



## Ordinary Decent Criminals (P.S. (Paperback))

*Lionel Shriver*

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Lionel Shriver

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A new edition of one of bestselling author Lionel Shriver's early novels, reissued 25 years after first publication—an engrossing commentary on the intersection of politics and human relationships, set in turbulent Northern Ireland.

For ten years, Estrin Lancaster has fled Philadelphia. From the Philippines to Berlin, she's been a traveler without a destination, an expatriate without a motherland. In each of the cities Estrin favors, she manages an apartment, a job, a lover, and never tarries past the first signs of ennui.

Her latest destination is Belfast, in Northern Ireland. After twenty years of ritualized violence, this city, too, is exhausted—a town where when one more bomb explodes in the city center, old ladies blow the dust off their treacle cakes and count their change. Here the lanky and spiteful Farrell O'Phelan, former purveyor of his own bomb-disposal service, technically Catholic but everyone's aggravation, wrangles through the maze of factions in the North by despising every side. Farrell's affair with the curious Estrin is nonetheless a meeting of two loners; like hers, Farrell's marathoning around the planet has become a running in place. In deadlocked Northern Ireland, it has become harder and harder to believe that anything is happening at all.

A grand tragi-comedy—one of the earliest displays of the ambition and intelligence that has since earned Lionel Shriver worldwide acclaim—*Ordinary Decent Criminals* is about conflict groupies, people terrified of domesticity, who stir up anguish in their lives and their countries to avoid the greater horror of what lies closest to home.

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