



The Outcasts of 19 Schuyler Place

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

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A new novel from this reticent, prize-winning author is always welcome, particularly when it also champions the cause of civil protest. Set in the recent American past when Reagan was still President, it describes how 12-year-old Margaret splendidly defies her punitive Summer Camp authorities. After she is finally thrown out, she goes on to save from destruction the three nearby decorated towers that her two uncles had erected in their garden. So far so good, with Margaret stepping into the shoes of Herman Melville's great character Bartleby with her repeated refrain 'I prefer not to' whenever asked to do something she disapproves of. The only trouble is that her two uncles' much described eccentricity comes over as more loveable to Margaret than it might do to readers, gradually tiring of so much repetition and longing for a return to the book's spiky beginnings. Even so, there is still a lot to enjoy in this typically unusual story with its odd throwaway lines and abundant evidence of the author's keen intelligence on every page.

Running Order:

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