



The Fearful

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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This dark, brooding, and generally miserable story involves a lake in contemporary Yorkshire said to be occupied by a ferocious but never sighted monster known as the Mourn. This needs regular sustenance from outside to keep it from gobbling up the locals. Morose, 15-year-old Tim is due to take over the role of chief Mourner at his next birthday, a job that has always belonged to his family and is at present carried out by his tetchy father. It involves scraping up road kill to feed the Mourn every week, while also keeping a wary eye on the lake. No wonder the other locals think Tim and his father are a bit cracked. Finally, an unaccountably overdue decision to scan the lake with modern sonar and radar equipment leads to Tim's crisis of faith. But by now this overly contrived story has begun to unravel, rather like one of those under-powered low budget British horror films of old whose special effects never quite come off. There is some good writing to start with before the continual need to keep explaining wrecks this narrative of any pace or conviction. A mini-Tsunami at one stage serves as a reminder of the way that so many children's books have been predicting this sort of event long before the real life disaster last Boxing Day. But otherwise this novel, mournful in every sense of the word, belongs with its monster at the bottom of a lake. Let's hope its otherwise talented author returns to form with his next offering.

Running Order:

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