

## DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE EXPLOSIVE  
WINNER OF THE  
2014  
CARNEGIE  
MEDAL

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kevin Brooks has won numerous awards for his many novels, including Britain's prestigious Carnegie Medal for *The Bunker Diary*. Brooks was born in Exeter and studied in Birmingham and London. He had a varied working life, with jobs in a crematorium, a zoo, a garage, and a post office before—happily—giving it all up to write books. He now lives in North Yorkshire in England.



*The Bunker Diary*

Kevin Brooks

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264 Pages

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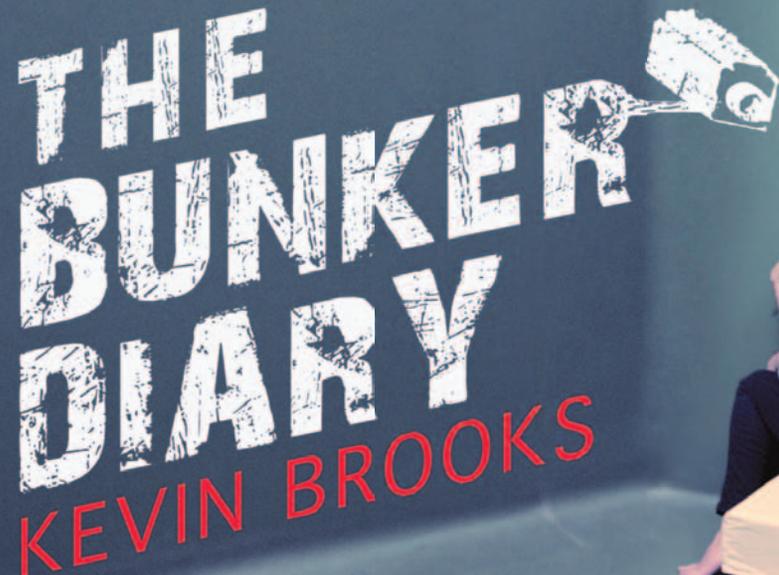
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THE  
BUNKER  
DIARY  
KEVIN BROOKS



## I CAN'T BELIEVE I FELL FOR IT.

It was still dark when I woke up this morning.

As soon as my eyes opened I knew where I was.

A low-ceilinged rectangular building made entirely of whitewashed concrete.

There are six little rooms along the main corridor.

There are no windows. No doors. The elevator is the only way in or out.

What's he going to do to me?

## WHAT AM I GOING TO DO?

*People are really quite simple, and they have simple needs. Food, water, light, space, privacy. Maybe a small measure of dignity. A bit of freedom. What happens when someone simply takes all that away?*

## TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

- At first, Linus believes he's been kidnapped to extort money from his father. Why is he relieved to think that? What disproves his theory?
- Compare and contrast the bunker inmates' situation with other confinement situations, such as being in prison or marooned on an island.
- Linus writes "Whatever it takes" on the bottom of the request he and Jenny send to their captor. Why do you think he wrote this?
- Who is the diary for? Who are the readers or audience?
- Unlike Anya, Linus keeps himself mostly calm throughout the imprisonment. What are some of Linus' survival tactics?
- What kind of people end up in the bunker? How do they compare to each other? Why might have He have chosen them?
- Linus acts as the leader in many situations. What makes him qualified or unqualified to take this role?
- The elevator supplies food and basic cleaning supplies. What else do they get from it? What don't they get from it, and why?
- If you were trapped in the bunker, what would you ask for, even if you didn't think you would get it?
- Linus calls himself the mother of the bunker inmates at one point in the novel. Why? What roles do the other captives fill?
- Jenny has a hard time understanding why someone would want to imprison them. Why does Linus have a better understanding of why they are trapped?
- What sort of voice does Linus have? How would you describe him?
- Mr. Russell describes the Man as "charming...manipulative...persuasive... intelligent...endearingly bland...[in retrospect] a classic psychopath." How has the Man's tactic for kidnapping changed since he abducted Linus? Why might he have changed his strategy as he kidnapped more people?
- When writing about the man who abducted him, Linus capitalizes Man, He, and Him like proper nouns. Why does he capitalize Man and He? What effect does this capitalization have?
- A box filled with cigarettes, alcohol, newspaper clippings, and other things the prisoners want arrives at one point. How does each prisoner react? What does the box distract them from, and why?
- Linus thinks of businessmen like overgrown children. What constitutes growing up for him?
- Anja writes nothing in her journal. What might Anja's thoughts read like? Fred's?
- Linus, were he to get out, would watch mindless TV and eat fast food. What would the others want? What would you want?
- Linus considers apologizing after the dog attacks. How is what he considers different than the first, written apology he gave the Man? What are the implications of what he considers doing?
- Linus says the Man is like a kid poking at things with a stick—like young Linus and the bugs. What other metaphors can you think of that describe the Man and the six people in the bunker?
- In Linus' March 19 diary entry, Linus says that his description of the Man is what he is. Does it matter what the Man actually is? Would you change anything about Linus' description?
- Though Linus admits he'd trade a thousand dictionaries for some stale cake, he wants dictionaries and maps of the world with him in the bunker. Why would these be comforting to him?
- Linus has never felt like he belonged somewhere until the bunker. Why does he belong in the bunker? Would he have said this initially? What has changed?
- In what ways are you, the reader, like the Man? In what ways are you like the prisoners? Compare and contrast your role as the reader to the roles of the prisoners and their captor.
- Though the diary ends, the story isn't necessarily over. How do you think the diary was found?