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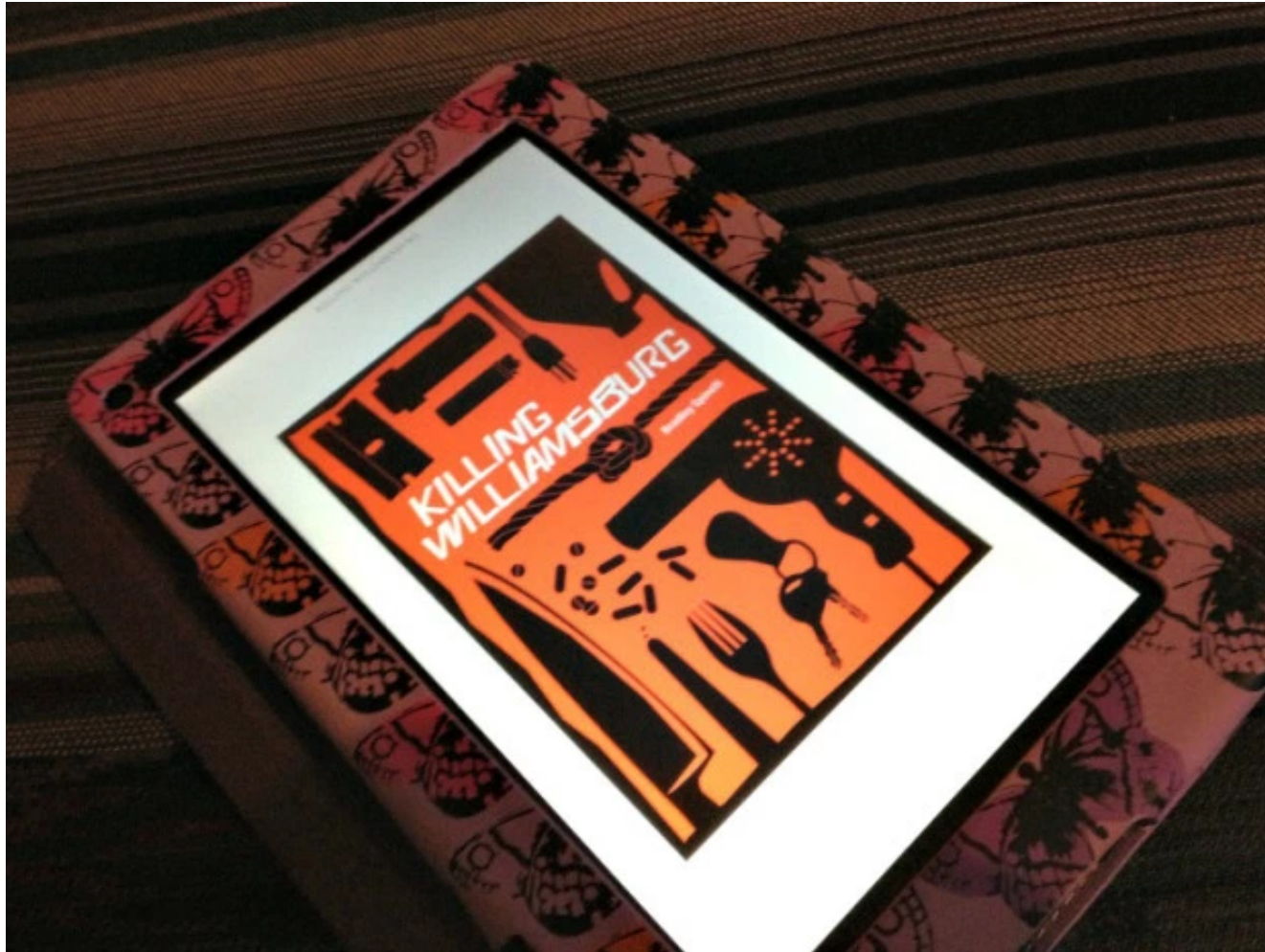
A UK Lifestyle Blog



