

Rhyming Life and Death by Amos Oz.  
Chatto and Windus 2009.

Amos Oz' latest work is disappointingly short for anyone who loves his prose, but hugely satisfying for those who love his story-telling. Rhyming Life and Death is also a huge tease as it tempts the reader repeatedly to ponder how much of the novel is real fiction and how much is based on fact!

Too much detail here will spoil the book, but it focuses around a celebrity book event in Tel Aviv, whence the unnamed author goes to give a reading from his latest book. A host of characters fill the story, and the author is quick to fill their lives with concocted details, there is also much about the inherent loneliness, and opportunity, of such events. There is pathos, pain and humour aplenty, and some astute observations of the attendees at such occasions.

No one who reads Rhyming Life and Death will ever think the same about celebrity book signings!

Rabbi Dr Charles H Middleburgh