



The Dark Side of Nowhere

By Neal Shusterman

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The Dark Side of Nowhere By Neal Shusterman

A classic science fiction novel from bestselling author Neal Shusterman is back in print.

Jason is having a bad day. The kind of day when you just don't feel like yourself. Only for Jason, it's not just a feeling. He really isn't himself. Not anymore. Who is he? That's the problem. Jason isn't sure. And it's not just him. Everyone in town is acting weird. His friends. His parents. Everyone. Billington is usually such a normal town. As Jason is about to discover, nothing will ever be normal again....

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The Dark Side of Nowhere By Neal Shusterman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #896039 in Books
- Published on: 2012-08-14
- Released on: 2012-08-14
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x .80" w x 5.50" l, .52 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 256 pages

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6-9. This story appears at first to be yet another problem novel, populated by teenagers dissatisfied with their too ordinary circumstances. No amount of subtle foreshadowing prepares readers for the direction the plot takes, however. The main character and most of his close friends and relatives are in fact extraterrestrials, living forgotten on Earth after a failed invasion. As the story begins, Jason is bored with life in his small town. The school janitor, Grant, disturbs the boy's placid universe, hinting at long-hidden secrets and presenting him with an odd metallic glove that can fire BBs through its fingers. Later, readers learn that it is a training glove for a far more lethal weapon. Jason slowly realizes that he is part of a colony of aliens who maintain human form through DNA injections, the DNA having been obtained from people killed during their ill-fated invasion. Now Grant has reestablished contact with their lost world. The adult extraterrestrials go off to plan another invasion, leaving Grant to assist the young people as they revert to their alien forms and to train them as fighters. But Jason thwarts this plan, having decided to remain what his mind and emotions tell him he is?human. Shusterman makes most of this believable; the most difficult part of the story to swallow is the way Jason's girlfriend, a real human, takes everything in stride. Still, plenty of adventure and suspense move the story along nicely. Jason is unquestionably a hero. Ultimately, the book asks readers to examine the question of what it means to be truly human. This is great science fiction. It's fun to read and thought-provoking at the same time. *Bruce Anne Shook, Mendenhall Middle School, Greensboro, NC*

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From Booklist

Gr. 6^-9. Describing his hometown in the book's first chapter, 14-year-old narrator Jason says, "If boredom was a living, breathing thing, then its less interesting cousin would live in Billington." Of course, that's the first chapter, before Jason discovers that his parents are aliens, his schoolmates are secretly in training to fire strange and deadly weapons, his friend Jason didn't die of appendicitis but has been transformed into an otherworldly being, and strangest of all, that beautiful Paula, star pitcher for the baseball team, loves him. Shusterman tells a fast-paced story, giving Jason many vivid, original turns of phrase, letting the plot get weird enough to keep readers enthralled, then coming back to the human emotions at the heart of it all. The ending is less satisfying than the rest of the novel, but Jason's convincing voice carries throughout. A good choice for booktalks. *Carolyn Phelan*

From Kirkus Reviews

Shusterman (Scorpion Shards, 1995, etc.) delivers a tense thriller that doesn't duck larger issues, with echoes of the Nazi youth movement and The Wave. After Jason's friend, Ethan, reportedly dies of a burst appendix, the web of lies that has wrapped his humdrum existence in a small town begins to unravel. Jason discovers that his parents--and the parents of all his friends--were part of the advance force of an alien invasion, and that none of them--nor their offspring--are human. Now, nearly forgotten while Jason's generation grew to adolescence, the invasion force is coming, and the children are in training at the front line, while their parents scatter around the globe to prepare for the first strike. Simultaneously, the teenagers have started to metamorphose into their true alien forms; Ethan, alive after all, has already gone through the change. At first swept up in excitement, Jason begins to wonder if he really wants the invasion to succeed. Shusterman seamlessly combines gritty, heart-stopping plotting with a wealth of complex issues; this book is a natural in and out of the classroom. Jason's ultimate decision--to remain human at heart if not in form--is one with reverberations that both sophisticated and reluctant readers will want to ponder. (Fiction. 12+) -- *Copyright ©1997, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mary Blackwell:

Reading a e-book tends to be new life style in this particular era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world can easily share their idea. Publications can also inspire a lot of people. A great deal of author can inspire their particular reader with their story or maybe their experience. Not only situation that share in the books. But also they write about the data about something that you need illustration. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach children, there are many kinds of book which exist now. The authors these days always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some exploration before they write to the book. One of them is this The Dark Side of Nowhere.

John Lopez:

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Alice Scales:

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