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Drive By

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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Readers who enjoy wrestling with the complexities of moral responsibility will respond enthusiastically to this novel and to the intriguing dilemma at its centre. Four teenage boys, growing up in contemporary London, are kicking a ball around, it finds its way on to the property of an elderly grumpy neighbour, they eventually retrieve it - but with a large slit in its side; some days later the boys re-encounter 'the Poisoned Dwarf', as they call her, while she is sitting in her car, the window down, and, by way of 'revenge', they fire their water pistols at her. But events are soon to take a very different tone: the old woman suffers a fatal heart attack. For Johnny, one of the four boys, this is a turning point. Can he and his friends possibly be seen as murderers? The anxiety provoked by the question begins to gnaw at him, interrupting his sleep, inducing paranoiac nightmares and leading him to believe that the now dead woman is haunting him.

At the same time, Johnny is attempting to establish some sort of relationship with an enigmatic teenage girl called Summer, who, as the reader knows though he does not, is not merely the grand-daughter of the woman he may have helped to 'murder' but has her own compelling back story, one which neatly slots into the unwinding of the central plot. How will it all end - and what role in the resolution will be allocated to Mikey, Johnny's obnoxious younger brother? Carrington keeps us guessing, right up to the very last page, and in the process provides us with an absorbing narrative.

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