

[PDF] Black Swan Green: A Novel

David Mitchell - pdf download free book



Books Details:

Title: Black Swan Green: A Novel
Author: David Mitchell
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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Starred Review. For his fourth novel, two-time Booker Prize finalist Mitchell (*Cloud Atlas*, etc.) turns to material most writers plumb in their first: the semiautobiographical, first-person coming-of-age story. And after three books with notably complex narrative structure, far-flung settings, and multiple viewpoints, he has chosen one narrator, 13-year-old Jason Taylor, to tell the story of one year (1982) in one town, Worcestershire's Black Swan Green. Jason starts with the January day he accidentally smashes his late grandfather's irreplaceable Omega Seamaster DeVille watch and ends with Christmas, which, because of intervening events, becomes the last he spends in this sleepy Midlands hamlet. The gorgeously revealed cast includes

Jason's brilliant older sister, sarcastic mother, blustering dad and a spectrum of bullies and mates. Jason's nemesis is an intermittent, fluctuating stammer: some days he must avoid words beginning with N; other days, S. Once he is exposed, the bullies taunt him mercilessly; there is no respite for the weak or disabled in *Black Swan Green* nor, as the realities of Thatcher's grim reign begin to take their toll, in England writ large. How Jason and his family navigate this year of change is the emotional core of this rich novel, but the virtuoso chapter is "The Bridle Path," wherein Jason, alone for one delicious day, searches for a tunnel fabled to have been dug by the Romans in order to rout the Vikings. What he finds along the way captures the sheer pleasure of being a boy and brings to mind adventures shared by Huck and Tom. (*Apr.*)

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From School Library Journal Adult/High School--Thirteen chapters provide a monthly snapshot of Jason Taylor's life in small-town England from January 1982 to January 1983. Whether the 13-year-old narrator is battling his stammer or trying to navigate the social hierarchy of his schoolmates or watching the slow disintegration of his parents' marriage, he relates his story in a voice that is achingly true to life. Each chapter becomes a skillfully drawn creation that can stand on its own, but is subtly interwoven with the others. While readers may not see the connectedness in the first two thirds of the book, the final three sections skillfully bring the threads together. The author does not pull any punches when it comes to the casual cruelty that adolescent boys can inflict on one another, but it is this very brutality that underscores the sweetness of which they are also capable. With its British slang and complex twists and turns, this title is not a selection for reluctant readers, but teens who enjoy multifaceted coming-of-age stories will be richly rewarded. The chapter entitled *Rocks*, which centers around the British conflict in the Falkland Islands in May 1982, is especially compelling as Jason and his peers deal with the death of one of their own. Mitchell has been hailed as one of the great new authors of the 21st century; with *Black Swan Green*, he shows again how the best books challenge readers' complacency. --*Kim Dare, Chantilly Regional Library, Fairfax County, VA*

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