

Task for *The Messenger*

Quotes about Ed Kennedy

I'm typical of many of the young men you see in this suburban outpost of the city – not a whole lot of prospects or possibility. (p. 6)

For some reason I'll never understand.

I run out, picking up the gun along the way. When I cross the road, I lock eyes with the gunman. (p. 11)

I imagine the headlines.

Something like 'TAXI DRIVER TURNS TO HERO' would be nice, but they'll probably print something like 'LOCAL DEADBEAT MAKES GOOD.' (p. 14)

Constantly, I'm asking myself, 'Well, Ed – what have you really achieved in your nineteen years?' The answer's simple:

Jack-shit. (p. 17)

Due to my aforementioned laziness I was no good at school, except at English, because of the reading. (p. 18)

I haven't written a song of Dylan proportions yet, or started painting my first attempt at surrealism, and I doubt I could start a revolution if I tried – because apart from everything else, I'm a bit of an unfit bastard, though I'm lanky and lean. Just weak, too. (p. 22)

I lie a lot. (p. 24)

My ma comes over and I give her a beer. She's proud, she tells me. (p. 25)

'Of course – you're the guy from the bank. The hero.' (p. 53)

The message this time is to soothe this old lady's loneliness. The feeling of it gathers in me as I walk home, and when I see the Doorman, I pick him up and hold all forty-five kilos of him in my arms. I kiss him, in all his filth and stench, and I feel like I could carry the world in my arms tonight. (p. 57)

'Are you some kind of saint or something?'

Inside, I laugh. Me? A saint? I list what I am. Taxi driver. Local deadbeat. Cornerstone of mediocrity. Sexual midget. Pathetic card player. (p. 80)

'I'm Angelina,' she says. 'Are you here to save us?' I can see a tiny spark of hope awoken in her eyes...I look at her truthfully and say, 'You're right, Angelina – I'm here to save you.' (p. 84)

I have the gun pointed exactly between his eyes.

'If you're wondering if this is loaded, it might be the last thought you ever have.' (p. 94)

I have to kill him because slowly, almost effortlessly and with complete contempt, this man kills his wife and child every night. And it's me alone, Ed Kennedy, a less than ordinary suburbanite, who has the chance to end it. (p. 95)

'You're chosen.' (p. 127)

'You know, they say that there are countless saints who have nothing to do with the church and almost no knowledge of God. But they say God walks with those people without them ever knowing it.' His eyes are inside me now, followed by the words. 'You're one of those people, Ed. It's an honour to know you.' (p. 167)

His eyes are wild, with sincerity. 'No, Ed – you have to. You've given us so much. More than you'll ever know.' (p. 244)

There's my ma, fifty-odd years old, high-tailing around town with some guy – while I sit here, in the prime of my youth, completely and utterly alone. (p. 261)

'You're here, and just like your old man, you're all promise, Ed, and no results. You,' and she points at me with venom. 'You could be as good as any of them. As good as Tommy even... But you're still here and you'll still be here in fifty years.' She sounds so cold. 'And you'll have achieved nothing.' (p. 265)

She stops, and her expression reaches such a point of beauty that I nearly cry. 'You've outdone yourself, Ed.' (p. 274)

'Could you tell me what I can give to you? You've given me so much.' (p. 291)

I'm afraid for Marv, and for Audrey.

I'm afraid for me.

You can't let them down, I lecture myself, as each minute shoves past.

Afraid. Afraid. (p. 338)

'Come out,' he says, and when I do, my friend Marvin Harris hugs me. He hugs me so hard that I can smell him, and taste the joy that leaks from inside him. (p. 358)