Its summer and nothing much is happening in Rathmoye. So it doesn't go unnoticed when a dark-haired stranger appears on his bicycle and begins photographing the mourners at Mrs. Connulty's funeral. Florian Kilderry couldn't know that the Connultys are said to own half the town: he has only come to Rathmoye to photograph the scorched remains of its burnt-out cinema.

A few miles out in the country, Dillahan, a farmer and a decent man, has married again: Ellie is the young convent girl who came to work for him when he was widowed. Ellie leads a quiet, routine life, often alone while Dillahan runs the farm.
Florian is planning to leave Ireland and start over. Ellie is settled in her new role as Dillahans wife. But Florians visit to Rathmoye introduces him to Ellie, and a dangerously reckless attachment begins.

In a characteristically masterly way Trevor evokes the passions and frustrations felt by Ellie and Florian, and by the people of a small Irish town during one long summer.

**Personal Review: Love and Summer: A Novel by William Trevor**

William Trevor may be "Exhibit A" in support of the case that octogenarians can still produce fine literature. Love and Summer is a polished gem.

The story is set in the Irish provincial area around the fictional town of Rathmoye in the 1950s. It begins with the funeral of Eileen Connulty, a prominent businesswoman in the town, whose middle-aged daughter, "Miss" Connulty, and son, Joseph Paul Connulty, carry on after her. A young man, Florian Kilderry, happens into town at the time and has a chance encounter with a young farm wife, Ellie Dillahan.

After only a few conversations Ellie realizes that she loves Florian, and Florian soon detects that she does. Ellie was an orphan, brought from a foundling home to serve as Dillahan's housekeeper, becoming his wife after a few years. One can sense right away that there may be painful consequences if her relationship with Florian proceeds. Florian is an un-channeled young man, admirable in certain respects, but sometimes insensitive to the possible repercussions of his actions.

The past imposes. We eventually learn of critical incidents suffered by Dillahan and by Miss Connulty, for example. Another local character that will influence the action, Orpen Wren, lives in a delusional world, built around an appointment he had long ago to catalog a leading family's library in a home that has long sense decayed. Florian's once fine home (Shelhangh), where he was content as a child, has become run-down as well and laden with debts, and he has put it up for sale. He disposess of his past as he shuts it down, tossing, giving away, or burning whatever cannot be sold, including accomplished watercolors painted by his deceased parents. He retains his memories of his cousin Isabella, who visited Shelhangh during summers and whom he loved.

Trevor's narrative is like a musical composition where the pauses and silences are as integral to the effect as the notes themselves. He does not immediately tell us everything that we might want to know, leaving us to
make inferences from partial information. Yet he also provides copious
details to convey a palpable sense of the time and place, including, for
instance, product brand names (items on the shelves of the Cash and
Carry, bicycles, and autos, for example), descriptions of the step-by-step
tasks involved in certain farm chores, or the menu of meals taken by the
guests in the Connulty public house. It is in large part via the Connulty's
that we gain a sense of the provincial social atmosphere.

Trevor’s often very simple descriptions enable us to readily visualize (and
at times smell or feel) each scene. The images sometimes have symbolic
import for the narrative as well: for instance, when Florian was telling Ellie
about his plans to sell his house and to leave Ireland, he “watched a jet
plane trailing its ribbon of white against the washed-out paleness of the
sky. He watched the white evaporating, the last of its shreds falling apart.”
Parts of this novel might have been written by a painter (like Florian's
parents) or a photographer (which Florian tried himself).

Not all readers may be satisfied with the story's resolution. I was, but I
suspect Trevor is aware that many may have preferred a different
outcome.

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Love and Summer: A Novel by William Trevor 5 Star Customer Reviews and Lowest
Price!