Reading... Killing Williamsburg

September 14, 2013 September 30, 2013

*After moving to New York in 1999, Benson, a reflexively cynical twenty-something, and his girlfriend look for work while exploring the hipster playground emerging in North Brooklyn. Rumors of suicides spread, and people start to kill themselves in alarming numbers—hangings, jumpers, death by L train. Friends follow strangers. As the “Bug” spreads to Manhattan, Benson assembles a grassroots crew to help clean up the city, half-deserted and riddled with corpses. Killing Williamsburg is a dark meditation on the purpose of life and a testament to the stubborn resilience of the New York state of mind.*



(<https://twoninethree.files.wordpress.com/2013/09/kw.jpg>)

I read Bradley Spinelli's *Killing Williamsburg* (<http://killingwilliamsburg.com/>) a couple of weeks ago, and I've been thinking about what to write about it since. In short, I loved it.

It's a story about a suicide epidemic affecting the inhabitants of Williamsburg. At first, the suicides are apparently isolated incidents, but soon Benson realises that they are much more serious. Mostly confined to Williamsburg, a "bug" starts to infect people; instantly their eyes change and they find the fastest possible way to depart, regardless of where they are, what they're doing, or who they might take with them. Slowly, Williamsburg becomes a ghost town. Benson stays, recruiting a team of others to clean up, and to hope that life might return to something normal. It sounds horribly morbid, but it really isn't – it's a statement on a consumer-driven way of life, and questions what is really important.

I think Spinelli's writing style is similar to Bret Easton Ellis', but his characters are far more human, far more likeable. They are more... real. It might be just that *Killing Williamsburg* is dealing with a similar subject matter, but I enjoyed this far more than either *Glamorama* ([http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/9913.Glamorama?from\\_search=true](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/9913.Glamorama?from_search=true)) or *American Psycho* ([http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/28676.American\\_Psycho?ac=1](http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/28676.American_Psycho?ac=1)), and I think that its message is far more powerful for not being obscured by ridiculously graphic violence and sex scenes. (I think I'm done reading all the Bret Easton Ellis that I can. I tried!) The suicides in *Killing Williamsburg* (of which there are many) are written about in a variety of ways, some more descriptive than others, and some more violent than others, but at no point does Spinelli's writing become reaction-seeking. Instead, we see Benson become more compassionate, his life and his entire outlook completely changed by the events in his new neighbourhood.

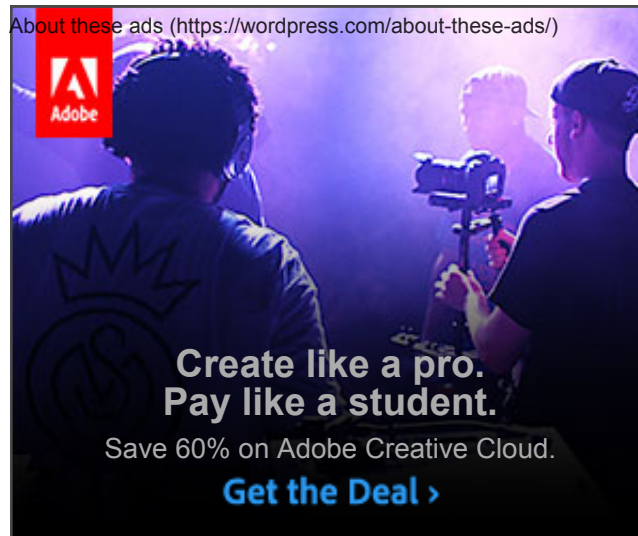
I found *Killing Williamsburg* on my Kindle ([http://www.amazon.co.uk/Killing-Williamsburg-ebook/dp/B00CXAHLPW/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1379097446&sr=8-1&keywords=killing+williamsburg](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Killing-Williamsburg-ebook/dp/B00CXAHLPW/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1379097446&sr=8-1&keywords=killing+williamsburg)), when it was a free download last month. I honestly can't recommend it enough. I wasn't sure that it would be my cup of tea, but it is so well written, and Benson is such an engaging character, that I was sucked in straight away, and it only took me a couple of days to read. It's so hard to review something that you can't find any fault with at all, but there you go! I'd love to know what you thought if you've read it!



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## 3 thoughts on “Reading... Killing Williamsburg”

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