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Hit the Road, Jack

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~~Editor's Choice:~~

off

Media type:

Book

BfK Rating:

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When Jack, aged 12, picks up and reads a letter from his absent father, one of many which are causing his mother to cry, he deduces from it that his banished and supposedly disgraced father is actually working somewhere and is being wilfully exiled from domestic happiness by his mum and her new boyfriend, Richard. Jack resolves to trace and help his poor mistreated dad, and in so doing gets himself and other people into trouble and finally danger. Jack is a very bright child, and the school he attends is a centre of excellence for gifted children. His behaviour throughout confirms the familiar truth that people of extremely high intelligence can also be gullible, naive and stupid. Jack's mixed-up loyalties and feelings are the only complex human traits in the book. Everyone else is (or finally proves to be) starkly bad or good, sinful or saintly, vicious or loving, with no intermediate shades. The book raises many dark and important themes - alcoholism, wife-beating, child-abuse, child prostitution, repressed memory - but it does so in such thin, cartoon-like, sentimental forms that the result is a lightweight tear-jerker, unworthy of the sombre topics it takes on board.

Running Order:

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