actions and situations, corrective redemption is available, bringing relief to those who take it. Black Memorial Award, I was awarded for this book's reception after its publication. In my opinion, it had three and a half stars. Although it may have more appeal to Catholics, the story was interesting for most people. As an old novel written in 1959, it is considered dated today. Giacomo Nerone, a man who lived briefly in a small Italian village, has been nominated for sainthood. Blaise Meredith, a devil's advocate who wants to disprove his saintly claims, is also struggling with cancer and disillusioned with life. The characters are varied and interesting, like groups of expatriates in a third world country, where unlikely friendships form. One thing stood out - how times have changed - especially regarding issues like homosexuality. Some readers may find the book's portrayal of gay men offensive and traumatic today. The writing style is sometimes omniscient, other times through various characters. I found it hindered by West's tendency to name characters with full titles and Christian surnames, which made the story feel formal and slow-paced. West's character sketch of Blaise Meredith highlights the lack of passion in his life, making him a stranger to human emotions. The bishop's orange grove is questioned by Meredith, who asks what oranges have to do with the human soul. The bishop responds that everything is connected, even the disposal of a person's body and the polishing of their soul. However, this philosophical concept is overshadowed by the predictability of the book and the inability to connect with the characters. The only two characters that garnered attention were Meredith and Giacomo, but even they lacked flaws and real human personality. The story failed to deliver on its promise, making it a disappointing read for many. Despite its dated nature, the novel still sparks interesting discussions about one's own assumptions regarding sexuality, parenting, spiritual goodness, and more. This book is often misunderstood as being related to the film of the same name, but in reality, it's a story about a priest who acts as the "devil's advocate" within the Catholic Church. He questions the miracles attributed to saints and verifies their authenticity, ensuring they're not just coincidences or false claims. The priest visits various locations, including Gemelo Minore, where he encounters Giacomo Nerone's name, which seems to be a straightforward story with no depth or psychology behind it. The novel's attempt to convey complex themes is admirable but ultimately falls short due to its predictability and lack of character development. Despite this, the book remains satisfying for some readers, perhaps because of its dated nature, which provides a fascinating glimpse into the past and challenges one's own assumptions about various topics. La investigación del caso de "Giacomo Nerone", un misterioso campesino encontrado muerto atado a un árbol, es la última asignación del sacerdote antes de que su enfermedad terminal lo obligue a abandonar el oficio. La gente alaba al próximo santo, pero una serie de personajes cercanos, incluyendo a un doctor judío, una rica hacendada y un pintor, se niegan a hablar del misterio. Una novela excelente que explora aspectos religiosos y humanos, con personajes muy bien desarrollados. Discovering the prospective saint had fathered a child with a local woman, and that the child is now threatened by the village's resident homosexual - Nicholas Black, aka the devil himself - prompts the Vatican official to take action and save the boy from a fate worse than death. The rest of the story unfolds as Fr. Blaise Meredith, sent to investigate Giacomo Nerone during WWII in Italy, faces suspicion, politics, and his own terminal illness. Despite these challenges, he perseveres with kindness, thoroughness, and gentleness. The novel delves into themes of faith, mortality, and moral dilemmas, prompting readers to re-examine their own beliefs and the burdens on their souls. The story's Christian Catholic philosophy adds depth to the characters' motivations, highlighting their struggles against societal oppression and a seemingly indifferent Church during WWII. As Meredith navigates his final days and mission to investigate Nerone, he grapples with his moral compass, finding new meaning in his life through a deeper understanding of faith and morality. La obra nos presenta la visión moral católica de finales de los 40's a la década de los 60's, mostrándonos que algunas cuestiones permanecen sin cambios en nuestra época. Los diálogos y argumentos son valiosos, lo que nos atrae desde el inicio de la historia. El personaje de Morris, un sacerdote investigador, nos introduce en su mundo, viajando entre el presente y el pasado, y retrata al protagonista con una redacción excepcional. La Segunda Guerra Mundial es una novela que explora la historia de Blaise Meredith, un sacerdote cuyo proceso de canonización se convierte en un viaje de descubrimiento de su propia identidad y el camino a la santidad. A través del desarrollo de su vida, el autor presenta un análisis profundo de temas variados y personajes complejos. A book about Giacomo, a man who died shortly after experiencing an intense conversion in his middle years, is more about human nature than holiness. The story showcases the complexities of convictions, wisdom, and struggles, as well as the gap between intellectual views and pastoral acuity. It's also a thought-provoking exploration of politics, frustrated ideals, and the nuances of good and evil.